Gaining insights from the Patriarch Joseph



David d'Lima - FamilyVoice Australia, October 2020

The Patriarch Joseph has much relevance to the modern world, with our fragile economies and great need for Godly people to take up ministry opportunities as leaders in pagan contexts, as we read in the Book of Genesis:

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him. [37:3-4]

Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. "Here comes that dreamer!" they said ... and they took him and threw him into the cistern. ... Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood." His brothers agreed. So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who ... sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. [37:18-36]

The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. 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. [39:2-5]

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he refused .... One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house ... When his master heard the story his wife told him ... he burned with anger. Joseph's master took him and put him in prison ... [39:6-20]

But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. [39:20-22]

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream ... He fell asleep again and had a second dream .... In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him. ... So Pharaoh sent for Joseph and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. ... Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." [41:1-15]

"I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires ... God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ... Seven years of great abundance are coming throughout the land of Egypt, but seven years of famine will follow them. ... And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food ... to be used during the seven years of famine ... ." [41:16-36]

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you." [41:39-40]

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