

Reading: Genesis Chapter 37

Last week we learn't of a large family, Jacob and his 12 sons who had now all come to live in the Land of Promise. We are today going to have a story about that family.

Jacob and his family lived a nomadic (meaning wanderer) life. Some of his sons were now grown up with their own wives and families, living in their own tents. They were shepherds tending their large flocks and wandering about from place to place in search of pasture, but at times settling down for quite a while in one place, pitching camp and even sowing and growing a crop of barley or wheat.

Of all Jacob's sons he loved Joseph the best. He was the youngest. To show his love, Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colours, unlike the other brothers who were shepherds had to wear coarse, rough clothes and warm skin garments for tending the sheep in all weathers. This coat marked Joseph as the special son and by right should have gone to the eldest son Reuben. This caused the brothers to be jealous of Joseph. Joseph was a boy who feared God and tried to do what was right.

Joseph had two dreams. The first one was, he and his brothers were binding sheaves of corn out in the field when suddenly his sheaf rose and stood upright, while his brothers' sheaves bowed down to it. The second dream was that the sun, moon and stars were bowing down to him. These two dreams indicated that Joseph would one day rule over his brothers. Joseph could not help having the lovely coat and he could not help having the dreams for God sent them. But it was not right of his brothers to be so jealous and hate their younger brother. We must be careful not to feel like that, jealous because someone else has something we would like.

Now Joseph's brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem. So his father Jacob, asked Joseph to journey to his brothers to see how they were, he found them in a place called Dothan. He was not afraid to go on the journey by himself because he always relied on God to help him. Before Joseph reached them, they saw him coming, so they plotted to kill him, but when the eldest Reuben heard this he tried to save Joseph from his brothers so he suggested that they only throw him in a pit (probably a deep well), so they removed his coat of many colours and threw him into the pit.

While his brothers were eating their meal a caravan of men on their way to Egypt, <sup>stopped</sup> they sold Joseph to the merchantmen for 20 pieces of silver. The Merchants would take care of Joseph on their journey to Egypt by feeding him and allowing him to ride on one of the camels. When they arrived in Egypt, Joseph was sold to Potipher, the captain of the King of Egypt's army, now Joseph worked very hard and came to be his head servant. Through out all this Joseph held firmly to his trust in God, and wherever he was, always tried to do his best.

Point to remember: We must remember that jealousy results in wrong behaviour.