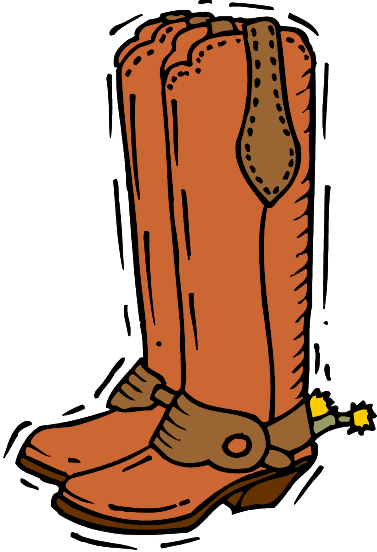


## **So you Think you have Troubles**

### **Scripture References:**

[Genesis 37: 2-3](#)



**INTRO:** Have you ever heard “Pull yourself up by your bootstraps”? As kids growing up in SW Oklahoma it was a common saying, a sort of “code of the West” if you will. A typical pair of cowboy boots has straps at the top that are not there just for decoration in many cases. You can grab a hold of them and more readily facilitate getting into your boots. While this phrase is commonly associated with improving your situation by your own efforts, we use the phrase more in the realm of reality, that is, that when God points you or moves you to follow His leadership, then He expects you to get on with the task at hand because He is able and therefore you are able as a result to get the job done.

With that in mind and a pair of boots at your disposal the lesson **So you Think you have Troubles** unfolds.

Do any of you keep up with the news? In 2010 the story has been about the economy. It’s in a mess and a lot of people have lost their jobs. Families can’t afford their house payment or rent, companies are going out of business, and people can’t find work. A few years ago my company was bought by another company; big changes took place; I got a new boss; a new computer system had to be learned.

Has anyone here ever felt like you have big problems and need some help? There are always problems in this world. I want to tell you about someone that had one problem after another, but kept looking up and God took care of him.

**Read [Genesis 37:2-3 \(King James Version\)](#)**

*2These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.*

*3Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors.*

**Joseph is the favorite son** of Jacob (Israel) so it sounds like things are going pretty good for him.

- His dad gave him a special coat of many colors. Dad let Joseph’s brothers know he was special.
- How spoiled Joseph was! At 17 he would tattletale on his brothers and get them in trouble.
- Then in verse 5 the Bible says: *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.* We see that Joseph had some dreams that he was bragging about to his brothers. In the dreams he was special and everyone would bow down to Joseph.
- If your brothers already hate you, it would not be a good idea to tell them about dreams where they bow down to you!!

- Joseph liked having dreams like this and being special to his dad, but **did not know what it would cost him to be special.**
- **All of us like the thought of being special in God's eyes, but we don't think about the responsibility.**
- Joseph was special to God, but needed training so he could handle the leadership that God wanted to give him.

**Joseph's brothers taught him that popularity is not what is important:** *Genesis 37:18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.*

- Because he was special, they hated him and planned to kill him.
- Joseph had been bragging on himself and possibly feeling that he was better than the rest.
- God can't use leaders like that, so it was time for God to teach him a lesson.
- This lesson began as a "**bottom of a dark pit**" lesson where you wait to die. *Genesis 37:24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit.*
- But God added another lesson, too, called "**sold into slavery**" lesson. *Genesis 37:36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.*
- We know that Joseph was special to God as well as his father, but because of the great love that God had for Joseph and all the children of Israel, God wanted to reshape Joseph into someone that God could use in a really big way.
- As a slave to Potiphar, God blessed everything that Joseph did. *Genesis 39:2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

**You'd think we'd be getting to a happy ending by now, but it's about to get worse:**

- Potiphar's wife accuses Joseph of something awful and he gets thrown into prison.
- He goes from a pit where he is about to die, to being blessed, and then back into another pit.
- Life isn't fair !!!!

**God blessed Joseph in prison:** *Genesis 39:21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison*

- If you are having a rough time right now, look for the hand of God in it to make you better.
- Joseph did and in *Chapter 41* we see God lift Joseph up to become the second most powerful man in the world.
- God put him through all the "stuff" to get him ready to be promoted to a position higher than he ever could have imagined.
- God promoted him to save his father, brothers, and family from starving as well as saving hundreds of thousands from starving.
- He is responsible for saving all 12 sons of Israel so the Jewish nation would not perish.
- God was preparing Joseph to be a help to others rather than to make Joseph special.

### **Summary:**

If you are born again, you can be a useful instrument to God just like Joseph was in spite of your "troubles".

If you are not saved/born again, you will have to go through your troubles without the help and guidance of God. Give your heart to Jesus now so He can help you today and forever.