

## **Joseph – The Journey Begins!**

Joseph's family environment was so unhealthy it put him in physical danger. His father's favoritism and the envious hatred of his brothers created an environment that would have hindered him in achieving his destiny. God sent him to Egypt to be molded by adversity and become an example of spiritual greatness.

- Joseph's life exemplifies Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28 - God uses even sin / evil to make good.

### **Study Outline:**

Vs 12-14	Jacob sent
Vs 14- 17	Joseph went
Vs 18-28	Brothers meant

### **Jacob Sent - vs 12-14.**

The brothers are supposed to be tending the flocks in Shechem; sends Joseph to see if there were any problems; 50 miles from Hebron to Shechem (3-4 days)

#### **1. Jacob closed his eyes to the magnitude of the problems in his family - denial.**

- Jacob sees things the way he wants to see them – dream world; Gen 29:15-30 Jacob loved Rachel more than anyone; Gen 35:19 – Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin; Jacob projects his love upon Rachel's children; they were his favorites

#### **2. One of the great goals of spiritual growth is to attain objectivity about family**

- All of us form an unreal image of our family, especially our parents – Firestone calls this family idealization a “fantasy bond”. A fantasy bond is an imaginary love connection created by family members that pictures the family as more loving or normal than it really is. The purpose of a fantasy bond is to find security from a dysfunctional system where needs are not being met – imagine your relationships are better than they are
- Jacob had idealized his family and the relationships between his sons

#### **3. Jacob was blind to the poor character of his sons.**

- He couldn't imagine they would conspire to commit murder or sell their brother.
- Even though two of them had already murdered - Gen 34 – Simeon & Levi took revenge for the rape of their sister Dinah

#### **4. Jacob sent Joseph to Shechem but God was sending him to Egypt.**

- Jacob had no idea what God was doing – making normal decisions
- God allowed Jacob's poor judgment & the brother's sin & used it for divine good.

### **Joseph Went - vs 14-17**

#### **1. Joseph reveals his faith in the Lord by his behavior: obedience to authority and persistence in doing God's will.**

#### **2. Joseph submitted to his father's authority even though in doing so, he put himself at risk - he might have suspected he would be in danger.**

- Authority orientation is the foundation of humility - submission.
- Authority orientation is preparation for life with God.
- Authority orientation is preparation for life in the world - marriage; family

3. **Joseph's dilemma: He is under command and that command puts him at risk.**
4. **Joseph used the word to discern God's will - divine guidance**
  - Clear divine do/don't that appears to put us at risk - obey and trust the Lord for the risk - military - jump out of airplane.
  - Divine directives conflict with common sense - obey and trust the Lord, not common sense - prayer accomplishes more than work.
5. **Joseph was persistent in doing the will of God.**
  - He didn't find them at Shechem and continued to search until he did - vs 15 - wandering, waiting on direction - man found him - sent by God so Joseph could keep his divine appt.
  - Joseph could have justified going home without finding the bro's - he went to Shechem like he was told.
  - Joseph fully obeyed the command & didn't give up until he accomplished his mission.
  - Some Bel's find reasons to do the full will of God; others look for excuses to quit.
6. **Joseph obeyed God to the fullest, not knowing where He would lead him.**
7. **It is doubtful that Joseph could envision where God's plan would take him.**

### **Brothers Meant vs 18-28**

1. Gen 50:20 - the brothers meant evil; God used it for good.
2. The envy and hatred based on Jacob's favoritism grew out of control until the bro's were willing to kill Joseph.
3. The brothers became involved in a conspiracy to commit evil - Satan/God; Jews/Jesus; Legalists/Paul.
4. Jacob was a poor parent, but the bro's chose evil; Jacob is not to blame for their sins.

**Acts 7:9 "Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him.**

1. **Jealous** – zeloo – strong desire, strive for, earnestly seek; hostile feeling from frustrated desire, jealous, covet
  - Joseph was the recipient of what the brothers desperately desired – Jacob's love/approval
  - Every child hungers for parental love/approval – needs parental approval to be healthy
  - Jacob's favoritism not only denied the love they needed but rubbed it in their faces.

**James 4:1-2 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God**

2. **Covet** – zeloo – frustrated desire – covet but can't have what you want
  - Desire denied causes frustration which in turn fosters anger and resentment
  - Anger & resentment can build into the desire to harm; desire to deprive; mental murder
  - The brothers built a desire to harm Joseph that erupted when opportunity arose
  - Their unchecked mental sins resulted in verbal/overt sins – whole family was harmed