GENESIS 39

Joseph In Egypt

1 They brought Joseph down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain[i] of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought Joseph down there.

2 And Yahveh was with Joseph. He prospered while serving in the house of his master, the Egyptian. **3** Now his master saw that Yahveh was with him and that Yahveh made all that he did prosper in his hand. **4** So Joseph found grace in his sight as he served him. Therefore, Potiphar made him overseer over his house. He put all that he had under his authority.[ii]

5 It came to pass, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and over all that he had, that Yahveh blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake. The blessing of Yahveh was on all Potiphar's houses and fields. **6** Potiphar left all that he had under Joseph's supervision. He didn't concern himself with anything he had except the food that he ate.

Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.[iii] **7** After a while, his master's wife[iv] started to cast her lustful eyes on Joseph. One day she said, "Lie with me."

8 But he refused, and said to his master's wife, "Look! My master is not concerned about anything while I am in the house. He has committed all that he has into my hand. **9** There is nobody greater in this house than me. He has kept nothing back from me except you because you are his wife. How then can I do this great covenant[v] wickedness and sin[vi] against Elohim?"

10 Although she spoke to Joseph this way day after day, he would not listen to her. He refused to have sex with her or even to be near her. **11** But one day, as Joseph went into the house to do his work,[vii] none of the servants were in the house. **12** So she caught him by his garment, saying, "Have sex with me."

But as he fled out of the house, he left his garment in her hand. **13** It came to pass that she realized that he had left his garment in her hand and had run out of the house. **14** Then she summoned the other servants of her house and spoke to them.

She said, "See! He has brought a Hebrew to laugh at us. The Hebrew came into me and tried to have sex with me, but I cried out with a loud voice. **15** And it came to pass, when he heard me cry out, he left his garment with me, ran away, and went out of the house."

16 Then she kept his garment by her until his lord came home. **17** Then she spoke to him according to these words. She said, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought to us, wanted to have sex with me. **18** But when I cried out, he left his garment with me and ran out."

19 It came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, that she spoke to him, saying, "This is the way your servant acted to me," that his anger flared up.[viii] **20** Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison.[ix] This was a place where the king's prisoners were kept. He was there in the prison.

21 But Yahveh was with Joseph and showed him mercy.[x] He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper[xi] of the prison. **22** The keeper of the prison put all the prisoners who were in the prison under Joseph's supervision.[xii] Whatever they did there, he was in charge of it. **23** The keeper of the prison didn't concern himself with anything that was under his control[xiii] because Yahveh was with Joseph. Whatever Joseph did, Yahveh made it prosper.

[i] The Hebrew שַׂר means captain, chief, ruler, or warden.

[ii] The Hebrew יָד (*yawd*) means hand. In certain contexts, it can refer to strength of hand (power), control, charge, or authority. What is placed "in the hand" is entrusted to that person for control, supervision, and oversight. The word "authority" conveys this right to rule, power of dominion, and authority to command.

[iii] Literally: Joseph was handsome of form and beautiful of appearance. The Hebrew uses poetic parallelism, emphasizing both his physique and facial beauty.

[iv] The Hebrew **אִשָּׁת** is an **Aleph**-Shin-**Tav**. The **Aleph**-Shin-**Tav** is the first (**Aleph**) love (*Shin*=flames) of the marriage (**Tav** = covenant). This is why Strong's defines the word as woman or wife. The deeper meaning is that Potiphar's wife played a significant role in God's plan of protecting His covenant nation of Israel. The blessing is questionable but God uses this woman.

[v] The Hebrew זֹאת is a Zayin-**Aleph**-**Tav**. Its basic meaning is to cut, either as a blessing or a judgment. This translation routinely renders this 3-letter word in terms of covenant. See the article "The **Aleph**-**Tav**."

[vi] The Hebrew חָטָא (*chaw-tawh*) means to miss. Synonyms include sin, miss the mark, repent, lead astray, purge, incur guilt, forfeit, and bear loss.

[vii] The Hebrew מְלָאכָה means occupation and work. Synonyms include business, property, and service. This is a formal public work.

[viii] Against whom did his wrath burn? If it were Joseph, he could have easily killed Joseph.

[ix] He was a high ranking official. He had the authority to have Joseph executed. That he only threw Joseph into prison gives us the idea that he knew something about his wife.

[x] The Hebrew חֶסֶד (*cheh-sehd*) means steadfast love or covenant mercy. It is all the aspects of Elohim's love based on Elohim's covenant faithfulness. Synonyms include beauty, favor, loving kindness, mercy, pity, goodness, faithfulness, and love.

[xi] The Hebrew שַׂר means captain, chief, ruler, or warden.

[xii] The Hebrew יָד (*yawd*) means hand. In certain contexts, it can refer to strength of hand (power), control, charge, or authority. What is placed "in the hand" is entrusted to that person for control, supervision, and oversight. The word "supervision" conveys this right to rule, power of dominion, and authority to command.

[xiii] The Hebrew יָד (*yawd*) means hand. In certain contexts, it can refer to strength of hand (power), control, charge, or authority. What is placed "in the hand" is entrusted to that person for control, supervision, and oversight. The word "control" conveys this right to rule, power of dominion, and authority to command.