

**CONVICTION, CONFESSION
OR COVER UP?
Genesis 37:12-36**

INTRODUCTION

From Genesis 37, Joseph becomes the main character in God's historical narrative. As a young man still living at home, he had received specific dreams from God about his future. In Genesis 37:12-36, events begin that bring these dreams to fruition. Joseph's brothers will do him very wrong. Their evil actions will haunt them for decades. Jacob will mourn many years because he had been told lies and believed their cover up. Scripture teaches "*be sure your sin will find you out.*" What to do about known sin - **Conviction, Confession or Cover Up?**

DIGGING DEEPER

In our series of studies on the life of Joseph, practical lessons can be applied for every student of Scripture. *Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11*. Read through Genesis 37:12-36 several times. Knowing how things will eventually work out for good (*Romans 8:28*), we can pass over the true lessons from this narrative. When his brothers sinned so greatly against Joseph, they surely knew how wrong they all were. But what was their response? **Conviction, Confession or Cover Up?** We will consider how to have a clear conscience. *Selah*

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

I. Genesis 37:12-19. Joseph faithfully searched for his brothers to bring back word to Jacob about them. These brothers were disobedient to their father's will, as they went to Shechem, and then even further away to Dothan. They continually proved that they are not to be trusted. And they hated Joseph, conspiring to kill him when they saw him coming their way. It seemed like a perfect crime – premeditated murder, as nobody would ever know what really happened (they thought).

II. Genesis 37:20-22. The lie begins. Fabricating lies to cover their murderous plan; what could they have been thinking? A slippery slope is created when lies are devised and then carried on over time. Now they will have to make up even more lies. Do they have no conscience? Reuben was bothered by all this, and did not want to cross the line into murder.

III. Genesis 37:23-27. No conviction! Intending to let Joseph die of thirst and starvation in a pit, the brothers sat down to eat a meal! It appears easy for them, as they had crossed the line many times before. *1 Timothy 4:2*. God places a conscience in man as the nerve ending of the soul. Conviction – a sense of guilt and shame – should lead to repentance. This is what the Holy Spirit does in shining light on your sin. *John 16:8-11, Matthew 5:4, 1 Timothy 1:15-16*. Selling Joseph for twenty shekels of silver, without owning their sin and mourning over it, the brothers found what seemed like an easy way out. Beloved, how do you react to sin? What is your sensitivity to sin? *Selah*.

IV. Genesis 37:28-36. The cover up. Joseph pleaded with them, but they would not hear (*Genesis 42:21*). And so begins decades of lies and deception, being content to let Jacob believe the lie and grieve 22 years as he believed Joseph was dead. Praise the Lord that this story does not end here! *Genesis 50:20*.

Before we move to personal application concerning our conscience and the Holy Spirit convicting of sin, let's meditate on the goat in our story – verse 31. Think about how this innocent goat is a type of Jesus Christ. Worship the Lamb! *Isaiah 53:4-5*

1. We are guilty of sin! Truly, we must own our sinfulness. *Isaiah 64:6, Romans 3:23-24*
2. Our sins are covered! The blood of this innocent animal reminds us of Christ's substitutionary atonement. *1 John 4:10*
3. Our righteousness is declared! Through Christ, God demonstrates His righteousness. *Romans 3:25-26, Psalm 103:8-12*

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness!

CONSIDER Christian, you should run toward the conviction of the Holy Spirit, not from it.

- Don't cover up! It's worse than the sin. *Numbers 32:23, Matthew 10:26, Proverbs 28:13*
- Denial of sin or unrepentant sin leads to a double life. That's no life! *Isaiah 48:22, Isaiah 52:11, Psalm 32:3-5*
- When the Holy Spirit, by grace reveals sin to you, act immediately! *Isaiah 1:16, 1 John 1:9, James 4:8-10*

Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Psalm 32:1-2

PRAY

- for a greater revelation of what His sacrifice on the cross means to each of us, personally. Ask Him to reveal any area of unconfessed sin in your life.
- a greater conviction of the Holy Spirit in each of our lives.
- for an outpouring of love and hope for those who come to the Veterans Day Assembly.
- the Holy Spirit would have free reign at the Shepherds School as He has separated them unto Himself for this time.