

Slave to Prisoner

Joseph 3; Genesis 37:29 – 39:23

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Genesis 37:29-36, The Cover-up of the Crime

²⁹ Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. ³⁰ And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad is no more; and I, where shall I go?" ³¹ So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. ³² Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?" ³³ And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." ³⁴ Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵ And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him. ³⁶ Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

v29-30 – Why did Reuben react the way he did when he found Joseph gone from the pit?

As the oldest, Reuben's father would expect from him an explanation of what happened to Joseph.

v31 – What is the significance of Joseph's tunic being dipped in blood?

As Joseph's tunic was dipped in blood, so too would Jesus' robe be when he returns [37]

Revelation 19:11-13 – *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True... He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood*

What is the significance of Jesus' robe being dipped in blood?

This reminds us of the sacrifice He made on our behalf when He died on the cross.

What is the significance of Reuben yielding to peer pressure to go along with the plot to be rid of Joseph?

As Reuben, the leader of the band of brothers yielded to the plan to be rid of Joseph, so did Pilate [38]

Mark 15:15 – *So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them; and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.*

While Pilate had absolute authority in deciding matters of capital punishment, he yielded to the mob who were being manipulated by the Jewish religious leaders.

How do religious leaders manipulate the mob today?

The media does an effective job of swaying public opinion to serve the agenda of the secular humanist ruling elite.

- We don't normally think of secular humanists as being religious because of their godless ideology but many are crusaders in forcing others to believe there is no salvation apart from human effort.

What was the significance of it being goat's blood on the tunic?

The Passover animal which points to the sacrifice of Christ could be a goat [39]:

Exodus 12:5 – *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.*

It is also interesting to note that goats were specified to be used on the Day of Atonement...

Leviticus 16:8 – *Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scapegoat.*

As goat's blood was used to represent the death of Joseph, so would it be used to represent the death of Jesus.

v32 – What is the significance of Joseph's brothers lying about his death?

As Joseph's brothers lied about him being alive, so too did the soldiers guarding the tomb of Jesus lie about His resurrection [40]:

Matthew 28:13 – *Tell them, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.'*

What made the lie that the disciples stole away the body of Jesus so ridiculous?

The disciples were all in hiding out of fear the authorities would come for them next.

Was the fear of the disciples valid?

Sure, there was a pattern: murderous hatred once kindled needs an object... If Jesus was a threat to Israel under Roman rule, those who followed Him would be as well.

Do we see this pattern of hatred transference today?

Yes, the visceral hatred of Trump is being redirected toward Trump-supporters... Are you now, or have you ever been a supporter of President Trump? (McCarthyism revisited)

v33-35 – How did Jacob react to the news about Joseph?

He tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and went into mourning. He refused to be comforted by his other children.

v36 – What is the significance of Joseph being taken to Egypt?

As Joseph escaped death by being taken to Egypt, so too did Jesus [41]:

Matthew 2:14 – So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt

Herod ordered a culling of the infants in and around Bethlehem to eliminate any potential threat to his rule as king.

Genesis 38 – Meanwhile back in Canaan, Judah arranged for Tamar to be a wife for his son who died then he gave her to his second son who also died but the third son wasn't old enough yet. Tamar got tired of waiting and tricked Judah into getting pregnant by him and bore twins, the firstborn was Perez and he was in the genealogy of Jesus.

Genesis 39:1-6, Joseph at Potiphar's House

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. ⁵ So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had in the house and in the field. ⁶ Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

v1-2 – What is the significance of Joseph being a servant?

As Joseph became a servant, so too did Jesus [42]:

Matthew 20:28 – the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Jesus performed the greatest service for humanity in all of history... paying the sin-debt of all who would believe in Him.

v3 – What is the significance of it being noticed that the Lord was with Joseph?

As Potiphar observed that the Lord was with Joseph, so too did Nicodemus notice this about Jesus [43]:

John 3:1-2 – There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

What signs was Jesus doing?

The miracles He performed fulfilled prophecies of the Messiah...

Isaiah 35:5-6 – Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.

v4 – What is the significance of Joseph finding favor in the sight of Potiphar?

As Joseph grew in favor of those he served, so too did Jesus [44]:

Luke 2:52 – And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

How may we grow in favor of God and men?

- By focusing on pleasing God alone... it will resonate as pleasing to some men.
- If you focus on pleasing men, some may be pleased but God will not (He knows the motives of our heart).

v5-6 – What is the significance of Joseph being the overseer of Potiphar’s house?

As Joseph became the ruler over Potiphar’s house, so too did Jesus become the ruler over the Father’s house [45]:

Hebrews 1:1-2 – God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds

The Son of God is our Creator and Lord.

Genesis 39:7-16, Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife

⁷ And it came to pass after these things that his master’s wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.” ⁸ But he refused and said to his master’s wife, “Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. ⁹ There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” ¹⁰ So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. ¹¹ But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, ¹² that she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. ¹³ And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, ¹⁴ that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, “See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. ¹⁵ And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside.” ¹⁶ So she kept his garment with her until his master came home.

What is the significance of Joseph being tempted by Potiphar’s wife but did not sin?

As Joseph was tempted by Potiphar’s wife but did not sin, so too was Jesus by tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11) but did not sin [46]:

Hebrews 4:15 – For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Why was it important for Jesus to be without sin?

He did not have to die for His own sin... thus He was able to pay the penalty of the sin of others; and since He was the eternal God, He could pay the penalty of not just one other but ALL others.

If Joseph had succumbed to the temptation of Potiphar’s wife, how would that be sin against God? ...wouldn’t that just be sin against Potiphar?

Exodus 20:14 – You shall not commit adultery.

It would have been an act of disobedience... and any act outside the order God had established is rebellion against His authority.

Unlike the other patriarchs, what is the significance of Scripture not recording any sin of Joseph?

Since Joseph was a mortal man, he couldn’t have been without sin yet Scripture does not record any of his sins.

And this points to Christ who was without sin [47]:

2 Corinthians 5:21 – He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

v13 – What is the significance of Joseph having his garment taken off?

This wasn’t the first time Joseph had his outer garment taken from him, his brothers took his tunic of many colors in Genesis 37:23. Both of these instances bring to mind the time when Jesus had his garments taken from Him as well [48]:

John 19:23 – Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic.

Why did they take Jesus’ garments?

Humiliation was part of crucifixion.

Why is it that those accusing others of wrong-doing are often guilty of the very same thing themselves?

This is a common pattern of evil-doers; they seek to divert attention away from themselves.

Genesis 39:17-23, Joseph in Prison

¹⁷ Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, “The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; ¹⁸ so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside.” ¹⁹ So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, “Your servant did to me after this manner,” that his anger was aroused. ²⁰ Then Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. ²¹ But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²² And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. ²³ The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph’s authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.

v17 – What is the significance of Joseph being falsely accused?

As Joseph was falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife, so too was Jesus falsely accused by the Jewish religious leaders [49]:

Luke 23:14 – *You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him*

Are false accusations a problem today?

Yes, it is becoming clear that such accusations is what will stir up persecution of Christ-followers in the USA.

v18-20 – What is the significance of Joseph not defending himself against the charges?

As Joseph was silent regarding the charges against him, so too was Jesus [50]:

Matthew 27:13-14 – *Pilate said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?” But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.*

Why was Jesus silent?

Nothing He could have said would have mattered and it fulfilled prophecy:

Isaiah 53:7 – *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent*

What is the significance of Joseph suffering for another’s sin?

As Joseph suffered because of the sin of Potiphar’s wife, so too Jesus suffered because of our sin [51]:

2 Corinthians 5:21 – *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Jesus willingly substituted Himself for us so that the sins of His followers would be forgiven.

v21-23 – What pattern do we see here that points to Christ?

- As Joseph grew in favor of Potiphar and the keeper of the prison, so too did Jesus [44]...
- As Joseph became the ruler over Potiphar’s house, he also became the default ruler of the prison and was destined to rule over all Egypt. Likewise, Jesus become the ruler over the Father’s house [45]