

## A. SERMON SLIDES

Slide 1:

The Dreamer, the Dream and the Dream-Giver  
Genesis 37

Slide 2:

Genesis 37:1-36 (ESV)

Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

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. And the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" "I am seeking my brothers," he said. "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 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.” But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” And 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. And 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. 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. 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 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.

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 the blood. And 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.” And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without 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 and 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.

Slide 3:

How will God have a nation of free moral agents who are bent toward evil, and through them bring salvation to the world?

Slide 4:

If God is loving and in control then why ?

He must be in control and evil/mean, OR not in control and really good/perfect!

Slide 5:

Three Concepts for Framing:

1) The Dreamer (The context of the pervasiveness of human sin)

2) The Dream (The concealed providence of God overruling sin)

3) The Dream-Giver (The way of salvation cannot be prevented. God will do it)

Slide 6:

The Dreamer

Genesis 37:3 (ESV)

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors.

Slide 7:

The Dream

Genesis 37:5 (ESV)

Now Joseph had a dream...

Slide 8:

Miracle = Supernatural event that cannot be explained by normal natural or scientific laws

Providence = Supernatural events that can be explained by natural or scientific laws

Slide 9:

God's goodness is compatible with awful suffering, and God's power is compatible with our free choices.

Slide 10:

Because providence is concealed in the natural:

1) God must use sin to work out his purposes because humans are naturally sinful

Slide 11:

Because providence is concealed in the natural:

1) God must use sin to work out his purposes because humans are naturally sinful

2) God is doing way more than just getting His way. He cares about every individual.

Slide 12:

The Dream-Giver

## **B. GROUP DISCUSSION**

1) Read Chapter 37 of Genesis. What is happening in this chapter? What can you surmise about the personality/character of the people in this scene?

- a) Joseph
- b) Brothers (Reuben/Judah)
- c) Jacob

2) How would you explain the Providence of God? Explain how it may look different for God to work out His purposes through miracles, or through providence.

3) Which places in this story is it most clear to you that God is working out His will in hidden but obvious ways?

4) How can you see now in the story that pain and suffering, and the "free" choices of humans can be completely compatible with God's absolute power and control over the affairs on the earth?

5) What advantages does God's providence have over miracles in transforming our own hearts as God works out His purposes?

6) Explore the "way" that salvation was brought to us. How does God plan on top of human sin to bring us grace? Read Acts 2:22-24. How does Peter show us God's plan of providence whereby God accomplishes His planned purposes through our sin without being accused of being an accomplice to our sin.

7) Prayer and praise