

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS
JULY 5, 2023
GENESIS 37:12-36

INTRODUCTION:

1. **GENESIS 37.11:** *“And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.”*
 - a) Envy (qana): The Hebrew word always describes a competitive attitude. Envy is always used in reference to rivalry in relationships. (Gen. 30.1; Num. 5.29-31)
 - b) God is a jealous God Who does not tolerate competition. (Ex. 34.14; 1 Kings 19.10)
 - c) The brothers of Joseph were envious (jealous) as they were competing for their father’s affection. That is what favoritism does. (Gen. 37.3,4)
2. Because of envy, Joseph’s brothers conspired against him.

I. UNFOLDING THE TEXT

A. Command.

1. **GENESIS 37.12,13:** *“Come, I will send you to them.”*
2. Where were the brothers? (Gen. 37.12,13; cf. 34.2,25,26)
3. Why did Jacob send Joseph to his brothers? (Gen. 37.14, with v. 2)
4. He learned that they were in Dothan. (Gen. 37.15-7; cf. 2 Kings 6.13).

B. Conspiracy.

1. **GENESIS 37.18:** *“Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.”*
2. Why did they conspire to kill their brother? (Gen. 37.19,20)

C. Compassion.

1. **GENESIS 37.21:** *“But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands”*
 - a) Reuben had both responsibility and feelings for Joseph. (Gen. 35.23; 46.8)
 - b) Reuben employed a delay tactic to save Joseph. (Gen. 27.22-24)
2. But there was no compassion in the hearts of the other brothers. (Gen. 27.25)

D. Company.

1. **GENESIS 37.25:** *“there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead”* They were traveling to Egypt to trade with the Egyptians.
2. **GENESIS 37.26:** *“So Judah said to his brothers, ‘What profit is there...’”*
3. **GENESIS 37.28:** *“sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver.”*

E. Cruelty.

1. **GENESIS 37.29:** *“Then Reuben... tore his clothes.”*
2. **GENESIS 37.34:** *“Then Jacob tore his clothes...”* (with vs 31-34)

II. APPLICATION

A. Envy changes how we feel about others.

1. Envy is often associated with selfishness (James 3.13-18; cf. Phil. 2.3,4)
2. Envy is the reason why Jesus was put to death. (Matt. 27.18)
3. **1 CORINTHIANS 13.4:** *“Love does not envy”*

B. God’s plan cannot be thwarted.

1. **GENESIS 37.20:** *“We shall see what will become of his dreams!”* They tried to prevent Joseph’s dreams from coming true. But they fulfilled them.
2. The Pharisees tried to thwart the plan of God by putting Him to death. But they carried out God’s plan. (Acts 2.21; 4.27,28; 13.27; cf. James 4.13-17)