

Unit 3, Session 3: Joseph Taken to Egypt

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.

Memory Verse: Genesis 50:20 – “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

Christ Connection: Even when bad things were happening in Joseph's life, God had a plan for good. Bad things also happened to Jesus. Jesus never sinned, but He was arrested, beaten, and killed on a cross. Those things happened to bring about our good—so people could be saved from sin and death through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Bible Passage: Genesis 37; 39-46; 50

Find the passages together in your Bibles and read through them together. You could also read the paraphrase of all these passages below in blue. For younger kids, you may want to just read the bolded portions.

Genesis 37-50 serves as a magnificent example of God's sovereignty to bring about good through the evil actions of men. God is clearly in control of Joseph's life as well as the lives of his father and brothers. Though each man is responsible for his choices, the Lord still directs the narrative. The account of Joseph's life tells of sibling rivalry, deception, suffering, forgiveness, and God's grace, especially as it directs readers to the ultimate gift of grace and forgiveness found in Christ. Even the story of Judah's affair with Tamar fits into God's plan as their son Perez is a part of the ancestral line of Jesus (Gen 38; Matt 1:3). This account almost seems like a mistake dropped in the middle of the broader narrative of Joseph's life, but it too is a demonstration of the sovereign hand of God upon his people for the sake of their salvation in both the immediate context and in the long term.

Joseph becomes a type of Christ, a savior for people. At God's direction, Joseph's suffering and exaltation in Egypt become the opportunity for the salvation of his family as well as all others who come to him for help. Because of Joseph's eventual position and status, Jacob and his sons are established as a remnant that will become the theocratic nation of Israel (Gen 45:7-8). When Israel moves his family to the land of Goshen in Egypt, the stage is then set for God's prophecy given to Abram to be fulfilled: “Your offspring will be resident aliens for four hundred years in a land that does not belong to them and will be enslaved and oppressed. However, I will judge the nation they serve, and afterward they will go out with many possessions...” (Gen 15:13-14). What Joseph's brothers planned for evil was indeed used by God for good (50:20), a good that reached farther than they could ever have imagined.

Jacob settled in the land of Canaan, where his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham had settled. **Jacob had 12 sons, but his son Joseph was his favorite. Jacob made Joseph a special robe, and all of Joseph's brothers were jealous and hated him.**

Then Joseph shared with his brothers some dreams he had. In these dreams, his brothers and father and mother bowed down to him. This made his brothers hate him even more. One day, **the brothers decided to get rid of Joseph. They sold him to some men who took him away to Egypt, where he became a servant in the house of a man named Potiphar.**

Joseph served his master Potiphar well, and Potiphar placed him in charge of everything he owned. **One day, Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph, accusing him of doing something he didn't do. Potiphar was angry, and he put Joseph in prison.**

While Joseph was in jail, he met a man who had been the cupbearer for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. This man told Joseph about a strange dream he had. God gave Joseph the ability to understand what the dream meant. This cupbearer would soon be freed from jail and serve the Pharaoh again. It happened just as Joseph had said!

Then, Pharaoh had some strange dreams. In one dream, seven healthy cows were eaten by seven thin, sickly cows. In another dream, seven this heads of grain swallowed seven healthy heads of grain. **The cupbearer told Pharaoh to send for Joseph.** With God's help, **Joseph told Pharaoh what the dreams meant: there would be seven years of great farming in the land followed by seven years of famine,** when no food would grow. **Pharaoh** was so impressed that he **put Joseph in charge of everything in Egypt!**

When the famine came, **Joseph's father and brothers had no food to eat. They went to Egypt to ask for grain. When they first saw Joseph, they did not recognize him. Then Joseph told his brothers who he was: their brother they had sold into slavery!**

The brothers were afraid Joseph would be angry with them, but Joseph said, "You planned evil against me, but God planned it for good so that many people would be saved."

If you or your child have questions about what it looks like to follow Jesus in salvation or baptism, Pastor Sam would love to talk with you! Please feel free to contact him at ssievers@lenexabaptist.com.