



## Joseph - From Pit to Prison to Palace

### Genesis 37:1-11 - Joseph the Dreamer

The Bible is a book of many stories.

"Once upon a time" (Genesis 1:1) will one day become "Once upon eternity" (Revelation 20:5).

God's promise of redemption from Genesis 12:1-3 is fulfilled ultimately in our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### The story of Joseph

- We are children of Abraham by faith (Galatians 3:7)
- The Bible traces God's redemptive work through the Patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that will eventually lead to the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Genesis 36 is an account of the lineage of Jacob, but the next 10 chapters focus in on Joseph.
- Through Joseph, Jacob and his family of 70 move to Egypt. It is where God had told Abraham earlier that they would be oppressed for 400 years until he brought them back to the promised land of Canaan (see Genesis 15:13-16).

Key verse: "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people[a] should be kept alive, as they are today." (Genesis 50:20)

#### Reading Narrative in Scripture:

- **1. Enter the story** – Who are the characters? What actions/words are involved? What motivates or causes the story line? What results?
- **2. Interpret the story** – What is its main point? What is the Gospel content or truth about God and people revealed in the story?
- **3. Apply the story** – how is this story relevant today?

#### Esau and Jacob - Unidentical twins!

- Esau despised his birthright (Genesis 25:29-34, esp. 34) and married Canaanite women who made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 26:34-35).
- God shows himself to Jacob and promises to bless the world through his offspring (Genesis 28:13-15).

1. Joseph the Favourite (vs 1-4)

2. Joseph the Dreamer (vs 5-8)

"This divine election is one of the themes of Genesis (cf. Rom. 9:11 ff.) .... The account of the dreams, coming at the outset, makes God, not Joseph, the 'hero' of the story: it is not a tale of human success but of divine sovereignty."  
Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, Downers Grove:IVP, 1967, page 133.

3. Joseph the Mystery (vs 9-11)

## Two Lessons for Today:

- 1. Joseph is a type (or prefigure) of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - As our Lord Jesus, Joseph is the object of his father's special love.
  - As our Lord Jesus, he was mocked by his family.
  - As our Lord Jesus, he was sold for pieces of silver, and stripped of his robe.
  - Joseph was also falsely accused.
  - Joseph also stood before rulers.
  - Joseph also saved his rebellious brothers from death when they realised who he was.
  - He was exalted after and through humiliation.
  - He embraced God's purpose even though it brought him intense physical harm.
  - Finally, people come and bow their knee before him.
- 2. Like Joseph, we must be ready to suffer and not lose faith in God.