

Articles and Sermons :: A Young Man Who Was Faithful To God - Zac Poonen**A Young Man Who Was Faithful To God - Zac Poonen - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2007/10/8 2:37**

A Young Man Who Was Faithful To God - Zac Poonen

In Genesis Chapter 39 there is a wonderful story of a young man who was faithful to God when tempted strongly by an attractive and powerful woman. There is only one way to avoid immorality— and that is to run away from it (See 1 Cor.6:18). And that was exactly Joseph did. Potiphar's wife pressed him to commit adultery with her (Gen.39:7). But Joseph refused. He refused to even be anywhere near her (v.10). He did not just say, "No." He ran away from the source of the temptation. As soon as that evil lady came near him, Joseph would go off somewhere else. You cannot overcome temptation, if you are always hanging around people who tempt you. God is looking for such men - who will run away from temptation. One day when she was alone with him in the house, she caught him. This time he pulled himself away and left her clutching on to his coat. This angered her so much that she accused Joseph of trying to rape her. Her husband was furious, and locked up Joseph in jail.

Look at the things Joseph suffered - jealousy from his brothers, false accusation from an evil woman, and jail. In those days jails were terrible dungeons with rats, worms and cockroaches crawling all over the place. But it says in v.21, that in addition to all those crawling things, "the Lord was also with Joseph". And that made all the difference. It doesn't matter if you are surrounded by every type of inconvenience, if the Lord is with you. That is enough. And that was all that Joseph wanted.

There in the jail he meets Pharaoh's cupbearer and thus gets an introduction to Pharaoh. You see how God's plan begins to work out slowly. It's not just that God protected Joseph from the evil that Potiphar did to him. He made the evil that Potiphar did to him to work out God's perfect plan. How would Joseph have ever met Pharaoh's butler and got an introduction to Pharaoh if he hadn't gone to that jail?!!

If Joseph could have seen all this at the beginning, he would have been praising the Lord all the while he was in jail— just as Paul and Silas did later. They could praise the Lord in that Philippian jail, because they had seen the sovereignty of God in the Scriptures. If we study the Scriptures, we too will praise the Lord in every tight situation caused by the evil that others do to us. One day, people may put us in jail too, with many false accusations. I am sure the Egyptians believed all the false stories that had been spread about this man who was the most upright man in Egypt. But that didn't bother Joseph. Many false stories are spread about true servants of God today too. What must we do? Keep quiet. Leave it to God to defend your reputation. He will vindicate you at the right time. Nobody can frustrate God's plan for your life, if you honour Him.

I want you to notice how Joseph came into contact with Pharaoh's cupbearer. Joseph had enough problems of His own to worry about in prison. But he forgot about his own sorrows when he saw two newcomers to the prison looking sad one day. Joseph had been appointed by the jailer to be in charge of all the prisoners and so he asked these two prisoners the reason for their looking so dejected (Gen.40:7). That was how he interpreted their dreams correctly and thus got an opening through one of them (the cupbearer) to interpret Pharaoh's dream one day. God has amazing ways of opening doors for His servants who are faithful to Him and who can forget their own sorrows and have a concern for others. That is what we learn from this incident. So let's not be taken up with our own sorrows. Let us open out hearts to other needy people in this world.

Finally Joseph stood day before Pharaoh. But that was in God's perfect time. The Bible says, "They afflicted Joseph's feet with fetters. But iron entered into his soul during his time in jail. Until the time appointed by God, Joseph was tested. Then God's Word came and set him free" (Psal, 105:18,19— free paraphrase). God is always on time. He is never late. There is a specific length of time fixed by God for all our trials. During that time, He will test us. When that time is over, He will command freedom for us. But by then, if we have been faithful, iron would have entered our soul, and we will have become strong in faith. God turns the tables on Satan and uses the very harm that Satan does to us to strengthen us. Hallelujah!