

Genesis 39

We have talked a lot about providence as God is working all things for His purposes and His promise. Circumstances don't have to be pleasant or just for God to be working out His promise for good. Notice how chapter begins and ends – the Lord was with Joseph – hard to see when everything is going wrong.

- I. God's Faithfulness to Joseph In Slavery (1-6a)
 - a. The Lord is With Joseph (1-2)
 - i. Joseph is Sold to Potiphar (1)
 1. High official in Pharaoh's court
 2. Captain of the guard – wealthy – high society
 - ii. The Lord Makes Joseph Successful (2)
 1. He is a house servant – not field worker
 2. God placing him where He desires
 - b. Joseph Is Favored By Potiphar Because of The Lord (3-5a)
 - i. Potiphar Sees Joseph is Special (3-4a)
 1. Saw that Yahweh was with him
 - a. How would Potiphar know about Yahweh? Did he?
 - b. Think Joseph told him?
 2. Saw that Yahweh caused all he did to succeed
 - ii. Potiphar places Joseph Over All His House (4b-5a)
 - c. Potiphar's House is Blessed Because of Joseph (5b-6a)
 - i. Lord blessed Potiphar because of Joseph (5b)
 1. Genesis 12:3 - I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."
 - ii. Joseph is trusted fully by Potiphar
 - iii. Only the food he ate is not under Joseph's charge
 1. Strange statement
 2. Some commentators make this euphemism – intimate affairs or wife
 - iv. Joseph is 30 years old when enters Pharaoh's service (Gen. 41:46) – and he spends two full years in prison. Since he was 17 when he was sold by his brothers, this means Joseph spent around ten years in Potiphar's house.
 - v. Joseph proves himself to be hardworking in Potiphar's eyes and though God blesses him, he is doing a good job
 - vi. What does this reveal about the young man who was wrongfully sent here in the first place?
- II. Joseph's Faithfulness To God In Slavery (6b-12)
 - a. Joseph is Tempted By Potiphar's Wife (6b-7)
 - i. Joseph is handsome and well-built (6b)

- ii. Joseph is commanded to lie with Potiphar's Wife(7)
 - 1. She gazed at him
 - 2. This is not a seductive invitation. It is a command from a master's wife to a servant.
- b. Joseph Refuses To Sin Against God and Potiphar (8-9)
 - NOTE: Joseph could have justified obeying this command. What are some ways he could have done so?
 - 1. doing what I am told
 - 2. this way things done in Egypt
 - 3. I deserve this – I have been wronged
 - 4. She can improve my situation
 - i. Joseph will not betray Potiphar's trust in him (8)
 - 1. My master?
 - 2. Potiphar has been good to him – giving him position and status
 - ii. Joseph will not betray Potiphar's marriage (9a)
 - 1. "because you are his wife"
 - 2. Joseph has high view of marriage – Why? Because of this last reason
 - iii. Joseph will not sin against God (9b)
 - 1. This reveals Joseph's heart
 - 2. Opposite of Judah in the last chapter
 - 3. Recognizes that this would be sin against God
 - 4. Calls it what it is – "great evil" – don't downplay like we do
- c. Joseph Faces This Temptation Continually (10)
 - i. He faces this every single day
 - 1. Remember normal 27 year old man
 - 2. This was a real temptation
 - ii. Language changes here – she tempts lesser
 - iii. She sly in her temptation
 - 1. Easier for us to succumb to temptation that is repeated over and over
 - 2. Only takes a moment of weakness to give in
 - 3. Joseph's faith is what sustains him – his is probably watching and praying alot
- d. Joseph Flees From Temptation (11-12)
 - i. Joseph is Alone With Her in the House
 - 1. Obviously a set up by her
 - 2. No witnesses
 - ii. Joseph Flees To Avoid Sinning (12)
 - 1. She grabs him by his garment
 - 2. She commands him to lie with her
 - 3. She left holding his garment when he runs
 - a. Joseph has already tried rationalizing with temptation
 - b. He will not stay in its presence

- c. The best way to fight is to flee
- III. God's Faithfulness To Joseph In Prison (13-23)
 - a. Joseph is Wrongly Imprisoned (13-20)
 - i. Joseph is Accused Before Potiphar's Household (13-15)
 - 1. She calls the house together to get her story out (13-14)
 - 2. She blames Potiphar for bringing the Hebrew in
 - a. Egyptians didn't like Hebrews at all
 - b. She would build a coalition of agreement so the whole house would affirm her accusation before her husband
 - 3. She accuses Joseph of attempting to rape her
 - a. Uses the garment he left as evidence against him
 - ii. Joseph is Accused Before Potiphar (16-18)
 - 1. She stages the scene for her husband (16)
 - a. Lays the coat beside her in the bed for dramatic effect
 - 2. She lies to her husband about Joseph's actions (17-18)
 - iii. Joseph is Imprisoned (19-20)
 - 1. Potiphar is Angry (Joseph's Wife?) – commentators disagree
 - 2. Joseph is placed into the king's prison (20)
 - a. Capital offense: Usually death would be the punishment
 - b. Why just prison for Joseph?
 - c. Been in house 10 years – what going through Potiphar's mind?
 - b. The Lord Blesses Joseph in Prison (21-23)
 - i. Lord was with Joseph – showed him Covenant faithfulness (21a)
 - ii. Joseph is Given Charge Of The Prison (21b-22)
 - 1. God gives him favor in prison keeper's sight
 - 2. Joseph given oversight of whole prison
 - iii. Joseph is Trusted Because Lord is With Him (23)
 - 1. Joseph is trusted fully by the prison keeper
 - 2. He also saw that Yahweh was with Joseph
 - 3. Whatever Joseph did, the Lord made it succeed

Joseph did the right thing over and over. He stayed faithful to his God. Amazing really. But things still didn't turn out good for him. He suffered anyway. Sometimes obedience to God leads to persecution and wrongful suffering anyway – why should we do it?

Biggest temptation – whether or not he would trust God when everything was going wrong
 - didn't know plan – but obeyed because trusted God

Prison: God where are you – why didn't you protect me – I did right over and over
 - with him in pit – with traders – on slave block – Potiphar's house – and now in prison
 Circumstances – not indicative of God's disfavor with him
 - Joseph knew his God – trusted his God

You don't know future of your story – you know your God

When you don't see it – must believe it
He who gave us his son – how will he not with him give us all things