

# The Story of Joseph

## *Screaming for Love*

Part 22 – August 12, 2012

Another PG-13 warning! When we left off, I told you that we'd be covering the sexual *proof* of God's existence. And *that's today!* But first, we'll need a sex review *and* a story review ...



The most comprehensive study *ever* undertaken on American sexual behavior<sup>1</sup> found that married, religious couples have the most frequent, most fun, most satisfying, and longest-lived sex lives!

Godly relationships with their *great sex* are built on trust and commitment. And, in the City of God devotion is the *goal* and sex is the *expression*. In the City of Man, sex is an *appetite* and the goal is to get as much as you can *commitment free!* And the end result is a soul wrenching search for true intimacy where it *can't* be found.



King Amenemhat I, c. 1977 BC

Mrs. Potiphar put *her* hopes for happiness in an affair with the kindhearted, attractive, Joseph. So, she sends his staff out of the house to get him alone, and removes his garment [behg'ED]. We're never told what the garment was; just that she pulled it off. The word can mean *outer* garment, so it's traditionally portrayed as a cloak, but stricter, word-for-word Bible translations don't, because it may or may not be a cloak.



Senbi II, c. 1900 BC

Modern archaeology has revealed that cloaks were rarely worn in the blistering climate of Joseph's Egypt (c. 1890<sup>BC</sup>). But an outer garment like a kilt was *incredibly* common (as on this 3900-year-old statue of an Egyptian steward from Joseph's lifetime). I think Mrs. Potiphar tried to skirt *Joseph's* commitment! But like the Grinch with the Whos, she grossly misjudged the situation through the lens of her own wickedness. *She* knows that *he* knows that he can't leave without his garment without exposing *her*. By taking his garment in *her hands*, she recklessly places her reputation, her marriage, even her life in his, knowing he won't leave her, he won't forsake her ... at least, that was the plan. But he does ... in a flash ... *literally!*

She caught him by his cloak [or kilt] and said, "Come to bed with me!" But [just as she made herself most vulnerable in her soul wrenching search for true intimacy] he left his cloak [or kilt] in her hand and ran out of the house. [She risked *everything* on him – bared her heart and soul ... *among other things!* And she's repaid with rejection and betrayal! "His kindness was an act, a con, a hoax! He *couldn't care less!*" ] – Genesis 39:12 NIV

<sup>1</sup> *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*, 1994, University of Chicago Press

And as he runs, reality vanishes in a reflexive eruption of Mrs. Potiphar's rage, her ferocity flaring to equalize the scorching intensity of the degradation, mortification, and humiliation now devastating her discontented, devalued, disillusioned heart! Ya gotta feel just a *little sorry* for her. I mean, if a sexual affair is your highest hope for happiness, you *are* being conned! Great love and Godly sex and romance are mere foreshadows of what can only be found in Christ. That's why scripture refers to Him figuratively as the Bridegroom and the church as His bride.



Nobody wants to get naked and just be *tolerated!* So we go to great lengths to try and conceal our spots and wrinkles and blemishes, and we turn off the lights for fear of rejection, but all the while what we *really* want is what we lost in the Garden: to be naked and unashamed and holy and cherished. And when we use sex to replace the infinitely greater intimate joy that it was created to foreshadow, it fails us *miserably*.

As the ash cloud of her wrath dissipates, the magnitude of what just happened begins to settle in. Joseph's righteous reaction has turned her wretched rendezvous into a death-match.

When she saw [realized] that he had left his cloak [or kilt] in her hand and had run *out of the house*, [Realization dawns, "Who saw?! What'd I yell?! Who heard?! Who'll he tell?! Potiphar! Who'll he kill?! Who knows who he will?! Who?! Who?! Who?! Who?!" ... Then she got an idea, an *awful* idea; the *winch* got a *wonderful, awful idea!* "I know just what to do!" The winch sneered as she spoke. "I'll make a defense with his *kilt!* (or his cloak)" she called her household servants. [These might be the ones she'd sent out of the house earlier (which means they stayed within *earshot*, to see what was up) and/or they might be servants she'd *positioned* within calling distance to attend to her and Joseph, assuming a successful seduction] – Genesis 39:13-14a NIV

It's in our fallen nature to self-justify, so you can bet she's quickly convincing herself that *she's* the victim. And she plays the race card on their pride and prejudice so they'll *want* to see what she *wants* 'em to see!

"Look," she said to them, [as if having nothing to hide] "this *Hebrew* [she says, assuming her *Egyptian* servants see Joseph as an inferior who sucked up to Potiphar and got promoted *over* them; a goody-goody whose high morals and work ethic makes 'em look bad; a bootlicker who demands deference to Potiphar, and admonishes every minor indecency and disloyalty! "This ... Hebrew ..."] has been brought to us ["Because I'm just one of you. I've always thought of you more as family than *servants*."] to make sport of us! ["By foolishly giving a Hebrew authority over *Egyptians*, Potiphar has made fools of us all!" Now watch her stitch together fact and fiction, taking what they saw and heard, and spinning their perception into corroboration] He came in here [FACT! They saw it with their own eyes] to sleep with me, [FICTION! *But*, they know her reputation (I doubt he's her first), they've seen her flirting, and they probably had an office pool on how long Mr. *Morals* would hold out. *And* when she sent them out of the house that morning, knowing they're under Joseph's charge, she likely presented it as a directive *from Joseph*] but I *screamed*. [FACT! They were within *earshot*. Wouldn't make sense to "call" 'em in and then claim a scream nobody heard. She's spinning her screaming to fit her alibi. Plus, if she *hadn't* screamed, but wanted 'em to think she *had* screamed, she would've just ... screamed, *before* calling 'em in; but she *couldn't* because she'd *already* screamed *before* Joseph ran out, and she knew that they knew, so she spins it] When he heard me scream for *help*, [FICTION! She *didn't* cry for help! [SCRIPTURE CONTINUED]

We know that, because nobody came – until she “called” ‘em in! And *not rushing in* when the master’s wife cries for help is punishable by death! Yet, they *didn’t* come in *and* they aren’t even *scolded*. So, there was screaming – expletives, invectives, profanities – but nothing sounded remotely like a cry for help] he left his *cloak* [FACT! (Or kilt), they can see it in her hand] *beside me* [FICTION! She pulled it off!] and ran out of the house.” [FACT! They saw it with their own eyes] – Genesis 39:14b-15 NIV

The best lies will always contain an element of truth. And one of Mrs. Potiphar’s biggest lies contains an element of truth even *she’s* not aware of: her *screaming*: those desperate, profanity-laden threats and commands, mixed with bitter tears. Truth is it *was* a cry for help.

Freud said spiritual longings are just frustrated sexual desires. But, what if our *sexual desires* are frustrated, foreshadowed, *spiritual longings*? Here’s the *sexual proof* of God’s existence: unselfish romantic love is always described in unrealistic, *spiritual* terms.

Longer than there’ve been fishes in the ocean; higher than any bird ever flew; longer than there’ve been stars up in the heavens, I’ve been in love with you. – *Longer*

And we all go, “Ahh”. Why don’t we go, “Huh?!” Because, believers and unbelievers, around the world, unconsciously project the attributes of the One we really need into our romantic foreshadow.

I feel like this is the beginning, though I've loved you for a million years. And if I thought our love was ending, I'd find myself drowning in my own tears. You are the sunshine of my life. That's why I'll always stay around. You are the apple of my eye. Forever you'll stay in my heart. – *You Are the Sunshine of My Life*

Love me tender, love me sweet; never let me go. You have made my life complete, and I love you so. Love me tender, love me dear; tell me you are mine. I'll be yours through all the years, till the end of time. – *Love Me Tender*

Fly me to the moon. Let me sing among those stars. Let me see what spring is like, on Jupiter and Mars. In other words, hold my hand. In other words, baby, kiss me. Fill my heart with song. Let me sing for ever more. You are all I long for, all I worship and adore. In other words, please be true. In other words, I love you. – *Fly Me To the Moon*

Bells will ring; the sun will shine. I'll be his and he'll be mine. We'll love until the end of time! And we'll never be lonely anymore, because we're goin' to the chapel and we're gonna get married. – *The Chapel of Love*

Unforgettable in every way, and forever more, that's how you'll stay. – *Unforgettable*

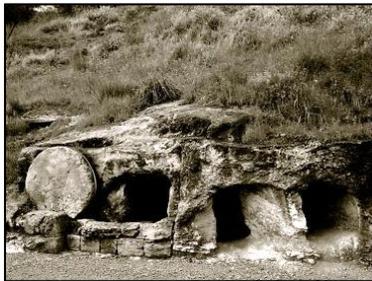
You are so beautiful, to me. Can't you see? You're everything I hope for; you're everything I need. You are so beautiful, to me. – *You Are So Beautiful*

Certain as the sun, rising in the east, tale as old as time, song as old as rhyme, Beauty and the Beast. – *Beauty and the Beast*

The world writes about His love, and they sing about His love, because they’re *lost without his love*. Every creature is wired to desire what it needs most. Ducklings desire water, there’s a pond. Piglets long to suckle, there’s a sow. Cats long to condescend, there’s ... us. But us, the thing we’re wired to most desire is the most unobtainable thing in the world apart from Christ: endless love. We’re hardwired to desire the impossible “happily ever after”!

She kept his cloak [or kilt] beside her until his master came home. Then [with the emotional impact of another man's clothing where it most ought not to be] she told him this story: [The evil genius of her well-crafted accusation is that it's *not just* against Joseph] "That *Hebrew* [She's obviously *not* playing on *his* prejudice, *he* put Joseph in charge. This racial slur is to remind Potiphar how *others* perceive his 'little Hebrew pet' "That Hebrew ...] *slave* ["You've elevated to almost your equal, a *slave* you *know* to be an *abomination*." Joseph isn't allowed to handle Potiphar's food (39:6) "That Hebrew slave ...] *you* brought us ["This is *all on you*. Think of the gossip in Pharaoh's court: the Captain of the Palace Guard can't even protect his own wife, in his own house, and in fact, has such a lack of judgment, he himself put her honor and life in jeopardy by turning over his household to a despised foreigner." It's part blame, part threat, and part diversion. "That Hebrew slave you brought us ...] *came to me* ["I have witnesses"] to make sport of *me*. ["Don't question it, unless you want the palace gossip to center around how the mighty, potent Potiphar is so bad in bed, his wife has to chase after the help"] But as soon as I screamed for help, ["I have witnesses"] he left his cloak beside me ["I have proof"] and ran out of the house." ["I have witnesses"] – *Genesis 39:16-18 NIV*

Poor Potiphar! He knows he's been badly betrayed, either by the once trusted steward who vowed to serve him with all his heart, or the once beautiful bride who vowed to love him with all hers. But, *nobody* can actually *do that* ... nobody, except One ... the One with the authority, who said, "I will *never* leave you nor forsake you." (Heb 13:5)



The One who truly sees you without spot or blemish, but holy and blameless, (Eph 5:27) because He wraps you in His *own righteousness*.

... neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, [including the fishes, the birds, and the stars up in the heavens] will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. – *Romans 8:38-39 NIV*

In the deepest depth of your soul, you really, really need the ultimate glorious beauty to look at you, with the lights *on*, at your *most vulnerable*, and say, "I find you beautiful; and I love you with all my heart; and I'm committed to you, wholly and without reservation, forever into eternity." Who else but Jesus could? Who else but Jesus would?

If Mrs. Potiphar's story is true, it's a shocking contradiction of everything Potiphar witnessed with Joseph. And if false, it's a heartbreaking confirmation of a deeply troubled relationship. Either way, the next time Potiphar, pride of the palace guard and terror of the king's enemies, finds himself alone, he likely weeps bitter tears, and buries his face in a pillow and screams.

When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "*This is how your slave treated me,*" he burned with anger. – *Genesis 39:19 NIV*

There's an old Henny Youngman line: "My best friend ran away with my wife, and let me tell you, I miss him!" Verse 19 is the setup and verse 20 is the punch line. But, after 3900 years we no longer get the humor! But, this is where we have to close Gold's story for today.