

# JOSEPH AND POTIPHAR — GENESIS 39

## JOSEPH AT POTIPHAR'S HOUSE

v.1-6

- Four times in this chapter it says, “the LORD was with Joseph.” Everyone around Joseph recognized something special was going on with him. God promised to be with the Patriarchs, and is evidenced in the life of Joseph as a covenant-keeping God.
- Humanly speaking the story is about Joseph. But really God is the central character!
- Joseph had no control over circumstances, yet God overruled the evil choices of man to accomplish His eternal purpose.
- By his trust in God, diligent work, and blessing from God, Joseph showed Potiphar that God was real.
- Joseph believed God could use him right where he was, so he did not wait for a better situation to serve Him.

## JOSEPH RESISTS TEMPTATION

v.7-10

- Potiphar’s wife was clearly forward toward Joseph. If Potiphar was a eunuch his wife may look elsewhere for sexual activity. The Bible points out that Joseph was “handsome” (v.6, same term for Rachael) and she “cast longing eyes” (v.7) on Joseph.
- Potiphar’s wife would not be the first or last woman who desired to seduce a man out of a sense of challenge.
- Joseph speaks logically of the kindness of Potiphar toward him, and her unique position should not be violated.
- Joseph said sexual sin is not just between two consenting adults. It is an act of disobedience against God and has strong theological significance. He let his faith be known (v.3) showing his character in loyalty to Potiphar and responsibility to God.

## POTIPHAR'S WIFE: PLAN TO TRAP

v.11-12

- Joseph was consistent and came to work. This made him predictable, and mixed with evil, vulnerable to her seduction. She knew Joseph was avoiding her.
- Surely Potiphar’s wife made certain none of the men were in the house. She planned for the other servants to be gone.
- Joseph did what he needed to do. He “fled youthful lusts” (2Tm.2:22). Joseph was in his mid 20’s at this time.

## POTIPHAR'S WIFE FALSELY ACCUSES JOSEPH

- The idea concerning the garment was not that he ran away completely naked. The garment was outer clothing, so left only wearing his underwear.
- Joseph did not seem to defend himself against this false accusation.
- She even blamed her husband for bringing this “Hebrew servant” into the house.



v.13-18

## JOSEPH SENT TO PRISON

v.19-20

- Potiphar went easy on Joseph (normally the penalty was death) because he suspected his wife’s role.
- Potiphar’s “anger” may not have been directed toward Joseph but against his wife for manipulating him and putting him in a situation where he had to save face.
- Joseph got in trouble with man, but kept this character pure before God. Who do we really want to please?

## JOSEPH PROSPERS EVEN IN PRISON

v.21-23

- If God blessed Joseph in the pit, and as a slave, we should not be surprised to see Him bless Joseph in prison.
- None of these terrible circumstances derailed God’s plan for Joseph’s life. In all these conditions God was sharpening and strengthening Joseph’s faith for even greater service while fulfilling Bible prophecy (Ge.37:1-11).