



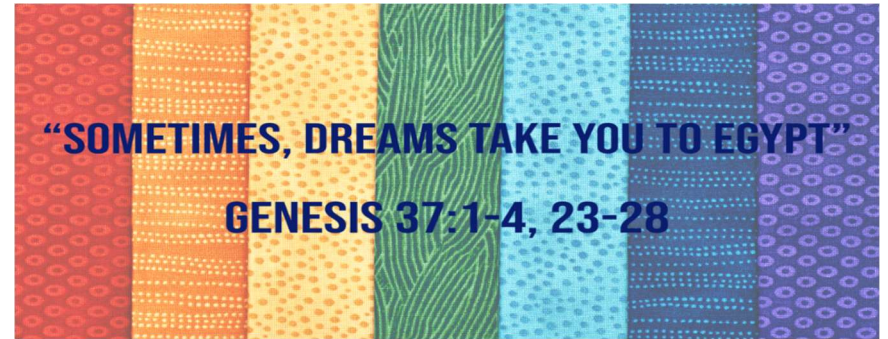
### Genesis 37:1-4, 23-28 New Revised Standard Version

<sup>1</sup> Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. <sup>2</sup> These are the descendants of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. <sup>3</sup> Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children because he was the son of his old age, and he made him an ornamented robe. <sup>4</sup> But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

<sup>23</sup> So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the ornamented robe that he wore, <sup>24</sup> and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

<sup>25</sup> Then they sat down to eat, and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. <sup>28</sup> When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.



**"Amazingly, even as Joseph sets out for Egypt as a slave, God has not abandoned the dream" –Walter Brueggemann**

It's somewhat easy to see from where the brothers were coming. After all, when was the last time you felt slighted by someone especially a family member? Joseph was the favored child. He could do no wrong and was always observant for those times when his siblings did so. A bit of a brat, a touch of a tattler; is there any wonder his brothers wished to be rid of him? All that was needed was the right time and opportunity, and the "dreamer" would be no more.

Dreams are common to the first book of the Hebrew Bible. They functioned as more than mental images during various stages of the sleep cycle, but were, in those days, perceived as a means of divine communication supplying reassurance or guidance to individuals or a people. To adapt a line from the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Joseph had a dream." This dream was not fully developed or interpreted as he shared his experiences with the family. No timeline was given as to how or when the events might unfold. Then, when all seemed to be going well for him, his dream became a living nightmare. Can you relate?

- 1. Always remain humble when communicating your dream.**
- 2. Know that not everyone will embrace your dream.**
- 3. Be awake to the reality that your path may change.**

**Prayer Pebble:** Lord, sometimes things happen which have the potential to dash my dreams. As long as my dreams remain "only mine," I can become discouraged. Help me to see that even when challenged, your dream lives on.