



Bible study for the week starting January 28, 2024

SHARE

Did you get along well with your siblings when you were growing up, or did you fight like cats and dogs? What about as an adult? What strengthens or weakens those relationships?

READ/STUDY/DISCUSS

1. Read **Genesis 37**. Joseph and his brothers had all kinds of conflict. What did Joseph do to contribute to this conflict; what about his brothers? What about Jacob/Israel?
2. Joseph's brothers threw him in a pit then sold him into slavery. Did the punishment fit the crime? As a parent (Jacob), few things are more heartbreaking than either losing a child or having children in conflict with one another. In a terrible situation, how was God still present and at work? Does this give you comfort in your own situations and relationships?
3. Read **Hebrews 5:7-14**. This reading says about Jesus: "Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered." What did Joseph learn (that he *needed* to learn) through his suffering? What have you learned – or what has been formed in you – through your own suffering and difficulties?
4. Read **Matthew 26:26-39**. It was the will of God that Jesus should suffer, and as He suffered to fulfill all righteousness and the will of God Himself. We can observe this and think – couldn't there have been another way? – but there wasn't a second option for salvation. God needed to take the children of Israel somewhere (and then back); does the end justify the means?
5. We don't always get to know or see why God allows difficult things to happen in our lives. Is it enough to know God is present (that's His promise) and that there is an often unseen story happening in the background of our lives? Or is this hard for you to stomach?

PRAY

Pray that God would be with you not just in the palace but in the pit.



THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB: DREAMS & NIGHTMARES

Genesis 37 (Heb. 5:7-14; Matt. 26:26-39)

January 28, 2024 – Pastor Eric Van Scharrel

The WRESTLER with 12 sons – what could go WRONG?

All was not WELL. But was God PRESENT? Was God accomplishing His PURPOSE?

This was all going to be part of a higher story of FORMATION and SALVATION for the people of Israel.

“God is more concerned with providing spiritual MATURITY for the children of Israel than he is physical SECURITY.”

This growth process in RESILIENCE wouldn't have happened in Joseph's life if the status quo remained the status quo.

Spiritual maturity only really comes in two ways: the transformational power of the HOLY SPIRIT, and the CRUCIBLE: a faith forged through difficulty.

Even from the cross, Jesus meets our gaze, acts with COMPASSION, and pleads that we would receive MERCY.

“Livin' the DREAM”

God promises to be with you – from the PIT to the PALACE.

For next week, read Genesis 39.