

# Bible Essentials

Scripture Passage: Genesis 37:12-36

Think about your past week. How has God answered prayer or worked in your life? What prayer requests do you have? Write them here. Then take time to pray about your requests and ask him to open your heart for today's study.

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Read today's passage. Jot down your initial impressions of the passage.

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Here is some context for Genesis 37:12-36.

*In last week's lesson, we transitioned from the story of Jacob to the story of Joseph. Joseph was the firstborn of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel, and Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons. This caused animosity and jealousy among the brothers. Joseph brought bad reports about his brothers to his dad, and the brothers hated Joseph and treated him poorly. After a couple dreams that implied that Joseph's brothers would bow down to him, Joseph's brothers hated him all the more. That hatred sparked the events in this week's passage.*

What are your thoughts about the context? Write some key points here.

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Read the passage again. Use a different Bible version if you have one available. Then summarize the passage in your own words.

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Look closely at the passage and answer the following questions.

What does the passage say about God?

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Understanding how a passage fits into the overarching story of the Bible is important.

*God had a plan for Joseph in Egypt. Although it was hard to see God's plan in the early years that Joseph was in Egypt, God's plan became clear later in Joseph's life. Joseph eventually rose to have great authority in Egypt, and he saved Egypt from famine through his wise planning. This plan also saved his own family, who came to Egypt for food during the famine. Although being sent to Egypt seemed like the result of evil on the part of his brothers, God used it to fulfill his divine plan. It's humbling to know that God can use people in spite of our own selfishness and sin.*

*In the same way, even though Jesus' death on the cross seemed like the result of the evil plan of the religious leaders, God used it to fulfill his plan for Jesus to pay the penalty for sin for all people and to conquer death and Satan. Although what happened in Joseph's life was outside of his control, what happened to Jesus was all within his control. If he had wanted, Jesus could have stopped his torture and crucifixion at any time. But he chose to go to the cross for us. He chose to endure the torture and humiliation and shame so that we wouldn't have to. That is the glory of the gospel story.*

What are your thoughts on how this passage fits into the overarching story of the Bible? Write your thoughts here. If you have any questions, write those as well. You may find answers in future lessons, or you may want to find another Christian that you can ask.

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Use the following questions to apply today's Scripture passage to your own life.

How does this passage affect how you view God?

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How does this passage affect how you view yourself?

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How does this passage affect how you will live your life?

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Close in prayer, asking God to help you apply what you learned today.