

"DISCERNMENT"

Written by

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Based on

The Biblical Story of Joseph

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FADE IN

INT. JACOB AND RACHEL'S HOUSEHOLD - DAY

JOSEPH (19,) wearing a sweatshirt and jeans, is talking with father JACOB (50,) and mother RACHEL (45). Joseph is sitting at the dining room table. Jacob is cracking eggs to make scrambled eggs and Rachel is making toast for breakfast in the kitchen. Joseph grabs an envelope that is sitting on the table and tears it open.

JOSEPH

This is it, the last college I was waiting to hear back from. Point University, drum-roll, please...

Jacob stops cracking the eggs into the bowl and drums both of his hands on the kitchen counter.

JOSEPH

I got in!

JACOB & RACHEL

(in unison)

Congratulations!!

JOSEPH

So this makes \$750,000 total in scholarships and I got acceptances from all the universities I applied to.

JACOB

Atta boy!

Jacob drops the fork that he was using to stir the eggs into the bowl walks over to the table where Joseph is sitting and gives him a hug.

JACOB

That is great son, I am so proud of you. Praise the Lord for all of your blessings.

RACHEL

Yes sweetie, that is amazing news.

Rachel drops the toast into the toaster and walks over to stir the eggs more. Jacob sits down at the table next to Joseph.

JACOB

So has God given you much discernment yet in which college you should choose?

JOSEPH

I have prayed about which to choose and I think God has given me great options.

RACHEL

There's no doubt that any of the colleges you applied to would give you a well-rounded education.

JOSEPH

That is true, I know I have good course offerings at all the colleges and universities that I'm looking at.

JACOB

What about the finances and the lifestyles of each of your college options?

JOSEPH

I think based on money in scholarships, I could pick just about any school that I've been accepted to and get close to a full ride. As for lifestyle, each college has a few active religious organizations on campus to choose from and I think all of the schools require chapel at least three times every week.

RACHEL

Another thing to research and look into are the churches in the area to attend and get involved in. Maybe even check out what events local churches offer and are a part of to see how much they are involved in the community.

JACOB

That is definitely something important to look into. There are lots of things to research. It might help to create a document to keep everything organized. But it sounds like you have lots of good options.

BENJAMIN (12,) the youngest son of Rachel and Jacob, and REUBEN (25,) the oldest son of Jacob (from a previous marriage) enter the room. Benjamin is wearing a t-shirt and jeans and Reuben is wearing a polo and dress pants. He grabs a piece of toast off of the plate next to Rachel and spreads some jelly onto the bread. Benjamin sits down at the table across from Joseph.

BENJAMIN

What are you two talking about?

JACOB

Your brother here just got into his tenth college and we were just talking about how he will seek the Lord's guidance to make his decision.

REUBEN

Oh goody for him...

BENJAMIN

That's cool, can I pick your college Joseph?

JOSEPH

Uh, I appreciate the offer little man but I don't think God would want someone else to make that decision for me. Plus, you're going to eventually make that decision for yourself, you've just got to wait a few years.

BENJAMIN

Ugh, no fair, I don't wanna wait.

REUBEN

Don't rush the process, Benjamin, it's not as much fun as you might think. Plus, Dad might let you join the business when you're older but you definitely won't be asked to join the

top of the chain of command for the business like his (mockingly) favorite son will.

JACOB

(Stern Voice)

Reuben, just because you aren't my favorite son doesn't mean I didn't help you with connections and getting a job in my company.

REUBEN

Yeah, you got me a job as a chip design engineer... I appreciate the job, don't get me wrong, but I am at the bottom of the company chain and who knows when I'll ever make it further up the ladder. That is if I ever get the chance to try and move up.

BENJAMIN

Dad, will you help me get a job in the company? I want to work in your software development business too!

JACOB

Well, in my business there is a position held for Joseph, but we'll just have to wait and see if there's a spot open for you once you graduate.

REUBEN

(roles eyes at Jacob and then turns to Joseph and Benjamin)

Come on you two, you've gotta go to school so finish up your breakfast quick and let's go. I don't want to be late to work.

INT. JOSEPH AT COLLEGE - DAY AND NIGHT

SUPER: "Point University, 3 Months Later."

Montage: Joseph's life at college.

- Joseph sits in a classroom

- Joseph interacts with others and makes new friends
- Joseph hangs out with others on and off-campus
- Joseph sits with friends in the dining hall
- Joseph gets papers and assignments back with good grades
- Joseph studies in the library during the day and at night
- Joseph attends and is involved in different organizations
- Joseph talks with Professors
- Joseph raises his hand to ask questions in class
- Joseph attends Chapel

EXT. JOSEPH AT GRADUATION - NIGHT

SUPER: "Point University Graduation, 4 Years Later."

After the graduation ceremony has concluded and many people are standing around taking photos and talking, Joseph is wearing his cap and gown and standing with his family. Joseph and Jacob are talking about Joseph's future.

JACOB

Praise God for you and your hard work through college. Your mom and I are so proud of you and everything you've accomplished in your life. I know that God will continue to bless you and guide you in your future endeavors.

JOSEPH

Thanks, Dad. God has been good to me for sure.

JACOB

Have you thought any more about joining my business? I would love to teach you more and for you to join the team. Eventually, you're gonna take over the company as well.

JOSEPH

Yes, I have thought more about it and I would like to work in the business with you. How high up in the company can I start? Do I just get to be a co-chief executive officer with you starting out?

JACOB

As much as I would enjoy that, I think it would be best for you to start as a Software Development Engineer and then work your way up through the company eventually. It is crucial to the whole company that those people at the top running the company know what each job entails and how to help people in those positions.

JOSEPH

Okay, that makes sense. Thanks Dad for offering me a spot in the company. I just hope I don't let you down.

JACOB

You could never disappoint me, you are my favorite son and you are a blessing from God.

INT. FIRST DAY AT THE OFFICE - DAY

Joseph's first day working at his father's business. Joseph is wearing formal business attire. Jacob drove Joseph and Reuben to work and they are all getting out of the car to walk into the building.

JOSEPH

Should I be this nervous?

REUBEN

It's probably just because you're afraid that you are going to let Dad down. Oh and because you haven't had a job before because Dad paid for all your expenses through college.

Reuben walks off in a bad mood and goes into the front door of the office building. Jacob and Joseph lock the car and start walking towards the front door.

JACOB

Don't pay any attention to him, he's just bitter. It's normal to be nervous, especially on the first day of a job. But remember, Psalm 55:22, "Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee..."

JOSEPH

"...he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." You're right, I will trust in God and he will help me to do my very best.

Jacob gives Joseph a tour of the building and introduces him to the people he will be working with. Jacob gives him the paperwork to fill out and shows him to his new desk.

On the way to his desk, Jacob stops and introduces Joseph to his secretary, ASENATH (25).

JACOB

Joseph, I'd like you to meet your secretary Asenath.

JOSEPH

Hi Asenath, nice to meet you.

ASENATH

Hello Joseph, nice to meet you too.

Jacob walks Joseph the rest of the way to his desk and when they get to his desk, there is a banner on the door. There are streamers hanging up in his office and he doesn't have a cubicle but instead, he has an office room to himself. Joseph is excited to get such a warm welcome to the office as other employees walk by congratulating him on his first day at work.

JOSEPH

I can't believe you decorated my door and made such a big deal about my first day. Thanks, Dad!

JACOB

You deserve it son. You're gonna do great things for this company and we are all so glad that you are here.

EMPLOYEES

(As they walk by)

Congratulations Joseph! Happy First Day. We're excited to start working with you.

Reuben is seen down the hallway with a disgusted face. He looks resentful.

REUBEN

(Under his breath)

Why do they care so much? It's just his first day, it's not like he's retiring. I didn't get a banner or even any welcoming comments.

Reuben turns around and walks back down the hallway. Joseph walks into his office and Jacob follows behind him.

INT. IN JOSEPH'S OFFICE - DAY

Joseph and Jacob are sitting at Joseph's desk inside his office. They talk about the company and Joseph's responsibilities within the company.

JOSEPH

So what do I get to do for the company?

JACOB

Well, we need you to be qualified for all the jobs here in the company because eventually, you will take over for me when I retire.

JOSEPH

I mean growing up watching you run the business has been helpful.

JACOB

Yeah, but what you have watched me do is only scratching the surface of

everything we do here. Plus now that you have a college degree and experience in software development.

JOSEPH

Will I need the full training in each job position?

JACOB

We will have to train you but basically, for the next 6 months, you will probably just shadow me around the office and pay attention to my duties, since you will eventually take over the company.

JOSEPH

Sounds good, when do we start?

JACOB

Today, after you finish your paperwork.

Jacob gets up and walks out of the office while Joseph stays at his desk, picks up a pen, and starts flipping through the paperwork.

INT. AT THE OFFICE IN A BREAK ROOM - DAY

Reuben is standing in the employee break room waiting on the coffee to brew. It is early in the morning so not many people are at work yet. Asenath walks into the break room and sits over at a small table to also wait on the coffee.

ASENATH

Good morning, Reuben! How are you doing?

REUBEN

I'm doing alright, I'm tired and hoping this coffee will wake me up enough to get through today. How are you?

ASENATH

I'm doing good, but yeah same here. How's your brother? Is he in his office yet for work this morning?

REUBEN

(rolls his eyes at the mention of Joseph)

I left the house before I saw him this morning. I know he only started 3 months ago but I thought everyone would have stopped fan-girling over him by now. What's so special about him anyway?

ASENATH

I personally think that everyone just wants to kiss his butt so that they are in good standing with him when he takes over the company. Cause we all know that once Joseph is trained and possibly ready to take over the business, Jacob will trust him and probably go ahead and retire.

REUBEN

You know, Asenath, you have a point. Maybe it's not about everyone actually liking Joseph, but maybe everyone just needs to make sure that he likes them. It still annoys me that people here give him so much attention though.

ASENATH

I know what you mean, as his secretary I do a lot of work for him and I get a thank you from him most of the time, but Jacob almost always only tells Joseph what a good job he's doing.

REUBEN

I know what that feels like, I get that all the time at home.

There is a pause in the conversation as the coffee pot finished brewing and makes noise.

REUBEN

You know something...what if we did something to change up the dynamics around the office?

ASENATH

What do you have in mind?

REUBEN

Well, Joseph has all of the documents in this company, right? Which means that you also have access to all of these documents?

ASENATH

Yeah, I believe so.

REUBEN

So, what if you went in and manipulated the general ledger to make it look like Joseph embezzled money from the company?

ASENATH

I don't know, that's a pretty big accusation to make of Joseph. Do you think people will believe that he would do that?

REUBEN

Well, probably not but that's why you're gonna have to go in and manipulate the actual ledger so that it looks real. I know a lot would be at stake for you too so I can pay you to go in and do that. What do you say?

ASENATH

Let's do it, maybe you and I will finally get some of the attention and respect we deserve then.

Reuben and Asenath shake on it and Reuben then pours coffee for both of them. They walk out of the break room together and walk away in opposite directions.

INT. AT THE OFFICE IN A BREAK ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "10 Days Later."

Reuben and Asenath meet up in the break room again. Reuben follows Asenath into the room and shuts the door behind him.

REUBEN

Did you finish the ledger yet?

ASENATH

Yes, it's done and I don't think anyone has seen the changes yet.

REUBEN

Okay, perfect. Now, all that's left is reporting it and getting the company to start an investigation into the embezzlement.

Reuben pulls money out of his pocket and pays Asenath for manipulating the ledger. They walk out of the break room separately and Reuben heads to Jacob's office.

INT. IN JACOB'S OFFICE - DAY

Reuben knocks on Jacob's door and opens the door almost immediately after knocking. Jacob is meeting with someone.

REUBEN

Dad, we need to talk. I'm sure you are having an important conversation but I have something that cannot wait that I need to discuss with you.

JACOB

(turning from Reuben to the person he was meeting with in his office)  
Erin, can you come back in about 30 minutes for us to finish our meeting? My son apparently is desperate to meet with me at this very second.

The person in the chair in front of Jacob nods, and then gets up out of the chair and walks out the door.

JACOB

Come on in Reuben.

Reuben walks in and shuts the office door behind him. He walks over to Jacob's desk and sits in the chair directly in front of Jacob. He sits on the edge of the seat.

JACOB

So, what was it that you couldn't wait to meet with me about?

REUBEN

I think you need to take a look at the general ledger.

JACOB

(confused)

Okay, why are you worried about the ledgers?

REUBEN

I am worried because I heard someone say that Joseph might be tampering with company money and I figured I would come straight to you. I knew that we wouldn't want that rumor spreading and I know you don't believe Joseph would do such a thing, nor do I, but it can't hurt to take a look, right?

Jacob types on his computer and they sit in silence for a moment as Jacob finds and reviews the ledger. After minutes of looking over the ledger, Jacob's face grows increasingly more worried over time and reaches for his phone and dials a number.

JACOB

Yes, Joseph, can you come to my office immediately please. Thanks.

Jacob hangs up the phone. He gets up out of his chair. He starts to pace behind his desk for a couple of minutes.

REUBEN

So, it's true then?

JACOB

There has to be a reasonable explanation as to why the ledger shows this. I would have seen it over time if he was taking money. This looks like it just popped up within the last week or so.

REUBEN

But what happens now? Is Joseph in trouble?

JACOB

I think he might be. I have to notify some people and we will start an investigation to look into if Joseph really did this.

Joseph knocks on the door and walks into the office.

JACOB

Son, sit down for a minute, please.

JOSEPH

Alright, is everything okay? Dad, you look worried.

Jacob waits until Joseph is sitting down before he starts asking questions.

JACOB

Your brother just came in here and told me that he overheard someone say that you might be tampering with company money. Now, Joseph, I don't really believe that you would do such a thing, but is that true? Please be honest.

JOSEPH

No Dad, of course that isn't true. I have full respect for you and this company that you built and work so hard to maintain, I would never steal from you or this company.

JACOB

Well, before I called you in here, I did check the general ledger and it shows numbers out of place and it does look like you have embezzled. I believe you son, but we are still going to have to do an investigation and you could possibly get in trouble. But I will do everything I can to make the investigation quick and painless since I know you haven't done anything wrong.

Joseph sighs loudly and gets up from the chair. He exits the office and heads back to his own office.

INT. IN JOSEPH'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: "5 Days Later."

Joseph is sitting in his office working when he looks up to see his father and other people behind his father walking towards his office door. He gets up and opens the door to his office as they approach. As they all approach, it becomes clear that there are two men in police uniforms.

JACOB

Joseph, these men are here to arrest you.

Joseph starts silently muttering a prayer, his mouth is moving and we can hear him mutter the words "Dear God..."

POLICE OFFICER #1

You have the right to remain silent...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. AT THE OFFICE IN A BREAK ROOM - DAY

Asenath is in the break room eating a snack when Reuben walks in. Another employee is pouring a cup of coffee so Reuben heads to the refrigerator, opens the door, and peers inside until the employee leaves the room and closes the door behind them.

ASENATH

How's your brother doing?

REUBEN

He's still getting a load of attention, that's for sure.

ASENATH

Can he get out on bail?

REUBEN

No, they're gonna have to keep him in jail until the investigation is over.

ASENATH

Oh dear. I thought this would be easier to do and get away with. And I

know so far we've gotten away with it but what we did feels awful. I can't stop thinking about it.

REUBEN

I know, I'm having the same problem. I am guilty, but what's worse than the guilt is that after my father appointed me to do Joseph's work, this government contract that I just got handed is over my head. I have no clue how to do it and I know Joseph would have known how to handle it but my Dad shouldn't expect the same out of me and Joseph.

ASENATH

You better find out a way to get it done, seeing as there's no other option at this point since Joseph can't help.

REUBEN

I know but I don't know how to figure it out and make it happen.

Asenath shrugs and Reuben walks out of the break room and back to his office.

INT. COMPILATION OF REUBEN ASLEEP - NIGHT

Montage: Compilation of Reuben tossing and turning in his sleep.

- Reuben sits on the side of his bed, places his elbows on his knees, and holds his head in his hands.

- Shot of the previous conversation between Reuben and Asenath about how to frame Joseph.

- Reuben slowly cuts the light off in his room.

- Shot of Reuben, Jacob, and Joseph talking about the ledger in Jacob's office.

- Reuben pulls the covers up.

- Reuben tosses and turns from one side to another.

- Shot from Joseph getting arrested in the office.

Reuben sits up in bed and rubs his eyes.

REUBEN

I've got to come clean and tell my  
father...I can't live like this  
anymore.

INT. AT THE OFFICE IN A CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Reuben and Jacob walk into a conference room. There are windows separating the office cubicles and the conference room. People are working in their cubicles. They sit across from each other at the conference table.

REUBEN

Dad, I need to tell you something. It isn't something that I'm proud of and I know that you'll be angry and resent me for this but it has gotten to the point that I have to come clean.

JACOB

Okay, what is it?

REUBEN

Well, I was talking to Asenath one day and we were joking about Joseph and how he's your favorite and thinks he's so high and mighty. As I was talking to her, I came up with the idea to get her to forge some of the company documents so that Joseph would get into some trouble. I didn't think...

JACOB

You what? You're sure right you didn't think.

Jacob keeps raising his voice and the employees in the cubicles start looking into the conference room.

REUBEN

I know you're upset but please let me finish explaining what happened, okay?

JACOB

Fine.

REUBEN

I asked Asenath if I paid her would she forge some documents and make it look like Joseph had stolen money from the company and from you. I wanted him to get in trouble and not always get all the praise and attention. When Asenath told me she would do it, I paid her and she manipulated the documents and changed up numbers to make it look like Joseph embezzled the money. I wanted to get him in trouble but I never meant to take it this far. I just thought it was such a good plan because Asenath, being Joseph's assistant has all the access to the files that Joseph does and we could get away with it.

JACOB

Why are you telling me now?

REUBEN

With the government contract, I am struggling because I don't know how to get it done and I know I've already disappointed you and the company...

JACOB

That's for sure, I don't know how you could betray your own kin so easily... and the company that I built from the ground up.

REUBEN

I know and I realize now how much I've messed up, I just need your help now to make this right.

Jacob gets up from his chair, closes his eyes and shakes his head, and then opens his eyes and walks toward the office door. Reuben follows.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. IN JOSEPH'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: "6 Months Later."

Joseph and Jacob are sitting in Joseph's office at work. They are talking about recent events.

JOSEPH

Thanks again for speeding the interrogation along once you found out what Reuben did and getting me out of jail. I appreciate you getting the company to drop the charges for embezzlement and making the company aware of what happened.

JACOB

It was the least I could do. I'm sorry you were put through all of this. I know sorry can't do anything to fix what happened but I wish I had known what happened sooner. I never thought you did any of it, but the company needed to go through with the investigation to be thorough and not lose our accreditation.

JOSEPH

No, I know and it happened for a reason. I know that God made all this happen for His glory, somehow, even if we don't know why or how.

JACOB

That is true...

Reuben knocks and comes into the office. He looks at Joseph with a sad look on his face as he sits down in a chair next to Jacob.

REUBEN

I don't know how to tell you enough, I'm so sorry.

JOSEPH

Reuben, I forgive you. What you did is not okay, but I understand that it happened for a reason and I forgive you.

REUBEN

Thanks Joseph. I don't know what I could ever do to make up for what I did to you.

JOSEPH

There's no need.

REUBEN

Well, here's my two-weeks notice. I know you're going to have to fire me after what I did, I just ask that you don't fire Asenath, if possible, because the whole thing was my idea.

JOSEPH

I don't know what Dad thinks, since he is still over the company

JACOB

(cuts Joseph off)

Actually, I was going to talk to you both and let you know that I want to retire soon. I think it's about time for me to hand the company over and I'm ready to relax and stay home with Rachel.

JOSEPH

That's great Dad. So if you are okay with this decision Dad, Reuben, I want you to stay and continue working for the company. I plan to keep both you and Asenath as employees. I want to do whatever I can to make sure that both of you (hand gesture to Jacob and Reuben) are financially supported.

REUBEN

Why are you willing to be so kind to me after I accused you of embezzlement and got you thrown into jail?

JOSEPH

I guess it's just because I know God has a greater plan and purpose. I also know that you have learned some valuable lessons from everything that happened and you feel guilty.

JACOB

Well, Joseph, I am proud of you and I find your decision completely admirable. I think you will make a great leader of this company. I can't wait to see what God has in store for your life!

THE END.