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The Convener regrets that owing to his necessary absence from home in attending the half-yearly meeting of the S. S. Committee in Toronto, he will be unable to prepare the next two numbers of this LEAFLET. It is with the utmost difficulty that he has been able to get the past issues ready for distribution on the dates required, and has not yet succeeded in laying in a stock of coming numbers.

# THE Teachers' Preparation Leaflet

LESSON 3.

APRIL 15th, 1894.

2nd QUARTER.

**Joseph sold into Egypt. Gen. 37: 23-36.**

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." Gen. 50: 20.

**COMMIT TO MEMORY** vs. 26-28. **CHILDREN'S HYMNAL**, 127, 151, 39, 71.

**PROVE THAT**—Children's sins bring sorrow to parents. 2 Sam. 18: 33.

**SHORTER CATECHISM**—Quest. 97. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper?

## DAILY PORTIONS.

*(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)*

MONDAY.	TUESDAY.	WEDNESDAY.	THURSDAY.	FRIDAY.	SATURDAY.	SABBATH.
Gen. 37: 23-36	Gen. 37: 13-22	Gen. 39: 1-6	Ps. 105: 16-22	Ps. 57: 1-13	Matt. 10: 21-31	1 Pet. 3: 8-17

**INTRODUCTORY.**—Joseph was sent by his father to enquire after the welfare of his brethren who were feeding their flocks near the scene of their cruel slaughter of the Shechemites. It might be that some smouldering embers of hate would be fanned by imprudence on their part and mischief happen. Solicitous, therefore, for their safety, Jacob sent his son to ascertain whether all was well. Arrived at Shechem, Joseph was informed that his brothers had removed to Dothan, some 18 miles farther north. His approach was descried by them and a plot laid to kill him, and thus bring his dreams to naught. Their wisdom and cruelty were on a level with that of Herod when he slew the babes of Bethlehem. Human wickedness may further God's plans, it can never thwart them. Desiring of saving his life, Reuben proposed that he be cast into an empty cistern, on the shallow plea that the crime would be less shocking than if they shed his blood. It was really more diabolically cruel. To him they assented and our lesson describes the further proceedings.

## NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

**LESSON PLAN.** I. Joseph Sold. vs. 23-30. II., Jacob Sorrowing. vs. 31-36.

**I. JOSEPH SOLD. 23.** When Joseph was come to his brethren—At Dothan, 70 miles from Hebron. What later historical notice of Dothan? (2 Kings 6: 13). They stripped Joseph—Joseph wore this coat probably because it was his usual dress, and he

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was unsuspecting of the feelings of his brethren regarding it. Such a distinguished dress, moreover, being indicative of rank, would ensure him respectful treatment from strangers. This was a rough reception to a brother, a mere boy, who had come a long distance to enquire after their welfare, and who had never done them any unkindness. His cries for mercy afterwards rang in their ears. (ch. 42: 21). Note throughout that Joseph is a type of Christ. He is a beloved son; he came unto his own and his own received him not; he was stripped of his raiment by his executioners (Matt. 27: 28). His goodness awoke the hatred of evil men. **24. Cast him into a pit**—Doubtless they intended to leave him there to die. These cisterns abound in Palestine, and are generally bottle-shaped, so that the prisoner could not possibly get out without help. They were designed for collecting a supply of water in the rainy season. The name Dothan means "the two wells." These still exist, and one of them is called "the well of the pit," but it cannot be the one into which Joseph was thrown, for it was dry. Dr. Marcus Dods makes a fine application of Joseph's experience to the case of young persons whose ambitious plans seem to be frustrated, yet who cannot see that their apparent failure is God's way of leading them to the work he has for them to do. (See *Isaac, Jacob and Joseph*, one of the volumes of the "Household Library of Exposition.") **25. They sat down to eat bread**—"The heartless barbarity with which the brethren of Joseph sat down to eat and drink the very dainties he had brought them from their father while they left him, as they thought, to starve, has been regarded by all later generations as the height of hardhearted indifference." (Dods). See the reference to it in Amos 6: 6, and compare 1 John 3: 12. It was the sin of Cain aggravated. "We often think respecting the tyrants of whom we read in history, that they must have been haunted by the furies. It is not so; there is a worse doom for sin than this: it is that it makes the heart callous and forgetful of its presence." (F. W. Robertson). **Ishmaelites**—Called also Midianites (v. 28) and Medanites (v. 39, R. V. margin). Ishmael was the son of Hagar; Medan and Midian were sons of Keturah (ch. 25: 2), whom Abraham married after Sarah's death, so that they were tribes related to the sons of Jacob and to one another. Probably the Ishmaelites were in friendly alliance with their cousins and were joined by them in commercial enterprises, so that all three tribes would mingle in the caravan. "Ishmael left his father's house when about fourteen or fifteen years of age. His mother took him a wife probably when he was eighteen, or twenty at the farthest. He had arrived at the latter age about 162 years before the date of the present occurrence. He had twelve sons (ch. 25: 13-15), and if we allow only four other generations, and a fivefold increase, there will be about 15,000 in the fifth generation." (Murphy). **Gilead**—The "hard, rocky region," standing in contrast with Bashan, "the level, fertile tract," its companion district on the East side of the Jordan. "Except among the hill of Galilee, and along the height of Carmel, there is nothing to be compared with it as 'a place for cattle'" (Num. 32: 1). It abounded in spices and aromatic gums. (Jer. 8: 22; 46: 11). The great caravan route from Damascus to Egypt still passes by the site of Dothan, and the approach of the Ishmaelites would be easily discerned in the distance. **Spicery**—The Hebrew word has the general meaning of "an aromatic powder," but was specifically applied to gum tragacanth, or "goat's thorn" gum, yielded by the *astragalus gumifer*, a native of Mt. Lebanon, and also found in Khoordistan. **Balm**—(R. V. marg. "mastic.") *Opobalsumum*, a resinous gum having healing qualities. Botanists have not been able to identify the particular shrub, or tree named. It is mentioned again in Jer. 8: 22. It is by no means certain that gum mastic is meant. **Myrrh**—(R. V. marg. "ladanum.") A fragrant resinous gum, collected from the leaf of a plant of the rose family growing in the island of Crete (*Cistus* or *Creticus*). It is found in Palestine and Arabia. Myrrh is not found in Palestine. The word used here occurs in but one other passage (ch. 43: 11) where it is evidently "of the best fruits in the land." Myrrh is the product of the *Balsanodendron myrrha* which is found in Arabia and the adjoining parts of Africa. **Egypt**—The Egyptians used large quantities of these substances in religious ceremonies, in embalming the dead, for medicinal purposes, and as ministering to the pleasures of the wealthy. **26. Judah said**—"It must be presumed that Judah was unacquainted with Reuben's intention. The brethren were so much excited that Judah alone could not have hoped to rescue Joseph from their hand. The ferocity, especially, of Simeon and Levi, is known to us from their former history. Judah, therefore could think no otherwise than that Joseph must die from hunger in the pit. As in opposition to this, therefore, and not as a counteraction of Reuben's attempt at deliverance, is his proposal to be judged. He lived still though a slave. There was a possibility of his becoming free. He might make his escape by the caravan route that passed south through his home. Reuben in his tenderness had made a subtle attempt to save him. In the bolder policy of Judah we see that subtle attempt crossed by one more daring. No doubt both had some illfeeling towards Joseph, and were therefore, not capable of a mutual and open understanding. That both, however, preserved a better conscience than 'the rest,' is evident from the later history." (Lange). **Conceal his blood**—Could they do this? See ch. 4: 10; Job 16: 8. **27.** For similar instances of cowardly hypocrisy see 1 Sam. 18: 17; 2 Sam. 11: 15; 12: 9. Judah knew what argument alone would save Joseph's life and give him a chance of escape. Monumental inscriptions and carvings shew that

slavery existed in Egypt at this time. What Egyptian bondage meant the descendants of these men learned to know well. The crime of stealing and selling a man was punished in the Mosaic law by death. (Ex. 21 : 16). **28. Midianites**—probably a section of the larger caravan which as a whole was named from the tribe to which the majority belonged. **Twenty pieces**—probably shekels. So also in ch. 20 : 16. This seems to have been the price of a boy from 5 to 20 years old. (Lev. 27 : 5). A man from 20 to 60 was worth 50 shekels. (Lev. 27 : 3; Ex. 21 : 32). Compare Matt. 27 : 9. The price paid for Joseph was about \$15. This sale, is referred to in ch. 45 : 5; Ps. 105 : 17; Acts 7 : 9. When Joseph tells his fellow prisoners that he was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, he merely gives the substantial truth without betraying his brothers. **29. Rent his clothes**—"He seems designedly to have taken a circuitous route, with a view of secretly rescuing the poor lad from a lingering death by starvation. (Jameson). "Reuben was not cruel, simply because he was guilty of a different class of sin. It is well for us, before we take credit to ourselves for being free from this or that sin, to enquire whether it be banished by grace or only by another sin." (F. W. Robertson). Refer to ch. 49 : 4 "unstable as water," or as others take it "impetuous as the water-floods." This rending of the clothes was a very ancient mode of expressing grief. Job 1 : 20; Matt. 26 : 65. A rent is made in the skirt, long or short according to the intensity of the grief. The time came when the other brothers rent their clothes (ch. 44 : 13). **30. The child is not**—He thought the others had carried out their first intention. Compare ch. 42 : 13, 36; Jer. 31 : 15. They may not have told him the truth, but if they did, his weak nature yielded to circumstances, and he joined them in the deception practised on their father.

**II. JACOB SORROWING. 31.** "This was a cruel device. But possibly it was not intended to put a keener edge on Jacob's grief, nor to mock him, but was done in the thoughtlessness of coarseminded men." (Dods). Some explanation of Jacob's non-return was necessary, and this seemed the safest one for themselves. **32.** They sent the coat by a messenger. It seems to be implied that they did not have the courage to face their father. Had they done so, the shrewd Jacob might have detected something suspicious in their looks or manner. **33.** His agony of mind would divert his attention from any suspicious circumstances and the idea once in possession of his mind would prevent his making further inquiry. Refer to verse 20, and Jacob's words 23 years afterwards ch. 44 : 23. Also note that Jacob deceived his father. (ch. 27). **34. Sackcloth**—The cloth of which sacks were, and are still, made in the East was commonly woven of camel's hair. (Rev. 6 : 12). The garments for mourners were made of it, and were, in extreme cases worn next the skin. The robe probably resembled a sack in shape with holes for the head and arms, and fitted close to the person. Sometimes it was spread upon the ground and sprinkled with ashes (Jer. 58 : 5). Other instances of wearing sackcloth, 1 Kings 21 : 27; 2 Kings 6 : 30; Job 16 : 15; Joel 1 : 8; Jonah 3 : 5. It was worn also by prophets and ascetics generally, Isa. 20 : 2. Compare 2 Kings 1 : 8 with Matt. 5 : 4. **35. His sons and daughters**—Only one daughter, Dinah, is mentioned, and it is unlikely that even the callous hearts of the sons would have allowed them to go so far. They were coarse and cruel, but not smooth tongued hypocrites. They were probably still at Dothan. From the expression "tose up" we would naturally infer that the comforters were those who remained with Jacob, and whom also the news plunged into deepest grief. The terms would include his daughters-in-law and grand-children. So David 2 Sam. 12 : 17. **For I will go**—This was the refrain with which he declined all their consolation. "Great grief is still expressed in the East by saying, "I have grief like that which Jacob felt for the loss of Joseph." (Dods). "There is doubtless something more here than grief merely for the loss; there is also self-reproach for having exposed the child to so much danger." (Lange). **The grave**—R. V. margin, "Sheol," the name of the abode of the dead, answering to the Greek *Hades*. Acts 2 : 27. This is the first passage in which the word occurs. (See the Excursus by Prof. Taylor Lewis in Lange's Commentary here). It means neither the grave, i. e. the receptacle of dead bodies, nor the abode of lost spirits, but the place of the disembodied souls of men, without specifying their condition. Jacob really says "I will go to my son mourning Sheol-ward"—on the way to the unknown land. (Lewis). Each of the three patriarchs had to give up his son and receive him again as from the dead. (Dods). **36. Midianites**—R. V. marg. "Medanites," descendants of Medan, son of Abraham and Keturah and brother of Midian. In ch. 39 : 1, Joseph is bought from Ishmaelites, the common designation being used, as before. As Heliopolis, or On, was the seat of government, Joseph was probably offered there publicly for sale. **Potiphar**—"devoted to the sun," or to "Pharaoh" for the words are the same. **Officer**—The word originally meant a eunuch, but came to signify any courtier, or officer in attendance on the king. **Captain of the guard**—R. V. marg. "chief of the executioners." The Septuagint renders the word "principal cook." The royal bodyguard were the executioners of the king's sentences and these were generally death penalties. "It is manifest from this dark chapter, that the power of sin has not been extinguished in the family of Jacob. The name of God does not appear, and his hand is at

present only dimly seen among the wicked designs, deeds, and devices of these unnatural brothers. Nevertheless his counsel of mercy standeth sure, and fixed is his purpose to bring salvation to the whole race of man, by means of his special covenant with Abraham. (Murphy).

## SUMMARY AND REVIEW.

BY REV. DR. MACGREGOR, B. A., AMHERST, N. S.

### JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

J. E.

Joseph a type of Christ.

The Brother's Sin.

God's Providence.

J. T.

B. S.

G. P.

Loved.  
Sent.  
Hated.  
Sold.

Envy.  
Virtual Murder.  
Deception.

Midianites.  
Egypt.  
God's Plan.

1. The lesson title? Plan? Joseph has always been looked upon as a type of Christ. Show in what respects. The words above will indicate. Dwell on the thought suggested by each word and point the scholars to Christ.

2. The Brother's Sin. Bring out first of all the cause of their envy and hatred of their brother, by the past history. Show the opportunity Joseph's visit to them afforded of carrying out the evil that was in their hearts. The devil is sure to put temptation in the way of men who are wrongly inclined. What did the brothers mean to do with Joseph at first? What share had Reuben and Judah in the matter? Trace the steps in the sin from the beginning to the end, including the deception practiced on their father. Show how one sin leads to another. How one sin makes another necessary. Why was it that Reuben did not tell Jacob the whole truth?

3. God's Providence. Show how striking God's providence here. Reuben's interference. A little time gained till the Midianites came up. Sold to carry out God's plan. Take Christ's case as parallel. Violently taken, sold, condemned, slain by men, and yet God saved the world through him. Does this fact make the sin of the brothers less aggravating? What did Peter say to the Jews as to their responsibility for the death of Christ? Show the bearing this has on the promise "All things work together for good to them that love God." Did Joseph know at the time that this was working for his good? Did he see it afterwards? (Golden Text). What is the lesson to us?

## NORMAL DRILL

based on the text-book, *The Sabbath School Teacher's Handbook, or, The Principle and Practice of teaching, with special reference to the Sabbath School,* prepared by Principal Kirkland of the Toronto Normal School.

### TELLING AND QUESTIONING. (CHAPTER VII).

#### IV. Manner of Putting a Question.

1. State the question to the whole class and ask *one* to answer.
2. Simultaneous questions may be used with young pupils.
3. Important questions should be asked in a variety of ways.

#### V. Tests of a Good Answer.

1. It should be full and complete.
2. It should be given in the form of a sentence.