

**People of the Promise:  
Joseph: God Turns Evil to Good.  
Genesis 37-50**

**Introduction**

NJFK—a cross—the greatest evil and suffering necessary to accomplish the greatest good

**Genesis 37**

Love (favored son)  
Dreams  
Hatred (murder planned)  
Slavery (sold by brothers)

**Genesis 39-40**

Success (the Lord with him)  
Prison (falsely accused; the Lord with him)  
Dreams (cupbearer, baker, . . . Pharaoh)

**Genesis 41-50**

Promotion (second to Pharaoh)  
Rescue (nation of Egypt, children of Israel)  
Restoration (repentance and forgiveness)  
Faith (Israel's return to Canaan)

**Love (favored son)**

**Dreams**

Genesis 37:4-8

<sup>4</sup> But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him. <sup>5</sup> Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> He said to them, "Hear this dream

that I have dreamed: <sup>7</sup> Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.” <sup>8</sup> His brothers said to him, “Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Why did Jacob love Joseph more?  
Who had sent the dreams?

### **Hatred (murder planned)**

Genesis 37:18-20

<sup>18</sup> They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. <sup>19</sup> They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. <sup>20</sup> Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.”

### **Slavery (sold by brothers)**

Genesis 37:27-28

<sup>27</sup> Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him. <sup>28</sup> Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

**Success (the Lord with him)**

Genesis 39:2-4

<sup>2</sup> The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup> His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.

**Prison (falsely accused; the Lord with him)**

Genesis 39:8-9

<sup>8</sup> But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. <sup>9</sup> He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

Genesis 39:17-21

<sup>17</sup> and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. <sup>18</sup> But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house."

**19** As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. **20** And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. **21** But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

### **Dreams (cupbearer, baker, . . . Pharaoh)**

Genesis 40:7-8

**7** So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" **8** They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me."

Joseph interprets dreams of cupbearer and baker

### **Promotion (second to Pharaoh)**

Genesis 41 Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and is appointed ruler in Egypt.

### **Rescue (nation of Egypt, children of Israel)**

Genesis 42-50

## **Restoration (repentance and forgiveness)**

Genesis 50:20

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

## **Faith (Israel's return to Canaan)**

Genesis 50:24-26

<sup>24</sup> And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."  
<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."  
<sup>26</sup> So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Hebrews 11:22

By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.

## **Conclusion**

Joseph's life is part of redemption history. Had he not been sold into slavery, and then been unjustly imprisoned, Egypt and Israel would not have survived the famine. In Egypt Israel grew to be a great nation, ready to return to the Promised Land in God's time.

From Israel would come the ultimate Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Israel's survival was necessary to the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ, descendant of Israel through Judah.

*Ultimately, God used the hatred of Joseph's brothers, their selling him into slavery, along with the false accusations of Potiphar's wife that landed him in prison, to save all whose faith is in Jesus Christ.*

Our role is not exactly the same as Joseph's, but our lives are connected to the same grand redemption story that God is bringing to pass in human history. For that reason, whatever happens in our lives as God's people has meaning, value, and purpose—even the bad stuff. God turns evil to good.

Romans 8:28-30

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

**29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.