



FREEDOM

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BIG IDEA – Allowing us to do anything we want is not the same as doing what is good for us. One can get us trapped in a nightmare, the other can grow us into the life that feels like a dream come true.

Scripture Focus – You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is beneficial. **1 Corinthians 10:23 NLT.**

“I can do anything I want.” True enough. But will it get you what you think you want, or what you actually need? **God lets you choose your own path.** He'd rather grow you into the life your heart has been chasing all along.

Glenn's Story: Learning to Dream Again

At a very young age, maybe six or seven, I would spend my dreamtime on rescuing 2nd grade damsels in distress. By the time I was eight a curtain dropped and I could never imagine what my life would become, because dreaming was no longer available to me. **“What do you want to be when you grow up,” folks used to ask us about that age. When I would close my eyes and think about the answer, all I would see was a solid black existence.**



My life has been beyond what I ever imagine it to be!

I have faithfully and consistently followed Proverbs 16:9 NIV

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.”

God granted me the freedom to choose to obey him, follow him, trust him and totally depend on him to make my crooked paths straight ([Isaiah 45:2](#)) and have a life that has been a joy to live!

There was a young man in the Old Testament that had a very different start, but eventually far more than all of his dreams would come true.

This young man was very loved but he was born into a very large, but very complicated family.

We want to take note of what God did and what this young man did in response in these four very circuitous, crazy scenes of his life.

Let me introduce you to Joseph.



“This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father’s flocks. He worked for his half-brothers, the sons of his father’s wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing.” Genesis 37:2 NLT.

What an odd way to continue the story of Jacob! You remember, Esau and Jacob were miracle twins born to Rebekah & Jacob. But Moses wanted to immediately humble-brag about Jacob’s oldest son of his beloved Rebekah - Joseph. And wow, he laid on the accolades thick, starting with the fact that **Joseph was his snitch.**

And Jacob just could not hide his favoritism for his boy.

“Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe.” Genesis 37:3 NLT

Which obviously created friction between Joseph’s older sons by several different mothers:



1. **Reuben** (Leah)
2. **Simeon** (Leah)
3. **Levi** (Leah)
4. **Judah** (Leah)
5. **Dan** (Bilhah)
6. **Naphtali** (Bilhah)
7. **Dinah** (Leah)
8. **Gad** (Zilpah)
9. **Asher** (Zilpah)
10. **Issachar** (Leah)
11. **Zebulun** (Leah)
12. **Joseph** (Rachel)
13. **Benjamin** (Rachel)

“But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn’t say a kind word to him. Genesis 37:4 NLT

Four Scenes

We’ll look at four scenes out of Joseph’s life that will help us understand this idea of our **Freedom To Become**.

Joseph is the perfect story of how our own stories are rarely ever a straight line to the fulfillment of our dreams.



Scene One: The Dream (Genesis 37). Joseph was just different; he was a dreamer. His purpose arrived in the form of two dreams at seventeen years old. **Of course, they were immediately opposed by the ones who should have protected it.**

The love of his father and the coat . To add fuel to the already raging feud, **God gave Joseph dreams (plural) about him and his family's future!** And... you are not going to believe this but it is true – in complete and utter innocence or **naïveté**, Joseph decided to tell his brothers about the dream.

One night Joseph had a dream, and when **he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever.** Genesis 37:5 NLT



Then again, he told his brothers about it.

“Soon Joseph had **another dream, and again he told his brothers** about it. “Listen, I have had another dream,” he said. “The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!” Genesis 37:9 NLT



Joseph was **so excited**, he decided to tell his Dad and brothers about the dream as well. Even Jacob was alarmed at how audacious and presumptuous his son was about his future. But he was also **curious**.

“This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. “What kind of dream is that?” he asked. “Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?” But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant.” Genesis 37:10-11 NLT



Joseph sharing his dream ended up becoming a detour that would last for many years of his life.

The hatred his brothers had for him was just the beginning of his struggle to see how this magnificent dream would eventually turn into reality.

Obviously, Joseph's brothers were jealous enough to act on their own desires to solve a temporary emotion with a very permanent decision – together then conspired to kill their little brother along with him dreams.

“When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. **As he approached, they made plans to kill him. “Here comes the dreamer!”** they said. “Come on, **let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns.** We can tell our father, ‘A wild animal has eaten him.’ Then **we'll see what becomes of his dreams!**” **Genesis 37:18-20 NLT**



Scene Two: Favor Tested by Injustice (Genesis 39:1-20) Excellence in Potiphar's house, real favor, real responsibility, and then punished for the one thing he refused to do wrong. **Sometimes integrity doesn't protect you, it costs you.**

Genesis 39 opens with Joseph being sold by Ishmaelite traders, and purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian officer. Potiphar was captain of the guard for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.



“The Lord was with Joseph, so **he succeeded in everything he did** as he served in the home of his Egyptian master. **Potiphar noticed this and realized that the Lord was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did.** This pleased Potiphar, so **he soon made Joseph his personal attendant.** He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned. From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, **the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake.** All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. **So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned.** With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat!” Genesis 39:2-6a NLT

We don't know exactly how long Joseph served in Potiphar's house, but we do know that Joseph was successful, Potiphar noticed it and increasingly gave him more responsibility, eventually allowing him to be in charge of everything Potiphar owned.

“he didn't worry about anything except what he would like to eat... and, it turns out, his own wife's behavior.

“Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. “Come and sleep with me,” she demanded.”
Genesis 39:6b-7 NLT



Potiphar's wife is a scenario where Joseph could have and no one would have known. Joseph weighs what could be seen as "allowed" against "beneficial" in real time.

Reminds us of Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 10:23, "You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial.

Joseph resisted and tried talking sense into the woman, but she persistently pressured him into sleeping with her. Joseph was able to avoid being anywhere around her, until one day she caught him alone, with no one else around.

"She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house. When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. **"My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed.** When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me." Genesis 39:12-15 NLT

"integrity can still cost you"

It's all a riveting story in Genesis for you to read in one sitting, but for Joseph, **time crawled by very slowly, going from Pit to Potiphar, then off to prison for being falsely accused.**



Scene Three: Forgotten in the Dark (Genesis 39:21-40:23).

Still faithful in prison, still gifted (interpreting dreams for the cupbearer and baker), and then **explicitly forgotten for two more years** (40:23) by the one person who could have spoken up for him.

"But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. **The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed."** Genesis 39:21-23 NLT



At every point thus far, someone in Joseph's life could have, should have stepped up to protect him or at least acknowledge his innocence and treated justly – his Father, his oldest brother, Reuben, Potiphar and even one of the inmates that Joseph was instrumental in saving his life by interpreting one of fellow prisoner's dreams.

A pattern of success, success and success amidst favor, upon favor, upon favor, but still Joseph was not free to the point of fulfilling the dreams in his past. Do you think he might have given up on those dreams at some point, in the pit, with Potiphar or while in prison?

"faithfulness can still get you forgotten "

God didn't just give Joseph incredible dreams; he also gave Joseph even more amazing – the gift of dream interpretation.

While in prison, Joseph got to rub shoulders with some pretty important guys in Pharaoh's court. He made friends with Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and chief baker. Two men who protected the food chain of the ruler of Egypt! But something happened and they "fell out of favor" with the Pharaoh.



"While they were in prison, Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning. When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them. And they replied, "We both had dreams last

night, but no one can tell us what they mean.” “**Interpreting dreams is God’s business,**” Joseph replied. “**Go ahead and tell me your dreams.**” Genesis 40:5-8 NLT

Joseph also requested a favor of both of them,

“And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place.” Genesis 40:14 NLT

Yeah, yeah, sure thing kid, they kind of responded – now tell me what my dream means!

The cupbearers interpretation was so positive that the chief baker thought he’d give it a go as well. But... the baker’s dream wasn’t so positive. It was all true, but it did not go well for the baker. And for the cupbearer sharing Joseph’s plight – not so much!



Scene Four: The Reveal and Realization of becoming (Genesis 41)

Promotion, yes, but again anchored on 41:51-52 rather than the throne itself: Joseph naming what the years did to him, forgetting and fruitfulness both, in the same two verses.

A full two years later – it is Pharaoh that has two dreams this time. And for the Pharaoh to have a dream is apparently a **very significant occasion**. At his level, with the entire command of Egypt, he is desperate to know what these dreams mean. I can tell you this – Pharaoh’s fake gods didn’t give him these dreams; it was the One True God that broke into his sleep giving him both the warning of what **was to come** and the opportunity to choose to **prepare for it!**



"Two full years later, **Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River.** In his dream he saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. Then he saw seven more cows come up behind them from the Nile, but these were scrawny and thin. These cows stood beside the fat cows on the riverbank. Then the scrawny, thin cows ate the seven healthy, fat cows! **At this point in the dream, Pharaoh woke up.** Genesis 41:1-4 NLT

"But **he fell asleep again and had a second dream.** This time he saw seven heads of grain, plump and beautiful, growing on a single stalk. Then seven more heads of grain appeared, but these were shriveled and withered by the east wind. And these thin heads swallowed up the seven plump, well-formed heads! **Then Pharaoh woke up again and realized it was a dream.**" Genesis 41:5-7 NLT

WHAT DRAMA!



"The next morning Pharaoh was very disturbed by the dreams. So he called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. When Pharaoh told them his dreams, **not one of them could tell him what they meant. Finally, the king's chief cupbearer spoke up.** "Today I have been reminded of my failure," he told Pharaoh." Genesis 41:8-9 NLT

After Joseph successfully interpreted the Pharaoh's dreams, he actually recommended someone else for the job of preparing Egypt for the famine ahead – even then he didn't **SELF PROMOTE!!!**

JOSEPH SAID...

"Therefore, **Pharaoh should find an intelligent and wise man** and put him in charge of the entire land of Egypt." Genesis 41:33 NLT

Are you kidding me?

Then the moment of the fulfillment of the dream came to pass!



"So Pharaoh asked his officials, "Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are. You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours." Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt." Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and placed it on Joseph's finger. **He dressed him in fine linen clothing** and hung a gold chain around his neck." Genesis 41:38-42 NLT

I don't think **Jacob knew exactly what he was doing when he made the colorful coat** for young Joseph. **Jacob did so to show favoritism.** I don't think **Hannah stitching Samuel's little Priest Garment had a plan for a nation's first prophet in mind either.** But watch what God does with our parental love. **He can weave it into the fabric of our future!**

When Pharaoh put that fine linen on Joseph, I think Joseph experienced a very visceral moment.

From receiving the colorful coat from his father Jacob to his brothers stripping it off of him and throwing him into the pit, to this final full-circle moment of wearing the uniform of purpose that God knew about all along.

Clothing can often function as a marker of identity and a change of status in the Bible.

Most of us have not experienced the life that Joseph lived. But look at the similarities between being born to a Father and Mother who smothered, even to the point of favoring Joseph as a little boy. That love, that kind of belonging in a family likely gave Joseph the patience and courage to endure the trauma and travesty of 22 years he would experience as a young man, figuring out his destiny, his purpose, not on his own, but with this extraordinary relationship with his God.

From the coat his father gave him in love, to the coat his brothers stripped off him in hatred, to the linen Pharaoh placed on him in honor, clothing marks every turn of Joseph's story.

But it's not the robe that tells us Joseph is finally free.

It's what he named his sons. He called the first Manasseh: 'God made me forget.' He called the second Ephraim: 'God made me fruitful, in the very place I suffered.' The coat announced Joseph's favor. The names announced his healing. [Genesis 41:50-52 NLT](#)

Before we go further, find yourself somewhere in this story. Maybe you just got handed a dream, and it's already being opposed by people who should be in your corner. Maybe you're doing the right thing and it's costing you, not protecting you. Maybe you feel forgotten, waiting on someone who never called. Or maybe you're standing right at the edge of the reveal, and you don't know it yet. Wherever you are, this next part is for you.

REFLECTIONS

Whatever scene you found yourself or currently find yourself in - it doesn't get removed! Remember: this is not the end of your story and you're not writing the ending of it alone.

- Genesis repeats "the LORD was with Joseph" three separate times, always right after something painful happened:
 - In Potiphar's house – [Genesis 39:2](#)
 - In Prison – [Genesis 39:21](#)
 - In Joseph's promotion – [Genesis 39:23](#)

APPLICATION

Each scene names a distinct ache:

- Have you been **opposed by the ones who should protect you?**
- Has your integrity **penalized rather than promote you?**
- Have you been **forgotten by someone who could've helped you?**
- Have you been waiting **for God to fulfill a dream or promise?**

God is not opposing your will when you've chosen to follow him.

God is not punishing you for doing what's right.

God has not and will not forget you!

God is still working on fulfilling your godly dreams and pursuits.

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 37:2 NLT

"This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father's flocks. He worked for his half-brothers, the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing."

Genesis 37:3 NLT

"Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe."

Genesis 37:4 NLT

"But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him. Genesis 37:4 NLT

Genesis 37:5 NLT

One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever.

Genesis 37:9 NLT

"Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"

Genesis 37:10-11 NLT

"This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?" But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant."

Genesis 37:18-20 NLT

"When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!"

Genesis 39:2-6a NLT

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Genesis 39:6b-7 NLT

"Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded."

1 Corinthians 10:23 NLT

"You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial.

Genesis 39:12-15 NLT

"She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, "Come on, sleep with me!" Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house. When she saw that she was holding his cloak and he had fled, she called out to her servants. Soon all the men came running. "Look!" she said. "My husband has brought this Hebrew slave here to make fools of us! He came into my room to rape me, but I screamed. When he heard me scream, he ran outside and got away, but he left his cloak behind with me."

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"While they were in prison, Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning. When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them. And they replied, "We both had dreams last night, but no one can tell us what they mean." "Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams."

Genesis 40:14 NLT

"And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place."

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"Two full years later, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River. In his dream he saw seven fat, healthy cows come up out of the river and begin grazing in the marsh grass. Then he saw seven more cows come up behind them from the Nile, but these were scrawny and thin. These cows stood beside the fat cows on the riverbank. Then the scrawny, thin cows ate the seven healthy, fat cows! At this point in the dream, Pharaoh woke up.

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Genesis 41:8-9 NLT

"The next morning Pharaoh was very disturbed by the dreams. So he called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. When Pharaoh told them his dreams, not one of them could tell him what they meant. Finally, the king's chief cupbearer spoke up. "Today I have been reminded of my failure," he told Pharaoh."

Genesis 41:33 NLT

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"So Pharaoh asked his officials, "Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are. You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours." Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the entire land of Egypt." Then Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his hand and placed it on Joseph's finger. He dressed him in fine linen clothing and hung a gold chain around his neck."



DIG DEEPER NOTES



JOSEPH:

THE HEBREW BEHIND "FAVOR"

Twice in the darkest stretches of his story, Genesis uses the same word: Joseph "found favor" in Potiphar's house as a slave (Genesis 39:4), and later the Lord gave him "favor" in the eyes of the prison warden (39:21). The Hebrew is *chen* (חֵן), the same root behind the name Hannah. It's worth noting this word shows up precisely where Joseph's circumstances look most like failure, not success, slavery and prison, not the palace. The favor was present in the pit as much as on the throne; the text doesn't wait for the dream to be fulfilled before naming it.

THE TIMELINE BETWEEN DREAM AND FULFILLMENT

Genesis gives the numbers, though it never states the total directly, so this is arithmetic from the text rather than a stated figure. Joseph is seventeen when he receives the dream (37:2). He is thirty when he stands before Pharaoh (41:46), thirteen years later. Add the seven years of abundance and the two years of famine already underway when his brothers arrive (45:6), and the gap between the dream and its fulfillment comes to roughly twenty-two years.

GENESIS 50:20, ONE WORD FOR TWO INTENTIONS

The Hebrew verb *chashab* (to plan, devise, intend) appears twice in this single verse, once for the brothers, once for God: "you meant [chashab] evil against me, but God meant [chashab] it for good." The text isn't describing two different processes, human evil and then a separate divine rescue; it uses the identical word for both, the brothers' scheming and God's purposing described with the same verb. This lands close to the free will and providence tension already flagged in Week 2, worth holding with the same care rather than resolving it more neatly than the text does.

PSALM 105 ON THE PRISON YEARS

Psalms 105:17-19 looks back on this same story and adds a phrase Genesis itself never uses: "until what he had said came to pass, the word of the LORD tested him." This is a later biblical author's theological commentary on the Genesis narrative, not something stated in Genesis itself, worth citing as interpretation layered onto the text rather than the text's own claim. It does supply useful vocabulary though: the delay wasn't empty waiting, it was framed by a later Scripture writer as *testing*, tied directly to the promise not yet fulfilled.



PAUL:

THE SPECIFIC CALL TO THE GENTILES

Paul names this calling in two places with unusual directness. In Galatians 1:15-16, he says God "set apart" him from his mother's womb and "was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles." Acts 9:15 records God's words to Ananias at Paul's conversion: he is "a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." The specificity of audience, Gentiles named first, is present from the very beginning of his story, not something he grew into discovering.

THE GAP BETWEEN CALL AND MISSION

Scholars place Paul's Damascus road conversion around AD 34-35 (dates vary by a year or two depending on how Galatians 2:1's "fourteen years" is counted). His first missionary journey doesn't begin until roughly AD 46-47, a gap of about a decade. In between: three years in Arabia (Galatians 1:17-18), a brief visit to Jerusalem, then years of quieter ministry in Tarsus and Antioch. The call to the Gentiles was given immediately; the sending took roughly ten years to arrive, worth naming alongside Joseph's twenty-two if the sermon wants a second data point on purpose declared early and formed slowly.

"GENTILES" VERSUS "HEATHEN"

The Greek word behind both English renderings is *ethnē* (ἔθνη), meaning simply "the nations" or "the peoples," the same root behind "ethnic." It's a neutral term of scope, not a term of contempt; the KJV's "heathen" carries a pejorative weight in modern English that the Greek word itself doesn't inherently carry. Worth flagging if the notes use both terms interchangeably, since "heathen" today reads as a slur in a way *ethnē* never was.

THE "MYSTERY" LANGUAGE IN EPHESIANS

Ephesians 3:1-8 has Paul describing himself as steward of a "mystery," that Gentiles are "fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus," something he says was "hidden for ages in God" and only now revealed. This gives you a second, later text (written well after Galatians and Acts) where Paul is still returning to and unpacking the same specific calling, decades into his ministry, suggesting the assignment kept deepening in meaning for him rather than settling into something he'd simply completed and moved past.



Born with a silver spoon in your mouth.

The phrase “**born with a silver spoon in his mouth**” means someone was **born into wealth, privilege, or high social position**. Cambridge defines it as having a high social position and being rich from birth; Oxford summarizes it as “having rich parents.” ([Cambridge Dictionary](#)) ([Oxford Learner's Dictionaries](#))

The image behind the phrase is straightforward: ordinary people historically used **wooden spoons**, while wealthy families could afford **silver tableware**. “Spoon” itself goes back to Old English *spōn*, meaning a chip or splinter of wood, which fits the older association with wooden utensils. ([Oxford Learner's Dictionaries](#))

There is also a christening/baptism tradition behind it. In many countries, wealthy godparents gave a **silver spoon** to a child at baptism or christening. That may be the source of the phrase, or the phrase may simply come from the broader fact that the rich ate with silver while the poor did not. I cannot confirm which of those two explanations is the original source. ([Phrase Finder](#))

The phrase is old. One idiom source traces an early English printed form to an English translation of **Don Quixote**, with the wording, “**Every man was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth.**” Another phrase-history source gives a confirmed U.S. congressional citation from **1801**: “few lawyers were born with silver spoons in their mouths.” ([Idiom Origins](#)) ([Phrase Finder](#))

Bottom line: it came from the contrast between **being born into a household rich enough for silver** versus **being born into ordinary circumstances**. It is not about talent; it is about inherited advantage.