

Genesis Chapter 39 - Commentary By Mike Wells

Chapter 39 Overview:

The story of the life of Joseph resumes in Egypt. Chapter 39 tells the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife where Joseph winding up in prison due to false accusations. We will see how God works through all of this in Joseph's life to ultimately fulfill His promise.

Genesis 39 : 1-6 - 1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. 2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous 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 that he did to prosper in his hand. 4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. 5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. 6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured

- The story shifts back to Joseph in Egypt.
- He here is noted as having been sold to Potiphar by the Ishmeelites. (Remember, the Ishmeelites and Midianites are mentioned interchangeably because they both were in the same caravan that Joseph's brothers sold them to. (Genesis 37:25))
- Through all the adversity Joseph has gone through, God still blessed Joseph.
- Though he had suffered, God blessed him in prospering him and causing him to be promoted.
- The providence of God is seen!!
- This is a good reminder to all of us that God blesses the righteous. (***Psalm 5:12 - For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous***)
- In addition, God also blessed Potiphar for Joseph's sake and prospered him as well.
- Note the parallel here with that in Genesis 30:27 – Laban realized that he had been blessed for Jacob's sake when Jacob had served him and their flocks had multiplied.

Genesis 39 : 7-10 - 7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.

- Mrs. Potiphar was enamored by Joseph and the power that evident in his life and sought to seduce him to commit adultery with him.

- He refused.
- He knew would be sinning against one who had entrusted so much to him.
- He would also ultimately be sinning against God.
- The righteous, moral character of Joseph is clear.
- As the wife of a high ranking Egyptian official, it is very likely that she was an attractive woman.
- Also, she most likely in her attempt to allure Joseph, dressed and acted immodestly and seductively as she day-by-day sought to seduce him.
- Through it all, Joseph remained steadfast and resolute.
- He then wisely tried avoiding being near her.

Genesis 39 : 11-18 - 11 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

- Upset that she Joseph wasn't interested in her attempt to seduce him, Mrs. Potiphar now turned in vengeance against Joseph.
- As he worked, she tried one more time to entice him, grabbing his garment.
- This time Joseph ran away leaving his outer garment in her hands.
- She then called other men of the household in and accused Joseph of trying to sexually assault her.
- She held up his garment as proof.
- When her husband came home, she made the same accusations against Joseph to him.

Genesis 39 : 19-23 - 19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. 21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

- After hearing this, Potiphar had Joseph thrown in prison “*where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*”

- Note that he wasn't thrown in with the hardened criminals, but was put in with the king's prisoners.
- Nevertheless, ***“the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison”***
- The keeper of the prison promoted Joseph making him a trustee
- Joseph quickly became the overseer of the prison.
- The keeper had entrusted Joseph with oversight of the entire prison, ***“because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.”***
- Several lessons are clear:
- (1) Indeed, all things were working together for good.
 - God had a greater plan for Joseph and his family.
 - Being in prison was part of the preparation of that plan.
- (2) God has never promised the Christian life would be without storms.
 - But he has promised to protect us during the storms.