

# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## PERIOD TWO

### THE PATRIARCHS - JOSEPH

#### LESSON 9

Time	PERIOD TWO THE PATRIARCHS			
Main thought	THE MESSAGE OF FAITH IS FOUND IN THE LIVES OF THESE MEN			
Great men	ABRAHAM	ISAAC	JACOB	JOSEPH
Chapters that tell of each part	Genesis 12 to 23	Genesis 24 to 26	Genesis 27 to 36	Genesis 37 to 50
what this part tells about	Faithful friend of God. Father of a great nation. Job may have	Man of peace, Son of a great man. lived during	A Prince of God. this time.	Good man.

Joseph was a very great man. He is a picture or type of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many lessons to learn from Joseph.

READ GENESIS CHAPTERS 37 to 50.

#### 1. JOSEPH'S EARLY YEARS

Who was Joseph's mother (Genesis 30:22-24)?

Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son. Benjamin was the twelfth and last. Jacob loved Joseph because he was a child of his old age (Genesis 37:3). Jacob also loved Joseph because he was Rachel's child. Rachel had only two boys. She died when Benjamin was born (Genesis 35:16-19).

How did the other sons of Jacob feel about Jacob loving Joseph more than them (Genesis 37:3,4)?

Reuben was Jacob's first-born son. He was born to Leah. He was to receive the birthright. But Reuben did a sex sin with Bilhah (Genesis 35:22). Because of this he lost his birthright (Genesis 49:3,4). Joseph was the first-born to Rachel. Therefore he would receive the birthright. What did Jacob give to Joseph (Genesis 37:3)?

Joseph was much younger than his brothers, therefore, he grew up different from his brothers. A well-known Bible teacher, Theodore Epp, believes that the older brothers grew up when Jacob was not living close to the Lord. These boys were not taught the things of the Lord. They only saw the trickery of their father and of Laban. After Jacob got right with the Lord, he taught Joseph to live right before the Lord. (Theodore Epp, Joseph, God Planned it for Good, p. 14. Copyright: The Good News Broadcasting Association, Lincoln, Nebraska, Inc. Used by permission.)

We can learn from Jacob. Our children will live the way we teach them while they are young (Proverbs 22:6).

How did Joseph do his work for his father (Genesis 37:13-17)?

What did Joseph think about the bad things his brothers did (Genesis 37:2)?

It is not good to let those who do bad things get away with it. They will only bring hurt to others and themselves, (1 Thessalonians 5:14; Proverbs 15:10).

## **2. JOSEPH'S CALL**

God spoke to Joseph in two dreams. What were these dreams (Genesis 37:5-11)?

Did Joseph understand these dreams at this time?

There were no Bibles when Joseph lived. God had to speak to people in other ways. He would speak to them through dreams and visions. The people in those days knew this. They thought much about their dreams.

## **3. JOSEPH PREPARED FOR WORK**

Joseph was taught to fear the Lord while he was young. He still had to learn to trust the Lord for all things.

- **Joseph's first test.**

What was Joseph's first test (Genesis 37:18-24)?

How did God save Joseph's life (Genesis 37:22)?

Reuben showed kindness to Joseph even though Joseph was to receive the birthright.

- **Joseph's second test.**

What was Joseph's second test (Genesis 37:28)?

It was not easy for Joseph to be taken away from his father. He was only 17 years old at that time. Yet, Joseph did not become bitter. He did not turn against God. He did all his work to please God. God blessed him. In what way did God bless him (Genesis 39:2-6)?

God knew that the work Joseph was going to do had great danger. This danger would be for him to become proud. God did not want Joseph to be proud. He let Joseph be tested.

- **Joseph's third test.**

Joseph faced the greatest temptation that a young man could face. Potiphar's wife wanted him to do a sex sin with her. Joseph was at an age when the desire for sex was strongest. Yet, he would not give in to her. Who was Joseph afraid to sin against (Genesis 39:9)?

Joseph must have known that God had a work for him to do. He knew that his mind and body belonged to God (Psalm 100:3). He knew he must take good care of his life. So he refused to have anything to do with Potiphar's wife.

- **Joseph's fourth test.**

What happened to Joseph because he did not do this sex sin (Genesis 39:20)?

Joseph did not fight against his owner. He trusted God to work things out for him. What did God do for Joseph in prison (Genesis 39:21-23)?

- **Joseph's fifth test.**

Two of Pharaoh's servants were in prison with Joseph. One night they each had a dream. These men wondered what the dreams were about. God gave Joseph the meaning to the dreams. The butler (cupbearer) was to be set free. Joseph asked him to speak to Pharaoh about him. Perhaps Joseph thought this was his time to go free. What did happen (Genesis 40:23)?

Joseph waited another two years in prison. He must have really learned to wait on the Lord. God gave him strength in the tests and problems.

#### **4. JOSEPH'S GOOD WORKS**

- **He knew how to work.**

Joseph was willing to obey. He worked hard for Potiphar. Because of this Potiphar made Joseph the head over his house. Potiphar also saw that God blessed the work of Joseph in a wonderful way.

- **He was faithful.**

Joseph learned to be faithful in his work all the time. He learned to be faithful even when it was hard. Joseph was in prison because someone told a lie about him. Yet he did what he was told to do. Because of this the jailor put him in charge of the prison. The jailor trusted Joseph.

- **He was interested in others.**

Joseph was interested in other peoples' problems. What do we read in Genesis 40:6,7 that tells us this?

Joseph told the men in prison that \_\_\_\_\_ would give him the answer to their dreams (Genesis 40:8). The baker was hanged (Genesis 40:22). The butler (cupbearer) was given his work again (Genesis 40:21). The butler forgot about Joseph (Genesis 40:23).

Two years after the butler went back to work, Pharaoh had a dream. What did Pharaoh dream about (Genesis 41:17-24)?

Pharaoh could not find anyone to tell him the meaning of the dream.

It would have been easy for Joseph to say, "I can tell you the meaning of the dream. Just let me out of prison." What did Joseph tell Pharaoh (Genesis 41:16)?

Joseph always gave God the honor for what was done.

What did Pharaoh see in Joseph's life (Genesis 41:38)?

Because of this he made Joseph the second ruler in the country (Genesis 41:40).

If we give God first place in our lives, others will see Him in us. Then God can use us to do His work (Romans 12:1,2).

The Bible does not tell about the sins of Joseph. We know that he must have sinned, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23 KJV).

## **5. JOSEPH SAVED HIS PEOPLE**

- **Joseph gathered food.**

At last Joseph was ready to do God's work. Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare a place for the children of Jacob. He was to have food ready for them during the famine (Genesis 45:5). A famine is a time when there is not enough food. God sent a famine over all the countries near the Great Sea (Genesis 41:54-57). Jacob and his family needed food too.

God works out His plan at the right time. God showed His plan to Joseph. He showed Joseph the meaning of Pharaoh's dream. He showed him how to gather food.

Pharaoh saw the wisdom of Joseph and made him second ruler. He asked Joseph to gather the food and store it (Genesis 41:49).

- **Joseph fed Jacob and his family.**

There was very little food in Canaan. Jacob heard that there was food in Egypt. He sent his ten sons to Egypt to get food.

The sons of Jacob came to Joseph for food. Joseph knew his brothers. He did not tell them who he was. Joseph tested his brothers. Then he gave them food (Genesis 42:7-26).

- **Joseph gave Jacob and his family land.**

The land of Goshen was given to Jacob and his family to live in (Genesis 45:17-20; 47:1-6).

Jacob's family was called the nation of Israel. Israel was still a very small nation. There were only 70 men (Genesis 46:26,27). Other nations could have destroyed them. The sons of Jacob could have married people from the land of Canaan. These Canaanite people could have led them to worship false gods.

Jacob and his family were safe in Egypt. In 430 years they grew to be a nation.

## **6. JOSEPH'S LOVE**

We see Joseph's love for his father in Genesis 46:28-31. We also have a beautiful picture of Joseph's love for his brothers (Genesis 45:14-16). Joseph never scolded his brothers for what they did. He reminded them that God sent him to prepare a place for them. Joseph fully forgave his brothers (Genesis 45:5).

What were Joseph's brothers afraid of after the death of Jacob (Genesis 50:15)?

When Joseph's brothers came to him and asked him not to harm them, he cried. Maybe he cried because his brothers had not learned to trust him. What did he tell his brothers (Genesis 50:20,21)?

## **7. JOSEPH'S DEATH**

Joseph believed that God would take the sons of Jacob out of Egypt (Genesis 50:25,26). He made his brothers promise to take his body with them when they would leave Egypt.

The Egyptians had a way of fixing bodies so they would not rot. Joseph's body was kept in a casket in Egypt nearly 400 years. It was never buried there (Exodus 13:19).

## 8. JOSEPH'S LIFE TEACHES US

- God has work for each one of us. Many people do not know God has work for them. This is because they never listen to God.
- God has a reason for letting things happen to us. The things which happen to us, prepare us for the work we are to do (Romans 8:28). Tests and trials make our faith stronger (James 1:2,3).
- God wants us to be faithful to Him in everything we do, (I Corinthians 4:2; I Corinthians 15:58).
- When God starts a work in our lives, He will finish it (Philippians 1:6).
- God will receive honor and glory through us when we are faithful to Him (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- God is able to take care of those who really trust Him (Isaiah 41:10).
- God's wisdom is not always seen until He finishes His work. We cannot understand God's ways. They are too great for us (Romans 11:33).

## 9. JOSEPH, A PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST

	Joseph	Christ
1	Rejected by his brothers, Genesis 37:4.	Rejected by His own people, John 1:11.
2	Sold for 20 pieces of silver, Genesis 37:28.	Sold for 30 pieces of silver, Matthew 27:9.
3	Put into a pit which was a type of death, Genesis 37:23-24.	Put to death on the cross, Philippians 2:6-8.
4	Forgave those who were bad to him, Genesis 45:5.	Forgave those who were bad to Him, Luke 23:34.
5	Put into a place of honor, Genesis 41:40,41.	Put into a place of honor, Philippians 2:9-11.

## WORDS TO LEARN

1. butler - cupbearer - a person who gives the king his drink.

2. destroy - to break down, to pull into pieces.
3. faithful - to be true to someone or something.
4. famine - when there is not enough food to eat in a country.
5. jailor - a person who is in charge of a prison.
6. refuse - to say "no."
7. reject - not to accept.
8. temptation - that which wants to make us do something wrong.
9. type - an example of.
10. vision - a dream with a lesson.
11. wisdom - using what we know in the right way.

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