

Remnant Life Church
10.30.22
Joseph
Pt 4
A Different Kind of Confrontation
Gen 39:1-20

Part 1 – The forced confrontation that Joseph had to endure with his brothers due to his father’s favoritism

Part 2 – Joseph shares two dreams with his brothers and fathers that would have been smarter to keep to himself

Part 3 – The brother’s revenge as they sell their brother to the Midianite and Ishmaelite traders

- In this third part Joseph comes to his brothers on his father’s instructions
- Because of the valley where they were grazing near Dothan, they see him coming and plot to rid themselves of this spoiled brat of a brother who has delusions of grandeur
- Rueben and Judah get the other 8 to change their plan of killing Joseph and instead throw him into a dry cistern
- Joseph is sold to the traders, carried off, and when we last see him in **Gen 37:36** he is again being sold into the household of an Egyptian, Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh’s guard

READ – **Gen 39:1-20**

The author of Genesis uses a very interesting style of writing that keeps the reader focused on the most important elements of the various accounts

- When diving into the beauty, complexity, yet still simplistic depth of the Bible there are important considerations to examine
 - The Bible was written by men under the guidance/inspiration of the Holy Spirit
 - But at the same time, its literary structure must also be taken into account
 - For instance, we have the poetry of Psalms and Song of Solomon
 - The historical records in the OT
 - The narratives found throughout the books of Genesis, Joshua, and the books of Samuel and Kings among others
 - And the personal letters of Paul to the church and individuals
- When considering this first book, Moses is without question a primary contributor to the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Old Testament) but it is almost universally accepted that he was not the only author
 - There must have been others because there are accounts following Moses’ death in **Deuteronomy 34** that are recorded that he could not have written
 - There is also evidence that there was editing of account details that took place later
 - This does not in any way diminish the authenticity of these 5 books, but it does help us to see the Bible in a more complete way and why it has so deeply impacted every generation of reader for millennia.

- Back to the account of Joseph
 - The author of Genesis uses a literary pattern of beginning an account that follows a person or people, and then coming back to the most important or true line of the story
 - A good example of this are the stories of Ishmael and Esau
 - While both are not only mentioned but followed for a time the writer brings you back to who is most important
 - The story of Ishmael comes quickly back to Isaac ([Gen 16](#))
 - And Esau fades out while we follow the life of Jacob ([Gen 25](#))
 - The same thing happens with Joseph
 - After he is sold, we are then told the story of Judah and the problems he makes for himself ([Gen 38](#))
 - But we quickly come back to Joseph for the remaining 12 chapters
- I believe there is an important lesson to learn from this...
 - We must stay focused on those things that truly matter and are of real value in your life
 - We waste so much time on things that are simply not worth the time and energy we invest in them
 - Do you think our cell phones just might fall into this category?
 - Eating out this week and seeing couples and families with their faces buried in their screens
 - More and more parents and families putting limits and restrictions on their use – especially in the home (mealtimes)
 - Or how about friendships that keep trying to lead you away from the things of God?
 - Anything that occupies a great deal of your time, your thinking, or your resources should be scrutinized to determine how important they truly are.
- Joseph is now the property of a man by the name of Potiphar
 - He is presented to us under two titles both found in [Gen 39:1](#)
 - He is called Official of Pharaoh
 - The Captain of the Guard
 - Both of these titles were fairly common and general in their use
 - But they also present a possible example of later editing
 - The original Hebrew for Official of Pharaoh is also translated as eunuch
 - However, eunuchs were not customary in ancient Egyptian culture in the time of Moses
 - The second title of “captain,” however, is clear with the word “guard” placing it within a military context
 - This is also confirmed when we realize that the prison for political prisoners is actually located in Potiphar’s house ([Gen 40:3](#))

Now there are two primary story-lines in this story segment of Joseph’s life

- The first is that God’s favor is on him, and He blesses everything he does ([Gen 39:2](#))

- Potiphar recognizes this and shrewdly puts Joseph in charge of his entire household (**Gen 39:6**)
- This is very similar to what happened with his father Jacob and his father-in-law Laban
 - While Jacob was working for Laban in order to be able to marry his daughter Rachel, Jacob was blessed by God
 - Laban realizes that his flocks also prospered because of God's favor over Jacob (**Gen 30:27**)
- We will see this again later when Joseph is in prison
- The second, and I believe one of the most important and potentially life-altering times in his life, shows us that Joseph is a man of unwavering integrity and righteousness
 - We read that Potiphar's wife begins to notice this young, handsome, well-built Hebrew who seems to have everything going for him (**Gen 39:6b-7**)
 - She not only notices him, but wants to take him to bed
 - Now there is not one thing about this plot on her part that suggests this is a first-time or one-time indiscretion
 - And Potiphar's response would appear to confirm that (more about that next week)
 - But first, don't miss the fact that Joseph absolutely refuses and he tells her why
 - **Gen 39:8-10** - ... *"With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.*
 - You know I actually picture Joseph as a man of few words at this time in his life
 - Now this attribute would have served him well earlier when he was blabbing about his dreams to anyone who would listen
 - But notice that Joseph is not talking about himself to Potiphar or anyone else
 - It says in **Gen 39:3** *when Potiphar SAW that the Lord was with him...*
 - When you are living for God in the way that Joseph did, in honesty and integrity, you don't need to talk about yourself, it will be evident by how you live

Catch three things that stand out in this story of Joseph's encounter with Potiphar's wife:

1. He was legally bound to obey, not only his master, but his master's wife, yet he did not
 - a. Why? Because the law of God supersedes the law of man
 - b. I am not saying that you use the Bible to circumvent the laws of the land
 - c. But when the law of man comes directly against the law of God you must stand on the side of God

- d. The most obvious example of this for Christians today, I believe, is the law regarding abortion
 - i. The law of the land says that it is legal
 - ii. The law of God's word says that it is murder and a sin
 - e. Joseph was bound by the law of God and therefore refused to give in to the woman's advances
 - f. How bold are you to do the same?
2. He was unwavering and could not be worn down
- a. *Gen 39:10 – And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her*
 - b. You see Joseph was not only firm in his conviction, but he was wise in his actions
 - i. *...or even be with her*
 - ii. When you know the point of temptation, you should do all that you can to avoid it
 - 1. Billy Graham and the Modesto Manifesto
 - 2. The four original members of the ministry team were Cliff Barrows (music and choir director), Grady Wilson (Graham's closest friend since high school, the first VP of the organization and the first associate evangelist), George Beverly Shea (soloist); and Billy Graham
 - 3. They wrote out 4 non-negotiable resolutions dealing with how they would conduct the business of the ministry – finances, honesty with the press, maintain support of the local church and an important guideline regarding moral integrity
 - 4. Never be alone with a woman unless you are married to her
 - 5. This is how they stayed above and outside of all the pitfalls that have killed countless ministries
 - iii. Why knowingly put yourself in that situation?
 - iv. Satan is not all-powerful or all-knowing but he does know your weaknesses
 - c. And no matter how many times she came at him, Joseph's answer was always the same – NO, NO, and NO
 - i. I believe that if he had given in to her advances his story would have been very different