

Joseph Sold Into Slavery

Genesis 37

PPT Title

Joseph Sold Into Slavery

Main Point: We must depend on God's grace to turn away from sin.

Key Verse: *(God's grace) teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings.* - Titus 2:12a

Props: Richly colored fabric, gold trim or tassels; 2 balloons and a pin

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: God had made some amazing promises to a man named Abraham (Genesis 12:2-3). God promised to bless him, and give him many children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and so on. God promised that the entire world would be blessed through Abraham's family. Miraculously God gave a son to Abraham and his wife, Sarah, even though they were WAY too old to have a child. **Ask:** Who can remember the name of their son? *Isaac*. And who can remember the name of Isaac's twin boys? *Jacob and Esau*. **Say:** Jacob was the younger son, but he received his father's blessing. Jacob had four wives, but the only wife he really loved was Rachel. All together, Jacob had twelve sons. His two youngest sons were from his beloved wife, Rachel. The older of these two was Joseph and the younger was Benjamin. Back then, the oldest son would often be the father's favorite child. Even though Joseph wasn't the oldest of all of Jacob's sons, he was the oldest son of his *favorite wife*. So out of all of Jacob's sons, Joseph was Jacob's **very favorite**.



For the next several weeks, we are going to learn about the AMAZING life of Joseph. The story of Joseph is better than any movie you've ever seen. It is the TRUE story of God's incredible plan for Joseph, and the entire world. It is the story of forgiveness and God's over-flowing grace. It is a story of seeing circumstances the way God sees them instead of the way we see them.

JOSEPH'S DREAMS (Genesis 37:1-11)

Ask: Now, do you think that Joseph's brothers noticed that Joseph was their dad's favorite? *Listen for answers*. **Say:** Those brothers certainly knew which one was dad's favorite, and they didn't like it one bit! At times, Joseph would tell his father when his brothers weren't behaving well (Genesis 37:2). And Jacob treated Joseph differently from his other sons.

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph - a beautiful robe. But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him. - Genesis 37:3-4 NLT



Say: Sadly, Jacob made it very clear that he had a favorite son. When Joseph was a teenager, Jacob had a fancy robe made for him. The Bible says it was a colorful coat. It was the type that was worn by royalty (Gesenius's Lexicon). In Bible times, dyes for fabric were very expensive. A richly colored robe was a sign of great importance.

Teacher: Show your fabric and trim. Explain that the robe may have been made of

similar fabric with elaborate trim. Say: Joseph's brothers were shepherds who took care of dirty sheep all day. None of them had a coat like this. By wearing the coat, they thought Joseph was saying he was better than them. Then something happened that made the brothers even more jealous.

One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him 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?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.



Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"

This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?" But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant. - Genesis 37:5-11 NLT

Say: These dreams were from God; they predicted the future. The Bible says that God doesn't do anything without telling His servants the prophets about it (Amos 3:7). The wheat and the stars were actually symbols for people. These dreams were God's promise to Joseph. God knew that Joseph's sweet life was about to turn sour. He would be treated terribly by many people for many years. But in the end, things would turn out great for Joseph. God wanted Joseph to remain strong and encouraged during the hard times. By His grace, God gave this vision of the future to Joseph like a big warm hug ahead of time. We'll learn more about this in a few weeks.

We're not sure if Joseph bragged about these dreams, or if he told the dreams to his brothers in an innocent way. No matter how Joseph meant it when he talked about the dreams, it made his brothers really angry.

It seems that everything about Joseph made his brothers angry - even things that Joseph had no control over. They held onto their bitterness and they never forgave. Over time, their anger grew and grew. It's sort of like this. **Teacher: take out your balloon.** Let's say this balloon represents the brothers' anger. Each time they saw something about Joseph that they didn't like, they became angry. **Blow up the balloon a little.** They saw Jacob spending time with Joseph. **Blow up the balloon a little more.** Joseph told their father when they acted badly. **Blow up the balloon a little more.** Jacob gave Joseph his awesome robe. **Blow up the balloon a little more.** Joseph told them his first dream. **Blow up the balloon a little more.** Then Joseph told them his second dream. **Blow up the balloon a little more.** When anger builds and builds, eventually, what will happen? Quickly **POP** the balloon with the **pin**. Eventually, all that anger leads to sin. We'll see that Joseph's brothers were about to do something terrible!

Application: Everyone gets angry sometimes. Raise your hand if you have NEVER gotten angry. We can't even blame Joseph's brothers for being angry when they were treated unfairly. However, the Bible says, **"When you are angry, do not sin."** (Psalm 4:4). But when we are so angry, how in the world can we keep from sinning? Each one of us has a sin nature. Just like Adam and Eve, we choose to sin. **On our own, we are powerless over sin** (Romans 6:17a). But here is where God's grace steps in.

When you are angry, do not sin.
Psalm 4:4a

One of the amazing things that God's grace does is it makes us holy. God's grace gives us the power to say no to sin. Titus 2:12 says that God's grace "teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings."

For example, if someone gets something they don't deserve, it might make you angry. **Blow up the balloon a little.** You have a choice to hold onto your anger or pray for God to give you the grace to let it go. **Let the air out.** Someone might be unkind to you and it makes you angry. **Blow up the balloon a little.** You have a choice to hold onto your anger or ask God to give you the grace to forgive that person (Ephesians 4:31-32). **Let the air out.** Holding onto anger leads to sin. When we abide with God, He will show us when there is a root of anger or bitterness in our heart. Each time, ask God for the grace to forgive and let go of your anger so you will not sin.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS (Genesis 37:12-36)



One day, all of Joseph's older brothers were out in the countryside taking care of the family's sheep. Jacob told Joseph to go check on them, and come back and tell him how they were doing. While Joseph was still a long way off, his brothers saw him coming. **Ask:** Can anyone guess how they saw him coming? *His colorful coat.* **Say:** Most shepherds were poor. They couldn't afford brightly colored clothing, so their clothes blended into the landscape. But when Joseph came wearing his fancy coat, he really stood out. While he was walking toward them, they came up with an evil plan.

"Here comes that dreamer!" they said to one another. "Come. Let's kill him. Let's throw him into one of these empty wells. Let's say that a wild animal ate him up. Then we'll see whether his dreams will come true."

Reuben (the oldest brother) heard them. He tried to save Joseph from them. "Let's not take his life," he said. "Let's not spill any blood. Throw him into this empty well here in the desert. But don't harm him yourselves."

Reuben said that to save Joseph from them. He was hoping he could take him back to his father. - Genesis 37:19-22

Say: This was the most terrible plan possible! They were so angry and jealous that they wanted to kill their own brother (Psalm 37:8). As Jacob's oldest son, Reuben would have been held responsible for his brothers' actions. He wanted to stop his brothers from committing this terrible sin (Genesis 42:22). He was planning to come back and rescue Joseph when his brothers weren't around. Thankfully, they listened to Reuben. When Joseph arrived, they tore off his beautiful coat and threw him into the dry well. Joseph begged his brothers not to leave him there to die but they did not care (Genesis 42:21).



Now, the plot thickens. As some of the brothers sat down to eat their lunch, they saw some traders (not traitors) coming by. The word *trader* comes from the word "trade." Traders were sort of like traveling salesmen. They had items that they would buy, sell, or trade with people as they traveled from one town to another. One of the brothers, named Judah, came up with another idea. He said that instead of leaving Joseph to die in the well, they could sell him as a slave to the traders. That way, they wouldn't be guilty of actually killing him, and they could make some money at the same time.

Say: We KNOW that murder is wrong. **Ask:** Is selling someone into slavery wrong? **Yes! Say:** Of course it's wrong! Every man, woman, and child is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). One person does not have the right to own another person. Judah's plan was evil. But sadly, his brothers agreed to do it. Reuben was not part of this scheme. He was probably taking care of the sheep at this time (Genesis 37:29).



The traders from Midian came by. Joseph's brothers pulled him up out of the well. They sold him to the Ishmaelite traders for eight ounces of silver. Then the traders took him to Egypt.

Later, Reuben came back to the empty well. He saw that Joseph wasn't there. He was so upset that he tore his clothes. He went back to his brothers and said, "The boy isn't there! Now what should I do?"



Then they got Joseph's beautiful robe. They killed a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took it back to their father. They said, "We found this. Take a look at it. See if it's your son's robe."

Jacob recognized it. He said, "It's my son's robe! A wild animal has eaten him up. Joseph must have been torn to pieces." - Genesis 37:28-33

Jacob sobbed and sobbed because he thought that his precious son had been killed. He wore black clothes to show how very sad he was. All of his children tried to make him feel better, but they couldn't. Jacob said he would be broken-hearted until the day he died. **Ask:** How do you think the brothers felt when they saw how sad their father was? *Listen for answers.* **Say:** The brothers sinned by selling Joseph into slavery. Then they sinned by lying to their father, leading him to believe that Joseph was dead. We have to wonder if Jacob's sons ever thought about the pain they would cause their father when they made their evil plans (Proverbs 17:25). Sin almost always hurts innocent people. Furthermore, sin hurts the ones who sin. Jacob's sons would have to live with their guilt for years and years to come. Sin ALWAYS has a price. Sin causes pain, loss, and separation.

Application: We have to remember that sin ALWAYS ruins things. Only God's grace can break the power of sin (Romans 6:14). When you put your trust in Jesus, God pours out His grace on you. God's grace sets you FREE from sin (Romans 6:18, 8:1-2).

JOSEPH SOLD TO POTIPHAR (Genesis 37:36)

Say: While Jacob was grieving the loss of his son, God was working out an amazing plan for Joseph.



Meanwhile, the Midianite traders arrived in Egypt, where they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Potiphar was captain of the palace guard. - Genesis 37:36

If we were to describe the events in Joseph's life up to this point, it might not sound too good. His brothers hated him, he was almost killed, he was robbed of his most valuable possession, and he was thrown into a well. Then he was sold into slavery and he didn't know if he would ever see his father again. But this was not the end for Joseph. His adventure was just beginning. Be sure to come back next week to see what happened next!

PPT Verse

Key Verse: *(God's grace) teaches us to say no to godless ways and sinful longings.*
- Titus 2:12a

PPT Main Point

Main Point: We must depend on God's grace to turn away from sin.