

The cover features a central dark blue circle with a textured, slightly grainy surface. Inside this circle, the title "Joseph's Christ-like Experiences" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below the title, "Genesis 37" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The circle is set against a background of two overlapping squares: a dark blue one on the left and a lighter blue one on the right. Two stylized hands, rendered in a gradient of yellow and orange, are positioned as if holding the central circle from the top and bottom. Thin, flowing yellow lines swirl around the circle, adding a sense of movement and grace to the design.

Joseph's Christ-like Experiences

Genesis 37

Joseph's Christ-like Experiences

Begin with prayer

Read: Genesis 37

Listen: THRU the BIBLE: [Genesis 37](#)

Dear God,

Guard us from acting in the energy of the flesh. When we are wronged, help us to trust Your justice rather than seize our own revenge. Give us the courage to lead with wisdom and the faith to leave vengeance in Your hands.

Amen



Joseph's Story



Genesis 37

In Genesis 1-11, we covered 2,000 years of history.

In Genesis 12-36, we covered the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Now, for the remaining 14 chapters of Genesis, we focus on one person, Joseph. More chapters are devoted to Joseph than to the accounts of Creation, the Fall, the Flood, or the patriarchs.

Why should Joseph be given such prominence in Scripture?

Here are some reasons to consider:

1. **Joseph's life was a good and honorable life** (see *Philippians 4:8*). God wants us to have whatever is good, virtuous, and great before us, and Joseph's life is a fine example of that.
2. **No one in Scripture was more like Jesus Christ in his person and experiences than Joseph.** We'll discover at least 30 parallels.
3. **From Jacob's family line came the Messiah, Jesus Christ.** Jacob is living in Canaan as Joseph's story begins.



“When we sow corn, we reap corn.
When we sow tares, we reap tares.
We get exactly what we sow.”

”

Family Conflict

Jacob moved his family south of Bethlehem to Hebron (where Abraham had lived). This is the place of fellowship and communion with God.

We've made no secret that most of Jacob's sons were in trouble (with the exception of Joseph and Benjamin). These brothers took a long time to learn the lessons God wanted to teach them.

Our story picks up on a day when Joseph was 17, a teenager, the youngest of the brothers, tending the flocks. Benjamin, still very young, was at home. That night, Joseph brought his father a bad report about the other boys. Of course, nobody likes a complainer.

More than that, nobody likes the favored child. Now, Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. To show it, he made him a coat of many colors. Jacob should have learned a lesson in his own home. Parents playing favorites never lead to anything good. His own father had favoured his older brother, and Jacob knew what it was like to be pushed aside. But here, he does the same thing.

A "coat of many colors" is the same as saying it was a coat with long sleeves. This would be a major fashion upgrade from the typical fabric drape of that time. Putting sleeves in the coat would make that person look greater than the others. It was a sign he wouldn't do hard labor and that he was favored.

Naturally, the brothers hated Joseph for being their father's favorite. They couldn't even speak nicely to him. Sin was a family tradition for Jacob's tribe.

Sin ruins lives, and sin ruins families; sin ruins communities, and it ruins nations. This is the problem with our families, cities, and nations today. There is just one cause: God calls it sin.

Joseph was the object of discrimination, his father discriminated in his love for him, and the brothers discriminated in their hatred against him. Joseph and Benjamin likely got more teaching time and personal attention than the other ten boys. These seemed to be the only two boys in whom Jacob was interested. A sad commentary on this unfair dad.

Joseph's Dream

Why would Joseph bring a bad report about his brothers when he already knew they hated him? Likely, he was naive about how wicked we can all get.

Joseph was also naive about how his dreams would reopen old wounds in his brothers' hearts. He said, "Listen to this dream I had about us."

"There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.' And his brothers said to him, 'Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us? 'So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.'" *Genesis 37:7-8*

Can you imagine how they sneered, "Him? Rule over us?" The dream only made them hate him more. But then Joseph had another dream. "This time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me" (v. 9). This time, the brothers knew he was talking about themselves, the sons of Israel (the eleven stars).

This same image appears in Revelation 12, where a woman is described as clothed with the sun, the moon is under her feet, and she has a crown of 12 stars upon her head, which refers to the nation of Israel.

We are seeing the nation of Israel at its beginning here. Genesis is like a bud, and the flower opens up as we go through the Scriptures. Here is a bud that won't open until we get into the book of Revelation.

Old Jacob understood it exactly, and he asked, "Does this mean that your father, your mother, and your brothers are going to bow down to you?"

All Joseph could answer was, "That was the dream." His brothers paid no attention to it, but Jacob remembered it.

The Brother's Plot

Jacob and his family lived in Hebron, about 20 miles south of Jerusalem. The brothers (except Joseph and Benjamin) were grazing the family's sheep miles from home. Jacob sends Joseph to go check on them and see if they need anything. So Joseph traveled to Shechem, where they were supposed to be.

This was rugged terrain, and Joseph couldn't find them. He heard from a local that they had moved the flocks to Dothan, a long way, even farther north, so he set out to join them.

Even when he was still far off, his brothers saw him coming in his coat of many colors. They sneered, **"Look, here comes the dreamer."** They really hated him. Then their ideas started churning. "We should kill him. Or we should throw him in a pit and say some wild animal got him." Here they are, probably 100 miles from home, and they agreed, "Let's get rid of him now, and we'll see what will become of his dreams!"

Reuben, the firstborn, had better judgment than the others. He said, "We can't kill him." Who knows, if Reuben hadn't spoken up, they could have killed Joseph then and there. It was Reuben's idea to throw Joseph into a pit. "Don't shed his blood, and that way he'll be out of our lives." (Reuben intended to rescue Joseph out of the pit and take him home to his father.)

The first thing they did was strip Joseph of that hated coat. Then they threw him into an empty pit. And then they had lunch. As they ate, they saw a caravan of traders from Gilead, descendants of Ishmael, heading down to Egypt.

It was Judah's idea that instead of killing their brother and getting his blood on their hands, they should just sell him to the traders. "He is our brother, our flesh and blood, after all." And that plan satisfied the brothers. They just wanted to get rid of him. They didn't care how.

They knew the traders would take him to Egypt and would sell him there as a slave. Slavery in most places was a living death, and they knew they would certainly never hear from him again.

So the brothers got Joseph out of the pit and sold him for 20 pieces of silver. And Joseph was on his way to Egypt.

Then Reuben, who apparently wasn't with them for the sale, went back to the pit and found it empty. He cried out and tore his clothes.

The brothers devised a good story to tell their father. They took Joseph's coat, killed a goat, and dipped the coat in its blood. They took the coat to Jacob and said, "Is this Joseph's coat?" They pretended they didn't recognize it and asked their father if he did. Jacob knew it was Joseph's coat, and he came to the natural conclusion that he had been mauled to death by a wild animal, just as the brothers had schemed.

Let's pause and take another look at this. The brothers killed a goat and used its blood on the coat. Sound familiar? Remember that when Rebekah and Jacob deceived old Isaac, they took the skin of a goat and put it on Jacob's hands and arms? Now Jacob's sons use the goat's blood to deceive Jacob. **Now that he is a father, he is deceived in the same way he deceived his own father years before.**

Jacob's grief for his boy was inconsolable. His children tried to comfort him, but he refused all consolation. Yes, he certainly loved this boy, but it also revealed that Jacob hadn't learned to walk by faith yet. He will learn (*as we read in Hebrews 11:21*), but he's still on his way.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, Joseph was sold as a slave to Potiphar, the captain of the guard in the palace.



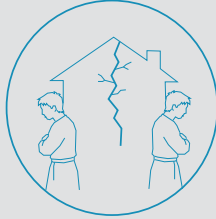
God's Eternal Truths

Relevant to us from Genesis 37

1

Sin is a Destructive Force:

Sin ruins lives, families, communities, and nations. The jealousy, hatred, and deception among Jacob's sons demonstrate that unchecked sin always leads to devastation.



2

The Principle of Sowing and Reaping:

God's truth dictates that our actions have consequences. Jacob's history of deception caught up with him when he was deceived in the exact identical way he had once deceived his own father.



3

God's Sovereign Preservation:

Even when humanity acts out of pure malice, God is orchestrating protection. God used the tragedy of Joseph's enslavement to move His people to Egypt, preserving their lives and separating them from the wicked influence of the Canaanites.



Reflection Questions

Question 1

Favoritism and Family: Jacob's blatant favoritism toward Joseph fuelled a murderous jealousy among his sons. Where might you be showing unfair favoritism or allowing discrimination to breed division in your own home, workplace, or church?

Question 2

Sowing and Reaping: Jacob was deceived with a goat's blood, perfectly mirroring how he used a goat to deceive Isaac. Are there areas in your life where you are currently experiencing the difficult harvest of seeds you planted in the past?

Question 3

God's Hidden Protection: God allowed Joseph to be sold into a "living death" as a slave to ultimately save his family from Canaanite corruption and famine. How might God be using a currently painful or confusing circumstance in your life to protect you from unseen spiritual dangers?



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