

## **Bible Reading Together during this Covid-19 Shutdown**

**October 18-24: Read Genesis 37 & Gospel of Matthew 13**

### **Genesis 37**

This is the opening chapter on the story of Joseph, the boy dreamer. Joseph will be used greatly to save God's people from the famine, but also the whole world. In this chapter, Joseph, the 11<sup>th</sup> son is the favorite son, and the one left out. Having grown up in a family that practiced overt favoritism, Joseph should have known better. But he continued the dysfunction by favoring Joseph, the first born of his favorite wife, Rachel.

### **Further Study & Discussion**

- We talk about passing down both good and bad family traditions. Some traditions are wonderful to pass down. Some are dysfunctions that should be ended. In Jacob's case, it was the harmful practice of favoritism. This caused tension among his wives, and ill-feeling among his children as the chapter bears out. Spend time with your family and talk about some good family traditions. And then talk about a few bad family traditions that should be rooted out.
- Joseph was only 17 when God gave him a dream, a life vision. Do you have a God-given vision for your life? Some receive it early and some later in life. For example, among the brothers, Judah will become the most important as this becomes the royal line of David and Jesus. And Levi will become the priestly line. And for some, God gives us small dreams scattered throughout our lives. Is there a divine dream you cultivating today?
- In the midst of the evil act by the brothers, Joseph is taken to Egypt as a slave. In the larger picture, Joseph's dream is fulfilled in his rising to become second only to the Pharaoh at Egypt. How do you explain the complexity of human sin and God's will [read Genesis 50:15-21]?

### **Gospel of Matthew 13**

We continue the teachings of Jesus – this time using the parables. We revisit Jesus' parable of the sower (Mark 4), and then his teachings on the kingdom and the end times using the parable of weeds among the wheat, the mustard seed, the yeast, and treasures.

### **Further Study & Discussion**

- We return to the Parable of the Sower and his reason for teaching in parables (v.10-17). In your own words, why does Jesus teach using parables? What does, 'seeing, they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand' mean in context of a parable?
- Parable of the Weed and the Wheat is Jesus' clearest teaching on the end times. What are the weeds, and why doesn't God remove them right away so that the wheat can grow unhindered? What are some weeds in your life, and in our world today?
- We see all these references to the Kingdom of God. In Matthew, following the Jewish tradition of not speaking the name of God, Matthew calls it Kingdom of Heaven. How is the Kingdom of God (heaven) described? And what does it mean to say we are citizens of this Kingdom?