



# The Beginning

## Lesson 16: Joseph Is Sold

(Genesis 37:1-39:23)

Joseph (the 11<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob) lived with his father and brothers in the land of Canaan. He was now 17 years old and told his father about something bad his brothers were doing. Now, Jacob loved Joseph more than all of his other children. So, Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors. But, when his brothers saw how much more their father loved Joseph than them, they hated Joseph and could not even speak kindly to him.

Then, Joseph had two dreams that caused his brothers to hate and be angry with him even more. In his first dream, Joseph and his brothers were gathering bundles of grain in the field. Then, Joseph's sheaf stood straight up and all the sheaves of his brothers bowed down to it. His brothers asked Joseph whether he really would reign over them and hated him even more for his dreams and his words.

Then, Joseph dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers. In this dream, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to Joseph. His father corrected him by asking whether it is true that Jacob, his mother, and all his brothers would really bow before him. His brothers were jealous of Joseph, but his father kept the dreams in mind.

Later, when Joseph's brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem, Jacob sent Joseph to check on them. Joseph found them in Dothan. When his brothers saw Joseph coming toward them, they made a plan to kill Joseph. They said, "Look, this dreamer is coming!" (Genesis 37:19) and wanted to kill him, throw him into a pit to destroy his dreams, and say that a wild animal killed him.

But, when Reuben (the oldest brother) heard this plan, he saved Joseph by saying that they should not kill him. Instead, he said that they should just throw him into a pit and not hurt him. For, he wanted to save Joseph and bring him back to his father.

So, when Joseph came to his brothers, they took off his coat of many colors and threw him into an empty pit with no water in it. Then, his brothers sat down to eat a meal. At that time, they looked up and saw a group of Ishmaelites coming on their camels and carrying many spices, who were on their way to Egypt.

Judah (one of the brothers) had an idea. Rather than killing Joseph and hiding him, why not sell Joseph to these Ishmaelites? So, rather than hurting their own brother, all the brothers agreed and sold Joseph. They lifted him out of the pit and sold him for 20 pieces of silver. Then, these people took Joseph to Egypt.

After selling Joseph, the brothers took Joseph's coat and dipped it in goat's blood and brought it to their father. They lied to their father and told him that they found Joseph's coat and asked if it was Joseph's. Their father knew it was Joseph's coat and believed that a wild animal must have torn Joseph to pieces and eaten him. So, he mourned over Joseph many days.

Jacob did not know that Joseph was taken down to Egypt and sold to a man named Potiphar (who was an officer of Pharaoh). The Lord was with Joseph in this new place and Joseph became very successful in the house of his master. Potiphar could see that God made everything Joseph did be successful. So, Potiphar made Joseph in charge of everything in his house and God blessed Potiphar because of Joseph.

However, Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to sin against God. Every day, Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to sin. But, every day, Joseph refused. Then, one day, Potiphar's wife grabbed hold of Joseph's garment and asked him to sin with her. But, he left his garment in her hand and ran outside. This made this woman angry and she called for the men of the house and told them that Joseph had done wrong. Whenever Potiphar was told about this, he had Joseph put into prison. Yet, even in prison, God was with Joseph and he was given great responsibility.

**Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series**

**Study Number: CS34**

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# Study Questions:

1) What did Jacob give to Joseph? Why did he only give one to Joseph?

2) What two dreams did Joseph have?

3) What did Joseph's brothers and father think about his dreams?

4) What did Joseph's brothers want to do to Joseph?

5) Who stopped them?

6) What did they do to Joseph?

7) What did Joseph's brothers tell Jacob?

8) Why did Joseph go to prison?

## Memory Verse:

“But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.” (Genesis 39:21).

**Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about:**