BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

When Temptation Comes Genesis 39:1-20 Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a <u>Unit</u> of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The <u>weekly session</u> "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

- 1. The Gathering Time Leader will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.
- **2.** The Bible Study Leader will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)
- 3. <u>The Worship Time Leader</u> has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the <u>Worship Time</u> that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Plan to use the outline given at the end of the Worship Time session on a whiteboard, a large sheet of paper or all individual sheets printed for each participant.

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

Grace Alone, The Worship Hymnal #112; CCLI #2335524 His Name is Wonderful, The Worship Hymnal #315; CCLI # 1122230 Blessed Be The Name, The Worship Hymnal #310; CCLI# 34525 Public domain

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

When Temptation Comes

Focal Text

Genesis 39:1-20

Background Text

Genesis 39:1-23

Main Idea

As did Joseph, we are to remain faithful to the Lord when temptation comes.

Question to Explore

When temptation comes, what do you do?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to describe what Joseph's experience teaches about dealing with temptation.

Gathering together:

Sing Grace Alone, The Worship Hymnal #112; CCLI #2335524

The song we have sung begins with these words:

Ev'ry promise we can make, ev'ry prayer and step of faith, Every difference we will make is only by his grace.

Scott Wesley Brown and Jeff Nelson, 1988, Maranatha! Music

Our focus today is on the life of Joseph after he was sold into slavery in Egypt. The theme that runs through this story is "The Lord was with Joseph." We will consider how that helped Joseph deal with temptation. Temptation came in many forms: pride in what he accomplished; pride in his relationship to a man of authority; and the invitation to sexual immorality. The Lord was with Joseph and sustained him throughout all of these ©2001-2010, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. www.homechurchonline.com 4 When Temptation Comes – 09-27-10-en

temptations. Yet, it was only through God's grace that these things were true. **The Lord gave him success in everything he did** is the lesson that is loud and clear in today's scripture passage. "Every difference we will make is only by his grace."

The story from the Old Testament speaks profoundly to us today. May we listen to God's message to us individually and corporately.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the "<u>Teacher Preparation</u>" for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the "<u>Bible Study Plan</u>" for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

When Temptation Comes

Focal Text

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Background Text

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Main Idea

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Introduction to your personal study:

After twelve years of fruitful and rewarding ministry in helping churches develop and grow, the job description was radically changed. Several years later, that position was eliminated. Sadness filled the hearts of the ones called to this ministry. Frustration and anger and a sense of betrayal were present as well. But God provided the opportunity for full time ministry in the development of materials for home churches around the world. What pleasure and satisfaction it has been to work with writers and translators who have given freely of their time and expertise. We still wait to see what God will do with this material, but glimpses of the big picture of its use sustain us. And in our own home church, we rejoice to see leadership exercised by relatively new Christians. Our theme verse written by Paul in Romans 15:14 *I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another* encourages us to continue to follow God's will in this

endeavour. When things are difficult, it is hard to remember that God always has a plan for the future of his followers, but it essential that we hold on to that truth.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study", found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

At the end of our previous study, in Genesis Chapter 37, Joseph's father, Jacob was inconsolable following the news that Joseph had apparently been killed by wild animals. In actuality, his extremely jealous brothers had sold him to Midianite merchants who were headed to Egypt. Chapter 38 parenthetically records the unusual story involving the transgression of Joseph's eldest brother Judah, and Judah's daughter-in- law. The story takes place sometime after Jacob and his brothers sold Joseph. After moving away and having a family, Judah ignored the needs of his widowed Canaanite daughter-in-law, Tamar. She finally resorted to an intriguing plan to trap Judah. Initially Judah was very self-righteous and commanded that she be stoned. Then Judah discovered that he was in fact the transgressor. After he was confronted with his own sinfulness, Judah become a changed man. Chapter 39 returns to the story of Joseph after he has arrived in Egypt.

Focusing on the Meaning:

The Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:1-5)

When we last saw Joseph he was a young man of 17 whose robe of identity had been torn off, his brothers had turned their backs to his cries, and he had been sold to strangers and taken from his home country (Genesis 37:23-29). Yet through the terrifying crisis God's presence remained with Joseph. We are told nothing of the journey to Egypt, but one can imagine Joseph's feelings of despair and horror. Once in Egypt, Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard, bought Joseph and put him to work in his house (39:1). There Joseph had "success in everything he did." Joseph was given increased responsibility and became Potiphar's attendant; likely his right-hand man (39:2-4). Joseph carried out each new responsibility well, and continued to receive more. Finally, Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything he owned. God's presence in Joseph's life was unmistakable. Nine times in this chapter God is named - Vs 2, 3, 5, 9, 21, 23. God did not deliver Joseph from slavery, but He was with him and God blessed him throughout all his circumstances.

Faced with Temptation (Genesis 39:6-10)

Joseph had risen to a place of power and authority (39:6). Additionally, he is described as "well-built and handsome." His mother Rachel was also described as "lovely in form and beautiful" (Genesis 29:17). Clearly, Joseph was a valued servant. After a while, because of his talents, or physique or both, he caught the attention of Potiphar's wife

(9:7). Each time Mrs. Potiphar asked him to come to bed with her, Joseph refused her invitation. He stated his two reasons for his resistance: first because it would breach the trust Potiphar placed in him, and secondly, because the act of adultery was wicked and sinful to God (39:8,9). Yet Potiphar's wife continued to proposition Joseph, even though Joseph continued to refuse her and finally avoided being with her at all (39:10).

Caught in a Trap (Genesis 39:11-20)

In spite of Joseph's vigilance, Potiphar's wife finally ensnared him (39:11). It appears clear that Mrs. Potiphar had made plans for this moment. When Joseph entered the house on business, no other servant was there. He must have seen the situation and turned to make his escape when she grabbed his cloak, and again propositioned him (39:12). Joseph ran out of the house, leaving his cloak in her hand. Joseph showed good discernment in leaving. In 1 Corinthians 6:18, Paul warns the believers to flee sexual immorality. This was not a lingering look in the heat of the moment; Joseph knew that Potiphar's wife meant business. To be rejected by a Hebrew slave was for this vain woman an insult too great to ignore. Joseph could picture no good result from his staying so he ran, leaving his cloak behind (Genesis. 39:13). Somehow significant events in his life are tied up with Joseph's cloaks!

As soon as she discovered her plan had failed, Potiphar's wife called her servants. She wanted witnesses to her claims and used the cloak as evidence against Joseph (39:14-15). When Potiphar returned, she showed the cloak to him and claimed that Joseph wanted to take advantage of her (16-18). The object of her affections suddenly became the object of her scorn. She didn't even use his name but called Joseph "that Hebrew slave" and "your slave" (17, 19).

When she told Potiphar her account of the incident, "he burned with anger" (39:19). One of the oldest defenses in common law is the "heat of passion" defense. This defends a man against a charge of murder when he kills another man who is caught with the killer's wife. Throughout history, death is the usual sentence for one who takes advantage of another's wife. Clearly Potiphar had a reason to be angry. Yet Scripture does not record against whom his anger burned. Perhaps he didn't fall for his wife's tale of her own innocence because instead of putting Joseph to death, he had him put in prison (20). This wasn't the common prison, but the place of the king's prisoners (20). It was actually in his own house. As captain of the guard, Potiphar was in charge of these prisoners (40:3). How ironic for Joseph! Most recently he had been in charge of Potiphar's whole household. Yet again he was stripped of his cloak, his position and thrown into captivity.

God's Continued Presence (Genesis 39:21-23)

Joseph was falsely accused, again stripped of everything he knew and isolated even more from any chance to see a familiar face. Surely he called upon God, yet God did not remove Joseph from prison. However, His Presence remained with Joseph, even in prison (39:21). Imagine Joseph's mental state. Yet even in our darkest hours God is at

work. He again paved the way for Joseph in his superior's eyes. Just as he did in Potiphar's house, Joseph rose to positions of greater and greater responsibility (22). Finally, the warden gave Joseph exclusive control of his responsibility; and God gave Joseph success (23).

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Joseph left his father's home by being sold into slavery as a young man of seventeen. Yet the teachings of his childhood were firmly fixed in his mind and heart. When tempted to engage in illicit sexual behaviour, he told the very powerful woman who tried to seduce him that adultery was against God's plans and will for mankind.

This passage holds many truths for us. The primary one is that God's plans for us are greater than human circumstances. A further teaching exists in the importance of instilling in children the truth of Scripture and the truth about God's sustaining power. Joseph could not have known all of these realities without having been taught them as a child.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

When Temptation Comes

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the <u>Focal Text</u> in their Bibles. Also, share with them the <u>Main Idea</u> to be learned from the Scriptures, and the <u>Questions to be</u> <u>Explored</u> by the group.

Focal Text

Genesis 39:1-20

Background Text

Genesis 39:1-23

Main Idea

As did Joseph, we are to remain faithful to the Lord when temptation comes.

Question to Explore

When temptation comes, what do you do?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to describe what Joseph's experience teaches about dealing with temptation.

Connect with Life:

Ask the group to think about a time when temptation to do evil was very present in their own lives. Do not ask for these to be shared. Give a few moments of reflection and prayer before beginning the teaching session.

Guide the Study:

Use the following outline to guide the study. You may place the outline on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or provide individual copies for each participant. You may make copies from the outline given at the end of the Worship Time.

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The Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:1-5)
Faced with Temptation (Genesis 39:6-10)
Caught in a Trap (Genesis 39:11-20)
God's Continued Presence (Genesis 39:21-23)

The Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:1-5)

Have someone read Genesis 39:1-5.

Note that the significant words here are *The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered.*

Comment: Even though Joseph's story is an extraordinary one and he was an extraordinary person, the same is true for those of us who are ordinary people – when the Lord is with us, we will prosper. That does not mean we will become wealthy, but it means our lives will be overshadowed by God's protective care.

Continue: Focus on verse 3. **The Lord gave him success in everything he did.**Later in the story of Joseph we will better understand the reason for God's grace in Joseph's life. We are not talking about the success of one person, but the guidance and care of God for many people.

Ask: Do you see the difference between the promise of God's presence and protective care—and the promise of some evangelists that if you will do certain things you will have health and wealth? (Allow a moment for comments on the group regarding this but don't allow this to become the focus of the study. It is only a minor point).

Faced with Temptation (Genesis 39:6-10)

Have someone read verse 6.

Share with the participants: Potiphar has really abdicated his own responsibility to oversee his household and to serve as captain of the guard. He did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Perhaps his inattention extended to his wife.

Have someone read verse 7.

Look for discussion on this: How do you imagine Joseph's appearance to be?

Discuss the gift of physical beauty and the responsibility that goes along with it.

Have another person read verse 7-10.

Say: Potiphar's wife had power. Her invitation to Joseph is not really an invitation – it is an order.

Seek an answer: What are the two reasons Joseph gave for refusing Potiphar's wife? (The master had placed trusted him and it would be a sin against God).

Comment: Here again we see the importance of the early Godly instruction Joseph must have received. Clearly Joseph understood the reasons behind his choice. It is vitally important the parents give the message to their kids, "God has rules so we don't get hurt." Joseph was tempted beyond his physical desires. He was tempted to misuse his position and power for his own pleasure. But he was strong in his refusal to yield to temptation.

Follow up with this: <u>Jesus included in the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:13 these words</u> **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** In Joseph's day, in Jesus' day and in our day, that is a prayer we need to pray continually. No one is exempt from temptation or from circumstances where we might betray our values and our Lord.

Caught in a Trap (Genesis 39:11-20)

Reguest a different person to read Genesis 39: 11-20.

State: No modern day novel or television show could have more drama than is expressed here. The rejected wife of Potiphar is now ready for revenge. There is little Joseph can do but be subject to the punishment given him even though he is not guilty. Doing the right thing can cause loss of a job, a relationship and hopes for the future. However, when personal integrity is intact, one can live with even very severe consequences.

Encourage a discussion by the group in regard to the relevance of this problem in today's world.

Ask: <u>Is it still possible today to be unjustly accused and suffer consequences though</u> innocent?

Now ask: How does Jesus teach us to act if this happens to us?

God's Continued Presence (Genesis 39:21-23)

Have someone read Genesis 39: 21-23.

Search for answers to this: What words or phrases have appeared in earlier accounts of Joseph's stay in Potiphar's house? (the Lord was with him; he was made responsible for what happened in the prison; the Lord gave him success in whatever he did.)

Have someone summarize Joseph's experiences as studied today.

Comment that Joseph's story is far from over and further studies will indicate that God continued to use and bless Joseph.

Encourage Application:

Conclude the study with this: <u>Joseph could easily have become discouraged</u>, <u>blamed God and become bitter</u>. Certainly other people in less difficult circumstances have done so. This lesson should encourage us to remain constantly aware of temptation so that we make right choices. We should build into our lives the assurance that God's continued presence will guide our lives. As did Joseph, we are to remain faithful to the Lord when temptation comes.

Call for someone to close with prayer for strength to resist temptation and to trust God to bring good out of unjust accusations against us.

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

When Temptation Comes Genesis 39: 1-23

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Practicing Our Trust in God

You may have heard your parents say, "God has rules so you won't get hurt." They may personalize it even more and say, "Our rules are so that you won't get hurt." In today's story, Joseph obeyed the rules. He honoured God's admonitions about moral purity and he respected the covenant he had made with his master, Potiphar. In spite of that, Joseph ended up in jail. Read verses 20-23 of Chapter 39 of Genesis and discuss the next part of the story.

Joseph again earns favour with those in authority. Part of trusting God is believing that He will work for good in our lives even when we can't see how that is going to happen.

Joseph was only 17 years old when his story begins in Genesis 37:2. He is sold by his brothers into slavery and taken away from his family at that early age. Do you find it amazing that such a young man would continue to follow God when things were so very difficult for him?

What are some things or practices that you can begin now that will guard your faithfulness to Jesus Christ when something happens and life becomes truly difficult for you?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)

The Blessing of the Lord- A Trust Given Genesis 39: 1-23

Beginning the Service:

Sing His Name is Wonderful, *The Worship Hymnal* #315; CCLI # 1122230 Blessed Be The Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #310; CCLI# 34525 Public domain

Offering:

Praying for the World:

Use this prayer request or a similar one that may be more recent. Have another person participate in worship by reading this and calling someone else to voice this prayer.

Pray for the Shiloh Baptist Church in Port au Prince, Haiti as they continue faithful after the loss of their pastor and many, many members of their congregation in the earthquake of January 12, 1010.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Blessing of the Lord – A Trust Given

The blessing of the Lord was evidenced in Joseph's life from his birth throughout his long life. He was born late in life to Jacob and was much loved by him. In fact, that

overabundance of love resulted in undue favouritism by his father and the jealousy of the older brothers.

This was no ordinary sibling rivalry for it resulted in Joseph's being sold into slavery in Egypt. It was hard to see the blessing of the Lord at work at this time.

However, this young, attractive, and smart man found favour with Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials. He bought him and took him into his home. Even the Egyptian sensed the blessing of the Lord on Joseph's life. Genesis 39:3-4 says When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favour in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household and he entrusted to his care everything he owned"

Joseph was a steward of all that Potiphar entrusted to him. This concept is echoed in the New Testament words of 1 Corinthians 4:1-2: **So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.**

Jesus himself expressed this truth as recorded in Luke12:48b: From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Joseph was a person to whom much had been given – personal attractiveness, administrative abilities, and a unique relationship with God. Further, he had been entrusted with the care of everything Potiphar owned. We sometimes see people who are given extraordinary ability and power coming to feel they are beyond the rules of society and those of God. This was not true with Joseph.

A further New Testament truth was exhibited in the life of Joseph. 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us: No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. Joseph left his home and the teachings of his father, Jacob, and the Jewish law at the age of 17. Yet this truth was exhibited in his life.

Joseph remained true to God's standards for moral purity. When temptation came, he resisted it – in fact, he ran from it. In verse 7 of Chapter 39, Potiphar's wife invited Joseph *Come to bed with me!* Joseph refused stating that this would be breaking Potiphar's trust and God's laws. She continued to tempt him – day after day. One day she managed to be alone in the house when he was there. Joseph realized the compromising situation and literally ran out of the house. Unfortunately, she had grabbed his cloak and managed to retain possession of it.

Potiphar burned with anger. Anger is often mixed with disappointment and this probably was true in this situation. Potiphar had placed his trust in Joseph and that trust seemed

to have been broken. However, Potiphar did not order his death which he could easily have done. Perhaps he suspected that his wife had a part in what had happened. Joseph was placed in prison and while in prison "the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warden."

God's blessing continued as expressed in verse 22-23 **So** the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

This is not the end of Joseph's story. God continued to bless him all of his life. This focus on how Joseph remained true to God's law and to the commitment he had made to be a good steward of his master's belongings speaks to us across the ages.

God's blessing is real and continuous even when outward circumstances do not indicate this to be true. A missionary to Haiti stood in the remains of a church building demolished in the earthquake of January 12, 2010. The pastor of the church had been killed. The missionary had discipled that pastor as a young man and had been a part of his first church start. Now the missionary stood in the ruins of the building and learned that of the 2,000 members of the church, only 100 members had been accounted for a week after the quake. Twenty-five year old Pierre Anderson spoke with the missionary, Mark Rutledge. "It's been the church's encouragement that has helped give me strength," Anderson said. The church has been holding services every day outside the building since the quake.

No matter what happens in life, the only thing that matters is Jesus Christ." Anderson continued. "If you have faith, he will sustain you." Amid the dire situation "a revival could happen..." Rutledge said. "If the focus is on Jesus, that kind of change can happen...a change that is more than skin deep" (Baptist New Mexican, January 30, 2010, p. 8).

In prison, Joseph could have despaired and given up. However, he continued to work for the good of others and the good of the master who had lost faith in him. God's blessing was evident to him and to others. May it be so in our lives.

Call to Commitment:

When we leave here today, we leave with a choice. We can decide that we will worry about temptations and problems that life will surely bring to us when those moments or situations arise. Or, we can leave committed to find and practice the kind of actions, devotional time, and prayer life that will help ensure our faithfulness to God when difficulties come. Let us choose this better way and do so even as we close our time together.

Concluding the Service:

Choose a hymn to sing or read—or choose a scripture the church as you leave to serve God through the week.	that will	express a	blessing on

Use the following outline to teach the Bible Study. You may write these on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or provide individual copies for each participant.

When Temptation Comes Genesis 39:1-20

The Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:1-5)

Faced with Temptation (Genesis 39:6-10)

Caught in a Trap (Genesis 39:11-20)

God's Continued Presence (Genesis 39:21-23)

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