

Week#: 24 Text: Genesis 37:1 – 36 Title: Joseph's Dreams and Betrayal
Songs: Ancient of Days
Trust In You
There is None Like You

“TRUSTING GOD” BIBLE STUDY
Lesson Two JOSEPH’S DREAMS AND BETRAYAL

GOD’S PROMISES WILL ALWAYS BE CONFIRMED 3 WAYS

Genesis 37:5-8, “Yosef (Joseph) had a dream which he told his brothers, and that made them hate him all the more. ⁶ He said to them, “Listen while I tell you about this dream of mine. ⁷ We were tying up bundles of wheat in the field when suddenly my bundle got up by itself and stood upright; then your bundles came, gathered around mine and prostrated themselves before it.” ⁸ His brothers retorted, “Yes, you will certainly be our king. You’ll do a great job of bossing us around!” And they hated him still more for his dreams and for what he said.”.

When God talks to you, it will always be confirmed three ways: 1) It will always agree with His Word (*He will never tell you to do anything against His Word*); 2) It will bear witness in your spirit (*You will have peace about it.*); and 3) It will be evident with your circumstances or life events (often out of the blue). If number one and three line up, but not number two, it is not God. If two and three line up, but not number one, it is not God. If one and two line up but number three does not, put it on a back burner and wait, because it may be God, but it might **not be for right now**. James 3:17-18 says, “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

Joseph’s dreams agreed with God’s Word (#1). It bore witness in his spirit—he had peace about it (#2). However, the circumstances were not manifested for years afterward (#3). Joseph would have to wait twenty years for #3 to be evident.

Genesis 37:9-11, “He had another dream which he told his brothers: “Here, I had another dream, and there were the sun, the moon and eleven stars prostrating themselves before me.” ¹⁰ He told his father too, as well as his brothers, but his father rebuked him: “What is this dream you have had? Do you really expect me, your mother and your brothers to come and prostrate ourselves before you on the ground?” ¹¹ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.”

God knew that Joseph was going to need more than just one dream to stand on for all those years. God gave him the second dream as a confirmation of the first dream. **God will ALWAYS confirm a word, dream, or vision He gives you.** You should always ask for confirmation(s) and wait on God to confirm through His Word or other means. If a confirmation does not come, “*put it on the back burner*” and leave it alone. God will confirm it in His time, if it is from Him.

Joseph innocently told these two dreams to his parents and brothers. The brothers and other close family members were further antagonized and enraged when hearing of Joseph's dreams. His family was enraged. All of them only saw Joseph trying to exalt himself above them all. Even Joseph did not realize the full significance of the dreams. However, God was giving Joseph a prophecy that would take twenty years to be fulfilled.

Joseph's life was about to be turned upside down. He did not have any warning. The day his dreams started being fulfilled, could have been a beautiful, sunshiny day and Joseph may not have had a care in the world. This author will endeavor to glean as much truth and examples from Joseph's story. Then, when suddenly thrust in the middle of a problem, you will have some insight as to how to, not only survive. but be victorious.

Most trials are entered into quickly and without any warning. The loss of a job; a child is found to be addicted to drugs; your marriage ends after many years; you have to downsize your home, etc. Throughout the Bible we are told how God's people were *suddenly* put in difficult situations. James 1:2-4 tells us. "**My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.**" (KJV)

GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR TRIALS

Ultimately, trials are essential to make us stronger much as the methods used by a farmer are intended for a more bountiful crop. God watches over your trials like a farmer watches over his crops. In Isaiah 28:23-27, God equates this to planting, harvesting and processing different grains. Every grain has variations in how it grows, how it is harvested and how it is processed and all may vary much as a farmer tends to various crops. "Give ear, and hear my voice; give attention, and hear my speech. ²⁴ Does he who plows for sowing plow continually? Does he continually open and harrow his ground? ²⁵ When he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter dill, sow cumin, and put in wheat in rows and barley in its proper place, ²⁶ For he is rightly instructed; his God teaches him. ²⁷ Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin, but dill is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod."

No trial will last forever. Isaiah 28:29-29 says, "Does one crush grain for bread? No, he does not thresh it forever; when he drives his cart wheel over it with his horses, he does not crush it. ²⁹ This also comes from the LORD of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom." Similarly, some trials can be short or very long, but God has promised that **they will not last forever.**

Just like grains are different, people are all unique, too. God adjusts each trial to each individual person and their particular stage in life. Paul equated our Christian walk to be like a child growing up. 1 Corinthians 13:11 says, "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways." We all start out as infants in Christ and then grow up through all the stages a child goes through until adulthood is reached (Toddler; Preschooler; Youth; and Adolescent). This process can take a long time or be much abbreviated. Each person grows at their own rate. When God designs a trial, He knows which phase we are in and what will be the best possible way to bring about change in that person. Even if you have reached maturity in your Christian walk, you

still will undergo trials. In fact, the more mature you are in the Lord, the more often it may seem you will find yourself in the desert.

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. **God** is faithful, and he **will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.**” Every major trial I have experienced lasted right at six months. I don’t know if that is because that is all I could endure, or maybe that is all my husband could tolerate, or I would prefer to think that is all it took for me to learn the lesson God was trying to teach me. Of course, it could have been a combination or just the best way God could line up the circumstances.

Like I said before, every trial is designed by God for each person. Just as a weaver of a hand woven tapestry knows exactly what threads to insert at just the right time, our Heavenly Father weaves our trials for both beauty and strength. And just as a tapestry always looks like a mess when we see the back, our tapestry may look chaotic until God shows us the front.

GOD’S PURIFYING CONSUMING FIRE

Fire is God’s signature. Throughout the Bible God brings fire as proof that He is God Almighty. The first time the Bible associates fire with God is when God made covenant with Abram (Abraham). Genesis 15:9-12, 17-18a “He said to him, “Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”¹⁰ And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half.¹¹ And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.¹² As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him.¹⁷ When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, **a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch** passed between these pieces.¹⁸ On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram...” Both the smoking fire pot and the flaming torch are symbols of God. In a traditional covenant ceremony, the greater party always walked through the blood first. Then, if the lesser party agreed to all the terms the greater party wanted, he walked through the blood. But God would not let Abram walk through. God walked through for both Him and Abram so both fire and smoke represent God.

The next time in the Bible God is equated to being like fire is in Exodus 13 when God was leading His people out of Egypt. Verses 21 and 22 tell us, “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.”²² The pillar of cloud by day and **the pillar of fire by night** did not depart from before the people.”

Another example can be found in the account of when Elijah had a showdown with the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. I Kings 18:36b-38 says, “Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.”³⁷ Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back.”³⁸ Then **the**

fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.”

Hebrews 12:28-29 says, “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,²⁹ **for our God is a consuming fire.**” Exodus 24:17 says, “Now **the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire** on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.”

In Isaiah 43:2 God says, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; **when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.**” God does not say “if you walk through fire”, He says “**when.**”

Fire can be very destructive. According to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, the Greek word used for “fire” in the New Testament is “a primary word; “fire” (literally or figuratively, specially, lightning **fiery, fire.**”

Fire consumes everything that is combustible. 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 says, “For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, **because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.**¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.¹⁵ **If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.**” Peter tells you the reason for fiery trials. 1 Peter 4:13 says, “**But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.**”

Trials, on the other hand, are not to destroy our faith. They are sent by God to mold us more in to His likeness or as a result of our poor choices or sin. According to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, the Greek word used for “trials” in the New Testament is “ὄς peirasmós, pi-ras-mos”; a putting to proof (by experiment [of good], experience [of evil], solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity:—temptation.”

1 Peter 4:12 “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.” Peter tells us not to be surprised when we are tested. Everyone is tested. Peter calls these “fiery” trials. Fire is the way God burns off all the garbage from the world that has attached itself to you. Burning things off is never an easy process. Daniel 3:23-27 tells about some others who went through fire: “And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace.²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?” They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”²⁵ He answered and said, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.”²⁶ Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared,

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. ²⁷ And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. **The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them.**” You, too, can be assured that just as the three Hebrew children went in the Fiery Furnace and came out not even smelling like smoke, you can come out victorious because Jesus will be there in the midst of the fire with you, just as He was with them. Romans 2:11 says, “For God shows no partiality.” What He does for one, He will do for anyone else.

Did you notice that the three Hebrew children went into the fiery furnace with bonds on their hands (representing your service and praise) and feet (representing your walk with the Lord) but came out free?

The fire God sends is meant to make you better. Revelations 3:18-19 says, “I counsel you to **buy from me gold refined by fire**, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. ¹⁹ **Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline**, so be zealous and repent.”

Gold is measured in carats. According to Dictionary.com a carat is a noun “(US & Canadian) a measure of the proportion of gold in an alloy, expressed as the number of parts of gold in 24 parts of the alloy. Also spelt (in Britain and certain other countries) carat.” In other words, in 24 carat gold, 24 parts are gold and in 14 carat gold only 14 out of 24 parts are pure gold. The only way this is accomplished is to put the gold in a very hot fire and burn off or remove unwanted particles. This process is repeated to obtain the purest gold.

God does not tempt us, Satan does. We are tempted by “the tempter”: the enemy, Satan. James 1:12-13 says, “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” **for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.**” God will not tempt you, but He may lead you straight into a test or trial. He led the Children of Israel into the wilderness. He led His own Son, Jesus, into the desert. God may lead you into your “desert experience” also.

Everyone’s temptation starts with being lured and enticed by their own desire. James 1:14-15 says, “**But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.**” Guard your thoughts because your thoughts can become your dreams or ponderings and your dreams can become your actions.

This is where the Bible comes in to help you, but, it is not enough to just read the Word, you have to practice what it says. James 1:22-25 says, “**But be doers of the word**, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was

like.²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.”

1 Peter 1:6-7 explains that trials are meant to change you, “**In this you rejoice**, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,⁷ so that **the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire**—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”. (ESV)

Peter says that you are more valuable to God than perishable gold and that you have to be put through the fire several times to be judged worthy at His coming. I know I want to be found worthy. Do you? If you answered “yes” to that question, you, too, will have to be tested.

If you are a Christian, it is not a matter of “if” you will be tested, but “when”. Ephesians 4:1 says, “**...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called**,” (ESV) In fact, the higher the calling God has on your life, the harder and more frequent will be your trials. We **all** go through **droughts, fires and rains** just as Elijah did (1 Kings Chapters 17-19). **You may have to go through all three of these but maybe not in any particular order.**

Genesis 37:12-17: “After this, when his brothers had gone to pasture their father’s sheep in Sh’khem,¹³ Isra’el asked Yosef (Joseph), “Aren’t your brothers pasturing the sheep in Sh’khem? Come, I will send you to them.” He answered, “Here I am.”¹⁴ He said to him, “Go now, see whether things are going well with your brothers and with the sheep, and bring word back to me.” So he sent him away from the Hebron Valley, and he went to Sh’khem,¹⁵ where a man found him wandering around in the countryside. The man asked him, “What are you looking for?”¹⁶ “I’m looking for my brothers,” he answered. “Tell me, please, where are they pasturing the sheep?”¹⁷ The man said, “They’ve left here; because I heard them say, ‘Let’s go to Dotan.’” Yosef (Joseph) went after his brothers and found them in Dotan.”

Jacob had settled in Hebron (see Genesis 35:27 “And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned.”) This was his location when he sent Joseph to find his brothers in Shechem. According to The Moody Atlas of the Bible it was approximately 115 miles from Hebron to Shechem (as the crow flies). Then Joseph had to travel further to Dothan, another 30 miles away. This was quite a journey. If Joseph was traveling by foot, it probably took him at least five to six days to find his brothers. It is assumed by then, he was very happy to discover them and know that his journey was ending.



Genesis 37:18-27 “They spotted him in the distance, and before he had arrived where they were, they had already plotted to kill him.¹⁹ They said to each other, “Look, this dreamer is coming!²⁰ So come now, let’s kill him and throw him into one of these water cisterns here. Then we’ll say some wild animal devoured him. We’ll see then what becomes of his dreams!”²¹ But when Re’uven heard this, he saved him from being destroyed by them. He said, “We shouldn’t take his life.²² Don’t shed blood,” Re’uven added. “Throw him into this cistern here in the wilds, but don’t lay hands on him yourselves.” He intended to rescue him from them later and restore him to his father.

²³ So it was that when Yosef (Joseph) arrived to be with his brothers, they stripped off his robe, the long-sleeved robe he was wearing,²⁴ and took him and threw him into the cistern (the cistern was empty; without any water in it).²⁵ Then they sat down to eat their meal; but as they looked up, they saw in front of them a caravan of Yishma’elim coming from Gil’ad, their camels loaded with aromatic gum, healing resin and opium, on their way down to Egypt.²⁶ Y’hudah said to his brothers, “What advantage is it to us if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?²⁷ Come, let’s sell him to the Yishma’elim, instead of putting him to death with our own hands. After all, he is our brother, our own flesh.” His brothers paid attention to him.”

Skipping ahead in the story to Genesis 42:21 gives us some insight as to what happened here. *“Then they said to one another, “In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that **we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen.** That is why this distress has come upon us.”* It seems Joseph’s initial response to this impromptu diversion to his life, was distress not faith. I am sure Joseph raised quite a commotion in that pit. Assuredly, he will mature a lot in his faith in the next few years.

Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of silver. Numbers always have great significance in the Bible. Every number mentioned in the Bible is significant. Twenty is twice ten, and can at times, mean a complete or perfect waiting period since the number ten is the number of completeness or perfection. At the time all this was happening, though, Joseph probably couldn’t see the big picture or any way for God to fulfill his dreams.

Genesis 37:28-35, “So when the Midyanim, merchants, passed by, they drew and lifted Yosef (Joseph) up out of the cistern and sold him for half a pound of silver shekels to the Yishma’elim, who took Yosef (Joseph) on to Egypt.

²⁹ Re’uven returned to the cistern, and, upon seeing that Yosef (Joseph) wasn’t in it, tore his clothes in mourning. ³⁰ He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy isn’t there! Where can I go now?”

³¹ They took Yosef’s (Joseph’s) robe, killed a male goat and dipped the robe in the blood.

³² Then they sent the long-sleeved robe and brought it to their father, saying, “We found this. Do you know if it’s your son’s robe or not?” ³³ He recognized it and cried, “It’s my son’s robe! Some wild animal has torn Yosef (Joseph) in pieces and eaten him!”

³⁴ Ya’akov tore his clothes and, putting sackcloth around his waist, mourned his son for many days. ³⁵ Though all his sons and daughters tried to comfort him, he refused all consolation, saying, “No, I will go down to the grave, to my son, mourning.” And his father wept for him.”

My heart hurts for Jacob’s perceived loss. I think the worst thing a parent can go through is the death of a child. Of course, Joseph was not really dead, but it was not known to Jacob. Jacob had planted the seeds of “deceit” many years before when he deceived his brother, Esau out of his birthright, his own father, Isaac into giving him the blessing Esau should have had, and his father-in law, Laban into giving him the better herds. Here it appears that he is reaping some of that bad crop because now he is being deceived by his own sons who lied about Joseph. Galatians 6:7 tells us, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**” (ESV) If you sow bad things, you can be sure that they will be multiplied back to you; unless God intervenes and cancels some bad crops that were sown. I have prayed for God to cancel a few bad crops and for help to sow only good crops.

Genesis 37:36, “In Egypt the Midyanim sold Yosef (Joseph) to Potifar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, a captain of the guard.”

God promise's that He will direct your path if you trust Him with all your heart and not try to figure things out on your own. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and **He will make straight your paths.**" You can be sure God is working on your behalf, even when you can't see it. Here you see God orchestrating events for Joseph. Potiphar was an officer of Pharaoh and God was placing Joseph in an environment where he could flourish. Philippians 2:12-13 says, "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for **it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.**"

Romans 8:28 tells us, "And we know that for those who love God **all things work together for good**, for those who are called according his purpose." (ESV) The literal translation of this verse says it even better: "And we know that **God works everything together for good** to those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose." We can't give any credit to happenstance or coincidence because **God is the only One who works all things together** for your good.