

CHAPTER XIII.  
JOSEPH, OR THE PRISONER.  
GEN. xxxix. 1-6, 17-23.

THE men who had bought Joseph, took him to a country a great way off. It was called Egypt. When they got to Egypt they tried to sell him, as if he had been a horse or a cow. In this country, where we live, no one sells men. In some countries men are sold, and are called slaves: they are beaten and made to work very hard, but are not paid any money for their labour.

Poor Joseph was sold as a slave. Do you not hope that a kind man bought him? And it was a kind man who bought him. There was a very rich man who knew the king, and he bought Joseph to be his slave. His name was Potiphar. He took Joseph home with him. He did not send him to work in the house. So Joseph had not very hard work to do.

Joseph tried to be a good servant. Though he wished very much to be with his father, he did not waste his time in fretting, but took great pains to please his master. When his master told him to do anything, he did it so well that his master was quite pleased with him. It was God that made Joseph able to do his work so well; and Joseph's master knew that it was God that helped him to do things well.<sup>45</sup> I suppose that Joseph had told him; for his master did not know the true God, but worshipped idols.

His master liked him better every day. At last his master said to Joseph, 'I can trust you so well, that I will give you the charge of the other servants when I am out. Take care of the house, and all the things in it, of the garden and of the fields; for I can trust you.'

So Joseph had the care of everything, and all the other servants minded what he said: and he might do what he liked when his master was out. But Joseph behaved the same as if his master were watching him; for he knew the eye of God was always upon him. There are many children who behave ill as soon as their parents gone out of the room; such children do not fear God. Though Joseph had the care of nice things to eat, and beautiful things to wear, he only took what his master allowed him to take. He was always busy – sometimes in the house, and sometimes in the field; and God made the things grow well in the field; and the work go on right in the house. Potiphar took no trouble himself, for he found that Joseph could manage all for him.

So Joseph had now all he could wish for: but he could not forget his father, and his little baby-brother Benjamin. As for his mother, Rachel, you know that she had died some time before.

Now you shall hear what a sad thing happened to Joseph.

Potiphar had a very wicked wife. She wished Joseph to be turned out of the house, for Joseph had found out how bad she was; so she did not like to see Joseph.

This wicked woman said to Potiphar, 'Your slave, Joseph, that you think so good, is very wicked, and when you are out he behaves very ill.'

Then she told Potiphar of bad things that she said Joseph had done. Potiphar was so foolish as to believe her, and he fell into a great rage and said, 'Joseph shall be put into prison.'

So some men took Joseph and brought him to the prison, which was in Potiphar's house.

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<sup>45</sup> And his master *saw* that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord *made* all that he did to prosper in his hand. – Gen. xxxix. 3.