

## “God’s Career Path” (Genesis 39:1-23)

Yesterday, Lori and I met some friends in Tacoma for dinner. Our rendezvous point to carpool to the restaurant was *Krispy Kreme*’s. Lori and I arrived early and decided to indulge ourselves with a doughnut before our dinner. I know...not a good idea. (We confessed our sin to our friends.) Anyway, while we were there I decided to watch how the doughnuts were created. The process is quite remarkable. First, the little balls of dough are shot through with a piercing blast of air to create a hole. Then the flat doughnuts are forced to spend time in the “proof box” where they ride a vertical elevator up and down in an atmosphere of heat and humidity. This is what allows the flat dough to rise. Then the soon-to-be delicacies are dropped into hot oil in order to be cooked thoroughly. As the circular survivors make their way toward the end of the line, they pass through a cascading waterfall of icing.<sup>1</sup>

Whew! What abuse! These poor little fellows have to go through quite a bit of pain only to be consumed by a ravenous beast like me. Yet, it is the trials that these lumps of dough have to endure that make them into tasty *Krispy Kreme* doughnuts.

In Genesis 39, Joseph is going to experience *Krispy Kreme* like trials. He is going to be drilled by his brothers into slavery. He is going to have to deal with the incessant heat and humidity of a woman. And he is going to be dropped into the hot oil of false accusation and prison. These are severe trials! Yet, these are a few of the trials that develop Joseph into a godly man. Just as the poor doughnut’s trials produce a product of great delight to me, the trials God allows in our lives bring about in us what delights Him. In all the anguish of our trials, God’s invisible hand of grace and sovereignty is present with us.

### **Scene 1: (39:1-6)**

Our story begins in 39:1: “**Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there.**” After Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery, the Midianites took him down to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar (37:36). The title “**Potiphar**” means “he whom Ra gives.”<sup>2</sup> Potiphar is called “**the captain of the bodyguard,**” which means he was the chief executioner or chief of police. In other words, he had charge of the palace KGB, with the power of life and death, under the supervision of Pharaoh. Now, it was not a coincidence that Joseph ended up in this man’s home. Unbeknownst to Joseph, the Lord had sent him to Potiphar’s house to prepare him for the important task which lay ahead, that of serving as the second highest official in the land of Egypt. But in order for this to happen, Joseph first had to learn the language, culture, business, and politics of Egypt. And it wasn’t handed to him on a silver platter! He had to get up early and stay up late to both do his job and to learn Egyptian ways.

We can determine a sequence of events that culminated in Joseph’s promotion to the second highest position of power in Potiphar’s household. Joseph was a shepherd, so it would have been natural for him to begin his “career” in the fields of Potiphar. His master would first have observed his success in the fields. Good reports reached the ears of Potiphar, who then brought him into his house (39:2).<sup>3</sup> What a lesson to be faithful in little (Luke 16:10a).

Verse 2 informs us: “**The LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.**” The theme of this narrative is found in the statement: “**The LORD was with Joseph**” (cf. Acts 7:9). The divine name “**LORD**” (*Yahweh*) appears eight times in this chapter (39:2, 3 [twice], 5 [twice], 21, and 23 [twice]) but only one other time in the eleven remaining chapters of Genesis (49:18). Thus we are to understand that at the most uncertain time of Joseph’s life, when he could see nothing of God, the covenant God of Israel was at work to effect His covenant promises through Joseph.<sup>4</sup>

In the same way, you and I must understand that as we walk with the Lord, He too will be with us. Even though the circumstances of life may not seem to go our way, God is in control. He will orchestrate His purposes behind the scenes. We can lean on Him. He will be faithful to us.

In 39:3, something profound takes place. Moses writes: “**Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand.**” We must be careful not to read over 39:3 too quickly. God’s blessing upon Joseph was not ordinary prosperity—it was phenomenal and unexpected, because even Potiphar had to admit that the Lord was with Joseph and was causing him to prosper.<sup>5</sup> Imagine how strong Joseph’s testimony had to be for Potiphar to recognize and admire Joseph’s character and to attribute it to God rather than to Joseph.<sup>6</sup> Potiphar had many slaves; he was a busy man; and he was a pagan. But Joseph’s life was so uncommon and supernatural that Potiphar had to sit up and take notice.

This was not only God’s will for Joseph’s life, this is God’s will for your life. He wants you to live a supernatural life that attracts the recognition of the world. He longs for your boss, your coworkers, your neighbors, and your family members to see the presence of God in you. A man or woman that has the favor and blessing of God resting on him or her will have to be acknowledged by the world. Will you be that type of person?

The natural outcome of Joseph’s work ethic and God’s hand upon him is detailed in 39:4-6a. “**So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge. It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, the LORD blessed the Egyptian’s house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD’S blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field. So he left everything he owned in Joseph’s charge; and with him there he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate.**”<sup>7</sup> Since the Lord was with Joseph, he was promoted from shepherd boy, to personal servant, to Potiphar’s overseer (i.e., Executive Director). And God blessed everything that Joseph did. He had the Midas touch! But success and prosperity is not all it’s cracked up to be. It’s probably true that how we handle success says as much, if not more, about us as how we handle failure.<sup>8</sup> If God is blessing you right now, how are you handling His goodness? Are you depending more on Him? Or have you become proud or self-sufficient? God’s blessing comes when we are humble.

One of the greatest lessons we have to learn is that before we become leaders, we first must be servants. God tests us as servants before He promotes us to being leaders (Matt 25:21). Before He allows us to exercise authority, we have to be under authority and learn to submit and obey. So many Christians want to bypass this process of leadership. Yet, one of the essential elements of leadership and growth is patience. One of the primary lessons God is teaching me is the discipline of patience. It may be that He is teaching you the very same lesson. Will you submit to His instruction or will you jump the gun and learn the hard way?

This section closes with a parenthetical statement that sets the stage for what follows. Moses writes, “**Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance**” (39:6b).<sup>9</sup> The Bible rarely gives physical descriptions.<sup>10</sup> Joseph really stood out! He’s a combination of Brad Pitt and Arnold Schwarzenegger. He’s got six-pack abs, a chiseled chest, and guns of granite. He’s a stud! Many men would love to look like Joseph. However, this is one blessing too many. In fact, this is an outright curse.

## **Scene 2: (39:7-20)**

In 39:7, our story picks up some steam. Moses records these fateful words: “**It came about after these events that his master’s wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, ‘Lie with me.’**”<sup>11</sup> Please notice something very important. Verse 7 begins with the words, “**It came about after these events...**” The natural question to ask is: After what “events?” The answer: God’s prospering of Joseph.

Temptation often comes when we least expect it. Joseph is exactly where God wants him to be and he is simply minding his own business. Verses 2-6 emphasize over and over again that God's blessing is on his life. How, then, does he get into such trouble? The answer is crucial. There is no contradiction between God's blessing and your temptations. We often think that there is. We honestly believe that if we do what is right, we will never be tempted. But the opposite is true. We are much more likely to be tempted when things are going well for us. Why?

- If we are never tested when things are going well, we tend to get arrogant and bigheaded. Temptation can effectively humble us to dust.
- Satan tempts us then in order to destroy our testimony. Serious believers threaten him.
- Temptation often blindsides us in the moment of our greatest success, because that is when we least expect it.
- Temptation successfully resisted prepares us to do greater things for God.<sup>12</sup>

Moses records that Potiphar's wife **"looked with desire at Joseph."** The Hebrew reads, "she lifted up her eyes toward," an expression that emphasizes her deliberate and careful scrutiny of him.<sup>13</sup> Many men think they are more desirable than they actually are. But in this particular case, Joseph didn't misread the signals—he was directly propositioned. Mrs. Potiphar's pickup line was, **"Lie with me."** For a woman to be this forward he must have been quite the stud. As he crossed the room she followed him with her eyes, a smile of satisfaction crossing her face. He was one fine-looking man, young and strong, the way Potiphar had been when they first met, before too many court dinners had spoiled his waistline and before too many late night meetings with Pharaoh had placed permanent bags under his eyes. Yes, this Joseph looked like an excellent companion for a casual affair, a brief meeting between "a younger man and a bolder woman."<sup>14</sup>

Please notice though, it was after Joseph's rise to power and position that the physical attractiveness of Joseph registered with Potiphar's wife. There is little chance that she would have had any interest in a mere slave. But a man who had great leadership abilities and good looks—well, that was an irresistible combination.

In 39:8-9, we read this impressive account: **"But he refused and said to his master's wife, 'Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil and sin against God?'"** Joseph used three lines of argumentation: (1) the abuse of trust, (2) an offense against her husband, and (3) a sin against God.<sup>15</sup> This is what it means to be above reproach. Joseph is concerned about his integrity, the institution of marriage, and his fellowship with God. What a man! An important theological point is being made here: Our sin is never private. Every time we sin, we sin against God. And in a certain sense our sin is always against Him alone (Ps 51:4).<sup>16</sup>

What would you do in a similar situation? If you haven't spiritually and mentally prepared for such a temptation, you might find that you are unprepared in the heat of the moment!

Now our man Joe showed some amazing resolve in 39:8-9, but he's not out of the woods yet. In 39:10, Moses writes, **"She spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her."** I'm sure she dressed seductively and touched Joseph as often as possible in her effort to break down his resistance to an adulterous affair. She likely had all kinds of one-liners in her repertoire: "Potiphar is gone for the day." "No one will ever know." "Just this once!" "Potiphar hasn't been a very good husband...I deserve some happiness too, don't I?" "Just come close and hold me...it won't go any further." "We won't be hurting anyone."<sup>17</sup>

I have some bad news. Temptation will always be before you. It never takes a day off. It can haunt you. In fact, temptation is like a telemarketer:

- It comes to us when it is least convenient.
- It comes back again and again.
- It keeps pushing even after you say, “No.”
- It makes what it is selling sound great...but there is always a catch.<sup>18</sup>

One of my favorite stories is of an affluent, aristocratic woman who reviews resumes from potential chauffeurs to drive her Rolls Royce. She narrows the applicants to three men and invites them to her palatial home. She escorts each one individually to her driveway and the brick wall beside it. Then she asks, “If you were driving my Rolls, how close do you think you could come to that brick wall without scratching my car?” The first applicant says, “I can drive within a foot of that wall and not damage your Rolls.” She brings out the second man and asks, “If you were driving my Rolls, how close do you think you could come to that brick wall without scratching my car?” He scratches his head and says, “I can drive within six inches of that wall and not damage your car.” She invites the third applicant and asks, “If you were driving my Rolls, how close do you think you could come to that brick wall without scratching my car?” He does not hesitate: “Ma’am, I do not know how close I could come to the wall without damaging your car, but if I was driving your car, I would stay as far away as possible from the wall so as not to damage your car.” Guess who got the job? When addressing sexual temptation, the point is not how close one can get to the temptation without getting “scratched,” but staying as far away as possible.<sup>19</sup>

After resisting countless advances, Joseph may have been unprepared for what happened next. Verse 11 begins with these suspenseful words, **“Now it happened one day...that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. She caught him by his garment, saying, ‘Lie with me!’ And he left his garment in her hand and fled, and went outside.”** This woman was like static cling—all over Joseph. She tried to grab Joseph and take him to bed. She was a woman who was unaccustomed to hearing the word, “NO!” This reminds me of a friend of mine in Bible college who used to jokingly say, “Rejection only turns me on.” Apparently, Mrs. Potiphar had the same mindset.

It is important to realize that the garment that Joseph had on was like an oversized T-shirt.<sup>20</sup> This means there was a struggle involved here as Joseph sought to free himself. Can you imagine? Mrs. Potiphar is seductively screaming, **“Lie with me!”** and Joseph is trying to break free from her. What a sight this must have been! I imagine for a split second Joseph paused to consider his alternatives. He could submit to her this time and say, “Well, she made me do it.” He could go along because no one else would ever find out. He could say, “Why don’t we sit down and talk about this like mature adults?” Instead, Joseph made like Road Runner and ran!<sup>21</sup> Joseph opts for better naked than naughty and he streaks away! Men and women, the word is out: God is looking for a few good cowards.<sup>22</sup> Don’t fall like Samson, David, and Solomon. Be like Joseph...flee. It is possible to be pure in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But it requires a pure mind, quick feet, and God’s grace.

I want to remind you again of the temptation that this must have been to Joseph. Consider the full picture:

- Joseph came from a dysfunctional family (37:3).
- Joseph was hated and betrayed by his brothers (37:4-5, 8, 27-28).
- Joseph was sold into slavery (37:36; 39:1).
- Joseph’s brothers Reuben and Judah were immoral (35:22; 38:18).
- Joseph was a young man with hormones in full force (37:2).
- Joseph’s family would never know.
- The Egyptian culture was filled with sexual immorality.

These factors would have led almost any man into sin...but not Joseph.

Victor Hugo, the great French writer, once said, “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.” This statement is certainly true of Potiphar’s wife. In 39:13-15, Moses records this wicked woman’s response: **“When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside<sup>23</sup> she called to the men of her household and said to them, ‘See, he has brought in a Hebrew to us to make sport of us; he came in to me to lie with me, and I screamed. When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside.’”** All of a sudden, Mrs. Potiphar is left holding the bag...or better yet, a pile of dirty laundry. What is she to do? She can’t admit that she has an insatiable sex drive and has been coming on to Joseph for many days. So she pulls the race card and blames her husband for bringing in a **“Hebrew”** to rape her. Mrs. Potiphar uses the phrase **“make sport”** in 39:14 and 39:17. The Hebrew word translated “make sport” (*tsachaq*) is the same one that provides the root for Isaac’s name and that has been repeatedly used as a motif in the book of Genesis (17:17; 18:12f, 15; 19:14; 21:6, 9; 26:8).

After this pathetic sob story, Mrs. Potiphar left Joseph’s garment beside her until Potiphar came home (39:16). In 39:17-18, Moses writes, **“Then she spoke to him with these words, ‘The Hebrew slave, whom you brought to us, came in to me to make sport of me; and as I raised my voice and screamed, he left his garment beside me and fled outside.’”** Again, Mrs. Potiphar blamed her husband for what took place.

Verse 19 is of particular interest to me. The verse reads: **“Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, ‘This is what your slave did to me,’ his anger burned.”** Curiously, in speaking of Potiphar’s reaction to this situation, records say only that **“his anger burned.”** The statement is deliberately ambiguous, not asserting whether his anger is directed at Joseph or his wife.<sup>24</sup> I would suggest, given his wife’s slander of his own motives, the proven trustworthiness of Joseph, the fact that he is going to lose a competent slave, and his knowledge of his wife’s character or lack thereof, his anger arguably burns at his wife, not at Joseph.<sup>25</sup>

Potiphar is in a difficult position here—he cannot discount his wife’s accusation without publicly humiliating her, even if he was certain she is lying. The action he takes against Joseph is as minimal as it can be and still retain his family’s honor.<sup>26</sup> In 39:20, Potiphar **“took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail.”** Attempted rape was a capital offense. The milder punishment suggests that Potiphar does not believe his wife. He probably knows her character.<sup>27</sup> If Potiphar believed his wife and was truly angry with Joseph, Joseph would have probably been executed on the spot, no questions asked. Furthermore, the king’s prison was a place for political prisoners and would hardly have been expected to accommodate foreign slaves guilty of crimes against their masters.

Another very telling observation is that the prison is in the basement of Potiphar’s house (cf. 40:3, 7). Joseph was thus demoted. He was banned from the penthouse and bound in the prison. He went from the top floor to the basement. I can visualize Potiphar going down to Joseph each day to discuss the stock market, the economic conditions of the country, and all of the areas, which used to be under Joseph’s direct control. Now he was only a consultant.<sup>28</sup> Potiphar is a very shrewd man.

In reality, Joseph’s imprisonment by Potiphar was an answer to his persistent prayers: “Lord, protect me from this woman.” Where could Joseph be safer than behind the bars of a dungeon? The prison was God’s chosen location to further develop Joseph’s leadership skills and the setting of a very important future divine appointment between Joseph and the cupbearer of Pharaoh. But it was not an easy time (see Ps 105:18). This should also remind us of another principle: Those who resist temptation are rarely rewarded by the world. But overcoming your temptations like Joseph prove personal integrity, promote spiritual maturity, and prepare for fuller opportunity.

**Scene 3: (39:21-23)**

Joseph is not on a good career path. He does right and becomes a slave and then ends up spending years in an Egyptian prison. The more Joseph obeyed God, the worse life got.<sup>29</sup> Yet, our story concludes in 39:21-23 with these fascinating words: **“But the LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. The chief jailer committed to Joseph’s charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible for it. The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph’s charge because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made to prosper.”** The final paragraph creates a perfect symmetry for the chapter. Each phrase matches almost perfectly with a corresponding phrase in the opening section (39:2-6a). Once again Moses states, **“The LORD was with Joseph”** while he was in prison, just as He had been with him in Potiphar’s house (cp. 39:20-21 with 39:2). Joseph found favor in the sight of the prison warden, just as he had with Potiphar (cp. 39:21b and 39:4a). The prison warden put Joseph in charge of everything that went on there, just as Potiphar had placed Joseph over his entire household (cp. 39:22 and 39:4b). What happened in Potiphar’s house also happened in Pharaoh’s prison. Joseph soon became the chief administrator of the entire prison. Handling prisoners was a more difficult matter than handling the possessions of Potiphar. It was the same area of training; Joseph was an administrator. But the level of training was now higher. God was preparing Joseph for the day when he would be administering the entire land of Egypt. (41:41).<sup>30</sup> The Lord blessed Joseph’s work and made everything he did in prison prosper, just as He had done earlier when Joseph was in Potiphar’s house (cp. 39:23 and 39:5). In light of the tragic events in the intervening verses, this symmetry illustrates God’s sovereign and gracious control.<sup>31</sup>

| <b>Genesis 39:2-6a</b>  | <b>Genesis 39:21-23</b>  |
|---|--|
| “The LORD was with Joseph.”   | “The LORD was with Joseph.”  |
| Joseph found favor in the sight of Potiphar.  | Joseph found favor in the sight of the prison warden.                            |
| Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything.  | The warden put Joseph in charge of everything.                                   |
| The Lord blessed Joseph’s work in the penthouse and made everything he did prosper. | The Lord blessed Joseph’s work in the prison and made everything he did prosper. |

God causes our roots to grow deep in the soil of adversity in order that we may better know and serve Him.<sup>32</sup> Apparently, Joseph understood this because there is no indication that Joseph ever doubted God. The clear implication of the text is that Joseph was not bitter toward his brothers or enslaved by his circumstances. He was content in the presence of God (cp. Heb 13:5-6 and Phil 4:10-13). He didn’t mourn his disappointments but became useful where he was. And used that heart of faithfulness and contentment.<sup>33</sup>

The one great secret of adversity is to trust in the presence, power, and justice of God (Ps 37:6; Rom 8:28). Clearly, Joseph rose to the top, but how long did all this take? Joseph was 17 years old when he was sold into slavery (37:2). He was 30 when Pharaoh promoted him (41:46), and had been in prison for two years before that (41:1). So, he was in Potiphar’s house for 11 years. It took 11 years for the full measure of God’s blessing to be accomplished in Joseph’s life. Yet, Joseph persevered. He remained faithful to God. Even when his character was forged through fire, he held on, trusting in the Lord.

There was a man who was in search of a perfect picture of peace. He announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. The crowd was shocked when the winning submission was revealed. It seemed to be the furthest thing from a picture of peace. A waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice, and stormy, gray clouds exploded with lightning, wind, and rain. In the midst of the scene, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls, and a bird rested in a nest in the elbow of a branch. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcended all the turmoil.

The Master Artist has designed for you to experience His inner peace in a way that doesn't allow the circumstances of life to overshadow your hope of His sovereignty in all things. And He summons His people to spread that peace to those around them. When you have been filled with God's peace, you will want others to experience the same. It has been said, "Peace that Jesus gives is not the absence of trouble, but is rather the confidence that He is there with you always."<sup>34</sup>

Whatever you are going through today, I can assure you that God's gracious and sovereign hand is with you. He simply wants you to trust in Him as you walk through the fires of life. Will you?

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> See Preaching Today Citation: Submitted by Greg Asimakoupoulos, Naperville, IL.
- <sup>2</sup> John H. Walton, *Genesis: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 670.
- <sup>3</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, *Genesis: From Paradise to Patriarchs*. Lesson 39: From the Penthouse to the Prison (Genesis 39:1-23): [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org), 1997.
- <sup>4</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 461.
- <sup>5</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988 [2002 ed.]), 625. Youngblood suggests, Joseph may have been the prototype of the righteous man described in Ps 1:3. Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 251.
- <sup>6</sup> Bill Crowder, *Joseph: Overcoming Life's Challenges* (Grand Rapids: Radio Bible Class, 1998), 11.
- <sup>7</sup> This was likely because of ritual preparation at mealtime. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 18-50: NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 461.
- <sup>8</sup> Crowder, *Joseph*, 10.
- <sup>9</sup> The same Hebrew expressions were used in Gen 29:17 for Rachel. See NET Bible notes.
- <sup>10</sup> The only other men who are referred to in this way are David (1 Sam 16:12) and Absalom (2 Sam 14:25).
- <sup>11</sup> Wiersbe writes, "No matter how much people talk about 'love' and defend sex outside of marriage, the experience is wrong, cheap, and demeaning. Fornication and adultery change a pure river into a sewer and transform free people into slaves and then animals (Prov 5:15-23; 7:21-23). What begins as "sweetness" soon turns into poison (Prov 5:1-14). Joseph wasn't about to sacrifice either his purity or his integrity just to please his master's wife. Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Authentic: Genesis 25-50* (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor, 1997), 96.
- <sup>12</sup> I have fleshed out these principles from Ray Pritchard, *Just Say No* (Genesis 39): <http://www.calvarymemorial.com/sermons/SMdisplay.asp?id=627>.
- <sup>13</sup> NET Bible notes.
- <sup>14</sup> Pritchard, *Just Say No*.
- <sup>15</sup> Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, Vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 734.
- <sup>16</sup> Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 251.
- <sup>17</sup> Bruce Goettsche, *Combating Temptation* (Genesis 39): <http://www.unionchurch.com/archive/110799.html>.
- <sup>18</sup> Goettsche, *Combating Temptation*.
- <sup>19</sup> Preaching Now: Vol. 4, No. 23: June 28, 2005 From Tim Wilkins' Cross Ministry.
- <sup>20</sup> Another point of interest is this: This is the second time that a coat had been used in a lie against Joseph. In the first case, the brothers sold him into slavery using the coat as a tool. On the second occasion, Potiphar sent him to prison based upon the evidence of his coat.
- <sup>21</sup> Pritchard, *Just Say No*.
- <sup>22</sup> Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 464.
- <sup>23</sup> Sailhamer writes, "This story about Joseph reverses a well-known plot in the patriarchal narratives. Whereas before it was the beautiful wife...of the patriarch who was sought by the foreign ruler, now it was Joseph, the handsome patriarch...himself who was sought by the wife of the foreign ruler. Whereas in the earlier narratives it was either the Lord (12:17; 20:3) or the moral purity of the foreign ruler (26:10) that rescued the wife rather than the patriarch, here it was Joseph's own moral courage that saved the day...Whereas in the preceding narratives, the focus of the writer had been on God's faithfulness in fulfilling his covenant promises, in the story of Joseph his attention is turned to the human response...The Joseph narratives are intended then to give balance to the narratives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Together the two sections show both God's faithfulness in spite of human failure as well as the necessity of an obedient and faithful response." John H. Sailhamer, *Genesis: EBC* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), Electronic ed.
- <sup>24</sup> Barry C. Davis, *Genesis* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Biblical Seminary unpublished class Notes, 2003); Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 521.
- <sup>25</sup> Walton, *Genesis*, 671.
- <sup>26</sup> Walton, *Genesis*, 672.
- <sup>27</sup> Waltke, *Genesis*, 522.
- <sup>28</sup> Deffinbaugh, "From the Penthouse to the Prison."
- <sup>29</sup> Davis asks the penetrating question, "What if Joseph dies in prison, would his life have been a success or a failure—in your eyes, in his eyes, in God's eyes." Davis, *Genesis*.
- <sup>30</sup> Michael Eaton, *Preaching Through the Bible: Genesis 24-50* (Kent, England: Sovereign World, 1999), 81.
- <sup>31</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis: Tyndale OT Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1967), 189; Bill T. Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 151.

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<sup>32</sup> Deffinbaugh, "From the Penthouse to the Prison."

<sup>33</sup> Crowder, *Joseph*, 11-12.

<sup>34</sup> Berit Kjos, *A Wardrobe from the King* (Colorado Springs: Victor, 2002), 45-46; quoted in *Grace for the Day* with Dr. David Jeremiah, 3/9/06.