

The Joseph Story

Genesis 37

1 Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan.

2 This is the account of Jacob's family line.

Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. **4** When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

This is the beginning of one of the most remarkable life stories in the Bible.

We all have ideas and dreams about what a perfect family should be. By anyone's measure, Joseph's family had a lot of problems.

- As a young man, his father Jacob tried to trick his grandfather Isaac into giving him the family fortune instead of his older twin brother.
- The result of that was his twin brother vowed to kill him.
- Jacob ran away, more than 200 miles on foot. He did not see his father Isaac for more than twenty years. There is no record that he ever saw his mother again.
- Jacob found a place with his Uncle Laban who cheated him and treated him like a slave.
- Jacob married two of his cousins, Leah and Rachel and took two more concubines Bilhah and Zilpah.

- Between them all, they had twelve sons and one daughter.
- There was constant competition and conflict among all the children and all the mothers.
- It was one great big messed-up family; still, it brought forth Joseph, and furthered God's great plan for Israel and the world.

The take away from God's Word is this: A messed-up family (past, present, or future) does not mean God has forsaken you. God works in and through difficult and messed-up families.

Vs. 5-11

5 Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. **6** He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: **7** We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

8 His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

10 When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?"

11 His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Note to self don't tell people who hate you the great things God has planned for your life...

- There are a couple things I have determined in my heart to avoid; Jealousy and Doubt.

#1 Jealousy

- Why would anyone be jealous of what God has done for someone; Don't we serve the same God? perhaps he plans to do the same for you, if we keep our hearts right?
- If God can promote someone, would he not also promote you?
- Perhaps the only prerequisite for a blessing, is that we rejoice with others when they are blessed...
- Why would God bless me if I have a rotten attitude towards someone's blessing?
- You will find out a lot about people when you share your dreams and victories... You will find out whether they are a true friend or not...

#2 Doubt

Coca Cola didn't sell 100 bottles of coke their first year of business. Now they are on every continent of the world...

Michael Jordan's High School Basketball coach cut him from the team because he could play...

Friend if God can use me he can use anyone...

When someone comes to me with a dream or an ambition, I may not understand it, and I may have some questions, but it's only because I'm trying to understand it and see where God is working...

If a blind man walks up and says he wants to learn to play the piano, he might be the next Ray Charles or Stevie Wonder...

Never Doubt

Vs. 11

His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Vs. 12-28

12 Now his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem, **13** and Israel said to Joseph, "As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them."

"Very well," he replied.

14 So he said to him, "Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me." Then he sent him off from the Valley of Hebron.

When Joseph arrived at Shechem, **15** a man found him wandering around in the fields and asked him, "What are you looking for?"

16 He replied, "I'm looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?"

17 "They have moved on from here," the man answered. "I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'"

So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. **18** But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

19 "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. **20** "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."

21 When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. "Let's not take his life," he said. **22** "Don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don't lay a hand on him." Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father.

23 So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe —the ornate robe he was wearing— **24** and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.

25 As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

26 Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? **27** Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.

28 So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

Vs. 14

So he said to him, “Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me.” Then he sent him off from the Valley of Hebron.

Here comes Joseph with his coat of many colors, what is believed to be long sleeves and down past the waste walking over the hill to check on his brothers...

Everything about this picture from the coat that represented his father’s favor the the dream he just shared representing God’s favor stirred up hatred and jealousy in the heart of his brothers much like the religious leaders towards Jesus...

- Joseph was favored by his Father - Jesus was also; when baptized the Father said, “This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased.” Matt. 3:17
- Joseph experienced Divine favor - Jesus did also; “For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit.” John 3:34

The way Jesus walked in favor and divine authority, healing the sick, raising the dead and casting out demons provoked the Religious leaders to want to kill Jesus even as Joseph’s brothers plotted to kill him.

Then Vs. 28 Joseph was sold and betrayed for 20 shekels of silver and in the same way Jesus was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

1. Joseph story is one of Brokenness:

Psalm 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
 a broken and contrite heart,
 O God, you will not despise.

Broken: wreck, crush, broken to pieces, shattered

Contrite: to crush down, to crush to pieces

- Joseph was **Betrayed. (lost sense of Security)**
- Joseph was **Abandoned. (Forsaken, left for dead)**
- Joseph had **Lost his Identity. (Value or Where he belongs)**

(Joseph went from being an honored son to dead to his family.)

Genesis 39:1-4

1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

2 The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. **3** When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, **4** Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned.

2. The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered:

1 Samuel 2:30

Those who **honor** me I will **honor**

- Joseph maintained his walk with God through hardship and God blesses him.
- What his brothers meant for evil, God used to position Joseph for his purpose.
- Not every set back is a step down, sometimes it's what's needed for the next step God has...

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, **guard your heart**, for it is the wellspring of life.

Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

- The story of Enoch shows the walk of faith.
- The story of Noah shows the perseverance of faith.
- The story of Abraham shows the obedience of faith.
- The story of Isaac shows the power of faith.
- The story of Jacob shows the discipline of faith.
- The story of Joseph shows the triumph of faith.

Joseph never complained and he never compromised.

“He was loved and hated, favored and abused, tempted and trusted, exalted and abased. Yet at no point in the one-hundred-and-ten-year life of Joseph did he ever seem to get his eyes off God or cease to trust him. Adversity did not harden his character. Prosperity did not ruin him. He was the same in private as in public.” (Boice)

- God is giving Joseph a confidence in Him.
- God is showing Joseph that even when others betrayed him, He never abandoned Him.
- God is restoring back to Joseph a new Identity.

This is the Gospel, that God takes broken people and restores them.

There is no difference between the men of the Bible and you.

They had failures, hardships and broken hearts but through it all they found God.

They honored him and He in return honored them.