



RCCG OCEANIA

Faith & Trust

Joseph: Shielded Through Trials

At a Glance

BIG IDEA

Scripture portrays God as a shield who surrounds His people with favor. Joseph's life shows how identity and calling can attract conflict, yet integrity in temptation and patience in delay keep a person positioned for God's timing. Along the way, God's word stands firm, while compromise can derail many—so we learn to stand guarded and obedient.

PRIMARY PASSAGES

Genesis 37:3, 19

Genesis 39:1, 7

Genesis 41:1

Genesis 15:1

Ephesians 6:11

Psalms 5:12

Key Takeaways

- God presents Himself as a shield; His favor surrounds and protects (Gen 15:1; Ps 5:12).
- Favor and identity may provoke opposition, but opposition does not cancel purpose (Gen 37:3, 19).
- Integrity must be practiced in real temptation, not just in public moments (Gen 39:1, 7).
- Some breakthroughs come after delay; timing is part of God's process (Gen 41:1).
- Stand equipped against schemes, and avoid compromise that leads people away from God (Eph 6:11; Num 25:1).
- God's word remains true and reliable even when circumstances resist it (Num 23:17).
- Jesus restores and recommissions those He calls to serve Him (Luke 5:1; John 21:15).

Introduction

Psalm 5:12 describes God's favor as a shield surrounding the righteous. This study explores two linked ideas—shield (defense) and favor (God-given advantage)—and shows how holiness keeps that favor active and protective.

Scripture Reading

- **Psalm 5:12** — God blesses the righteous and surrounds them with favor like a shield—favor is not just a gift; it functions as protection.
- **Ephesians 6:11-18 (especially v.16)** — Within the armor of God, the shield of faith is emphasized as essential defensive protection ("above all").
- **Genesis 15:1** — God identifies Himself to Abraham as a shield, removing fear when God's protection is in place.
- **Genesis 37:3-11; 37:19-24** — Joseph is marked out and begins to dream; when plotted against, he is thrown into a pit that is dry—providence goes ahead of him.
- **Genesis 39:1-6; 39:7-23** — In Potiphar's house and later in prison, Joseph keeps being entrusted with responsibility because God's presence and favor remain evident.
- **Genesis 41:1-44** — Joseph moves "overnight" from prison to leadership; a relationship formed in confinement becomes the link to elevation.

Scripture Reading (cont.)

- **Luke 5:1-11** — Jesus chooses one boat—Peter's—showing that favor can single out an ordinary person for partnership with God's purposes.
- **John 21:15-19** — After failure, Peter is restored and recommissioned ("Feed my sheep"), demonstrating favor that brings restoration, not only opportunity.
- **Luke 22:31-32** — Jesus tells Peter that Satan desired him, but Jesus prayed for him—an example of divine help surrounding a chosen person.
- **Genesis 39:7-10** — Joseph refuses sexual sin, naming it as sin against God; holiness is presented as a condition for sustained favor.
- **Numbers 23:17-24** — A hired prophet cannot curse Israel because God has not beheld iniquity in them; holiness blocks spiritual opposition.
- **Numbers 25:1-9** — When Israel is enticed into sin, judgment follows and many die; sin removes protection and invites defeat.
- **Psalm 18:35** — God is again described as a shield, reinforcing the theme that divine protection surrounds those aligned with Him.

Key Points

1. "Shield" highlights defense: a shield is the major weapon of protection in conflict; losing other resources is survivable if defense remains (compare the emphasis on the shield in Ephesians 6:16).
2. God Himself is a shield (Genesis 15:1): when God's shielding presence is in place, fear is not the final word.
3. "Favor" is God-given advantage: it is received, not earned; it works like an invisible force—unseen, but its results are obvious.
4. Favor can cause preservation: Joseph's enemies intended harm, yet circumstances (a dry pit) kept him alive (Genesis 37:19-24).
5. Favor can produce trust and responsibility in unlikely places: Joseph prospers as a slave and later as a prisoner because God's favor surrounds him (Genesis 39:1-6; 39:7-23).

Key Points (cont.)

- 6. Favor can accelerate elevation: Joseph goes from prison to leadership suddenly, and relationships formed in hard places can become divine links to destiny (Genesis 41:1-44).

Group Discussion

Tip: Use these questions to guide the group from seeing → understanding → applying.

Observation

- In Psalm 5:12, what two actions does God take for the righteous, and what picture is used to describe His favor?
- According to Ephesians 6:16, what is the shield called, and what does it protect against?
- List the different settings Joseph lived through in Genesis 37–41 (home, pit, slavery, prison, palace). Where is favor visible in each stage?
- In Luke 5:1-11, what specific choice does Jesus make that highlights Peter being singled out?
- In John 21:15-19, what repeated instruction does Jesus give Peter, and what does that imply about Peter's future after failure?

Interpretation

- Why might Scripture present favor not only as blessing but also as a “shield” (Psalm 5:12)? What kinds of threats does that image suggest?
- Joseph’s enemies acted with evil intent. How does the narrative show that favor does not always prevent trouble, but can preserve and advance a person through trouble?
- What does it mean practically that favor is ‘not deserved’ yet produces visible results? How can someone recognize it without becoming proud?
- How do Numbers 23:17-24 and Numbers 25:1-9 work together to teach a single lesson about holiness and spiritual vulnerability?
- Why is Jesus’ prayer for Peter (Luke 22:31-32) significant for understanding favor as protection—not just opportunity?

Application

- Where do you most need God’s favor to function as a shield right now (workplace opposition, family conflict, fear, temptation)? Name one situation specifically.
- Joseph kept receiving responsibility wherever he went. What is one ‘small trust’ you can steward faithfully this week as an act of faith under God’s favor?
- Peter was restored and recommissioned. If past failure still defines you, what step of repentance and obedience would ‘feed my sheep’ look like in your life this week?
- Identify one recurring temptation that could weaken your spiritual covering. What boundary will you set to ‘stay away from sin’ in that area?
- The teaching warns that enticement into sin can be a strategy against God’s people. What relationships, invitations, or patterns do you need to evaluate more carefully?

Prayer Focus

- Lord, surround me with Your favor as a shield against fear, accusation, and spiritual schemes.
- Strengthen my integrity to refuse compromise and remain holy under temptation.
- Give me patience and faithfulness in seasons of delay, trusting Your timing and purpose.
- Restore me where I have failed and recommission me to serve with obedience.

Next Step

Identify one area where opposition or temptation is strongest and establish a specific obedience boundary while praying daily for God's shielding favor and strength.

Conclusion

God's favor is not merely a pleasant feeling—it surrounds and defends like a shield. The examples of Joseph and Peter show that favor can preserve, elevate, and restore. The study ends with a sober call to holiness: sin removes protection, but walking with God keeps the shield of favor active. Those who want this favor are called to turn to Jesus Christ and live in obedience.

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Adapted from Pastor E.A Adeboye's teachings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9URt8ACmzY>