

Midweek Study

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TRUSTING GOD IN THE DARKNESS

Genesis 37-50

Dreams and Destiny

(Genesis 37:1-36)

1) The **Advantages** He Enjoyed (37:1-4)

- Joseph did not simply snitch on his brothers (v.2 – “a bad report”). This is showing the contrast between Joseph’s integrity and the brothers wickedness. Thomas writes, “There is a time to speak, and on such an occasion silence is criminal.”¹
- Joseph was the “son of his old age” - It may be that Joseph, much younger than the others, was more influenced by the godliness of Jacob’s later years.
- Joseph was given a “tunic of many colors” – The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew) translates it this way. It may also be “a long-sleeved robe” or “an ornamented tunic,” something a future leader would wear. It may also point to Joseph being promised the family birthright.

Application: You can be a person of faith and integrity, even with a less-than-ideal upbringing.

2) The **Announcement** He Made (37:5-11)

- Joseph is saying with the first dream, “I am heir to Jacob’s blessing,” and with the second dream, “I am the future leader of the Jewish nation.”²

Application: Never underestimate the dreams of a child. Thomas writes, “Youth is the time for visions of the future. Young men cannot help dreaming dreams, for they would not be young men if they did not do so. A youth without ideals is a youth without inspiration.”³

3) The **Assignment** He Was Given (37:12-17)

- Shechem was where Dinah’s tragedy and the ensuing vengeance occurred. Jacob could have gotten concerned that the sons might be in some danger.

¹ W.H. Griffith Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1953), 355.

² Stephen Davey, “Teenage Dreamer” (Genesis 37), www.wisdomonline.org.

³ Thomas, 357.

Application: Parents must engage. Jacob was passive in all of his dealings with his sons, especially with regards to their jealousy and anger. Proverbs 23:13 says, “Don’t withhold discipline from your child.” (See also Proverbs 13:24)

4) The Anger He Faced (37:18-28)

- Song of Solomon 8:6 (RSV), “Jealousy is cruel as the grave.” Acts 7:9 says, “And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him.” Psalm 37:1 says, “Do not ... be envious of the workers of iniquity.” Things can be coveted, but people are envied. James 3:16 warns, “Where envy is, there is confusion and every evil work.” (see also Proverbs 14:30 and 27:4).

5) The Abandonment He Endured (37:29-36)

- F. B. Meyer once wrote, “Little did he think that hereafter he should look back on that day as one of the most gracious links in a chain of loving providences; or that he should ever say, ‘Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves: God did send me here before you’ (Genesis 45:5). It is very sweet, as life passes by, to be able to look back on dark and mysterious events and to trace the hand of God where we once saw only the malice and cruelty of man.”

*I believe in the sun when it does not shine,
I believe in God when He is silent,
I know the sun is up there even on the darkest day,
And when darkness veils Jesus’ lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.*



Four benefits to studying the life of Joseph:

- 1) You will **understand** how the Hebrews ended up in Egypt.
- 2) You will **appreciate** God’s sovereignty during suffering and trials.
- 3) You will **discover** a remarkable example of personal character in Joseph. He is unique in that there is no obvious sin recorded about him.
- 4) You will **recognize** Joseph as a type of Christ, Who would also suffer for others.

Wiersbe writes, “Joseph is like Jesus in that he was beloved by his father and obedient to his will; hated and rejected by his own brethren and sold as a slave; falsely accused and unjustly punished; finally elevated from the place of suffering to a powerful throne, thus saving his people from death. The major difference, of course, is that Joseph was only reported to be dead, while Jesus Christ did give His life on the cross and was raised from the dead in order to save us.”⁴

⁴ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Authentic*, “Be” Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor Pub., 1997), 78.