

The **Story** of **Joseph**

God's Invisible Hand in Our Lives

Genesis 37:1 – 50:26

Stuart Myers/Ron Scicluna





The Story of Joseph

Welcome to Week 3





Review of Week 2

*As for you, you meant evil against me, **but God meant* it for good,** [50:20]*

- This story is an example of how God’s sovereign “invisible hand” works in the lives of His people
- God’s plans come to pass (*fall out*) as He makes use of the nature of actions, things, and creatures





Review of Week 2

God's means . . .

- God *makes use of* our nature – our inclinations – to effect His plans
- Our inclinations are *shaped* by our *response* to our trials
- Responding with a *patient belief and trust* in God's providence conforms us to His likeness





Review of Week 2

More Importantly . . .

- Our trials are meant to teach us to *call upon* Him and *rely on* His promise that He is working all things out for good

I waited patiently for *you*, LORD; *you* inclined to me and heard my cry.
²*You* drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. ³*You* put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to *you*. *Psalm 40:1-3 (ESV)*





Review of Week 2

Most Importantly . . .

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces **endurance**, ⁴and endurance produces **character**, and character produces **hope**, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. *Romans 5:3-5*

Our character is defined by our natural inclinations.

Those inclinations are refined as we mature in Christ.

As we mature our hope and trust in God's provision increases.



Review of Week 2



“It takes the **test of trials** to make us **useful to God**. Some of us are not as useful as we might be, for in shunning trials we have missed God’s blessings. . . . **And they will come** so that we might be **prepared** to accomplish His will in our lives *and* in the lives of others.” Alistair Begg





Kidnapped!



Genesis 37:12 - 28





Kidnapped!

Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." And he said to him, "Here I am." ¹⁴So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word." So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. ¹⁵And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" ¹⁶"I am seeking my brothers," he said. "Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." ¹⁷And the man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. *Genesis 37:12-18*





Kidnapped!

¹⁹They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.” ²¹But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” ²²And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father. ²³So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. ²⁴And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it. *Genesis 37:19-24*





Kidnapped!

²⁵Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him. ²⁸Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt. *Genesis 37:25-28*





Kidnapped!

Dysfunctional

Passive Father + Clueless Son + Jealous Brothers

Disaster in the Making !





Kidnapped!

Jacob asked Joseph to go check on his brothers

What was he thinking?!



Joseph agreed to go



What was he thinking?!



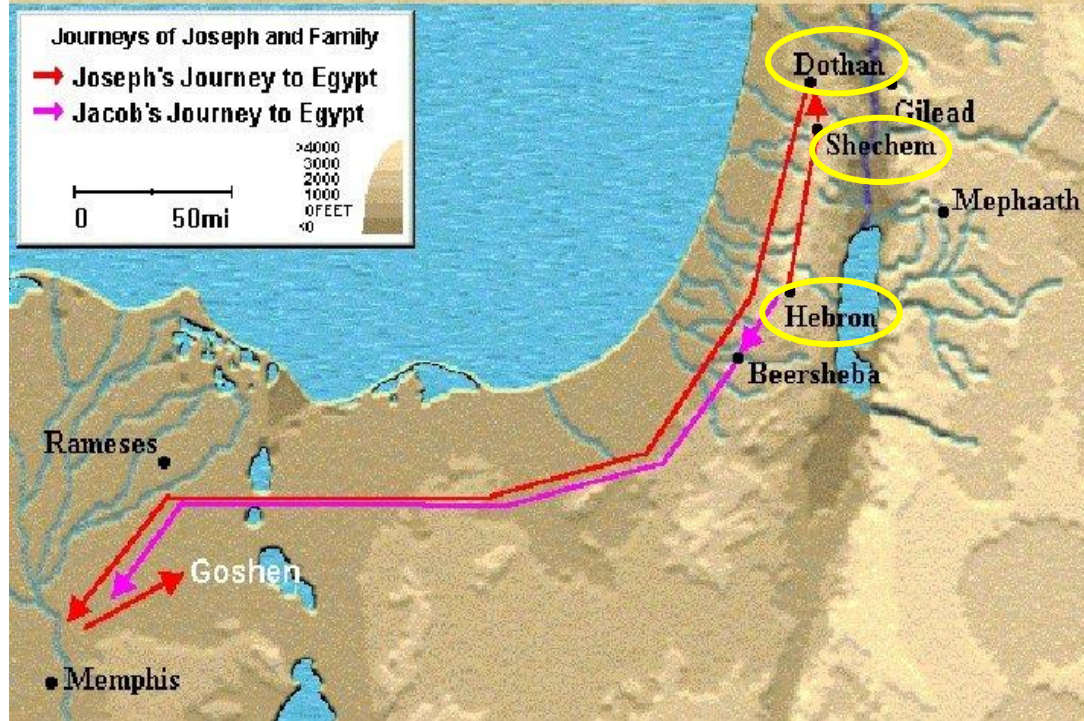


Kidnapped!

So he sent him from the Valley of **Hebron**, and he came to **Shechem**.
15 And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, “What are you seeking?” 16 “I am seeking my brothers,” he said. “Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.”

Joseph's Travels

“the trip to Egypt was long (250–300 miles) and dangerous, and a round trip could consume six weeks' time”



17 And the man said, “They have gone away, for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to **Dothan**.’” So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

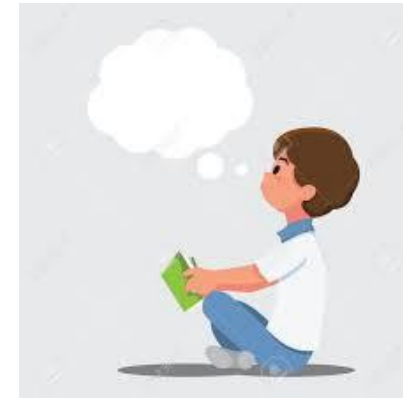




Kidnapped!

So

- Joseph travels alone 5 or 6 days to Shechem
- He meets a man in the field and learns they have moved on to Dothan
- He travels another 6 or 7 miles to Dothan
- He is wearing his multi-colored coat
- And, finally, he sees them way off in the distance





Kidnapped!

And then . . .



- The brothers saw him coming over the hill
- His coat was unmistakable
- Their hatred instantly burned inside them
- They immediately conspired to kill him
- Reuben convinced them to let Joseph live
- There were several pits nearby
- Their plan was quickly formulated





Kidnapped!

When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes ³⁰and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?” ³¹Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. ³²And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.” ³³And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.” ³⁴Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him. *Genesis 37:29-35*





Kidnapped!

- How did God make use of Reuben's nature?
 - Reuben was the oldest and felt responsible for Joseph
 - Reuben did not hate his brother as much as the others
 - Reuben's brothers respected him
 - Reuben quickly saw an alternative to murder
 - Reuben's actions saved Joseph's life
- BUT, by *coincidence*, a caravan happened by
 - The brothers' hate quickly turned to greed
 - Their lie was quickly worked out
 - Reuben's secret rescue plan was thwarted





Kidnapped!

- “Is this your son’s robe?”
 - Their natural inclination was to lie
 - Strong dislike for their father
 - They “appeared” compassionate
- Jacob wallowed in self pity
 - Jacob mourned deeply for days
 - He refused to be comforted by his family
 - Jacob did not turn to God for comfort
 - It appears he had not “kept the saying in mind”



Egypt



But the caravan is bound for Egypt, and although Joseph is now a slave, this is just the beginning of his story... an incredible story that sees him rise up from slavery to become a king of Egypt.

Genesis 37:36; Genesis 39:1- 6





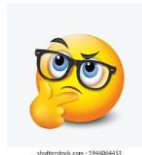
Egypt

Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

¹Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. Genesis 37:36 – 38:1

- The trip from Dothan to Egypt was about 300 miles – 3 weeks
- Potiphar could afford to be a picky slave owner

So why Joseph?



Egypt



There is precious little detail in the narrative but . . .

Joseph had 3 weeks to “collect his thoughts”.

Is it reasonable to imagine he might have:

- Blamed himself for letting his family know of his dreams
- Blamed his father for not supporting him when he described his dreams
- Blamed himself for not realizing how much his brothers hated him
- Blamed his father for showing favoritism
- Blamed his brothers for being so mean; so jealous





Egypt

There is precious little detail in the narrative but . . .

Or perhaps he:

- Blamed his father for creating such a screwed-up family
- Cried out to God saying, “Why me? This is not fair!”
- Cried out to God saying, “What have I done to deserve this?”
- Cried out to God saying, “Almighty God, deliver me from this captivity.”
- Cried out to God saying, “In this day of my trouble, Lord, I call upon you.”
- Plotted revenge

