

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Joseph in Egypt

With today's column, we will close our study of those who lived entirely during the patriarchal age. We find Joseph having been sold by the Midianite merchantmen to some Ishmaelites, and by them to a man by the name of Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. By this time, the young man Joseph had been "owned" by the Midianites (who pulled him from the pit in which his brethren placed him); then by the Ishmaelites, and now by an Egyptian. In Genesis 37:28,36; 39:1, we learn the Midianites sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites, who then sold him into Egyptian slavery.

Here is a perfect example to show God has always shown man His will. Genesis 39:2 tells us the Lord was with Joseph. The Egyptian saw, and knew, that the Lord was with Joseph, and that the Lord made all that Joseph did prosper in his hand. Today, would it not be a good thing that an employee would prosper and would cause the employer to prosper? That is what happened to Potiphar, and when Potiphar saw this, he made Joseph overseer in his house, and over all he had. But Joseph had a problem. Was it because he was a good person? Was it because he was a good-looking person? It was because there was a woman in the house not committed totally to her husband. She desires Joseph to engage in an illicit affair with her. Joseph tells her this would be great wickedness and a sin against God (Genesis 39:9). Yes, this type of conduct has been wrong throughout the ages, from the beginning of time until, and including, now. In Genesis 2:24, it is stated man is to "*leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*" Under the Mosaic law, any man and woman who engaged in this type act were to be put to death (Leviticus 20:10). In John 8:5, we find they were to be stoned. Back to Joseph: one day Joseph went in to do his work, and no other man was in the house. Mrs. Potiphar made her move. But, Joseph fled, having to leave behind his coat in the woman's hand. Joseph is a great example to us all; if only each of us would be as diligent as he was in refusing to commit sin! Because of his refusal, and because of the lie Mrs. Potiphar told, he was cast into prison. He spent at least two years in prison before he was called to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh. Eventually, he was elevated to the position next to Pharaoh. May we all be willing to serve God, as was Joseph. God's will has been revealed to us. It is settled!