READ **REFLECT** **APPLY**

Genesis 39:1-23

FALSE ACCUSATION

After recounting the way in which Judah's lineage was preserved, the focus returned to Joseph. His life was to become an example of how a person who follows Christ should live. In fact, his faith in God led him to behave so like the Lord Jesus that he is known as a 'type of Christ'.

Have you ever been falsely accused? How did you respond?

JOSEPH PROSPERS v 1-6 - the Lord guided Joseph's journey to Potiphar who ruled Egypt at that time. He bought him for an unspecified sum, probably to the profit of the Ishmaelites. Joseph's influence was soon felt. He carried out all the tasks and responsibilities given to him as if he was serving God. His trustworthy, honest, respectful behaviour was noticeable, and he was soon promoted to the highest level of responsibility possible. He was placed in charge of Potiphar's house, servants and land because Potiphar recognised that the Lord God was with him. The testimony of Abraham, and God's judgement on Sodom and Gomorrah was no doubt still remembered in the nation of Egypt.

WITHSTANDING TEMPTATION v 7-10 – Satan, is always looking for ways to tempt God's children into disobeying God, so that their testimony is spoiled. To do this, Satan worked through Potiphar's wife. Joseph, as well as having a likeable personality, had inherited good looks. His daily business, running Potiphar's household brought him into her company. She was not a moral woman, and decided she wanted to commit adultery with him. Joseph however respectfully pointed out that she was the only thing that Potiphar had not given him. If he committed adultery with her, he would be sinning, not just against Potiphar, but against God. However, Potiphar's wife was used to getting her own way and she persisted in her attempts to seduce him. Nevertheless, Joseph continued to refuse to lie with her, listen to her, or be with her at all.

Why is all sin, first and foremost, a sin against God? (Psalm 51:4, 1 John 3:4, Gen.3:1-6)

FALSELY ACCUSED v 11-20 – the daily attempt by Potiphar's wife to break down Joseph's resistance must have been very difficult to cope with. As a servant that had been purchased by Potiphar, he could not escape or appeal for help without implicating her. She meanwhile waited her chance, and could well have arranged the situation where Joseph was alone with her. She caught hold of him and explicitly demanded that he should get into bed with her. Joseph fled, but in doing so, left his garment in her hands. Humiliated and angry that she had been refused, Potiphar's wife cried loudly for help so her servants came running in. She then showed them Joseph's coat, referring to him as a 'Hebrew servant', and pretended that he had tried to rape her and she had resisted him. The story was repeated to Potiphar. He was justifiably extremely angry but spared Joseph's life, committing him instead to prison. To the casual onlooker, Joseph had been utterly humiliated, but he was in fact victorious. He had defeated temptation and remained faithful to God and to Potiphar. Furthermore, he had been removed from his tormenting situation and entered a new phase of service for God.

What should the Christians attitude to sexual relationships be? How should we avoid the temptation to adopt the attitude and behaviour of the society we live in? (Eph.5:1-7)

RESPONSIBILITY IN PRISON v 21-23 – Joseph's attitude to serving the Lord was no different in prison. He demonstrated the same genuine care, reliability and honesty as he had in Potiphar's house and did not dwell upon the unjust accusations that had been made against him, or seek revenge. His imprisonment became transformed into the liberty of serving God. The prison keeper soon noticed that Joseph was different from other prisoners. He and fellow inmates through the intervention of God, became kind to Joseph. In doing so they were blessed by God as well. Before long, like Potiphar, the prison keeper delegated responsibility to Joseph, knowing that if Joseph was in charge of something, it would be blessed.

'And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.'
Romans 8:28