

Dreams, Decisions, and the Divine

Description

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Genesis 37:1-11

Seventeen-year-old Joseph is about to learn a very grown-up lesson: words have consequences. For Joseph, those consequences would lead him into captivity, separated from family. We remember the end of this story more than its beginning, that God used conceit, anger, and deception to bring about His glory.

Genesis 37 begins with a “bad report” about his brothers. Joseph’s problems with his brothers likely began at that point if not before. We cannot fault Joseph for accepting the beautiful gift he received later, but neither did he need to flaunt it. Taking this history into account, when we read that the brothers “hated him all the more” when they heard about his dream (v. 8). Joseph still needed to learn to use his words wisely and with discretion.

Many of us still struggle with this problem. We justify gossip as “truth.” We say hurtful things because we are just “defending” our ideas and decisions. Our words wound others and we believe we are justified because we are “on the right side.” Joseph later learned his lesson the hard way.

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