

## **The Good Shepherd, John 10:22-30**

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**Introduction:** Our Lord promises that He is our Good Shepherd and as so, will protect us and provide for our needs. These promises are ours as His sheep! But, what are we to do when our Shepherd takes us through times of darkness and suffering?

- I. **Joseph's \_\_\_\_\_ conspired against him (Genesis 37)**
  - A. Jacob favored Joseph above all his other children.
  - B. One day they decided to get rid of him:  
"Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits" (Genesis 37:19).
  - C. Rather than kill him, Joseph is sold into slavery.
- II. **Joseph's \_\_\_\_\_ conspired against him (Genesis 39)**
  - A. Though a slave in Potiphar's house, Joseph does well.
  - B. Potiphar's wife however, brings further hardship on Joseph.
  - C. The result is Joseph being thrown in prison:  
"And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined (Genesis 39:20).
- III. **Joseph's \_\_\_\_\_ cared for him (Genesis 45-50)**
  - A. The Lord never abandoned Joseph in his suffering and kept him strong in the faith.
  - B. By God's grace, when a chance for vengeance came, Joseph instead forgave his brothers.
  - C. God preserved Joseph's faith and protected his family and many others from the great famine:  
"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today" (Genesis 50:20).

**Conclusion:** Jesus' words of promise as our Good Shepherd were for Joseph, just as they are for us: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." He sees us through the many ways of suffering and he has suffered on our behalf to free us from our sin.

## The Good Shepherd

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; John 10:22-30 (Easter IV 2013)

**OPEN:** How good are you at putting names and faces together? How important is it that the people in your life know you by name? How hard is it when someone forgets your name?

**DIG:**

1. Review **John 10:1-30**.
  - a. In this portion of Scripture we find Jesus describing Himself as "the Good Shepherd," which we celebrate every year as God's people. What do you know about shepherds and sheep?
  - b. Jesus explains to us that He knows us, He speaks to us, and that no one can snatch us out of His hand. How do we become one of His sheep? How does He keep us as His sheep?
  - c. How does this image or idea of Jesus as your shepherd help you better understand who you are as one of His sheep?
  - d. How does this image or idea of Jesus as your shepherd help you better understand how He takes care of you?
  
2. Review **Genesis 37, 39-41**.
  - a. Examine and discuss the suffering that Joseph went through during the years covered in these chapters.
  - b. How many times do we find the explanation that the Lord was with Joseph in the midst of the difficult times of his life?
  - c. What assurance does this offer you as you face the effects of sin in your life?
  - d. How do you respond to the idea that God blesses people according to their love for or dedication to Him? How does Joseph's life address this teaching?

## REFLECT:

1. Jesus promises as our Good Shepherd that we are always under His care as His sheep. How do you know that you are one of His sheep?
2. As the readings show, Joseph endured all kinds of suffering in the years leading up to his receiving earthly success. What contributed to the suffering He underwent? How did he respond to it?
3. Where can you go for comfort and assurance that your Good Shepherd is always with you and caring for you as you face the trials of this world? What hope do you have with respect to the suffering you are going through during this life?

Questions or comments?

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