

**A PRISONER BY
PROVIDENCE**
Genesis 39:13-23

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 39:13-23 continues our biographical study of Joseph's life. Sold into slavery in Egypt, Joseph maintained an intimate relationship with the Lord and fled from Potiphar's wife as she tried to get him to lie with her. He knew this wickedness was a sin against God. As he takes his stand for righteousness, he will be falsely accused and put into prison – but is completely innocent. What's happening? Has the Lord forsaken Joseph? This is just not right! In spite of how things appear, Joseph is actually **A Prisoner By Providence**.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Genesis 39:13-23 several times. Pleasing the Lord by running from the temptation to sin, Joseph now finds himself in greater difficulty by being put into prison over false charges. Beloved, persecutions or difficulties don't disappear when we live for Jesus. Joseph suffers ill-treatment for being a faithful disciple. We will consider what our reaction should be when being wronged for doing right.

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

I. Genesis 39:13-19. Wronged for doing right. Potiphar's wife broadcasts false charges against Joseph. Joseph did what was right, so we might expect that he should be exempt from this slander. But no! Let's not be surprised – throughout history, the church and Christians have done many good works, and doing what is right is often rewarded with prison. David expresses this plight in many psalms. *Psalm 69:1-7, Psalm 142*

II. Genesis 39:20-23. Put into prison. Scripture has many references to "captive", "prison", "prisoners" - forced and restricted freedom. Treated unjustly by his master, Joseph is the first recorded prisoner in Scripture. *Psalm 105:18*. God can use prison for His glory. David's *Psalm 142* describes the plight of wronged prisoners well.

There are many types of criminal prison (house arrest, medium or maximum security, solitary confinement). So also a Christian can have their freedom restricted and be confined different ways too. Through a series of events, panic can attack and constrict a believer. Perhaps debilitating health brings restriction of freedoms known in the past. Prison can be a result of bad decisions, like Samson. But the Lord is sovereign and has not abandoned anyone who is constrained by chains. *Psalm 69:33, Psalm 107:8-15, Psalm 3*

III. Genesis 39:21. The Lord was with him! Beloved, no matter what is happening, we must remember that God is sovereign. The Lord sent Joseph among prisoners by providence. He would never have gone there on his own. Through these circumstances, he will eventually come to be a ruler in Egypt, and fulfill God's word by providing for his entire family in their famine. Whatever your "prison", it is good and right to keep your eyes on the Lord and even worship Him! The Lord knows what He is doing. *Daniel 3:25 & 6:6:21-22, Philippians 1:12-14 & 4:22, Revelation 1:9-11a*

Beginning with Joseph, Scripture has recorded many prisoners' testimonies. Just think about Jeremiah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Peter, John, Paul.... Read **Foxes Book of Martyrs**. Their lives and sacrifice have ministered to multitudes over the years.

CONSIDER Joseph continues to be a good example for us. He gives us a picture of our Lord Jesus too.

- o Prison in some way is a part of life for the disciple of Jesus. *Matthew 10:16-20, John 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12 & 4:5*
- o God has a purpose for prison. Look for opportunity in it. *Genesis 50:20, Ephesians 6:18-20, Romans 8:28*
- o Be at peace, have joy, serve the Lord where He sends you to set the captives free. Glory to God! *Acts 16:22-34*

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:1-2

PRAY

- o that you would see the Lord's sovereignty in every area of your life, even in the difficult trials.
- o for the Lord's favor on our Hope for Puerto Rico outreach as we seek to engage the community.
- o for hearts of thankfulness and praise to our Lord!
- o the Lord would speak to each and every heart at the Women's Christmas Tea on December 9th.
- o for Pastor Ted – that the Lord would use him mightily and strengthen and equip him to minister in China and India.