

Joseph - The Epitome of Righteousness & Decency

Here's another favorite, the story of Joseph. In fact, I like to believe that I am more like him than any other character in the Bible insofar as my life experiences are analogous to some of his. Joseph's decency, though, very few of us can even compare with; the bar is very high. But it's something to strive for.

Joseph underwent some unbelievably trying circumstances. In my view he was more widely misunderstood than any other Biblical character, save Jesus Himself. His early attempts to explain the visions the Lord had given him were met with unbelievable hostility, especially from his own family. His own brothers tried their level best to kill him, and failing that, they sold him into slavery, telling their father he'd been killed by wild animals.

But everywhere Joseph went, whether by choice, which was rare for him, or by force, which was the norm for him, he prospered and overcame all his obstacles. I just love this guy. I don't know which one I admire more, Joseph or Joshua (I think of him as Joshua the conqueror; a story for another day).

Everyone thought Joseph was arrogant, and a dreamer. They thought of him as an exaggerator; some thought he was a blasphemer. But he was hearing directly from the Lord all-the-while, and all his attempts to convey the good news of this were rejected by just about everyone around him.

But Joseph had some awesome talents (Spiritual Gifts). He had the gifts of Administration, Faith, Organization... Everything he touched eventually turned to gold! And his captors knew it, so they entrusted him with everything they had, withholding almost nothing.

So one day, one of Joseph's captors wives, who'd had a lustful eye on him, tried to get him to sleep with her. He respectfully declined. So she grabbed him in an attempt to force the issue, but he tore away from her and ran away. When he did, she'd had a firm grip on his garment (probably a shirt or sweater), and it came off of him into her hands. So she began to holler and accused him of trying to rape her, and when the guards came she gave them the garment to try to prove her accusation. They believed her, so when her husband returned home they told him the wife's version of what had happened, and he believed it, so then he had Joseph thrown in jail.

While he was incarcerated, two things happened: (1) his captors discovered he could interpret dreams very accurately (this was highly valued back then); and (2) his Administrative skills were second to none. So the jailers, like his prior captor, put him in charge of everything.

Long story short: The Lord had promised Joseph, when he was about 17 years old, before any of this transpired, that he would one day become the Prime Minister of his homeland. That's what his initial dream was all about (the one that made his brothers so jealous of him). But the Lord didn't say when or how that would happen. So all the events above, and then some, took somewhere around 15 or 17 years to come to full fruition. But, like the "Karate Kid", the Lord used all the adversities to train Joseph to become a Super-Great leader. And when the time was right (or as the Bible often says in the KJV: "In the fullness of time" - I love that phrase), God installed Joseph as Prime Minister, just as He'd promised. And Joseph ruled very wisely, even showing great mercy to his family members who'd tried all those years before to kill him.

I sooo LOVE this story.

I hope you have an amazing day!

- Jack

Genesis 37 (KJV)

And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. ² These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. ⁴ And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. ⁵ And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. ⁶ And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: ⁷ For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. ⁸ And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. ⁹ And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. ¹⁰ And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? ¹¹ And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. ¹² And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. ¹³ And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. ¹⁴ And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. ¹⁵ And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? ¹⁶ And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. ¹⁷ And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan. ¹⁸ And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. ¹⁹ And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. ²⁰ Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. ²¹ And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. ²² And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. ²³ And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; ²⁴ And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. ²⁵ And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶ And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. ²⁸ Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought

Joseph into Egypt. ²⁹ And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. ³⁰ And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? ³¹ And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; ³² And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. ³³ And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. ³⁴ And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵ And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. ³⁶ And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.