

JOSEPH

God is with us everywhere and in every situation

Jacob, who we learned about the last few weeks, had many sons, but his favorite son was named Joseph. Joseph is a very special person in the Bible story, but not just because Jacob loved him, but because God loved him and chose him to play a very special part in God's rescue plan.

Because Jacob loved his son Joseph more than any of his other sons, he made him a very beautiful robe to show his love for him. It may have been made of many beautiful colors and it may have been decorated with all kinds of beautiful ornaments. What do you think Joseph's older brothers thought when they saw him wearing this coat? It reminded them of their father's favoritism of Joseph and every time they saw it, they grew more and more jealous.

Do you ever have dreams? Sometimes we have dreams that are scary or dreams that are happy or dreams that are just plain crazy! When he was young, Joseph had some dreams, too, but these were not just any dreams. These were dreams that came to him from God himself. In these dreams, God told Joseph that he was a very special person in God's plan. God told Joseph that someday he would raise him to a very powerful position in life and that he would someday be in authority over his brothers, even though they were all older than him.

As you can imagine, when his brothers heard of these dreams they didn't like it at all. They already disliked Joseph because he was his dad's favorite, but this really did it! So, one day when Dad was not around, they took Joseph and threw him into the bottom of an empty well; a deep, dirty hole in the ground. At first they talked about killing him, but then some men traveled by who bought people as slaves and sold them.

"Why not make some money off of him instead of just killing him?" said his brothers. So that's what they did.

They thought, “What are we going to tell our father, now?” So they made a plan for deceiving their father. They covered Joseph’s coat with animal blood, brought it to Jacob, and convinced him that Joseph had been killed by some wild animal.

Jacob was tricked, much like he had tricked his brother Esau and his father, Isaac. But this time it was different. His heart was broken and he wept for many days over his son who he thought was dead.

The men, who bought Joseph, re-sold him to a man named Potiphar when they got to the country of Egypt. Joseph was only seventeen years old, but he was far from home, owned by a powerful man who made him work very hard, and his dear father would never come find him because he thought Joseph was dead.

But Joseph wasn’t alone. He was a special man in God’s rescue plan and God knew right where he was and exactly what he was going through. It wasn’t long before the man who owned Joseph began to admire him for his hard work, for how responsible he was, and how trustworthy he was. Potiphar, the Egyptian owner soon trusted Joseph with everything he owned and would even leave Joseph in charge when he had to leave home.

When it seemed things were going well for Joseph, a terrible thing happened. Potiphar’s wife tried to convince Joseph to do some wrong things with her. Of course, Joseph refused, but she wouldn’t give up. Over and over she tried to get him to do wrong. One day she became so angry with Joseph for refusing that she made up a story about Joseph and told Potiphar when he got home. Joseph had not done wrong, but Potiphar believed his wife and Joseph was sent to prison.

Once again it looks like Joseph is alone, this time in prison. Why did God let this happen to him? Had God forgotten about Joseph? Joseph probably had these and many other questions in his mind. But what do you think happened to Joseph there in prison? Once again God knew right where he was. Like Potiphar, the man in charge of the jail begins to notice how trustworthy

and responsible Joseph is. God caused the jail-keeper to admire Joseph and soon he was put in charge of all that happened in the prison.

You see, other people could try to hurt Joseph or even kill him, but God was with him through all of this. Joseph was a very important person in God's rescue plan. God loved Joseph and would eventually deliver him from all his troubles and put him in a place where he could save his brothers and his father. All of Joseph's situations were being guided by God's invisible hand in order to keep his rescue plan alive.