

The First Family

Date: 06.14.2026 | Joseph in Potifphar's Home
Scripture: Genesis 39

CENTRAL TRUTHS



PRESCHOOL:

God is with us, even when hard things happen.

YOUNGER KIDS (K5-2ND GRADE):

Joseph's brothers treated him badly, but God was still with him.

OLDER KIDS (3RD-5TH GRADE):

Even though Joseph was betrayed and sold by his brothers, God was still working in his life.

STUDENTS:

Joseph's brothers acted out of jealousy and sin, but God was still at work through these events to accomplish His greater plan.

ADULTS:

In Joseph's betrayal and suffering, human sin is clearly displayed, yet God's sovereign providence remains at work, orchestrating events to fulfill His purposes. This passage reminds us that God is present and active even in injustice, using it to accomplish His redemptive plan.

MEMORY VERSE

So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.
Galatians 3:9



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Verses 21-23 - Steadfast Love - chesed - God only is perfectly faithful to the terms of His covenants. His steadfast, covenant love and loyalty to His people animate His fidelity to His people. This divine, constant, even stubborn love does what no other love can do and provides what no one else can see. Matthew Henry, "God can raise up friends for his people even where they little expect to find them." Joseph makes friends in prison! - "Chesed for Joseph" Ligonier Ministries

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

After being betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery in **Genesis 37**, Joseph is taken down to Egypt, where he is purchased by an Egyptian named Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials and captain of the palace guard (**Genesis 39:1**). Joseph's circumstances seem to have gone from bad to worse—he has moved from favored son to slave in a foreign land. Yet **Genesis 39** immediately introduces the central truth of this chapter: "The LORD was with Joseph" (**Genesis 39:2**). Though Joseph's life appears marked by injustice and suffering, God has not abandoned him. This continues the major theme of Joseph's story begun in **Genesis 37**: though others intend evil against Joseph, God is sovereignly working through hardship to accomplish His good purposes.

Potiphar quickly notices that Joseph prospers in everything he does because the Lord is with him (**Genesis 39:2-3**). Joseph's success is not merely the result of hard work or natural giftedness, but of God's blessing upon him. The presence of God in Joseph's life demonstrates that divine favor is not measured by the absence of suffering but by God's sustaining presence in the midst of suffering. Joseph remains faithful in adversity, and God causes all he does to prosper. As a result, Potiphar elevates Joseph to oversee his entire household and all that he owns (**Genesis 39:4-6**). Through Joseph, God even blesses Potiphar's household, showing once again that covenant blessing flows outward through God's chosen people (**Genesis 39:5**).

Joseph's success, however, soon places him in the path of temptation. **Genesis 39:6** notes that Joseph was handsome in form and appearance, language that intentionally echoes the description of his mother Rachel (**Genesis 29:17**). Potiphar's wife notices Joseph's appearance. She repeatedly pressures him to sin with



her (*Genesis 39:7, 10*). Day after day, she pursues him, but Joseph steadfastly refuses.

Joseph's refusal reveals both his integrity and his theology. He remains loyal to Potiphar, who has entrusted him with everything in the household, but even more importantly, Joseph recognizes that sexual sin is ultimately an offense against God Himself. He declares, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (*Genesis 39:9*). Joseph understands that obedience matters because God is with him. His fear of the Lord strengthens him to resist temptation.

Eventually, Potiphar's wife corners Joseph when no one else is in the house. She grabs his garment and again demands that he be with her, but Joseph flees immediately, leaving his cloak behind in her hand (*Genesis 39:11–12*). Joseph chooses suffering over sin. His willingness to run from temptation models radical obedience and reminds believers that fleeing sin is often the path of faithfulness.

As in *Genesis 37*, Joseph's garment again becomes a tool of deception. Just as his brothers used his robe to deceive Jacob, Potiphar's wife now uses Joseph's cloak to falsely accuse him (*Genesis 39:13–18*) falsely. She manipulates the situation carefully, exploiting social tensions and presenting Joseph as a dangerous foreigner who attacked not just her but the entire household. When Potiphar returns home, she intensifies the accusation, calling Joseph "your servant" to pressure her husband and emphasizing his foreign background and supposed wrongdoing.

Though Joseph is innocent, Potiphar becomes angry and has him thrown into prison where the king's prisoners are confined (*Genesis 39:19–20*). Once again, Joseph suffers unjustly. He has now experienced betrayal by his brothers, slavery in Egypt, and false accusation leading to imprisonment. Yet at the very moment Joseph reaches another low point, Scripture repeats the central truth of the chapter: "But the LORD was with Joseph" (*Genesis 39:21*).

This truth challenges the common belief that hardship means God has abandoned His people. Joseph's story teaches the opposite. Adversity is not evidence of God's absence. In fact, some of the clearest displays of God's presence in Joseph's life occur in the middle of his suffering. God's providence is not absent in Joseph's pain—it is actively working through it.

Even in prison, the Lord grants Joseph favor. The prison warden sees Joseph's character and entrusts him with oversight of the other prisoners (*Genesis 39:21–23*). The language intentionally mirrors Joseph's earlier experience in Potiphar's house: because the Lord is with Joseph, he prospers again. Whether in a mansion or a prison cell, Joseph's circumstances do not determine God's presence. God remains steadfastly with him, blessing him and advancing His purposes.

Genesis 39 powerfully demonstrates that God's covenant presence empowers His people to remain faithful in suffering and temptation. Joseph's faithfulness in private, his integrity under pressure, and his endurance in the face of injustice all reveal a man who trusts God more than his circumstances.

Joseph's story points forward to Jesus Christ. Like Joseph, Jesus was righteous and yet falsely accused. Like Joseph, Jesus suffered not for His own sin but because of the sin of others. Like Joseph, Jesus remained faithful in the face of temptation and obedient in suffering. Yet where Joseph was imprisoned, Jesus went all the way to the cross. Through His suffering, Jesus accomplished salvation for His people. Because Jesus remained faithful where we often fail, those who trust in Him receive forgiveness and the power to obey God through His Spirit.

Genesis 39 reminds believers that God's presence does not guarantee comfort, ease, or immediate rescue. Instead, His presence guarantees that He is with His people in every hardship, sustaining them, sanctifying them, and sovereignly working all things toward His good purposes. The God who was with Joseph in slavery and prison is the same God who remains with His people today.

TELL THE STORY

Genesis 39

The Biggest Story Storybook Bible - Joseph's Mean Brothers and What God Meant to Do

Jesus Storybook Bible - The Forgiving Prince

Hey-Oh! Bible - Joseph in Egypt



After Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, traders took him far away to Egypt. There, an important Egyptian officer named Potiphar bought Joseph to work in his house.

Even though Joseph had lost his home, his family, and his freedom, God had not left him. The Bible says, "The Lord was with Joseph." God helped Joseph do his work well, and everything Joseph did was successful.

Potiphar noticed that God was with Joseph. Soon Potiphar trusted Joseph so much that he put him in charge of his whole house and everything he owned. God even blessed Potiphar's household because of Joseph.

Joseph was doing well, but then something difficult happened. Potiphar's wife kept trying to get Joseph to sin with her. Day after day, she tempted him, but Joseph refused.

Joseph said, "How could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" Joseph knew that obeying God mattered more than anything else.

One day, Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's robe and tried again to get him to sin. Joseph ran out of the house as fast as he could, leaving his robe behind.

Potiphar's wife became angry. She lied and told everyone that Joseph had attacked her. When Potiphar came home, she showed him Joseph's robe as "proof" and blamed Joseph for something he did not do.

Potiphar was furious and had Joseph thrown into prison.

Joseph had done the right thing, but instead of being rewarded, he was punished. He had been betrayed by his brothers, sold as a slave, lied about, and now was locked in prison.

But even in prison, God had not left Joseph.

Again, the Bible says, "The Lord was with Joseph." God helped Joseph find favor with the prison keeper, and soon Joseph was put in charge of the other prisoners.

Joseph's life was very hard, but God was still with him every step of

the way. God was using even Joseph's suffering to carry out His good plan.

Joseph's story reminds us of Jesus. Like Joseph, Jesus was innocent but was falsely accused and suffered even though He had done nothing wrong. But through Jesus' suffering, God made a way to save sinners.

Genesis 39 teaches us that God is with His people even when life is unfair, painful, or confusing. We can trust Him because He is always working for His glory and for our good.

REBUILD THE STORY

1. Who purchased Joseph as a slave after he was taken to Egypt?

Genesis 39:1

2. How could Potiphar tell that the Lord was with Joseph?

Genesis 39:2-3

3. What responsibilities did Potiphar give Joseph because he trusted him? **Genesis 39:4-6**

4. How did Potiphar's wife try to tempt Joseph? **Genesis 39:7, 10**

5. How did Joseph respond to Potiphar's wife, and why did he refuse her? **Genesis 39:8-9**

6. What did Joseph do when Potiphar's wife grabbed his garment? **Genesis 39:11-12**

7. What lie did Potiphar's wife tell about Joseph, and who did she blame? **Genesis 39:13-18**



8. What happened to Joseph after Potiphar believed his wife, and how did God continue to show favor to Joseph?

Genesis 39:19–23

9. Joseph obeyed God even when it cost him greatly. Why is doing the right thing sometimes hard?

10. What can we learn from Joseph about how to respond when we are tempted to sin?

11. How can we trust God when we do what is right but still face unfair consequences?

12. How does Joseph's suffering and faithfulness point us to Jesus?

GOSPEL EMPHASIS

Though Joseph was far from home, falsely accused, and unfairly imprisoned, the Lord was with him every step of the way. Joseph's success in both Potiphar's house and in prison was not because life was easy, but because God's presence and providential care remained over him in the midst of suffering. These repeated reminders that "the Lord was with Joseph" show that God was still keeping His covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—blessing His people and working through them even in hardship. Joseph's story points us to Jesus, who was also righteous, falsely accused, and made to suffer though He had done no wrong. Yet through Jesus' suffering, God accomplished the greatest good: salvation for sinners. Because Jesus died and rose again, all who trust in Him can know that God is with them in every circumstance and that no suffering is wasted in His sovereign plan.



WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

Use your Attributes of God poster as a guide.

PRAYER PROMPTS

God, thank You for always being with us! Help us realize that You are using the circumstances You place us in for our good and Your glory. Help us flee from temptation and follow You with integrity. Help us remember we are never alone and that You are always at work!



THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READING

Genesis 40-41