

Holding on to hope

Genesis 37:1-4,12-28

Jacob shows favouritism to Joseph, buying him a special robe. His jealous brothers plot to kill Joseph but end up selling him into slavery in Egypt.

Read this week's passage:



ACT



Modern slavery remains a problem today. Research this persistent challenge to social justice and human rights. Could your church display material to raise awareness or signpost survivors to support?

Read



Read Psalm 62 which talks about God as our rock and our salvation, and reflect on it. You could doodle or draw what comes to mind, write a reflection in a journal or simply meditate on it on silence.

Find more free Roots resources to reflect on this week's theme:



Living Scripture

'Here I am.' Genesis 37:13

This is Joseph's willing response to his father Jacob's intention to send him on a long journey into the unknown. And so he receives his fateful commission: 'Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me'. Jacob knew it was a long way to Shechem – about 50 miles – and potentially hazardous, but he was perhaps naively unaware that Joseph's greatest danger would be in facing his hate-filled brothers alone.

However, Joseph follows his great-grandfather Abraham, who also dared to say, 'Here I am' to God (Genesis 22:1), and was instructed to take his son, Isaac, as an offering. And after Joseph's time, many Bible characters chose to say 'Here I am' to God: Moses (Exodus 3:4), Samuel (1 Samuel 3:4), Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8) and Mary (Luke 1:38).

Why not take some time this week with one or more of these stories and notice which characters you identify with? What would it mean for you to say 'Here I am' to God?

First impressions

- When have you had to hold on to something (or someone) really tightly?
- What hope can you hold on to in tough times?
- Looking back on your experiences, can you see God at work in difficult times?



Pray



Dear God, help us to hold on to you this week, even when we can't see you. Help us to hold on through good times and bad. Thank you that you always hold onto us, when we remember you – and when we forget you. Amen.

Cut up scrap paper, e.g. envelopes, old magazines, newspapers into strips. Write the names of family, friends and places in the world you want to pray for on the strips in permanent marker, then create a prayer paperchain to decorate your home or church space.



LISTEN



Listen to 'Holding On', Josh Baldwin. Which lyrics stand out to you?