

JOSEPH- PROFILE OF COURAGE

Part 1: Joseph's Family History

INTRO: Joseph is one of the Bible's most known and respected Bible characters. He is the fourth and final patriarch (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob). His story is 28% of Genesis. He is one of the few Bible personalities of whom nothing negative or evil is ever said—that's impressive. Though human and fallen just like each of us, his measured responses (rather than reaction) to life's blows: dysfunctional family, mistreatment, false accusations, undeserved punishment, gross misunderstanding and more makes his life an example to emulate.

I. LIFE OVERVIEW: Joseph's life has three segments.

- A. Birth to Age Seventeen (Gen. 30:24-37:2). If Joseph's life were a storm, this segment would be the clouds swelling up—family in transition, unsettled, moving. Growing agitation and dysfunction in the family.
- B. Seventeen to Thirty (37:2-41:46). As Joseph enters manhood, the clouds finally burst and hatred, rejection, slavery, and imprisonment rain down on him.
- C. Thirty to Death (41:46-50:26). His last 80 years are years of prosperity and blessing. Died at 110.

II. FAMILY TREE

We can better understand and appreciate Joseph's life (Chs. 37-50) if we understand his family background. Counselors tell us much of who we are (or were) is connected to the relationships we had with our father, mother, siblings, and extended family—healthy or unhealthy or mixture these relationships influenced who we have become.

- A. Family Tree (visual)
- B. Joseph's Father, Jacob (25:19-36:43). "Joseph Jacobson"! "Jacob" means deceiver or swindler, which he was. Example: stole birthright (25:19-34), stole blessing from first born (27:1-28:9). He lied and cheated except for a few moments of piety. (Chs. 28-46 6 encounters with God)—28:10ff; 32:22-32. He could not be trusted.
- C. Joseph's Mother—Jacob had an unstable married life (29:1-30) — See Family Tree visual again. Rachel was his true love. The deceiver was deceived (by Uncle Laban) and had to wait 14 years

to wed Rachel. He broke the Law (Lev. 18:18). Two wives, two sisters = trouble! Plus, Rachel was a manipulator and schemer.

- D. Children (29:31-35)—Wife rivalry resulted in childbearing competition. Leah was first with seven total (one girl Dinah). Since Rachel was barren she had her handmaiden, Bilhah, lie with Jacob. They had two sons. Leah then had Zilpah, her handmaiden bear two sons. Finally, Rachel born her first, Joseph (30:22-24). Add it all up—one husband, two wives, two concubines, four mothers, twelve sons, and one daughter—little marital and family bliss—jealousy, strife, anger, lust, deceit, corruption, and secrecy. Jacob, no longer a young man, decides to move home to Canaan (30:25)
- E. Travel back home to Canaan (MAP OF Jacob's travels) A trip filled with dysfunction and tragedy (Chs. 31-35).

LESSONS

1. No family is exempt from adversity (Adam and Eve, Noah and sons, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel and sons).
2. Scheming must never be substituted for trusting (Rebekah, Jacob, Rachel, Laban, Jacob's sons).
3. Parental passivity is costly—Jacob, like his dad. Isaac checked-out (did nothing 34:5; 35:22).
4. Delayed obedience is still disobedience and brings consequences (should've been in Bethel)
5. God always speaks to us in crisis (6 times to Jacob).
6. We reap what we sow (ask Rebekah, Jacob, Rachel).
7. God's grace is always greater than our human frailties and failure (Rom. 5:20). No matter how many times we fail God forgives—may still be consequences.
8. We struggle trusting God will do what He promises.

CONC: