

Bible Study

Lesson: Genesis 37-39

God is always with us, and when we draw near to God and are close to Him we can overcome challenges in our lives even in the most dire circumstances.

Jacob had a favorite son named Joseph and he was hated by his brothers because he was thought to be loved more than they were. When Joseph told his brothers about his dream, which depicted his brothers bowing before him, his brothers hated him even more than ever. "Listen to this dream, he said. We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine! His brothers responded, so you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" (Genesis 37: 6-8). The envy that his brothers had for him caused them to plot against Joseph and sold him into slavery (Genesis 37: 18-28).

The men that the brothers sold Joseph to took him to Egypt where he was bought by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt (Genesis 39: 1). Although Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery, Joseph found himself in a position where he took advantage of what his brothers set up for evil. Because the Lord was with Joseph, he succeeded in everything he did, even in the midst of bondage.

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Potiphar noticed that the Lord was with Joseph, and this pleased him, so he made Joseph his personal attendant and put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned (Genesis 39: 3-4). “From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished” (Genesis 39:5).

As Joseph was doing exceedingly well in spite of his unfortunate circumstance being away from his home and family and working for Potiphar, he was attacked with even more injustice. The wife of Potiphar falsely accused Joseph of coming into her room to sleep with her, “That Hebrew slave you've brought into our house tried to come in and fool around with me, she said” (Genesis 39: 17). Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph because day after day he refused her persistent request to sleep with him. “Potiphar was furious when he heard his wife's story about how Joseph had treated her. So, he took Joseph and threw him into the prison where the king's prisoners were held” (Genesis 39:19-20). And even there in prison in the middle of his challenge, God's light shined on him for all to see. “The Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison” (Genesis 39: 21-22).

When we are faced with difficulty, in a world where people who we come across may not have the best intentions to treat others fairly, then as children of God, the best thing to do is to be Christ like. We should follow God's example of strength, resilience, goodness, and perseverance. We should be the light of God shining for others to notice and be influenced

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by God's goodness, as it was with Joseph. God was with Joseph and whatever he did, whether in bondage in pharaoh's service or in prison, the Lord made it prosper.

Take away: Being close to God makes it possible to rise above challenges, to master situations and turn problems around to your advantage/ Through difficult situations in life such as unfairness and hate we can set good examples for others influence.

Notes:

Devotional

Genesis 37-39

What are some challenges that you have overcome and prospered through as a result of being close to God?

How has envy or jealousy from others impacted your life?



Devotional

Describe a situation in which you succeeded at something that was meant for evil but was turned for good and to your advantage.

How has God's goodness toward you influenced others?