

Sent: Wednesday, May 01, 2019 11:17 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Genesis 39

"Fear thou not, for I am with you! Be not dismayed, for I am your God! I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness!" (Isaiah 41:10 -- I like the "yea" in the KJV!)

Interestingly, the author of Genesis, believed to be Moses, devotes more coverage to the life of Joseph than to any other character in the book of Genesis, despite the likes of Adam and Noah, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! And despite the fact that Joseph is not mentioned much in the rest of Scripture! Perhaps to highlight (for those to come) how God's divine providence secures His covenant promises in the midst of impossible situations!

Our story line begins in Genesis 39 with Joseph, after having been taken to Egypt by Ishmaelites and sold as a slave to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's bodyguard, eventually, "finding favor with Potiphar," to the point where he, "put him in charge of all that he owned"! Genesis 39:2 says, four times in this passage, "the Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man"! In fact, even Potiphar, "saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord had caused all that he did to prosper."

Verses 5-6 confirm that it was the Lord who, "blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph," and that the Lord's blessing was upon all that he owned in the house and in the field!" (We see God's "providence" working!)

But there was a "catch": Potiphar's wife was "struck" not only by Joseph's success as "overseer," but by his stunning good looks and tried to seduce him into a sexual relationship! Arnold notes how Joseph's, "quick and emphatic refusal to surrender to her advances is a model for all believers on how to resist temptation." He had a clear perception of right and wrong and didn't give in, "even though she spoke to him day after day"! Why didn't he give in? He realized that such an act was not only a sin against his earthly master (Potiphar) but, even more significantly, a sin against God! (vs. 9-10)

(This reminds us of the great sin between David and Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11 where David, rather than "running" from sin, allowed his lust to consume him and later, after being confronted by Nathan, begged for God's forgiveness, after realizing that his sin was "first and foremost, a sin against God!" Psalm 51 is the classic Old Testament reminder of the seriousness of sexual sin in eyes of God and how man's repentance and God's forgiveness are essential! And Paul admonishes us in 1 Corinthians 6:18-19 to "flee fornication" and notes how, "every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but that the immoral man sins against his own body...which is temple of the Holy Spirit."

Potiphar's wife didn't relent and finally tried to "entrap" Joseph who had the God-given sense to run! Verse 13 says, "leaving his garment in her hand"! (Another case where Joseph's "cloak" was used in conspiracy against him!) You know the rest of this part of the story! She used Joseph's garment unjustly to implicate Joseph, resulting in Potiphar putting him into prison!

And yet God was not finished with Joseph! Verse 21 says, "the Lord was with him and extended kindness to him and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer," again to the point that, "the chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail," (and thus the beginning of "prison ministry").

Even in jail, Genesis 39:21 says, the Lord, "was with him and whatever he did, the Lord made to prosper." (There was a certain consistency in Joseph's godly character and behavior and in God's faithfulness!)

Well, the story of the life of Joseph, as recorded in Genesis, is just beginning! In some ways we can already see how he's a "type" of Christ! He was a favored son! Rejected by his brothers! He honored and obeyed his father! The "good and faithful" servant! Suffering unjustly, and ascending to a higher place! (We'll see more of this in the weeks to come!)

Meanwhile, we as men must deal with compelling temptations, particularly involving sexual desires! 1 Corinthians 10:13 offers a good reminder: "There has no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide a way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."

And so, we end this lesson as we began it, with a great promise: "Fear thou not, for I am with you! Be not dismayed, for I am your God! I will strengthen you! Yea, I will help you! Yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness!" (I like the "yea"!)

Have a great week, men, and know that God "is with you" just as He was with Joseph! Yea!

Lowell