

JOSEPH, THE MAN GOD USES

Text: Genesis 39

1. THE MAN GOD USES IS A BLESSED MAN. (Genesis 39:1-6)

Joseph had been thrown into a pit by his brothers. His death was at first conspired then faked. Finally he was sold by his brothers to the Ishmeelites who took him down to Egypt to bring a profit. It did not take Potipher long to realize he now had a slave who was a better man than he was. Joseph was a man of a hard work ethic, organizational ability, common sense, integrity and a perfect specimen of manliness. The Bible says, *"...the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand"* (Genesis 39:3).

It was only natural that Potipher would entrust so much to Joseph. Although Joseph stands head and shoulders above those around him, whether it was in his home or as a captive in a foreign land, he is not unique. History has recorded others, like Joseph who were blessed because of their dedicated and surrendered life. A good example is Daniel who was kidnapped and carried to a wicked, foreign land. The Bible says, *"Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm"* (Daniel 6:3). You cannot keep a good man down. He is like the cream on the old fashioned bottle of non-pasteurized milk: you can shake up the bottle and disperse the cream throughout the milk, but once you set it down, the cream is always going to come to the top.

Let's do a brief Bible study that defines a blessed man. A blessed man is a saved man: Romans 4:8. A blessed man trusts in the Lord; he is not proud and lives in truth: Psalm 40:4. A blessed man is a man who has been disciplined, receives it and becomes a man of integrity: Psalm 94:12; James 1:12. A blessed man allows the Word of God to be his true north. A blessed man fears the Lord and continually does right in the light of Scripture: Psalm 112:1; James 1:25; Ephesians 6:17.

2. THE MAN GOD USES LIVES WITH PERIMETERS SURROUNDING HIM.

(Genesis 39:7-9)

This passage shows how God separates His men from the men of this world. In Saul's most surrendered state the Bible says, *"And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man"* (1 Samuel 10:6). May God help us to be so filled with the Holy Spirit that we too will act differently than the average man. May the Lord deliver us from being the weak-kneed sister who cannot resist doing wrong. God's man finds freedom in setting up fences around his liberty. It is the man who restricts his liberty who finds the greatest freedom. We all need this reminder from the Scriptures, *"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin"* (John 8:34). Sin never liberates, it always enslaves.

3. THE MAN GOD USES RECOGNIZES SIN AS GREAT OFFENSE TO GOD.

(Genesis 39:9)

Joseph says, *"...how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"* Romans 7:13 points out that *"...sin, that it might appear sin...by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."* Have you seen sin for what it is and what it does, *"...exceeding sinful"*? Sin takes the joy out of life and exchanges it with sorrow. God promises to exchange your sorrow for joy (Isaiah 61:3). Sin robs a man of purpose. God gives a man, not only purpose, but direction (Proverbs 3:6). Above all, a man who is desiring to live in right relationship with God sees his sin as David did in Psalm 51:4: *"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight..."* David took another man's wife and, yes, he sinned against Uriah, but more importantly, he sinned against God! God unites a man and woman in holy matrimony. Marriage is a covenant ordained by God between a man and a woman. David broke that covenant ordained by God. He affronted God's bond! David committed adultery. Bathsheba's body belonged to God; he illegally took that which was not his. He then orchestrated the death of Uriah. This was a life given by God; David had no right to take it. David broke the tenth commandment; he coveted another man's wife (Exodus 20:17). David broke the eighth commandment; he stole (Exodus 20:8). David broke the sixth commandment, he killed. David also broke the fifth commandment by not honoring the parents of the couple who gave them in marriage to one another (Exodus 20:20:12). Students of the Word can do a Bible study and discover that Ahitophel, the grandfather of Bathsheba turned against David in the rebellion of Absalom and this very probably came

about because of the dishonor David did to this loyal family of Israel in his sin with Bathsheba.

Sin is wrong; it damages you. Sin is wrong; it hurts others. Above all, sin is wrong; it offends a thrice-holy God!

4. THE MAN GOD USES BECOMES THE FOCUS OF THE DEVIL'S ATTACKS.

(Genesis 39:10-12a)

"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. 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. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me...." If we do nothing for God, the Devil will probably leave us alone. Get on fire for God and get ready because Satan will put a bulls-eye on you. Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph by speaking with him "day by day." The Devil works by attempting to wear down God's people as seen in Daniel 7:25: *"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High...."* Finally, on a given day, Mrs. Potiphar springs the trap that she feels certain will work. She makes sure everyone is gone so there will be no witnesses, trying to make it easier for Joseph to do wrong. Then she reaches out, thinking he'll not be able to resist her touch. Proverbs 7:13-27 correlates to our story today, except with a much different and much sadder ending.

The Devil gains little or nothing by the fall of a non-Christian or merely nominal Christian. It is the dedicated Christian who has become the light in the darkness that he wishes to extinguish.

5. THE MAN GOD USES RESPONDS IMMEDIATELY TO DECISIONS CONCERNING RIGHT AND WRONG. (Genesis 39:12)

"...And he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out." Doing right is non-negotiable. Our response is to be automatic. People have fallen onto train and subway tracks and have been rescued just in the nick of time. Delay of even seconds could mean certain death. When morality is on the line, delay could mean the difference in a future full of joy or a future full of regret. Proverbs 1:10 says it very well, *"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."*

6. THE MAN GOD USES ENTERS FULL COMBAT WHEN HE ADVANCES IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. (Genesis 39:13-20)

This passage reveals an illustration of Ephesians 6:12: *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”* We observe the wicked Mrs. Potiphar has been scorned and with vengeance she plans and prosecutes young Joseph. If she cannot have him, she will destroy him. She lies horribly and this brings to mind what Jesus said in John 8:44, *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”* She was only being like her father. Our enemy is the master of deceit. When Satan cannot get us to do wrong, he tries to get us out of circulation. Since Joseph wasn't going to cave into sin, the Devil will now try to limit his influence. Joseph is sent to prison. And I am certain if the Devil had his way, Joseph would have died in the jail. In conclusion we see...

7. THE MAN GOD USES LIVES IN THE CONTINUOUS FAVOR OF GOD. (Genesis 39:21-23)

This brings us back to our first point: God blessed Joseph. It was said of our Lord, *“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man”* (Luke 2:52). A pure life absorbs the favor with God that in turn brings favor with man. Circumstances, no matter how dark, dismal, demanding and depressing cannot change this fact: *“...the LORD was with him (Joseph), and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper”* (Genesis 39:23b). Joseph was placed in a pit. He went as a slave to Potiphar's house. Then he went to prison but finally ended up in the palace (Genesis 41:41-43). You cannot keep the man God uses down. You cannot disgrace the man God has given grace. You cannot disfavor the man to whom God has given favor.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.