

July 1 st	Genesis 39	65 Jubilate, everybody
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Today's hymn is a modern chorus based on Psalm 100

Jubilate, everybody,
 serve the Lord in all your ways,
 and come before his presence singing,
 enter now his courts with praise.
 For the Lord our God is gracious,
 and his mercy everlasting.
 Jubilate, jubilate,
 jubilate Deo !

Fred Dunn (1907–1979) CCL 51436

Written in 1977, this popular chorus is a very uplifting version of the 'old hundredth' psalm. I couldn't find out much about the hymn writer, this seems to be his only hymn which is well known, perhaps the only one he wrote? If it is indeed a 'one hit wonder', it reminds us how a short piece by an obscure person can have a world-wide impact on worship!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qS-7gh9tz0>

*Today's reading is **Genesis 39***

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From

the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!"

But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her. One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, she called her household servants. "Look," she said to them, "this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. Then she told him this story: "That Hebrew

slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

The story is well known, and so contemporary! Attempted seduction, alleged rape, racism, and miscarriage of justice. And the story of someone facing and resisting temptation before becoming God's servant is also repeated throughout the Bible, and history: Daniel, Paul, Jesus, and many others.

We're told repeatedly that the Lord was with Joseph, even as little more than a slave in a foreign country. But interestingly, his master Potiphar also recognises the blessing of the Lord on Joseph. Normally, someone in Joseph's position would have been instantly executed. But Potiphar has discerned a higher hand at work in Joseph's life. This is remarkable, because for Potiphar, the Lord would be a foreign deity! Even in prison he is given a

position of authority.

There's a message for us here. Wherever God's people are, God is also there to bless them. And not only to bless them, but also to bless those in the unbelieving or even hostile world around them. Jesus tells us to let our lights shine so that people will glorify God. And Peter writes:

'Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles. . . live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us'
(1 Peter 2:11,12)

In today's secular world, the response to criticism, suspicion or opposition is simply to 'do the right thing' by following Jesus.

Prayer from '*Spill the Beans*'

Lord Jesus, you call us to follow in your footsteps, to live a life of love; by serving our neighbours, by being kind, by being generous, by welcoming people, by forgiving those who hurt us.

You did this when you lived on the earth, you have shown us by your example and now you ask us to do the same. It is hard Lord, but we promise to try.

Help us Lord Jesus to be more like you.

Discipling God, we are made in your image and called to follow your Son, Jesus, the risen Christ.

We are to be like him in every way, even unto death.

Lord, this is scary stuff, help us.

Along with our brothers and sisters around the world, we gather to offer this time of worship,

to acknowledge your love for us, revealed in Jesus.

In these strange days, our gatherings are very different,

apart and yet united by our love for you.

Even today the harvest is large, many people seeking to find you amid this global pandemic and the fears and anxieties it holds for each one of us.

We are discovering new ways to engage with people and we are grateful for the wonder of technology that allows us to reach out to people in our communities and beyond.

Forgive us, Lord, when we fail you,
when we choose our own way instead of yours.

Forgive us, Lord, for our frailties,
help us move forward determined to be
more like the people you created us to be,
using our gifts and talents for the work of your kingdom,
here and now.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to live,
the way to behave, help us to want to be more like you.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.