



Lesson 3

Horror at Home; Peaceful Preparations in Egypt (Genesis 37:31-36; 39-1-6)

OPENING PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

BIBLE STUDY: God Prepares the Brothers

Genesis 37:31-35 Then they got Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took the ornamented robe back to their father and said, "We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son's robe." He recognized it and said, "It is my son's robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces."

Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "No," he said, "in mourning will I go down to the grave to my son." So his father wept for him.

- 1.) How must the brothers' act of selling Joseph have changed their whole lives?
- 2.) What might have happened if the brothers had confessed their sin to Jacob?

Psalms 32:3-5 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

3.) Let's calculate how long the brothers lived with this skeleton in their closet.

- Joseph was 17 years old when he was sold into slavery (37:2).
- He was elevated to second in command in Egypt when he was 30 years old (41:46).
- Add the seven years of plenty and two years of famine (45:6).
- 22 years!

4.) How would you describe the condition of God's church (Jacob's family) in the years after Joseph was sold into slavery?

5.) Even as the brothers strove to cover up their sin and guilt, how could God still use that denial for their eternal good?

BIBLE STUDY: God Prepares Joseph

Genesis 39:1-6a Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

1.) How God use this time in Potiphar's household to teach Joseph the following...?

a.) God's power to bless

Isaiah 45:7 "I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things."

b.) Respect and faithfulness

Colossians 3:22-23 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

c.) Attention to detail and business acumen

d.) Agricultural practices and grain storage

e.) Egyptian culture and language

f.) Political life among Egypt's elite

g.) Administration of people

h.) Any other words or phrases that we could include in how the Lord prepared and shaped Joseph during his service in Potiphar's household?

2.) Even as the Lord gave Joseph great success in Egypt, what may he have been wondering about his brothers? About his father?

APPLICATION

1.) We know the end of the story, but Joseph didn't. And we do not know the end of the story of our lives. How might we use Joseph's years in slavery as an encouragement in the dark and mysterious times of life when we seem to be in slavery to hostile forces around us?

2.) Can you share with the class a time when God taught you a lesson that later in your life you needed in order to help someone else (or to do some special work in his kingdom)?

CLOSING BENEDICTION