

## Setback or Setup? WHEN OTHERS SET US BACK

### JOSEPH EXPERIENCES A SERIES OF SETBACKS:

- Joseph grew up in a home where he was ignored and mistreated by his siblings.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph - a beautiful robe. <sup>4</sup> But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn't say a kind word to him. One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. <sup>6</sup> "Listen to this dream," he said. <sup>7</sup> "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!" <sup>8</sup> His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them. **Genesis 37:3-8 NLT**

- Joseph was thrown into a pit of rejection.

<sup>18</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. <sup>19</sup> "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. <sup>20</sup> "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!" <sup>21</sup> But when Reuben heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said. <sup>22</sup> "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to rescue Joseph and return him to his father. <sup>23</sup> So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing. <sup>24</sup> Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it. **Genesis 37:18-24 NLT**

- Joseph was sold out for money.

<sup>26</sup> Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime. <sup>27</sup> Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother - our own flesh and blood!" And his brothers agreed. <sup>28</sup> So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt. **Genesis 37:26-28 NLT**

- Joseph lost his identity.

Meanwhile, the Midianite traders arrived in Egypt, where they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Potiphar was captain of the palace guard. **Genesis 37:36 NLT**

- Joseph was punished for doing the right thing.

<sup>6</sup> So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing - except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, <sup>7</sup> and Potiphar's wife soon began to look at him lustfully. "Come and sleep with me," she demanded. <sup>8</sup> But Joseph refused. "Look," he told her, "my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. <sup>9</sup> No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God." **Genesis 39:6-9 NLT**

- Joseph was forgotten by people he helped.

<sup>14</sup> "And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. <sup>15</sup> For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it." **Genesis 40:14-15 NLT**

Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought. **Genesis 40:23 NLT**

### WHAT KEPT JOSEPH FROM GIVING UP?

Setbacks are the stepping stones of life if we trust God.

1. Joseph desired intimacy with God and was dependent on God's presence.

<sup>9</sup> "These patriarchs were jealous of their brother Joseph, and they sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But God was with him <sup>10</sup> and rescued him from all his troubles..." **Acts 7:9-10 NLT**

Potiphar noticed this and realized that the Lord was with Joseph, giving him success in everything he did. **Genesis 39:3 NLT**

2. Joseph was dependent on God's plan no matter how long it took.

You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. **Genesis 50:20 NLT**

3. Joseph depended on God's help in every challenge.

<sup>15</sup> Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream last night, and no one here can tell me what it means. But I have heard that when you hear about a dream you can interpret it." <sup>16</sup> "It is beyond my power to do this," Joseph replied. "But God can tell you what it means and set you at ease." **Genesis 41:15-16 NLT**