

# Bible Essentials

Scripture Passage: Genesis 37:12-36

As a group, share something about your past week. For example, share prayer requests and answers to prayer. Share the best and worst moments of your week (highs and lows). Write prayer requests here. Open with prayer for these requests and for God to open your hearts to this week's study.

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What was a time in your life when you had to leave what happened in God's hands?

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Read today's passage. Discuss your initial impressions of the passage. Write any major points here.

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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? Discuss the context as a group. Write some key points here.

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Read the passage again. Use a different Bible version if you have one available. Have someone summarize the passage in their own words, and use this space to record that summary.

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Look closely at the passage and answer the following questions as a group. Write notes in the space provided.

What does the passage say about God?

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What does the passage say about people?

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What does the passage say about God's plan?

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What else strikes you about this passage?

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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? Discuss as a group. What questions do you have individually or as a group? Discuss potential answers.

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As a group, use the following questions to apply today's Scripture passage to your 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.