

The Remedy For Insignificance: Favor

"Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father's family. He lived a hundred and ten years²³ and saw the third generation of Ephraim's children. Also the children of Makir son of Manasseh were placed at birth on Joseph's knees.²⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."²⁵ And Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath and said, "God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place."²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten." Genesis 50:22-26

Jack Wagon - Derived from the Freight or Chow Wagons used in the late 19th century. These were often the last wagons in a wagon train, making them the least favorable to drive due to the dust, waste, and debris from the front of the train. When used as an insult it refers to one's lack of significance, implying the insultee is deemed unintelligent, worthless, and capable of no more than operating a Chow wagon.

Significance Alert

Joseph as Favored Son

Joseph looked for **bad reports**

"Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them." Genesis 37:2

Joseph **boasted**

"Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more.⁶ He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had...⁹ Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." Genesis 37:5 -9

Joseph **flaunted**

Joseph received 'an ornate robe' from his father. *"So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan.¹⁸ But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.¹⁹ "Here comes that dreamer!" Genesis 37:17-19*

Insignificance Action

Joseph as House Slave - *"Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there." Genesis 39:1*

Joseph as Prisoner - *"When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger.²⁰ Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined." Genesis 39:19*

"The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master.³ When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did,⁴ Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned." Genesis 39:2

"But while Joseph was there in the prison,²¹ the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden.²² So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there.²³ The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did." Genesis 39:20

Joseph sought the heart of the Lord

Joseph accepted and excelled in his position

Joseph set his sights 'up from this place'

Small Group Questions

1. Currently, in which areas of your life are you experiencing favor?
(Ex: career, family, friendships, spiritually, physically, etc.)
 - Of the three "Significance Alerts", which are you most susceptible to?
2. Currently, in which areas of your life are you feeling somewhat insignificant?
(EX: career, family, friendships, spiritually, physically, etc.)
 - How are you responding to these predicaments?
 - Read and discuss Genesis 50:20
 - How can we find hope in that verse no matter what we are facing in life?
3. As Joseph pursued the favor of God he in turn received the favor of men. (Potiphar and the Prison Warden) Have you experienced that to be true in your life? Have you ever experienced the opposite?