

I. Introduction: We are beginning a series on the life of Joseph. Gen. 37-50

- A. Joseph was an exceptionally good man.
- B. Joseph is a type of Christ.
- C. Joseph's story exemplifies God's providence. 15:13-16 50:20 Romans 8:28
- D. Joseph's story is great literature.
- E. Joseph's story was important to the original readers of Genesis.

II. Joseph is exalted by Jacob and by God. v. 1-11

- A. Joseph is exalted by Jacob above his brothers. v. 1-4
 - 1. Joseph was a young man of seventeen. v. 2b II Ki. 11:21
 - 2. Was Joseph a tattletale? v. 2c Lev. 5:1 Mt. 18
 - 3. Did Jacob wrongfully and destructively show favoritism to Joseph? v. 3-4 25:28
 - 4. Apparently, Jacob had made Joseph the heir and had entrusted him with supervision of the family business. 35:22,25 34:30 I Chr. 5:1-2 Dt. 33:16
 - a. Joseph's older brothers had proven themselves unworthy.
 - b. The coat was probably a symbol of Joseph's authority. II Sam. 13:18
 - 5. The hatred of Joseph's older brothers was unjustified. v. 4 4:5 Lev. 19:17
- B. Joseph is exalted by God over the entire family. v. 5-11
 - 1. This is not the first revelatory dream in Genesis, nor is it the last in Joseph's life. 20:3,6 28:12 31:10-11,24 40:5f 41:1f
 - 2. What events are foretold in these dreams? 42:6 43:26,28 44:14 50
 - 3. God again has chosen the younger brother to rule over the older. 25:23.
 - 4. Why might God have revealed these things to Joseph?
 - 5. Was Joseph wrong to tell his family about his dream?
 - 6. What was Jacob's reaction to the dream? v. 10,11b Luke 2:19,51
 - 7. Should we expect God to reveal His purposes for us in dreams?
 - 8. The dreams make Joseph's brothers all the more jealous of him.
 - 9. They are resisting God Who is determined to exalt Joseph.

III. Joseph, the chosen one, is abused by his brethren and sold into slavery. v. 12-36

- A. Unsuspecting Joseph is sent to find his brothers. v. 12-17.
- B. Joseph's envious brothers plot to murder him. v. 18-24 4:8,10 9:5-6 4:8 34:25 Pr. 1:10
 - 1. Their assault on Joseph is an assault on God. v. 19-20 9:6
 - 2. Reuben makes a futile backhanded attempt to rescue Joseph. v. 21-22, 29-30
 - 3. They strip Joseph of his cloak and throw him into a pit to die. Jer. 38:6-7
 - 4. Then they sit down and eat their lunch! v. 25a 42:21 Amos 6:6 Pr. 30:20
- C. They sell Joseph as a slave. v. 25-30 Ex. 21:16 Dt. 24:7
 - 1. Why did Judah propose selling Joseph instead of slaughtering him? Pr. 1:19 15:27
 - 2. Being sent from the family of promise to be a slave to pagans was no act of mercy.
- D. Jacob, the deceiver, is most cruelly deceived. v. 31-35
 - 1. His sons trick him with a goat just as he deceived his father Isaac. v. 31-33 27:9,16
 - 2. Was Jacob's grief and gloom too great? v. 34-35 35:9-12 27:38
- E. Yet God is still at work as Joseph is delivered to his next destination. v. 36

IV. How does this text apply to us today?

A. Families (and churches) still struggle with the same sins.

- 1. Favoritism(?). James 2:1f Gen. 25:28 Lev. 17:2**
- 2. Envy and jealousy. I Pe. 2:1 Ro. 1:29 13:13 I Co. 3:3 13:4 Pr. 27:4 24:1,19 14:30
James 3:16 4:1f Ps. 37:1 73:3 Acts 7:9 Phil. 1:15**
 - a. The ultimate cause of envy is resistance to God's decrees.**
 - b. The cure to envy is close fellowship with God. Ps. 73:17f**
- 3. Murderous anger. Mt. 5:21f Js. 4:1-2 Eph. 4:31 Heb. 12:15**
- 4. Succumbing to peer pressure. Pr. 1:10-11 29:25**
- 5. Lies. Eph. 4:25 Mt. 5:33-37**
- 6. Hardness of heart. 42:21 Amos 6:6 I Tim. 4:2**
- 7. Greed. Col. 3:5 II Pe. 2:14**
- 8. How could such things happen in the chosen family? Jer. 17:9**
- 9. God's election is not based upon human merit. Dt. 7:7f Ro. 9:11**

B. The young man Joseph sets an example for us. I Co. 10:13 I Ti. 4:12 Js. 5:10

- 1. Those who are in Christ have left the old life behind. Eph. 4:17 Ti. 3:3 II Co. 5:17**
- 2. A young person can be mature and faithful. I Ti. 4:12f**
- 3. A young believer can maintain his faith, even in a spiritually hostile and tempting environment. II Pe. 2:9**
- 4. You may suffer in spite of (or because of) your faithfulness to God. II Tim. 3:12
Mark 8:34-35 I Pet. 2:20-25 3:17 4:4-5,12-19 John 15:18-20 Heb. 13:13**
- 5. Those who belong to God will endure grievous persecution, but nothing can keep them from fulfilling their God-given destiny. Ro. 8:31 II Co. 4:7f**
- 6. God uses your suffering for good. Js. 1:2-4**
- 7. A believer who is the victim of abuse can gain victory. 41:51**
 - a. Trust in God's providence. 50:20**
 - b. God is with you in the midst of your trial. Heb. 13:5 Mt. 11:28**
 - c. Hope in God's promises for the future. Rom. 8:18f James 5:7f I Thess. 4:18**
 - d. Leave vengeance to God. 50:19 Rom. 12:19f I Pet. 2:23**
 - e. You can even forgive because we have been forgiven. Mt. 6:12 18:21f Eph. 4:32**

C. God's hand of providence is at work in every detail of your life. 15:13-14 50:20 Acts 7:10 Ro. 8:28 Prov. 3:5-7

D. How might Joseph be seen as a type of Christ? Is. 53:3-6

- 1. Loved by His father. John 3:16 Mark 9:7**
- 2. Obedient to His father. John 8:28 10:18 Heb. 10:7Goes down to Egypt. Mt. 2:13f**
- 3. Rejected by his brothers because of envy. Jo. 1:11 3:19 Acts 7:9-10 2:23 Mt. 27:18**
- 4. Sold (betrayed) for silver. Mt. 26:15**
- 5. Stripped of His garments. Mt. 27:28**
- 6. His claims to preeminence mocked. v. 19-20 Mt. 27:42-43**
- 7. Suffers according to God's plan. 50:20 Acts 2:23 Mark 8:31**
- 8. His desire to pardon his wicked brethren. Luke 23:34**
- 9. Delivers His people from death. Eph. 2:1f**
- 10. All will bow to Christ. Phil. 2:9-11**

E. What will you do with the Son God has chosen?

Discussion questions

1. Who is the author of Genesis?

2. Who were the original readers of Genesis?

Why would Joseph's story have been of great interest to them?

3. How is Joseph unusual compared to other Bible characters?

4. Was there any justification for Jacob's preference of Joseph?

5. Was there any justification for Joseph's brothers' hatred?

6. What is the significance of Joseph's dreams?

7. Are Reuben and Judah commendable for their role in rescuing Joseph from death?

8. What is the irony in the deception of Jacob?

9. In what ways does Joseph set an example for us?

10. What is the most important lesson of Joseph's life?

11. How is Joseph a type of Christ?