

— Genesis 39 —
Genesis Series 86
Joseph a Slave in Egypt

Gn 39 ¹ Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. ⁵ So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. ⁶ Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. ⁷ And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." ⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. ⁹ There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

¹⁰ So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. ¹¹ But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, ¹² that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. ¹³ And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, ¹⁴ that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. ¹⁵ And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."

¹⁶ So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. ¹⁷ Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; ¹⁸ so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

¹⁹ So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused. ²⁰ Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. ²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²² And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. ²³ The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

► After focusing on Judah in ch38, the story jumps back to Joseph in ch39. These two storylines are going on at the _____ time, but in opposite directions. Judah seemed to be going up, but was actually going _____, away from the Lord; while Joseph seems to be going down, but is actually going _____, because the LORD is with him and is preparing to use him in _____ ways.

► J is brought to Egypt where he is put up for sale as a _____. Of all the people who could have bought him, the one who does buy him in the providence of God is Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the _____ (1).

► J stands out. Everything he does prospers, for the LORD is _____ him (2-3). So J is brought from the field to P's house (2), where P makes J overseer of _____ he has (4). As a result, all P has is blessed of the _____ (5).

► But J's blessing and success bring further _____. J was "handsome in form and appearance," so P's wife casts longing _____ upon him and propositions him (7). J is a Heb. slave, and P's wife is Egyptian and well connected (14), so J respectfully refuses, appealing to his (and her) duty to P and to _____ (8-9). P's wife persists daily (10), until one day she grabs J's garment, and he flees outside, leaving his garment in her hands (11-12). Scorned, she plots revenge – poisoning the servants, stirring up envy & prejudice toward _____ and resentment toward her _____ (13-15).

When P comes home, she again points the finger at both J and her _____ (6-18). P lit. "burns with anger," which we assume is toward J, for P throws him in prison (19-20). But if we pay careful attention, there are indications that something else is going on here: 1) That P did _____ believe his wife, for he knows her character, as well as J's; And 2) that P's anger burns not at J, but at his _____, who has checkmated him so that he has no choice but to punish J. Consider the normal punishment for a Heb. slave who assaults and attempts to rape in her own home the prominent Egyptian wife of the captain of Pharaoh's guard: Automatic _____.

But J doesn't die, he goes to prison. And consider which prison J goes to – the one for the _____ prisoners, those who have offended Pharaoh (20), i.e., nobility and high officials such as the king's chief butler and chief baker (40.2-3). This prison was also known as "the house of the captain of the guard" (40.3), who is _____ (39.1). P is not the "keeper of the prison" (21), but he is over him.

► In the king's prison, the _____ is once again with J, who finds favor in the sight of the keeper (21), and is rapidly trusted and placed in _____ of everything (22-23) – no doubt due in part to P's _____ to the keeper re J.

► These are the _____ God has placed within the story, which He wants us to follow where they lead. One of the places they lead is to very real possibility that P came to _____ in the LORD thru J's witness. P doesn't just see how gifted J is and now everything he does succeeds – P sees that "the _____ made all [Joseph] does to prosper" (3). "The LORD" (Yahweh or Jehovah, meaning "I AM") is God's personal _____ by which he revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. P's wife doesn't know the LORD, so J refers to him generically as "God" when speaking to her (9). But P does know who the LORD is, thus indicating that J & P have had conversations in which J has _____ of the LORD, and as a result P has come to faith. J will later have a similar relationship with _____ (45.8).

Gn 45.8 "God ... has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house"

► Application: Faithful _____ to God and others in good times and _____ is the foundation of Christian worship, witness, and blessing.

• Worshiping God means _____ him.

Lk 4.8 "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

1Th 1.9 [Y]ou turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

Rm 12.1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

• Serving God means _____ and _____ him in good times and bad.

Lk 4.4 "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Dt 8.2 [T]he Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness to humble you and test you, to know what was

in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

Jm 1.2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience [i.e. steadfastness]. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Hb 2.10 [I]t was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect [i.e., bring him to the goal] through sufferings ... 12.2 [Look] to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who the joy that was set before Him endured the cross

• Serving God means serving others, especially those he has placed _____ us or _____ us.

Jn 8.29 "I always do those things that please [My Father]."

Lk 22.27 "[W]ho is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? ... Yet I am among you as the One who serves."

Eph 6.1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you" ... 4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. 5 Bondservants, be obedient to ... your masters ... in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; 6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart ... 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. 9 And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master ... is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

• Responsibility, authority, and blessing _____ to those, like Joseph, who serve in this way.

Mt 23.11 "[H]e who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Gal 5.13 [T]hrough love serve one another.