

Joseph's Excellent Example

Genesis 39:6-18



For a young man, Joseph displayed remarkable spiritual discernment in the face of sexual temptation.

1) God allowed this temptation. Joseph was doing nothing wrong. He was serving his master exceptionally well. Because of Joseph, God was blessing his master Potiphar in every way. Yet, through no fault of Joseph, God allowed a wicked woman to entice him. In God's overall plan, Joseph must go to prison and later be exalted. God was involved in every detail of what we might call "unfortunate" events.

2) Joseph said "NO" and he meant it! Joseph was a physically attractive man (Gen. 39:6) and his master's wife set her eyes on him and made her move: "Lie with me" (Gen. 39:7). Without any hesitation Joseph refused and strongly rejected her seductive invitation.

3) Joseph had two reasons for declining her sinful offer. First, he had served his master well and was unwilling to betray him by having an adulterous affair with his wife (Gen. 39:8-9). Second, he greatly feared God: "*How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" (Gen. 39:9). Sinning against his master would have been horrible enough, but sinning against God would be far worse! How we need to have Joseph's hatred of sin in these days when sexual temptations are everywhere! The Ten Commandments had not even been given, but Joseph knew that adultery was a grievous sin.

4) The temptation continued day after day. Joseph was bombarded with repeated sexual advances from this wretched woman. Notice that he met each temptation with a strong refusal, not just to lie with her but *even to be with her* (Gen. 39:10). He kept his distance, since closeness could easily lead to sin.

5) When she finally forced herself on him, he ran! He anticipated Paul's command, "Flee youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22). Dare to be a Joseph!

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