

Resist Sin and Rest in God
Genesis 37:12-36
Pastor Skylar E Bernick

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by sin – sick, just sick, of all the evil in the world? We know from 1st John that God destroys the work of the devil and that the children of God are manifest by resisting sin. But how can we resist sin when there is so much evil in the world? We will see that this is not just a story of sin, but a story of the sovereign power of God. Even when sinners are sinners, God is always at work. There are always two stories: the story of what the sinner is trying to do, and the story of what God is doing despite the sinner. This wonderful truth of God's sovereign power keeps us coming to God and gives us light in the darkest days of our war with sin.

You must resist sin in your life by resting in the sovereign power of God

The Story of Sin

Gen 37: 18-27 The Sin of the Brothers

Vs 19 – the brothers' bitter envy has become dangerous. “This dreamer” could be translated as “this man of dreams” or even “this master of dreams”. Whatever is meant, the brothers were still bitter about the dreams.

Vs 22 –Reuben will conspire and lie but he hesitates to shed blood. Even so, he will not *resist*...

Reuben did not commit the wicked acts of his brothers. But he did fall and maybe in a worse way. Reuben was the oldest, he should have been the leader and stopped this evil, but he did not.

Vs 23-25 – that coat comes up, again! This is a striking, violent, phrase in Hebrew. It is well translated in the KJV but even so it's hard to get the gut feeling. "striped" comes from a word that basically means to plunder, rob, or invade. It has an idea of violence about two-thirds of the time it's used in the Old Testament. The brothers humiliated and hurt Joseph. Then they threw him in a dry watering-hole and had lunch.

Consider all the evil that came from a very “little” sin.

Great sins come from small sins, petty envy leads to horrible deeds. Deal with sins in your life right away before they grow out of control!

Gen 37:28-36 The Sorrow Caused by Sin

Vs 29 – Because Reuben did not resist, he will bear sorrow and guilt for years; none of the brothers profit; they only lose; standing before God, self-respect, their relationship with their father, the peace of their family, and much more.

Vs 35-36 – Jacob's suffering – your sin may most hurt those you love

Do not let sin have mastery in your life or you, and those you love will suffer terribly.

You must resist envy and all sin. How can you resist envy? Rest and trust in the sovereign of God! See His wise power even in these events...this is a story of sinful men, but it is also a story of the sovereign God.

The Story of the Sovereign God

God is your refuge from the destruction of sin. We have seen this story focused on the sin the of the brothers, but now let us consider these events with a focus on God.

All of this happened when Joseph was very young, he's 17 at the start of the chapter, and probably still under 20. Don't think that God won't call a young person to great trials, and that God can't lead a young person to great victories. *When you wake up every morning you never know how God will use you but be sure that He has a purpose for you each day.*

Vs 12-17 – God leads Joseph to the Brothers. Jacob and Joseph were expecting the brothers in Shechem. Joseph would never have found them but for a "chance meeting" with a stranger who just happened to hear exactly where the brothers were going.

Vs 21 – God saves Joseph's life. We hear a lot about Reuben, and almost all of it is bad. This is the only time we see Reuben do anything close to righteous.

Vs 27-28 – God removes Joseph so that the Brothers make no profit and have no idea what happened. God's judgment on the brothers starts immediately. Because of the “chance” meeting of two caravans, the brothers have no idea what happened to Joseph and must live for years wondering if their father's favorite will ever come home demanding justice.

What's going on here?

Psalm 105:17 He (God) sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:

God sent Joseph into Egypt! God was able to work through sinners to do His will, save those same sinners. *Marvel at the wise power of God.* But this amazing fact is so much more than just cool, it is practically at work in every day of a Christian's life. Even when people sin against you, even when you yourself sin, know that God uses even that for the good of those who love God. *Rest in the wise power of God and you will have the strength to resist sin.*

When sin seems to have the upper hand know that God's sovereignty will is working

You must resist sin in your life by resting in the sovereign power of God