



## PART TWO

### Genesis 37-50—A Life Meant for Good

*From Dysfunction to Dreams...Famine to Feast*

*Presenter: Greg English*

### Why is Joseph's story preserved in the Bible?

... From the “pit of slavery to the pinnacle of power,” his [Joseph's] life demonstrates we're capable of resisting the allure of temptation, to trust God in the darkest of days, [to release the hurt of others] through the power of forgiveness, and to leave a legacy of [love and] grace.

*(Insight for Living, Charles Swindoll; A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness, A Classic Series; emphasis mine)*

### Four BIG Deals:

#### 1. His life models godly CHARACTER

**Character** def: *The house within which every man's morality and ethics dwell. Character drives and predicts a person's decisions, and defines our personal development as revealed through our thoughts, values, and behaviors. It consists of beliefs and moral principles and born from caregiver development. It's tested when nobody else is looking.*

Joseph's faith produced obedience.

Obedience forged character.

*"The boy is the father of man."*

William Wordsworth, Poet 1802

### Some examples...

- *Respect*-Joseph exudes respect for His father; brothers trample on their father's heart
- *Leadership*- Joseph portrays a willingness to accept leadership within his home; his brothers rush to forfeit their roles
- *Obedience* -Joseph obeys God when he is alone; brothers repeatedly fall when alone and when together

- *Integrity* – honest, choosing to not do the wrong thing
- *Self-control* – Potiphar’s wife’s seduction
- *Compassion* – on brothers and father in time of extreme famine
- *Faithfulness* – even while in jail for a crime he didn’t commit
- *Grace* – showed mercy for his brothers
- *Humility* – managed success; position working as #2 for Pharaoh didn’t change him
- *Discipline* – lived with a “long view”
- *Resiliency* – despised, forsaken, betrayed, enslaved, forgotten

**Verse to Ponder:** “*Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?*”

Gen 41:38

## 2. His story proves the faithfulness of God’s PROMISES

**SOVEREIGNTY vs PROVIDENCE** -- both are used to effect God’s promises

**Sovereignty** is God’s right and power to do whatever He pleases.

**Providence** is the *exercise* of that right and power, purposefully (Eph 1:11)

- God’s providence secured God’s promises through Jacob and his family’s sovereign move to Egypt, specifically, Goshen. It was here that 70 people grew to perhaps more than 2 *million* over the next 400 years, living without the enticement of other cultures, ultimately setting them up for success as God’s chosen people upon their miraculous return to the PROMISED land, Canaan.
- Joseph is the most closely connected to the family to fulfill God’s COVENANT PROMISE to bless the nations through the people of his great grandfather, Abraham.

**Gen 12:2-3** – God accompanied his call to Abraham with core promises:

- a. He would multiply his descendants into a great nation
  - b. God would bless him
  - c. God would make his name great—renown!
  - d. Abraham would be a blessing
- We are part of God’s covenant promise with Abraham.

**Gal 3:29** – “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the *promise*.”

Specifically, Christ is the ultimate offspring of Abraham. All the promises of God made to Abraham and his offspring, flow to Christ! That’s why, by being in Christ, covered by Him, identified with Him, we also become Abraham’s children and heirs. Anyone who belongs to Christ, by faith, is *promised* to be an heir.

- As Gentile believers, we have been grafted into Israel’s branch! Ref Rom 11:17-24 Gk *egkentrizo*-- to cut into, puncture, for the sake of inserting a scion (a young shoot or twig of a plant on to the branch.)

**Rom 11:17-18** ESV “...and you [Gentiles], although a wild olive shoot, were **grafted** [*egkentrizo*] in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree...remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.”

**John 1:12** “But as many as received Him (the ‘grafter’ Yeshua), to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who BELIEVE in His name.”

**Verse to Ponder ...** “So now it was not you who sent me here, but God...” Gen 45:8a

### 3. HIS LIFE DISPLAYS THE POWER OF PROVIDENCE

- Joseph demonstrated a continuing awareness of the continual presence of God, even when “bad” things were allowed to happen. He endured the trials with strength and wisdom, and humbly embraced the “good”, as blessings from God.

*E.g. Evident in his dreams; in his response to Potiphar’s wife, interpreting dreams in prison; in his words with his father, brothers; in his request to have his bones taken with them when they departed Egypt.*

- God’s wisdom and goodness are greater than man’s evil.

*“How wonderfully those two things meet in practical harmony---the free will of man and the predestination of God! Man acts just as freely and just as guiltily as if there were no predestination whatever; and God ordains, arranges, supervises, and overrules, just as accurately as if there were no free will in the universe.”- Spurgeon*

**Verse to Ponder...** “But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for **God sent me before you to preserve life...God sent me before you to preserve a posterity** for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now **it was not you who sent me here, but God**; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” Gen 45: 5-8

#### 4. HIS LIFE SETS UP A REMARKABLE PATTERN

Typology is a form of symbolism that is prophetic. In the OT there are people and objects that pre-figure, foreshadow, “whisper” of, or “point” to something that is yet to happen or someone (most often Jesus) who is yet to come. While **Joseph is never identified as a “type” of Christ** within Scripture itself, there are too many connections made between Joseph and Jesus to ignore the remarkable pattern.

- Approx 60 connections made between of life of Joseph and Jesus (A.W. Pink)
- Joseph’s story has been referred to a “*Calvary in miniature*” and the “*outline sketch of the Artist’s finished work*”...and the “*rehearsal of the greatest drama ever acted amongst men*” (F.B. Meyer, “*Joseph: Beloved, Hated, Exalted*”,p.20)

**Some Key Comparisons:** (Drawn from *Gleanings in Genesis*, AW Pink, Orig. pub 1922)

1. Joseph was a shepherd (37:2); Jesus is the Great Shepherd (Jn 10)
2. Joseph was loved by his father (37:3-4); Jesus was beloved by the Father (Mt 3:17)
3. Joseph was hated by his brothers (37:4) Jesus was hated by His brothers (Lk 19:14)
4. Joseph was sent by his father to his brothers (Gen 37:13) Jesus was sent by His father to the “lost sheep of Israel” (Jn 6:38-40)
5. Joseph was conspired against (37:18) Jesus was also conspired against (Matt 12:14)
6. Joseph was stripped of his coat (37:23) Jesus was stripped of His coat (Matt 27:27,28)
7. Joseph was cast into a pit (37:24) Jesus was put in a tomb (Mt 27:59-60)
8. Joseph was taken out of the pit, alive in his body (37:28) Jesus was bodily resurrected from the tomb (I Cor 15:4)
9. Joseph was sold for the price of a slave (37:38) Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave (Matt 26:15)
10. Joseph became a servant (39:1) Jesus became a servant (Phil 2:6-7)
11. Joseph was sorely tempted and did not sin (39:7-12) Jesus was tempted and did not sin (Matt 4:1-11)
12. Joseph was falsely accused (39:16-18) Jesus was falsely accused (Matt 16:59,60)
13. Joseph was exalted, and set over all Egypt (41:39-40) God highly exalted Jesus (I Ptr 3:22)
14. Joseph dispersed bread to a perishing world (41:55) Jesus is the One who alone disperses the Bread of Life (Jn 6:35-38)

**BIG QUESTION:** How do we respond to unmet expectations, broken promises, unrealized dreams, impossible circumstances?

**CONCLUSION:** God chose to preserve the story of the life of Joseph to set before a us a real man, with a real story lived out over 110 years, to demonstrate that while in the midst of perversity and adversity, He is still all powerful and all-knowing to providentially control even evil persons and less-than-desired circumstances to achieve His sovereign plan for our lives---and others’.