

I. Introduction and review.

- A. Joseph's jealous brothers sold him as a slave in Egypt. 37:1-36 39:1
- B. Meanwhile, back in Canaan... things are bad in the chosen family. Genesis 38
 - 1. Judah marries a Canaanite woman. v. 1-5 28:1 Mal. 2:15-16 II Co. 6:14
 - 2. His first two sons are so wicked that God takes their lives. v. 6-10
 - 3. Judah breaks his promise to his daughter-in-law, Tamar. v. 11
 - 4. Judah commits immorality with what he thinks to be a shrine prostitute. v. 12-19
 - 5. Tamar has Judah's sons thereby preserving the messianic line. v. 20-30 Mt. 1:3
 - 6. Why is Genesis 38 in the Bible? 35:2 43:32 46:34
 - a. The chosen family needs to get away from the corrupting influence of Canaan.
 - b. Joseph's faithfulness stands in sharp contrast to the wickedness of his family.

II. God prospers Joseph both as a slave and as a prisoner. v. 1-6, 19-23

- A. Joseph resists many temptations while in Egypt.
 - 1. Joseph resists the temptation to conform to Egyptian religion. 39:9b
 - 2. Joseph resists temptations to self pity, despair, and even anger against God.
- B. Joseph is again exalted as he is given significant responsibility.
 - 1. He works hard, as unto the Lord, and gains the trust of his master.
 - 2. He rises from being the lowliest of slaves to the master of Potiphar's house. v. 2-6
 - 3. Later he becomes the manager of the prison. v. 21-23
- C. The secret to Joseph's success is that God is with him. 39:2-3,21,23 Pr. 10:22 Acts 7:9
 - 1. God has given Joseph unique administrative gifts.
 - 2. God supernaturally blesses to Joseph's work.
 - 3. Potiphar recognizes that Joseph's success came from God. v. 3 30:27 12:1-3

III. Joseph resists temptation from a *desperate housewife*. v. 6b-18

- A. Why did Mrs. Potiphar seek to seduce Joseph? v. 6b,14 29:17 12:11 27:7 24:11 I Sa. 16:7 Mt. 5:28 I Cor. 10:12 Rom. 12:2
- B. Potiphar's wife launches a threefold attack on Joseph's purity.
 - 1. She surprises him with a sudden unexpected proposition. v. 7 Pr. 7:6f
 - 2. She tries to wear him down with a lengthy war of attrition. v. 10 Judg. 14:17 16:16
 - 3. She goes for broke with a final frontal assault. v. 11-12a
- C. Joseph overcomes temptation with a threefold defense.
 - 1. He gives her a well-reasoned refusal. v. 8-9
 - a. Joseph correctly identifies her temptation as wickedness and sin.
 - b. He refuses because of his loyalty to her husband. Pr. 6:32-35
 - c. Sin is unthinkable because of his loyalty to God.
 - 2. He avoids her and keeps busy in his vocation.. v. 10b Pr. 5:8 Mt. 5:29-30 I Sa. 11
 - 3. Finally, he flees. II Tim. 2:22.
 - 4. Joseph succeeds where others have failed. 35:22 38:16 II Sa. 11:1f Jdg. 14:17 16:16
- D. Joseph is falsely accused of attempted rape, leading to his imprisonment. v. 13-20
 - 1. Mrs. Potiphar's lust quickly turns to hatred. v. 13 II Sam. 13
 - 2. Joseph again suffers for his righteousness. Ps. 105:17-18

IV. How does what happened to Joseph apply to us?

- A. Work hard in your vocation so that you might bring blessing to your employer and glory to God. Gen. 2:2 Ex. 20:9-10 Col. 3:23-24 Eph. 6:5-8 I Pe. 2:18,21 Mt. 5:18
- B. Beware of temptation.
1. You will be tempted, even (especially?) if you are doing God's will.
 2. Don't think you can't fall into sin. I Cor. 10:12 Pr. 7:22
 3. Don't *you* be the tempter. Pr. 7:10f Rom. 12:2 Js. 4:4 I Ti. 2:9
 4. Learn to recognize temptation for what it really is. Pr. 2:16-19
 5. What people often call "love" is often nothing but selfish lust, which can quickly turn to hatred. II Sam. 13:15
- C. You can gain victory over temptation.
1. Overcome temptation by valuing your relationship with God above all else. Pr. 1:7 2:1f 15:3 4:23 Isa. 55:1f I Cor. 6:15-20 Ps. 51:4 Heb. 13:4 Num. 32:23
 2. Overcome temptation by thinking of the rights and welfare of others.
 3. Avoid tempting situations and stay busy. Pr. 5:8 Job 31:1 Mt. 5:29-30
 4. When necessary, flee temptation. II Tim. 2:22 I Cor. 6:18
 5. Count the cost of giving in to temptation. Gal. 6:7 Pr. 6:27f 7:21f
 6. God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability. I Cor. 10:13 Rom. 6:18
- D. A believer can overcome any temptation or hardship by God's strength. I Cor. 10:13
1. You don't have to be embittered when others abuse you.
 2. God is with you even in the midst of trials and temptations. Mt. 28:20 Heb. 13:5-6
 3. Your faithfulness to God may not be rewarded in this life. Mt. 5:10-12
 4. You can grow in the midst of adversity. Phil. 1:29 I Pe. 4:12-16 II Cor. 4:7-10

V. Concluding applications.

- A. God is still sovereignly working out His perfect plan. Rom. 8:28
1. Chains cannot hinder God's plan for Joseph. 50:20 II Ti. 2:9 Ps. 105:17f
 2. Joseph is being prepared for his future work. 42:23 43:32 Rom. 8:28
- B. How does our text point to Christ?
1. He successfully resists temptation as he trusts God. Mt. 4:1f
 2. He learns through his suffering. Heb. 5:7-8
 3. He suffers as the result of his faithfulness.
 4. He is falsely accused.
 5. He is silent before his accusers. Isa. 53:7 I Pe. 2:19-23
 6. God prospers Him because of His faithfulness in suffering. Isa. 53:10

Discussion questions

1. Name some of the temptations Joseph must have faced as a slave and as a prisoner.
2. How did Joseph overcome those temptations?
3. How can you use Joseph's story to counsel a victim of abuse?
4. Why was Joseph elevated both in Potiphar's house and in prison?
5. How can you be a channel of God's blessing to those for whom you work?
6. How can you avoid being a moral temptation to others?
7. Is lust closer to love or hatred? Explain your answer.
8. Name at least three principles you learn from Joseph about how to resist temptation.
9. What is the secret to Joseph's success?
10. What is God doing in Joseph's life?