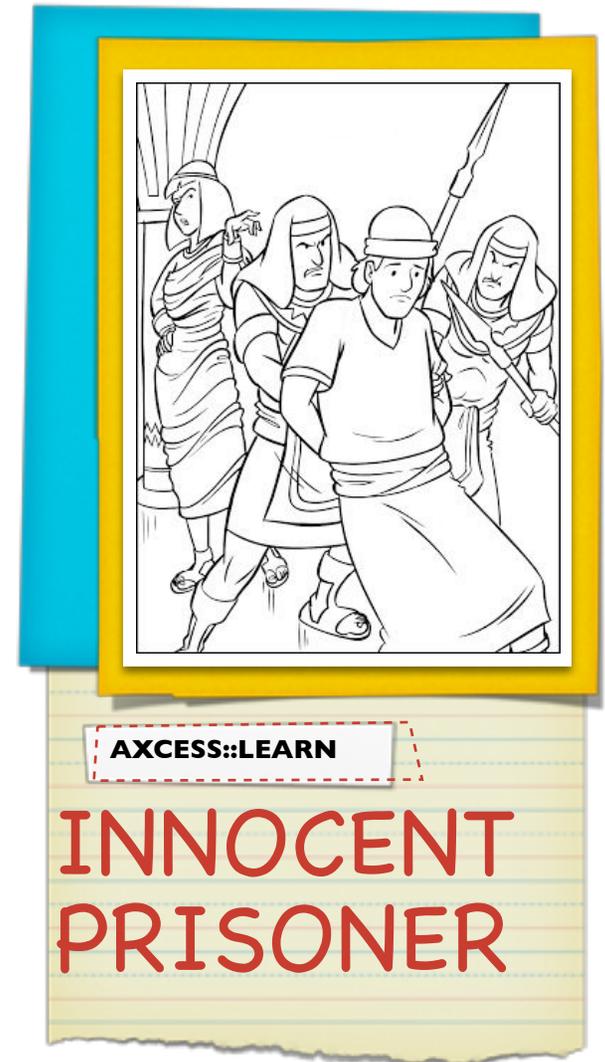




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*** *Approaching Scripture through the Hebrew mindset and context can help us to appreciate more fully and to properly interpret what the passage is actually intending to communicate.*

^study notes adapted from *The Complete Jewish Study Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, & Torah Class*



Read Genesis 39 & 40

GENESIS 39

>< **v.1 Potifar** officer of Pharaoh's, captain of the guard, and an Egyptian. Why the clear distinction that Potifar was an Egyptian...they were in Egypt after all.

***Tom Bradford's note: "The Bedouin Kings of Egypt"*

[article read on the podcast]

>< **v.2-6 YHWH prospered handsome Yosef**

YHWH was with Yosef...YHWH prospered everything he did...YHWH blessed the Egyptian's household for Yosef's sake...YHWH's blessing was on all he owned. RESULT: Yosef entrusted with all Potifar's possessions.

He was abandoned by his family and was bought to a strange land with foreign gods, but the God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov was still with him...protecting, controlling and guiding events.

BAD CIRCUMSTANCES DON'T MEAN GOD HAS TURNED HIS BACK ON YOU.

"Yosef was well-built and handsome as well..."

>< **v.7-10 Strong convictions and persistence**

Potifar's wife took a liking to Yosef with his good looks, strong physique, and obvious prosperity. The day came when she essentially orders him, "Sleep with me!"

Yosef gave three reasons why he refused her advances::

- 1) he wouldn't abuse the trust of his master,
- 2) he honoured the sanctity of marriage, and
- 3) adultery was against the ethical, moral, and

religious principles set forth in his own father's house.

"She kept pressing him, day after day..."

>< **v.11-20 Conspiracy with Yosef's garment**

After several attempts to seduce Yosef, Potifar's wife grew tired of being rejected by this purchased house servant and one day she grabs him by the robe in a desperate attempt to have him. Yosef ran for his life, but as he fled he had left a piece of his garment behind. Embarrassed and humiliated, with Yosef's robe in her hand, she quickly devises a plot against Yosef. She plays victim to rape. She even places blame on her husband for bringing this "Hebrew slave" into their house...he became furious and threw Yosef in prison with the king's prisoners.

This is another indication of the hatred that the Egyptians had for the Semites due to their current condition of being subjugated to the Semite people, even though these particular group of Semites were not Hebrews.

>< **v.21-23 Again YHWH prospered Yosef** Even in prison YHWH was with Yosef and he became supervisor over all the prisoners. Yosef prospered because YHWH ordered it so.

GENESIS 40

>< **v.1-4 House of the captain of the guard** Here we see that Yosef was not kept with the other prisoners. He was kept in the home of the prison captain, in a dungeon or some sort of basement. If the captain of the guard was Potifar, then it was Yosef's former master that directed him to attend to the two high government royal officials: the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. These Egyptian royal officials (most likely next in line to Potifar's position, probably unknowingly put the Oriental Semite Pharaoh in a bad mood and that's why they ended up at the house of the captain of the guard.

>< **v.5-8 "Don't interpretations belong to God?"**

Oneiromancy, the science or practice of interpreting dreams, flourished in ancient Egypt because dreams were thought to determine the future. Both Egypt and Babylon developed a professional class of dream interpreters. Such dream interpreters were part of ancient false religion and were to be avoided by God's people. So Yosef was careful to give credit to his God.

>< **v.9-19 Two dreams interpreted**

Each man shared his dream and Gd had given Yosef the interpretation. The baker heard the favourable interpretation of the cupbearer's dream and was emboldened to share his dream likely expecting equally good news, however, he received the bad news that in three days the cupbearer would be restored, but he would lose his life.

Yosef asked the cupbearer to remember him and show him kindness once he is reinstated by Pharaoh. He knew cupbearers had the ear of kings and hoped that he would speak a word for Yosef's freedom.

>< **v.20-23 Forgotten at Pharaoh's party** The Rosetta Stone records a custom of releasing Pharaoh's prisoners, but at this party held for his officials, Pharaoh rendered two very different kinds of judgment.

"The chief cupbearer didn't remember Yosef, but forgot him." So Yosef remained in prison for a crime he didn't commit because a woman told a lie about him.

NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ::

—Has anyone ever lied about your actions to protect themselves? How did you respond?

—How was God protecting Yosef even while he was in such terrible circumstances?

—Have you ever had a dream you felt was a message from God?

—How do you think Yosef felt when the cupbearer did not recommend him to the pharaoh?