

Genesis 39 Joseph has Success, has Trouble with Potiphar's Wife, and is Imprisoned

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Introduction

Genesis 39 – Joseph bought by Potiphar ^{verses 1-23}

Joseph is bought by Potiphar, and preferred in the family.

¹ And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar,^A an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.^B ² And YHVH was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man;^C and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ And his master saw that YHVH was with him, and that YHVH 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 (**וַיִּקְדְּהוּ** ^{vai: yaf: ki: De: hu})^D over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

^A Potiphar ^{H6318} was a *saris* i.e. eunuch ^{H5631}. an officer. See Word-Study-H5631-saris-eunuch-G2135-eunuchos, article #[109](#).

BDB: Potiphar = “belonging to the sun”. 1) an officer of Pharaoh, chief of the executioners, and the master to whom Joseph was sold as a slave. KJC: Gen 37:36, Gen 39:1

Potiphar = consecrated to Ra: one of the gods of lower Egypt.

Potiphar is the shortened form of "Potiphara" meaning "he whom Ra gave." This is analogous to the name "Theodore" in our own Western world. Source: Asimov, Isaac (1967). Guide to the Bible - Old Testament. p. 106.

^B A rabbi (Levi) remarked: “A slave buys, the son of a slave woman sells, and a free man is slave to both!” The purchaser was Potiphar – a descendant of Ham whom Noah had cursed that he should be “a slave’s slave to his brothers” (Gen 9:25), and who was now a slave to Pharaoh; the sellers were Ishmaelites, descendants of Abraham’s slave Hagar; and the slave of such people was Joseph, the firstborn son of Jacob’s favorite wife. – Artscroll Tanach

The first sentence of the quote above was a little hard to grok, so I re-wrote it.

- 1) A slave named Potiphar buys Joseph
- 2) The slaves called the Ishmaelites sold Joseph
- 3) The freeman called Joseph was bought and sold into slavery

^C Even in this state of being a slave, he prospered.

^D Same word ...**visiting** the iniquity of the father... Exo 20:5-6.

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 YHVH blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of YHVH was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.^E 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 favored.

He resists temptation by Potiphar's Wife.

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. 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.

He is falsely accused by her.

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 (לְצַחֵק le. Tza. chek);^F 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. 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.

He is cast into prison.

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.

God is with him there, and he is advanced by the keeper of prison.

²¹ But YHVH was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and 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 that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.^G

Gen 39:22 HSB5

be- yad- hand בְּיַד- has- So- har prison הַסֵּהַר beit- court בֵּית- sar And the keeper שַׂר vai- yit- Ten committed וַיִּתֵּן
 a- Sher who' אֲשֶׁר ha- 'a- si- Rim, all the prisoners הָאֲסִירִים kol- all כָּל- et' אֵת yo- Sef, to Joseph's יוֹסֵף
 a- Sher who' אֲשֶׁר kol- all כָּל- ve- 'Et וְאֵת has- So- har; prison הַסֵּהַר be- Veit court בְּבֵית

^E Yoseph doesn't know it yet, but he is in training to be Viceroy.

^F Strong's # H6711. NG says this is the exact word that Ishmael was saying to Isaac. She is saying he was brought here to molest us.

^G And so Yoseph starts the first prison ministry.

o- Seh. there he was the doer עָשָׂה ha- Yah become הָיָה hu he הוּא Sham, there שָׁם o- Sim and whatsoever they did עָשׂוּם

²³ The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because YHVH was with him, and that which he did, YHVH^H made it to prosper.

e-Sword Notes

Gen 39:4

This overseer concept is a two edged sword...privleges and responsibilities. Relating back to Exo 20:5-6, is it fair to ask how effective was the responsibilities of Isaac towards his family? Is that also not reflected onto Jacob, after all it was the sons of Jacob who sold (or for sure intended to sell) Yoseph. I'm suggesting that YHVH is balancing his books by allowing Yoseph to be put in this situation, but nevertheless YHVH is with him and also prospers him. Yoseph needs to be patient and show his faith that YHVH would do what YHVH said he will do bless and protect.

Isa 52:3-53:2^{??}

³ For thus saith YHVH, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

⁴ For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

⁵ Now therefore, what have I here, saith YHVH, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith YHVH; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

⁶ Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.

To receive the ministers thereof

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

⁸ Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when YHVH shall bring again Zion.

To joy in the power thereof

⁹ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for YHVH hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

Acts 16:16-40

^H YHVH will not be mentioned again until Gen 49:18.