



December 16, 2022

Joseph, Character traits of God

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Let's continue with the life of Joseph, one of the truly great heroes of the Bible.

Before the sons of Jacob left Egypt, again Joseph commanded his servants to fill up the empty grain sacks his brothers had brought. He had them place the money they had brought to pay for the grain in the top of the sacks. He then had his special silver cup put in the top of the sack that Benjamin brought.

Shortly after they left, Joseph commanded his servant to overtake them and accuse them of “stealing his cup by which he told them he is able to foretell and gain special information”. The brothers of course denied that they had done such a thing and offered to be slaves if it was found they had. Then Joseph's servant found the cup in Benjamin's sack!

Joseph then announced that Benjamin would stay and be his slave and the others could return to Canaan. Judah spoke up and related how their father Jacob would die from grief if they returned without Benjamin. Judah claimed that Benjamin's older brother Joseph was dead. Judah tells Joseph that he promised his father that he would be surety and he would offer to become a slave so Benjamin could be set free.

Joseph could no longer keep up the pretense, and amidst his tears he had his servants removed from the room. What an emotional story!

He then finally revealed who he was.

He also both encouraged them and made reconciliation by what he revealed. "And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "*I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life . . . And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God . . .*" (Gen 45:4-8)

Here is a man who does not hold grudges, harbor anger, or resentment. He sees the "big picture" and sees the hand of God working this out. (Romans 8:28)

Joseph tells them to quickly go to Canaan and bring their father Jacob back and settle in the land of Egypt because there are still 5 more years of famine to go. Pharaoh heard of what happened and insisted that carts be provided to contain provisions for the journey, and then be used to transport Jacob and the women and children from Canaan to Egypt.

Jacob is now convinced that Joseph is alive and agrees to make the trip. Along the way the Lord spoke to Jacob in a vision and told him to "*not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there.*" (Gen 46:3) When they arrived in Egypt, Judah was sent ahead to be shown the way to Goshen, and Jacob and his sons and their families made their new home there. Jacob rode his chariot to Goshen and had an emotional reunion with his father. Joseph continued to manage the distribution of grain during the continuing famine.

When money ran out to pay for grain, Joseph accepted livestock in exchange for grain. Then he accepted title to the land of the individuals seeking grain. Joseph acquired great wealth for Pharaoh. Jacob lived in Goshen for 17 years and finally he came to the end of his days. He made Joseph promise to have him buried in Canaan where Sarah and Abraham were buried. But, before he died, Jacob pronounced special blessings on the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh.

After Jacob died, a great entourage of Egyptians and Jacob's sons journeyed to Canaan, and Jacob was buried in the cave of the field of Machpelah.

When they all returned to Egypt, Joseph's brothers still had a lot of guilt over how they had treated Joseph. *"When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.'"* (Gen 50:15) They reminded Joseph that *"Jacob had told his brothers to beseech Joseph for forgiveness"*.

Here we also see Jacob does not hold on to any hard feelings or have ill will of any kind. Joseph told them, *"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*" (Gen 50:20-21)

Might I ask, have any of us in this life of ours, ever faced something that tested our ability to forgive and have no ill will? I think we can all understand what this story reveals.

Well, let's end this summary of Joseph here. Joseph was truly one of the great ones! He was great in power, prestige, wisdom, and discernment. But more importantly, he was also great in qualities of mercy, longsuffering, self-control and faithfulness, all character traits of our Creator. The great God knew Joseph could be used in a special way in the history of the nation of Israel.

Let us strive to be a true Godly Hero by allowing Christ to live in us, and reflecting Him (Gal 2:20) as we go about our daily walk as Christians...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



Scott Hoefker
Pastor, CGM

Church of God Ministries (CGM)
(*Ministerios de la Iglesia de Dios*)

tshoefker@cogministries.org

www.cogministries.org

P.O. Box 983 Daphne, AL, 36526-0983 / 251-930-1797 Office