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## Joseph

*God's Plan Is Always Best*



- Joseph was the 11th of 12 sons born to Jacob, but he was the first born to Rachel, the wife of Jacob's love. As such, Joseph occupied a very special place in the heart of Jacob, and Jacob did nothing to hide his preference for Joseph. This incited great jealousy among the brothers.

- Joseph is one of only a few men in the OT of which nothing bad is given. This has led some to consider him a "preview" of Jesus Christ. The similarities between Joseph and Jesus Christ revolve around the idea that both were rejected by their brethren, both stood up to temptation and tyranny without reprisal, and both endured harsh treatment from the very ones that latter were preserved because of their forgiveness and mercy.

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- Like Esther, Joseph is not criticized for taking a spouse from among the heathen peoples (see: Genesis 46:20).
- Joseph's story is meant to demonstrate the victory of forgiveness and mercy over treachery. On two occasions, Joseph is in a position to repeat the treachery done to him by separating one brother from the group. Both occasions prove to be only "tests" by which Joseph is trying to see if the hearts of his brothers have changed over the years. By restoring their money, and their brothers, Joseph demonstrates that forgiveness and mercy unify brothers while jealousy and treachery divide.
- Many years later, when the nation of Israel settles in Canaan, it is noticeable that the tribe of Joseph is left out of the allotment. This is the case because that tribe is actually split into to half tribes named for the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Mannaseh (see: Genesis 48:17-22). Jacob's love for Joseph is seen in that he grants an additional portion of inheritance to Joseph, which in turn, is passed on to his two sons making each of their portion a full share.

## Joseph

*God's Plan Is Always Best*  
Genesis 37 - 50

**Introduction:** The story of Joseph has been told and re-told for thousands of years in literature, and on the stage. This is only natural as it combines all of the elements of great drama. But the core truth of the life of Joseph is that forgiveness and mercy are a more powerful force than are jealousy and treachery. This story still resonates in our hearts today because we continue to live in a world where selfishness and revenge are prevalent.

### Joseph: A life in review

Genesis 37 - 50

The Brothers: *jealousy, opportunity, treachery*: 37

Joseph: *tested, and triumphant*: 39 - 41

Joseph: *testing the brothers*: 42 - 44

Joseph: *the triumph of forgiveness and mercy*

### GOD:LIFE LESSONS

### ABOUT GOD

### ABOUT US

### JESUS CHRIST:LIFE FOCUS

Jesus Christ: At the center of God's plan is a Savior who is fully worthy of our trust.

Jesus Christ: He stands as the ever present reminder that God glorifies Himself in extending forgiveness and mercy to the unworthy.

Jesus Christ: He endured the cross, taking upon Himself our sin, so that He might bring us back into a loving relationship with the Almighty.

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## GOD: LIFE LESSONS

### ABOUT GOD

Despite the presence of evil, God's plan is always best, and always right on schedule.

There is far more joy in granting forgiveness than in exacting revenge.

While forgiveness is ours to grant, reconciliation demands a repentant, reformed heart on the part of the offender.

### ABOUT US

We must not let circumstance or feeling turn us away from trust in the Lord, allegiance to His Word, and zeal for His Kingdom.

To choose mercy over revenge is to align with the ethic of heaven and oppose the way of this world.

We must be active advocates in our every relationship, asking or granting forgiveness where needed, and always prizing reconciliation and unity.

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