

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Famous Believers

Joseph

Reading:
Genesis Chapter 41

Joseph: Jehovah has added. *The Root, the Branch and the Saviour.*

1. Introduction

The patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob, was a spiritual forerunner of Jesus Christ. (**Yeshua the Messiah**) His work was a **'living blueprint'** of the spiritual work of salvation the coming **Saviour** was to accomplish for all mankind. In this lesson we will examine a few of Joseph's qualities and experiences, bearing in mind all the while that though the lessons we learn could apply to any true follower of Yahweh, Joseph's life was primarily a **'prophetic preview'** of the coming Saviour of the world!

2. Joseph the Dreamer

Yahweh often speaks to His people through **dreams** (Joel 2: 28, Hebrews 1: 1, 1 Samuel 28: 15). Several Bible prophecies were given that way. In Joseph's case the dreams came from an early age and he was mockingly called by his brothers **'the dreamer.'**

Gen.37:19 *And they said one to another, **Behold, this dreamer cometh.***

Though his brothers envied him, his father Jacob pondered over the dreams Joseph related.

Gen. 37:5-11... *His brothers envied him; but his father observed the saying.*

Interpretation belongs to God

As he grew older, Joseph learned some very important lessons. The first was that the ability to interpret dreams and prophecies belongs to God alone; to the One who gave the dream in the first place.

Genesis 40: 8: *"And Joseph said unto them, (Pharaoh's butler and baker) **Do not interpretations belong to God?"***

Genesis 41: 16: *"And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, **It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an***

answer of peace.”

The prophet Daniel mentions this same fact in (Daniel 2: 28) when he said to king Nebuchanezzar: “...**there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets.**” In other words, the interpretation of a prophetic dream or prophecy can only come from the Person who gave that dream or prophecy in the first place. We Christians may struggle and strain endlessly to understand Bible prophecy, but until the Almighty God of Abraham ‘**opens our spiritual eyes to see,**’ true understanding will never come! This means that we should constantly pray the ‘**Psalmist’s** prayer.

Psalm 119: 18: “**Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.**”

Psalm 24: 5: “**Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.**”

3. Joseph’s Experiences

Here are some facts about Joseph:

- **Family life:** Loved by his parents, hated by his brothers.
- **Slave/Servant:** Sold into slavery by his brothers.
- **Prisoner:** An innocent prisoner accused of rape!
- **Ruler:** Rose to become the ruler of all Egypt.
- **Saviour:** Saved the lives of tens of thousands.

4. Joseph’s Personal Qualities

Concerning Joseph's personal appearance and character we are told:

Appearance:

Genesis 39: 6: “*And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. **And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.***”

In other words, Joseph was an extremely good-looking man.

Industry:

Genesis 39: 22: “*And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; **and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.***
23: *The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; **because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.***”

Foresight:

As far as we know the plan to store food for the **seven** year famine was Joseph's plan.

Genesis 41: 33: “*Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a **man discreet and wise**, and set him over the land of Egypt.*
34: *Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the **seven** plenteous years.*
35: *And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.*
36: *And that food shall be for store to the land against the **seven** years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.”*

When Pharaoh considered Joseph's astonishing proposal he said:

Genesis 41: 38: “*Can we find such a one as this is, **a man in whom the Spirit of God is?***
39: *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, **there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:***”

Love & Emotion:

Joseph held no grievances against those who had harmed him. When, after 20 years of suffering, he again met his brothers, who were instrumental in causing his suffering, Joseph had no bitterness in his heart against them. He forgave them freely; even before they asked forgiveness. **Joseph was an emotional man.** Like Yeshua the Messiah we are told that he **wept** with **emotion**.

Genesis 43: 30: *“And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: (Benjamin) and **he sought where to weep**; and he entered into his chamber, and **wept** there.”*

Genesis 45: 1: *“Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.*

2: ***And he wept aloud**; and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.”*

Genesis 46: 29: *“And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, **and wept on his neck a good while.**”*

Joseph's heart was full of love and the 20 years of utter loneliness burst from his eyes; **“he wept a good while.”**

5. Joseph's Moral Standards

As far as sexual morality was concerned, ancient Egypt was much like our present civilisation. Illicit sexual intercourse was commonly practised. The sanctity of marriage mattered little and the women of ancient Egypt were as bad as the men. Just as they are today. Indeed, every great civilisation has been the same. Sexual depravity, adultery, fornication, incest, rape, child-abuse, violence and greed has characterised them all. The mighty civilizations of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome all glutted themselves to death on **illicit sex and violence**. Our present civilization is the last in the line. It is exactly the same. Men and women are obsessed with sex. The bookstores, the media, the holiday brochures and the television are saturated with illicit sexual overtones, insinuations and invitations. It was into that caldron of sexual corruption that the captive Joseph was hurled.

Genesis 37: 36: *“And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.”*

Genesis 39: 7: *“And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, **Lie with me.***

8: *But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;*

9: *There is none greater in this house than I; **neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?***

10: *And it came to pass, as **she spake to Joseph day by day**, that he hearkened not unto her, **to lie by her**, or to be with her.*

11: *And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within.*

12: *And she caught him by his garment, saying, **Lie with me**: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”*

The story is well known. **Joseph refused to commit adultery, to sin against God!** I wonder how many men would have stood up to such persistent and compelling temptation.

6. Joseph's Fruitfulness

Joseph had just passed one of the greatest tests of his life. He had placed the commandments of God above natural inclination and passion and had refused to sleep with Potiphar's wife. Yahweh noted Joseph's obedience and raised him to the highest rank in Egypt, under the Pharaoh himself. It was in this post that Joseph lived up to his name and became the **Saviour of millions of people**. A mighty world-wide famine arose.

Genesis 41: 56: *“**And the famine was over all the face of the earth**: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; **and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.**”*

The grain Joseph provided went to all the surrounding countries. No doubt, the fame of Joseph's God went with it; for had he not said to his brothers:

Genesis 45: 7: *“And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and **to save your lives by a great deliverance.**”*

Joseph: A Blessing to All

Everyone who befriended Joseph was blessed.

Genesis 39: 5: *“And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the **LORD blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake**; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.”*

7. Joseph’s Faith

Joseph believed in the resurrection. The oath he extracted from the people of Israel is proof that he believed that their stay in Egypt was temporary and that one day they would leave Egypt for the country Yahweh had promised Abraham and his descendants. Joseph believed God's promise and wanted to return with Israel to the **Promised Land; where he would rest in his grave till the resurrection of the dead.**

Genesis 50: 24: *“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*

*25: And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, **God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.**”*

Exodus 13: 19: *“And Moses took the **bones of Joseph** with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.”*

The bones of Joseph, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and some other Hebrews lie in the town of **Hebron** awaiting the resurrection. **That’s faith for you!** I, personally look forward to meeting these people of whom I have read so much.

8. Joseph’s Example

Few people in history compare with Joseph. There is nothing recorded in the Scriptures against him. Everything he did was without fault. He was a perfect physical and spiritual specimen. He was a type of Messiah, a forerunner of **Yeshua the Saviour** of the world! He was a man who rose from a lowly shepherd boy to rule the mightiest empire of the ancient world - Egypt! We can trace no blemish, no laziness, no dishonesty, no foolishness, no pride, no malice, no sexual malpractice and no lack of love in Joseph's record. In an age given over to sexual licence, pride, greed and hate, as was ancient Egypt, Joseph's example shines forth with amazing brilliance. Young and old should remember that they can be true to Yahweh and keep His commandments - **anywhere!**

- In the sheepfold,
- In a servant's post or slave pen.
- In the prison dungeon
- In high office. In fact, anywhere & in any condition!

What's more the Holy Spirit can be with us - and in us - amid all these circumstances. Said Pharaoh:

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

Are you a fruitful branch on the spiritual vine of Yeshua? Are you, like Joseph, honest, hard working, loving and pure? Do you endeavour to save life by sharing the spiritual bounties Yahweh has freely given you?

9. Joseph’s Blessing

Genesis 49: 22: *“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:
23: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:
24: **But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob;** (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)
25: Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with **blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:**
26: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: **they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.”***

10. Joseph's Secret

Joseph's secret of success was that the LORD was with him. In all his experiences we have these words repeated *‘the LORD was with Him.’*

Genesis 39: 2: *“**And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man...**”*

Genesis Verses: 21: *“**But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.***

*22: **And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.”***

Joseph's obedience and pure life ensured Yahweh's presence. **And it was Yahweh's presence which was the secret of Joseph's success.** Every true believer has exactly the same opportunities for success as Joseph had. I repeat: **Faith and obedience ensure Yahweh's presence; and it is Yahweh's presence in a believer's life which ensures success in every field.** That was the secret of Joseph's success. It can be yours.

AMEN!

In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.

Elder: *Max W. Mader*

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