

JOSEPH IS ATTACKED BY HIS BROTHERS

God saved Joseph so that He might one day save us also.



THE STORY: GENESIS 37:12-20

MONDAY

Joseph's brothers plotted against him

Joseph's brothers plotted against him – Jealous of their brother and seeing him from a distance with his robe of honor, Joseph's brothers conspired to murder him. They remembered Joseph's dreams, calling him a dreamer. They were obviously so bothered by the dreams and so envious of the favor Joseph had with his father that they wanted to murder Joseph. The idea that the younger son would be favored flew in the face of their sense of justice.

They sentenced him with their sinful judging and tried to thwart the plan of God for Joseph. They would have been aware of what Jacob, their father, had done to Esau in stealing the birthright from his brother. Now their younger brother was being favored over the rest of the older brothers, and he was even being sent to check on them. Jealous and angry, they plotted to murder him.

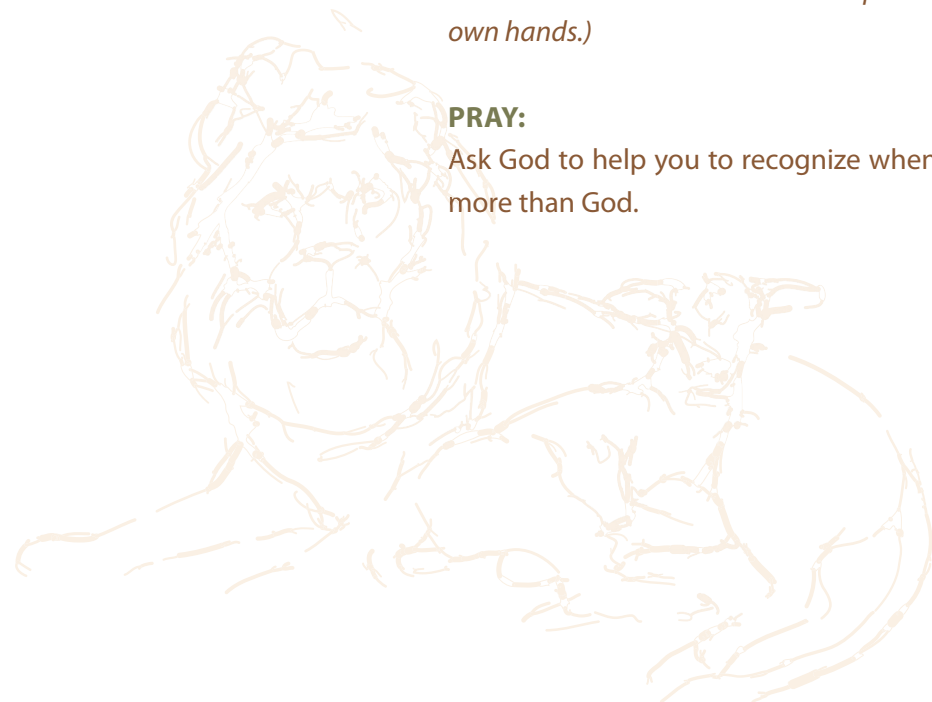
TALK ABOUT IT:

What is the most alarming part of this story? (Sin is so great that jealousy can turn to murder.)

What does James tell us in the New Testament (James chapter 4:1-2) lies behind the quarreling that can lead to murder? (*James tells us it all begins when we don't get what we want. We know when our desires have become idolatrous when we want them more than God. Just like Joseph's brothers we can sinfully take matters into our own hands.*)

PRAY:

Ask God to help you to recognize when your anger is a sign you are loving things more than God.





Reuben and Judah objected to Joseph's murder

Reuben and Judah objected to Joseph's murder – Not all the brothers conspired in the plot to kill Joseph. Two brothers resisted.

First, Reuben objected to the murder and suggested that they instead throw Joseph into a pit. This would give Reuben time to rescue Joseph. Reuben left and essentially did nothing. He did not tell his father, nor bring a rescue party back. Instead, he returned alone only to discover that his brothers had sold Joseph to some descendants of Ishmael. As the oldest, he likely

felt responsible. When he saw that his brother was taken, Reuben tore his clothes and left again.

Second, Judah suggested that rather than murdering Joseph, they should sell him as a slave. Judah suggested that murder would not profit them. Judah seemed to fear the Lord, and persuaded his brothers to listen to him.

Joseph himself was pleading for his life. This is not recorded here in Genesis, but it is mentioned later in Genesis 42:21 that Joseph's brothers remembered his pleas.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What do you think you would have done? *(It is easy to say we would have objected to sinning against Joseph and we would have told Joseph's father the truth. But we are all sinners like Joseph's brothers. In the end, none of them told the truth. We should see ourselves as those who are also guilty of intense jealousy, anger and lying. We too are sinners in need of salvation.)*

What hope is there for people who are liars, kidnappers, and murderers? *(Jesus died on the cross for the greatest of sinners. Trusting in Jesus is the only hope we have.)*

PRAY:

Pray that God would save us from our sin and pour out grace for us to obey.



Where is Jesus?

In the life of Joseph, who was betrayed, bound and sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, we see a picture of Jesus who was betrayed, bound, and crucified by His own people who were also jealous of Him.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did the chief priests and the elders persuade the crowd to ask for the release of Barabbas instead of Jesus? *(Matthew tells us it is because they were envious (envy is very similar to jealousy)).*

How did God work the evil of Joseph's brothers and the evil of the chief priest together for good? *(After being sold into slavery to Egypt Joseph would eventually become a great ruler in Egypt and save the nation of Israel from starvation and certain death. Jesus, after His death on the cross would rise again to save His people from certain death and give them eternal life.)*

PRAY:

Thank God for His sovereign control over all things. Thank Him that even evil things are used to accomplish His good plan.



THE STORY: GENESIS 37:31-36

THURSDAY

One sin leads to another

One sin leads to another - As is often the case, one sin leads to another. In this story, Joseph's brothers must lie to conceal their wickedness. Reuben kept silent and gave passive approval by his silence. Jacob recognized his son's robe and mourned for the loss of his son and would not be comforted. All the sons tried to comfort their father, which undoubtedly led to further lies.

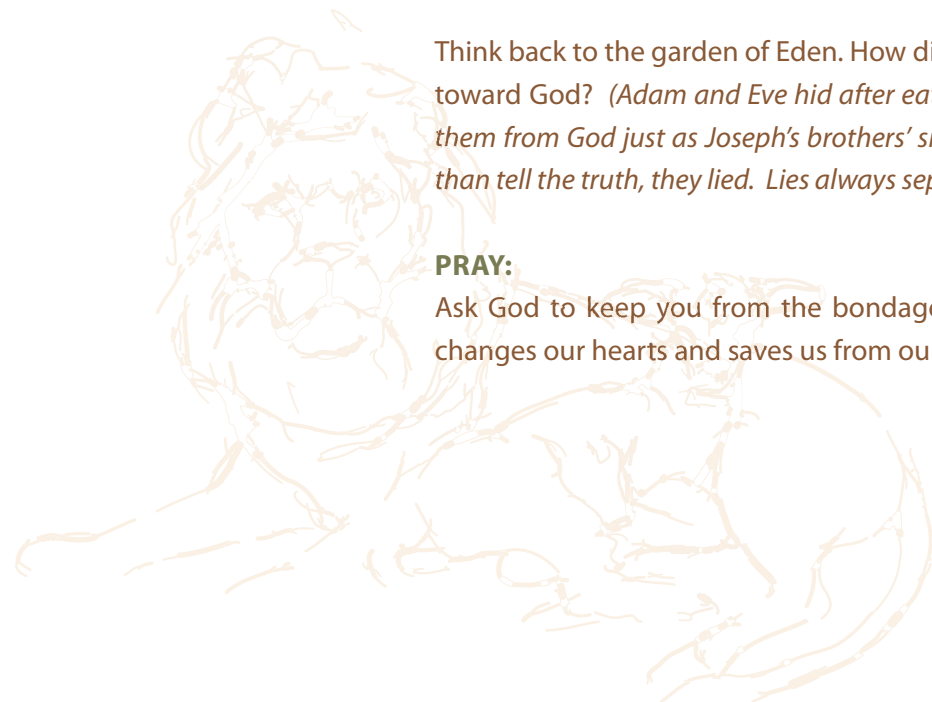
TALK ABOUT IT:

How does one sin often lead to another? *(When we sin we often find ourselves trying to hide it.)*

Think back to the garden of Eden. How did Adam and Eve's sin affect their behavior toward God? *(Adam and Eve hid after eating the forbidden fruit. Their sin separated them from God just as Joseph's brothers' sin separated them from their father. Rather than tell the truth, they lied. Lies always separate us from the people we love.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to keep you from the bondage of sin. This is only possible when God changes our hearts and saves us from our sins.





In Matthew 21:2-6 Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of this prophecy. God is so amazing. He determines in advance every part of His plan, even the smallest details.

On the road to Emmaus.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What do the prophetic clues we find in the prophets tell us about God? *(They tell us that history doesn't unfold by accident. All things come to pass according to God's sovereign plan. Read Ephesians 1:11)*

PRAY:

Thank God for the marvelous way He controls all things.

