



A LIFE OF MANY COLORS

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THE INTERWOVEN STORY OF JOSEPH & GOD

YES, NO & MAYBE

1. I've experienced more trials than most of the people in this room.

2. I've been wrongfully accused of something that still has not been cleared up.

3. When God is with you, your life prospers.

4. God's presence comes into our lives after we show our faithfulness.

5. God typically needs to tear us down in order to build us back up.

DIG DEEPER:

READ: Genesis 39:1-6a (NIV)

Now Joseph had been **taken down** to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the **captain of the guard**, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

2 **The Lord was with Joseph** so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. 3 When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, 4 Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. 5 From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, **the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph**. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. 6 So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

○ (Vs. 1) **Taken down** - [hûrad] This happens 3 times in Joseph's beginning story: The lowering of Joseph into the wilderness cistern (cf. 37:24-25), his forced descent into Egypt (37:36; 39:1), and his incarceration in prison by Potiphar (39:20).

○ (Vs. 1) **Potiphar...captain of the guard** - The most reliable translation is "chief of the executioners," the same as the warden of the prison, the zabut of modern Egypt.

◇ This will become quite revealing in the soon-coming details of the end of this chapter.

○ (Vs. 2) **The Lord was with Joseph** - This is a repeated theme within this chapter: 1. "the LORD was with Joseph, so he became a successful man" (39:2); 2. "the LORD was with him" (39:3); 3. "the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand" (39:3); 4. "the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph" (39:5); 5. "the LORD's blessing was upon all that he owned" (39:5); 6. "the LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him" (39:21); 7. "the LORD was with him" (39:23); 8. "whatever he did, the LORD made to prosper" (39:23).

Ø How can you tell when the Lord is 'with' someone? What are the marks of God's presence and blessing?



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Ø Which came first, God's presence and favor, or Joseph's faithfulness? Why do you think this is this important for us to understand?

READ: Genesis 39:6b-23 (NIV)

○ **(Vs. 6) Well-built and handsome** - literally, "fair with regard to form" (yēpēh tō'ar) and "fair with regard to appearance" (yēpēh mar'eh). The same words were used to describe his mother, Rachel.

○ **(Vs. 7) Come to bed with me** - The unusual expression "to lie beside [ešēl] her" rather than "to lie with her" (34:7; 39:14) may indicate a progression in her strategy, meaning to invite familiarity first and then sexual completion.

○ **(Vss. 12-18) Another Cloak Problem** - Since the homonym *b-g-d* may refer to adultery (e.g., Jer 3:20; Mal 2:14), "cloak" (*beqed*) reinforces the idea of infidelity. Potiphar's wife put forward the "cloak" as evidence of Joseph's attack. But as a wordplay on marital infidelity, the "cloak" symbolizes her unfaithfulness, which she clutches in her hand.

Ø Why do you think God allows innocent people to be wrongfully accused?

○ **(Vs. 19) [Potiphar] burned with anger** - That Potiphar did not require the slave's execution has perplexed interpreters (cf. Deut 22:23-27). **(Vs. 20) Put him in prison** - the roundhouse, from the form of its construction, usually attached to the dwelling of such an officer as Potiphar. It was partly a subterranean dungeon (Ge 41:14), though the brick-built walls rose considerably above the surface of the ground, and were surmounted by a vaulted roof somewhat in the form of an inverted bowl.

Ø Joseph's situation has gone from bad (a slave to Potiphar) to worse (an imprisoned slave to Potiphar). Why do you suppose God took Joseph on this type of a journey? Was He tearing him down? Building him up? Or something else?

Ø What does this segment of Joseph's story tell you about God?

NOTES:

MY PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

1. How have I missed God's presence during the trials of my life?
2. In what ways are the people around me blessed by God's presence in my life?
3. What new aspect of God's character do I understand better this week?



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