

“... the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did”
(GENESIS 39:23, NIV).

Bible Study 6 Joseph: Preserver of Life

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Read Genesis 37 and 39-41.

Why did Joseph's brothers sell him as a slave? (*Genesis 37:1-38*) _____

How did God protect and provide for Joseph, even through his slavery? (*Genesis 37:36; 39:1-6*) _____

Even when faced with temptation and falsely accused, Joseph honored God. How do we know this?

What evidence do we have that God still protected and provided for him during these difficult times? (*Genesis 37:7-23*) _____

Joseph's brothers were jealous of their father's love for him; and in their jealousy, they took drastic measures to get rid of him. God did not step in and stop their evil act, but He did provide a way for Joseph to be protected from harm. As a servant for one of Pharaoh's chief officials, Potiphar, Joseph was allowed to live in his master's house and was actually put in charge of everything he owned. God blessed Joseph during this time.

When Potiphar's wife became attracted to Joseph and tried to seduce him, he refused to disobey God or dishonor his master. It is very possible that if he had given in to the sexual temptation, Potiphar may not have discovered his betrayal. But God and Joseph would have known. His refusal to sin resulted in anger on the part of Potiphar's wife. He was falsely accused and punished for something that he did not do.

What gave Joseph the ability to withstand the temptation? _____

When was the last time you were in a situation where you were tempted to sin and you knew that you could probably do so without others knowing about it? _____

How did you respond? _____

What was the result? _____

How does our sin—or our refusal to sin—affect our ability to be *on mission* with God?

How was Joseph let down by his fellow prisoners? (*Genesis 40*) _____

How did Joseph honor God in Pharaoh's presence? (*Genesis 41:1-40*)

How was he rewarded?

How did Joseph use his position to preserve life? (*Genesis 41:41-57*)

What evidence do we have that Joseph was not bitter with his life and that he gave the glory to God for his circumstances?

How do the names of his children reveal his relationship with God?

Even when he was treated unfairly, Joseph refused to become bitter and his faithfulness was eventually rewarded. It would have been less risk for Joseph to take the credit for his ability to interpret dreams. But because he was honest and gave God the credit for his abilities, he was rewarded with a position of importance. God used him to save the lives of thousands of people from starvation.

Joseph was a "good" person. He was a good son, a good slave, a good prisoner, a good advisor and a good leader. How did his "goodness" often get him into trouble?

Sometimes being *on mission* for God involves unexpected difficulties that we can't understand, even when we are "good." Others who are jealous of our position or abilities may resent us. We may be accused of things we haven't said or done and find ourselves going through horrible situations for no apparent reason. We may be tempted to think that life is unfair.

Describe a time when you had some of these thoughts or feelings.

We must quietly and confidently endure hardships, knowing that God will use our experiences for His purposes if we will allow Him to. God didn't cause the horrible circumstances in Joseph's life, but He allowed them to happen. And because of Joseph's faithfulness, God used them for His purposes.

What is the undeserved negative circumstance of your life right now? _____

How are you responding to it? _____

How could God be positioning you through it to serve Him? _____