

## SERMON TRANSCRIPT

07.14.2024 | A Colorful Coat Covered in Blood | Genesis 37:12-36 | Dr. Ben Day, Senior Pastor

If you have a Bible this morning, I'd like for you to turn with me to Genesis chapter 37. This morning, we're continuing our study of the story of Joseph. Last week, we began that study, and so we looked at the first portion of Genesis chapter 37, which really introduces us to the whole story. Probably most of you know that introduction, but just in case you need a recap or if it'd be helpful for you to learn about the introduction to Joseph's story. Last week, we found out that Joseph was a young man, 17 years old, that though he was one of the youngest sons of his father, Jacob, otherwise known as Israel, he was the favorite son. His dad loved him more than he did any of his other children, and he symbolized that. He represented that favoritism by giving him this beautiful coat of many colors. And his brothers hated him. Joseph's brothers did not like him because his father loved him more than he did because of the favoritism shown. They hated him. In fact, it says they could not speak peacefully to him. And their hatred only grew whenever Joseph started to have these dreams. Not only did Joseph have these dreams, but he told his brothers and his family about these dreams. The reason these dreams caused them to grow in their hatred is because these dreams seem to say that at some point, Joseph, who's already the favorite son, is going to be lifted up, and the rest of his family is going to bow down before him.

And this is where we left off with the introduction to Joseph's story. And last week, as we introduced the story of Joseph, I pointed out that there are a few major themes throughout all of Joseph's story, one of them being the providence of God, secondly, the sinfulness of humanity, and thirdly, the grace of God. Those themes we were introduced to last time in the introduction, but we're going to see them all throughout the story, and we'll see them particularly today. So today we move from the introduction to the second part of Genesis 37, which is really the first development in Joseph's story. So let me read for us from Genesis chapter 37, verses 12 through 36. It says, "Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. And 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. So 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. And a man found him wandering in the fields. The man asked him, what are you seeking? He said, I'm seeking my brothers. Tell me please where they are pasturing the flock. 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. They saw him from afar. And before he came near to them, they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another, here comes this dreamer. Come, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say a fierce animal has devoured him. We will see what will become of his dreams. But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands saying, let us not take his life. 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. So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. They took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty. There was no water in it. Then they sat down to eat. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh. And on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Joseph said to, excuse me, then Judah said to his brothers, what profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, 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. Then many a night traders passed by, and they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt. When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes and returned to his brothers and said, the boy is gone, and I, where shall I go? Then they took Joseph's robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in blood. 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. He identified it and said, it is my son's robe. Fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without a doubt torn to pieces. Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. Said, no, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning. Thus his father wept for him. Meanwhile, the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

Now I mentioned that this is the first development of Joseph's story. After being introduced to the idea of what is going to kind of happen to Joseph, that there is this providential dream that God has given Joseph that he's gonna be lifted up, we come now to our first conflict in the story. As you can hear in Joseph's brother's voice, they say, well, let's take his life, and then let's see what will become of those dreams that he had, will he really be lifted up when he's put to death?

And this really is, I think, a picture of the sinfulness that we saw previewed in the introduction really being carried out. And in the sinful actions, it really takes a twist in Joseph's story. In fact, everything about this portion of the story is really, I think, everything kind of being flipped upside down. If Joseph had a theme song for his life, he might say from this portion of the story that this is a little story about how his life got flipped turned upside down. Nobody, Fresh Prince of Bel-Air? Okay, so, we got a few, all right. So this is all really about how everything gets flipped around in Joseph's life, and what I think, you could kind of see that just in the first reading of it, but actually, looking at some of the details of the story helps you to see that even more clearly. So what I want to do this morning is I want to first look at some of these details of the story, these elements of the story that we might better understand it, but then the whole point of reading the Bible is not just to understand it, but to apply it. And so we'll move from then the elements of the story, I think, to then the application of the story. How then can we apply this story to our lives?

So a few elements of the story, the details that I think help us to see this whole thing getting flipped upside down. First, you need to know about the places that are involved in this story. So the first element of the story is some of these geographical locations that are kind of just mentioned in the story, the places. We often, I think, read these portions of the Bible and we read about these towns or these cities, and they don't mean anything to us. Like, they just might be just naming anything because we don't know where they are unless we go in our Bible and look at a map. But to the original audience, these cities, these towns, they would have meant something, they signified things. So often, I think we read the Bible as if we're just reading it from our perspective, but I think we have to remember that to properly read scripture, we first need to seek to understand it from the perspective of the original audience. What would this have meant to them? How would they have understood the story? And then I think we can rightly apply it to our lives. So I think a lot of these places would have really stuck out to the people who first heard this story. So we're told that Joseph's brothers were pastoring the flocks in Shechem. So he's going to be sent there and it says in verse 14, why don't you go, and it says at the end of the verse, so he sent him from the Valley of Hebron and he came to Shechem.

Now what I think you need to know is this is I think somewhat symbolic. The Valley of Hebron was really kind of the place of the forefathers of Joseph. It was kind of almost like a part of the, a central part of the promised land, if you will. It's where Abram had settled, the father of this great family. Abram and his wife Sarah were both buried in the Valley of Hebron. Jacob's parents Isaac and Rebecca were both buried in this area. This is now where Jacob has settled. It seems to be really that land of promise. And Joseph has to leave the Valley of Hebron to go to Shechem. Now if you were just reading Genesis, we kind of jumped into Genesis in chapter 37, but if you were just reading it, it would probably signal to you that Shechem has already been mentioned in the book of Genesis. If you were just to go back a few chapters to chapter 34, I won't go into all the details, but something really terrible happens in the city of Shechem. Some terrible sins are committed, and it results in two of Jacob's sons actually killing a whole bunch of people in that city. So when we hear that his brothers are pastoring in Shechem, I think the original audience, or even if we were just reading Genesis, we would say, "What are they doing back in Shechem?" That seems to be a kind of a foreboding place for Joseph to go from the Valley of his forefathers, this kind of promised land, all the way to Shechem, where not good things have happened. And by the way, that's a 50-mile journey. Sometimes we read the story and we think that the boys are just kind of out in the pasture, and Joseph needs to go check on them, but he's traveling a great distance to go find his brothers.

Of course, they're not actually in Shechem. It's kind of wandering down the fields, and a man tells them that they actually made their way to Dothan. Now, as far as I can tell in studying scripture, I don't know if Dothan is maybe as symbolic as Shechem in some ways, but it's interesting, in Dothan, the word actually means two wells. It was a place for having these pits or these wells, and we're told that the pit that Joseph is thrown into, it seems to be a well because it says it was empty, there was no water in it, signifying at some point there probably was water in it. So I think it is interesting that he travels another 15 miles to Dothan to a place where there just happens to be pits for them to throw Joseph into, but it also happens to be a place where there are people traveling through on their way to Egypt. And it's from Dothan that Joseph is sold to these traders who are passing by, and that is how he ends up in Egypt. Now, that's a very significant place to keep in mind. Most of the story from here on out will take place in Egypt. And you have to think about the people who first heard this story. I mean, maybe the story had been passed down for generations, but when Moses first gathers the people of God and is kind of recounting this story to them, he's telling it to people who just left out of Egypt. After 400 years, they had been in slavery and in bondage in Egypt, and now they are finally leaving, and they are hearing that this is where Joseph is heading. Joseph is leaving the land of his fathers and going into this foreign

land. He is leaving the land of promise and going into the land of oppression in their mind. So this is significant. This is a sign of how Joseph's story has turned. The dreams had said he was going to be lifted up, but in these places, we just see that he has been brought down very low. We see it not only in the places, but also the people that are involved in the story.

So the second element of the story that is just good for us to think about a little bit in terms of the details is some of the people who are involved in the story and how all of them almost seem to kind of be flipped upside down in some way. Let's start with Jacob, the father of this story. Jacob, I don't know if you know this, but his name means deceiver. In early in Jacob's life, he was always tricking somebody, tricking his brother, tricking his parents, trying to trick his uncle. Now, I think Jacob in some ways has grown out of that. He's matured. God has changed his name to Israel. But it's interesting that almost throughout this portion of the story, Jacob is not one who is tricking others, but almost getting tricked. I mean, in some ways, he's really a foolish father throughout the story. I mean, think about just from the beginning, the fact that Jacob sent Joseph out to check on his brothers. Is this just the most oblivious dad of all time? I mean, does he not know all the conflict that's been brewing the last time that Joseph brought a word back from his brothers? It wasn't a good report. Now he's sending his son out to this desolate place, a chance for his sons who have done some bad things just a few chapters before to take action again. He seems to be really kind of foolish in this action of sending Joseph out. And then even at the end of the story, I don't know if you noticed, but the brothers actually didn't even have to tell the lie. All they did was sent this coat covered in blood and said, "Can you identify this?" And Jacob is the one who kind of forms the story in his mind. Oh yes, it's Joseph's coat, it's been covered in blood. Surely he's been devoured by an animal. I mean, they just have to agree to it. They don't even have to come up with the lie themselves. This one who has been tricking others his whole life is really foolish and deceived in this story.

Kind of reminds you even that garment that he's touching at the end, that at some point early in his life, he had deceived his father with a garment. He'd used a coat of an animal skin to trick his father into thinking he was his brother. Now he's being tricked in the very same way. Joseph is also turned upside down in this, not by his own doing, but by the actions of others. Joseph, it's kind of hard to know about Joseph, like what to think about him in the introduction. When you go to those first 11 verses like we did last week, a lot of times people will say, "What are we supposed to make about Joseph?" I mean, he's this young guy, he's the favorite son, he's got this nice coat, but like what's he doing bringing a bad report of his brothers? Is he a tattletale? Does he know he's the favorite? Is he kind of arrogant? Is he a brat? We don't really know what to think about Joseph in the introduction. But I think here in this portion of the story, it's really clear that Joseph is the obedient son. I mean, Jacob says, "I need you to go check on your brothers. "It's not a short distance. "They don't like you." But here Joseph says in verse 13, "Here I am." In some symbolic words for being sent out, he's willing to travel a long distance. Even as he's looking around kind of in checkup for them and he can't find them, he travels more to Dothan because he wants to see his brothers. He seems to be the obedient son. He was the favored son, but by the end of the story, he's no longer the favorite son.

His coat's been ripped off of him. Now he's in chains and now he is going down to this foreign land of Egypt. Everything's been turned upside down. Two of the brothers also I think are interesting in this story. And when we get a picture of the sinfulness of all the brothers, but two that are specifically highlighted they're almost kind of upside down themselves. We see here from Reuben and Judah, they're almost kind of like, in small ways, like the heroes of the story, aren't they? Like it wasn't for Reuben and Judah. It seems that Joseph would be dead and the story really does end. I mean, the providence of God is that he uses Reuben and Judah to keep Joseph alive. Whatever their motivations might have been, whatever their reasoning was, he uses them in his plan. And all that you need to know, I think, not to spend too much time on it, but you just need to know that Reuben and Judah aren't necessarily good dudes. Like if you read the book of Genesis, you just go back two chapters, in Genesis chapter 35, you'll find Reuben doing something really terribly sinful. Just go one chapter after this one in chapter 38, you'll find Judah doing something terribly sinful. These aren't necessarily the good brothers, if you will, but God is using them to keep Joseph alive as part of his providence. The last person that I think is just interesting to consider is this random man in Shechem.

I mean, do you find that part of the story kind of interesting? You know, if you think about the Bible, how it was originally written in scrolls and different places like that, that they really had to consider all the words that they would include because they weren't going to include unnecessary details. Why do we have this kind of random portion of the story where Joseph is wandering around the field in Shechem and then there's this man that says, well, you got to go to

Dothan. I heard them talking about going to Dothan. You know, early on in the story, Joseph might've looked at that guy and thought, well, thank you. I mean, I've been here looking for them forever and you've told me right where they are, thank you to this man. But maybe when he's in the pit, he's like, I wish I would've never met that man. I mean, this man who seems to kind of be a help actually is maybe like a curse to Joseph, sending him to his seemingly death or at least now to being enslaved. You know, older Jewish tradition believe that this man maybe was an angel from God. I mean, the fact that he just approaches Joseph, he just knows the details of Joseph's brothers, it seems to me maybe he even is from God, used by God to continue this story in its providential plan. But what seems to be kind of a help is really more of a hurt in Joseph's case, at least so it seems. All these people are kind of upside down.

And then lastly, the last detail, it's probably not one we need to spend much time on because I think it would stick out in most people's minds, but it is this possession. By possession, I mean coat. I'll admit I just like the alliteration and I wanted another pee for our elements of the story, but there's this possession that Joseph has that is this colorful coat. When you think about the very beginning of the story, the coat symbolizes the fact that Joseph is the favored son. In fact, he's wearing that coat as he goes out to see his brothers. A lot of people speculate maybe his brothers were able to identify him from afar because he's wearing that colorful coat. What had been a sign of his special status in the family is maybe now a target on his back. But by the end of the story, Cloak been stripped off of Joseph and now he's most likely in chains heading down to Egypt, a picture of what's happened to Joseph's life. We got foretold that Joseph was going to rise to prominence, but all we've seen so far is him heading in the opposite direction. The coat is symbolic of that being removed from Joseph, but not just being taken off of him, but the fact that it is dipped into the blood of an animal. It's really a picture of the results of sin. All throughout the Bible, the Bible is trying to help us to see that sin equals death, that sin results in death. Even at the very beginning, when God tells Adam and Eve, "When you eat of that fruit, you will surely die." Even if they didn't die that day, we know that there was an animal that was killed so that they could be clothed. It was like the first sacrifice that happened. Then all throughout the Bible, there's all these other sacrifices, blood being shed, as a picture of what are the results of sin.

And now this coat being covered in blood is a picture of the results of sin. Sin results in death. While Joseph's life has been spared, this blood has been shed. It is a picture of the way that sin, I think, turns everything upside down. What we saw in the beginning of this story was that the sin was starting to brew, and now we see it continue to grow. It's come to a head in this story. The question is, well, will God's providence continue to prevail? If you know the end of the story, of course you know that it will, but this is the conflict that we find ourselves in. All of these places, these people, this possession of the coat, is all signaling something to us that sin is seeking to undo this great plan of God. Seeking is, excuse me, sin is seeking to turn everything upside down. And in many ways, it's often successful. And so many times, it's successful in our own lives. In so many ways, sin has affected God's, what seems to be God's plan for our lives. So many times, sin seems like it has impacted us. It has really hurt us in many different ways.

And when we think about this story, I think when you think about applying the story, you kind of have to ask yourself, well, how am I going to read myself into this story? You know, a very natural thing to do when you read a story, I think the reason we love stories is because we can kind of see ourselves in the story. And the question is, well, where do we see ourselves in this story? I think naturally, we'd want to identify with Joseph, right? Like he's the main character. He seems to be the good guy in the story, if you will. So many times, I think we would want to put ourselves in Joseph's shoes. And at times, I think it's really important for us to do that because as I was mentioning to the children earlier, there are many times in our lives when we are like Joseph, hurt by others, maybe even those closest to us. I think also, if we're honest with ourselves, there are many times when we're actually a lot like Joseph's brothers. We are not necessarily always the one who's being hurt, but sometimes we are the one who hurts those around us, maybe even those close to us. So as we think about applying this story out, I want us to apply from kind of both lenses, if you will. So let's start by kind of relating to the brothers and just say it like this. As those who sin, let's be aware of sin's power and desire to destroy us. As sinners, as people who sin against others, let's beware the fact that sin is powerful and that it has a desire to destroy us.

You think about where the story began last week with Joseph's brothers hating him, Joseph's brothers that said they could not speak peacefully to him. Well, maybe in some ways we've been there before. I mean, in some ways we've had some hard feelings against somebody. We maybe have hated, been angry towards someone. Maybe at times we could not think of a nice word to say to someone or about someone. But all of a sudden, it has progressed where Joseph's

brothers are not only can't speak peacefully to him, but now they want to take his life. This is a picture of the way that I think sin works. Sin is powerful and it continues to push. Sin always draws you down farther. It always desires more. It always wants to consume more of you. It has the desire to destroy you. And maybe in some ways it sounds weird to personify sin in this way, to think about sin as desiring, but actually that's the way that God spoke about sin. You know, the story of brothers hating another brother, it reminds me of a story earlier in Genesis and Genesis chapter four. It's a story about Cain being jealous and hating his brother Abel. And God comes to Cain and this is what he says to him in Genesis chapter four, verse seven. He says, "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." The reality is sin was crouching at the door of Joseph's brothers, ready to devour, destroy their lives, their relationship with their brother.

Sin has the power to do that and it has the desire to do that. Then it has that same desire in each one of our lives. Sin has a desire that is contrary to you, desire to destroy you, and it has the ability to do so. Sin has ruined many lives. It has ruined many relationships. We need to be aware of its power and its desire that is contrary to us. So if you're here today and maybe you would find yourself like Joseph's brothers, maybe you find yourself being angry towards someone. Maybe you find yourself really being hurt by someone and you've built up a resentment, a hatred towards them. It's not good to just say, "Well, I'll just avoid them. I just won't talk to them anymore and maybe that'll make it better." Or maybe just to say, "Well, you know, I'll just kind of push these feelings down." I think the Bible says one of the first things we need to do is begin to move towards forgiveness. Not that we always have the ability to forgive right away, but that that would be our desire. That we would immediately, Jesus even says, you would leave your gift at the altar and you would go and begin to seek restoration with another. That sin is crouching at the door of your life. Don't allow it to have a foothold in your life. Maybe your sin is not necessarily against another, but it is something just private, personal, and you think it'll just stay that way. The reality is sin is never satisfied. It's always going to desire more of you. It's going to continue to seek to destroy you. So many times we think, "Well, if I could just kind of keep this sin in the dark, it will just not affect others." But the reality is our sin always comes to the light.

At the end of Genesis chapter 37, I think Joseph's brothers probably thought that they had gotten away with it. I mean, dad bought it. He came up with a story himself. Joseph's gone to Egypt. We'll never see him again. It's like, psh, everything's good. Spoiler alert, you probably know the story, but Joseph and his brothers get reunited at some point, and they are very fearful. Why? Because their sin has come to find them out. I mean, it's being brought to light. The reality is I think when sin is crouching at the door of our lives, when it is starting to consume us, we can either try to keep it in the dark or we can bring it out into the light. We can confess it. I think the way that we come to a place where we can confess sin is to trust in the forgiveness of God. Just as I was saying to the kids, that we have to believe that God is gracious and will forgive if we will confess our sins. I've always heard it said that if we will uncover our sin, God will cover it by his grace. If we will confess our sin, he is merciful and gracious to forgive us our sins. But when we choose to not confess, but to continue to cover our sin, at some point God will uncover it. At some point it will come to light. So do not allow sin to just be a part of your life. Do not just allow it to have a place in your life. Recognize that it has the power, the ability and the desire to destroy you, to destroy your relationships. Confess that sin, bring it into the light, trust in the forgiveness of God.

And also this is maybe a bit of just kind of a side application, but I am just thoughtful of Reuben in all of this. I mean the brother who was like trying to do the right thing, but he was kind of trying to do it like in a passive, sneaky way. Like I won't just stand up to my brothers, but I'll just say, hey, let's put them in the pit and I'll come sneak them out of the pit later. Sin's too powerful for us to fight against it in just kind of passive ways. Sin is so powerful, it is so strong that so often I think we need to actually take a clear stand against it. So often just trying to take a passive or shy, sneaky route against sin is not going to work. So many times the only way that we'll be able to stand up for people who are being sinned against is to take a clear stand against sin. So recognize, beware of sin's power and its desire. But at the same time I do recognize that at different stages and seasons of our life, we will be in Joseph's shoes. Yes, we are sinners, but we are also surrounded by sinners. We live among sinful people who will hurt us, sin against us. And so as those who are sinned against, let's trust in the plan and the grace of God. As people who are sinned against by others, let us trust in the plan and the grace of God.

Here we have all three of those major themes that I was pointing out last week. The sinfulness of humanity on full display, but also the providence, the plan of God, and the grace of God. Let's just think about it for a moment. As Joseph

is sitting in the pit, or maybe as he is on this caravan on the way to Egypt, he probably could have easily thought about all the things that could have gone differently. Gosh, I wish my dad would have just never sent me out there. Wish I would have never met the man in Shechem. I wish I wouldn't have been wearing that stupid coat that made them hate me so much. All these things that he would have just wanted to do differently. So many times that's what we could do in life. When things aren't going well, we could have a lot of what is and should have and could have that we would want things to go differently. But sometimes, like Joseph is here, it's not that we've done anything wrong. It's not that we should have done anything differently. I think the picture here is that Joseph is actually doing the right thing, being the obedient son. It's not that Joseph is sinning, at least in this instance, it's that he's being sinned against. In that moment, I think what continues to help Joseph to be faithful, even as he is going now into Egypt, is the fact that he knows that God has a plan. As he's sitting there in slavery, he's got to be thinking, well, I don't know about those dreams anymore. I'm not sure if anybody's going to bow down before me. But God, you're going to have to work this one out, because I'm not in control anymore. So many times when we've been hurt and we've been sinned against, that's the place where we need to be, trusting in the plan and the promises of God.

Now listen, Joseph had a very specific promise from God, that he was going to be lifted up and others were going to bow down before him. Most likely, you've not received such a specific promise from God. Maybe God's given you a word that something specific like that's going to happen, but we don't always have promises that things are going to work out for us in this season or that we're going to beat this illness or whatever the case might be. But we do have other promises from God. We have promises from God that he will never leave us or forsake us. Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age." When we are sinned against, we can be sure that God's presence is still very near to us. We're also reminded in scripture that Paul says in Ephesians 1, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. He says in Philippians chapter four, that he will supply every need of yours, according to the riches and glory in Christ Jesus. God is not withholding anything that you need. When you are sinned against, this is the promise that you can hold on to.

Of course, as we talked about last week and we are reminded of the story of Joseph, God has promised to work all things together for good. Not meaning that every action or every season in life will be good, but he is writing a greater story in which everything comes together for good. When it seems like life's not working out according to plan, when people have sinned against you, when it seems like the devil is winning, claim those promises of God. Trust in the plan of God. But also trust in the grace of God. And what I mean when I say that we need to trust in the grace of God when we've been sinned against is that I think we need to be so trusting in God's grace towards us as sinners that actually gives us the ability to be gracious to those who have sinned against us. When we've been sinned against, we need to be so moved by God's grace towards us that we would be able to show grace to others.

And I think we're reminded of God's grace towards us in this story. You know, Joseph is this obedient son sent out by his father to a field to check on workers. It results in him being thrown into a pit and then him being sold into slavery. You know, Jesus actually tells a really similar story in a parable. Jesus says that there was a master who had left his field and he left it to some tenants. And it says that he first sent some of his servants to those tenants to check on them. It says that the tenants decided to beat and kill these different servants. And so then similar to maybe even Jacob in the story, the master of that parable says, "Let me send my son to them "because they'll respect my son." It says that the tenants did not respect his son. In fact, they killed the son so that they could have the inheritance. And Jesus said this parable was all about how God relates to us, what has happened between God and his people. That through the prophets and through the messengers, God has sent his servants. And they were ignored and they were mistreated and they were killed. And so God said, "I will send my son."

You see, Jesus is the true and greater Joseph. The obedient son sent from the father. But not because his father was foolish, like maybe Jacob was, but because his father was faithful. And God had said, "I will not forsake my people "in their sin, but I will send my son "knowing that they will reject him, "knowing that they will kill him." Joseph was sold for 20 shekels of silver. Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. Joseph was thrown down into a pit. Jesus went much deeper. You know, at the end of the story, Jacob says, "I'm going to go down to Sheol to be with my son." The Sheol was the place of the dead. Bible says that Jesus did not just go down into a well or into a pit in the earth. He went down to the place of the dead as he experienced death. Unlike Joseph, Jesus' life wasn't spared. It wasn't a goat whose blood was shed, it was the lamb of God whose blood was shed. The Bible says all of this happened to Jesus because of God's grace

towards us. That though we were people who had rejected God, forsaken God in all that he had for us and who rejected his son when he came, put him upon the cross to kill him, God was gracious to us to forgive us as sinners. I think when we are sinned against, if we will look to the true and greater Joseph, if we will look to Jesus and the grace that we receive in him, it will give us the ability to show that grace to others.

So when you find yourself as someone who is sinning against others, harboring sin in your life, recognize its power, its desire to destroy you, confess that sin, trust in the grace of God. But when you are sinned against, when people have hurt you, trust that God is providential, trust that God is gracious, that he has forgiven you of far worse, and allow that to give you the ability to show grace to those who have sinned against you.