

**The Freeman Road Church of Christ**  
**1006 Freeman Road, Neosho, MO**

*Old Testament Examples Series*  
*Issue 3*

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**[www.neoshococ.org](http://www.neoshococ.org)**

**Joseph**

After telling the story of Abraham, the book of Genesis continues by telling the story of Abraham's son, Isaac. A few chapters later, Genesis continues the story by shifting focus to Isaac's son, Jacob. These three men were the fathers of promise. Each was promised in turn by God to become a nation. Finally, Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and his twelve sons would be the foundation of the future nation of Israel. One might expect that after the life of Jacob, the book of Genesis would focus on the next man in the lineage of Christ. Instead, Genesis shifts to Jacob's son Joseph. While Joseph was not a patriarchal father, or a part of the lineage of Christ, more chapters in Genesis are devoted to his story than any of his forefathers. The story of Joseph is one of the great examples we have of faithful followers of God in the Old Testament. Few Old Testament characters can compare to the righteousness of Joseph. In fact, of the four men written about in Genesis 12-50, only Joseph has nothing negative said about him at all.

One of the most impressive characteristics of Joseph was his ability to remain faithful despite difficult circumstances. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had all been greatly blessed in following God. For Joseph though, it seemed the more righteous he acted, the more difficult his life became.

Genesis introduces us to Joseph in the 37<sup>th</sup> chapter, when Joseph is only 17 years old. Joseph was the 11<sup>th</sup> of twelve

children that Jacob had. The Bible also tells us that Joseph was Jacob's favorite son, because he was the son of his old age. Joseph turned out to be a faithful and trustworthy child, and this also led to Jacob favoring Joseph. Because of the preferential treatment Joseph received, his brothers hated and despised him. Their hatred even got so fierce, that one day they plotted to kill Joseph. Instead of killing Joseph though, the brothers settled for selling him as a slave to some Ishmaelite traders. They returned to their father and led Jacob to believe Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.

While Jacob mourned the loss of his son, Joseph was actually sold as a slave to Egypt. As a slave in a man named Potiphar's house, Joseph excelled, and gained favor in the sight of Potiphar. Joseph excelled to the point of being put over Potiphar's entire house. One day, Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph. When Joseph refused, and chose righteousness over sin, Potiphar's wife told her husband Joseph had tried to force himself upon her. Potiphar immediately cast Joseph into prison. So as a reward for his righteousness, Joseph was cast into prison.

In Prison, Joseph excelled once again, until he was put in charge of all the prisoners. One day, two of Pharaoh's servants were cast in prison with Joseph. That night each had dreams, which were then interpreted accurately by Joseph. Pharaoh's cup bearer promised to tell Pharaoh about Joseph, but he forgot his promise once he was released, and Joseph remained a prisoner. Again, Joseph's ability and righteousness did not seem to be paying off.

Finally, two years later, Pharaoh had a dream that none of his magicians could interpret. The cupbearer remembered Joseph, and told Pharaoh about him. Joseph was brought to Pharaoh, and Joseph interpreted the dream by God's power. Pharaoh's dreams had been a warning from God that the land would enjoy seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. Pharaoh, relieved to have the dream interpreted, immediately set Joseph up as the second in command over

the entire kingdom, in order to prepare for the coming famine.

The Bible tells us Joseph was 30 years old when he was promoted by Pharaoh. That means Joseph had spent 13 years in slavery and prison before being rewarded for his righteousness! Although he had lived a difficult life, he never gave up hope in God.

Joseph prospered in his new position, and thanks to his work and planning, when the famine came Egypt was not only prepared to survive, but was able to provide for other nations as well. During the famine, Joseph's brothers were sent by Jacob to Egypt to get grain. In a dramatic story, Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers, more than 20 years after they had sold him to slavery! While many people would want revenge, Joseph forgave his brothers, and saved his father's family, and thus the nation of Israel.

Joseph's story teaches us many lessons, especially since Joseph experienced nearly every station in life. He was a favored son, a slave, a prisoner, and a ruler. Most impressively, he was faithful and righteous in every situation. Joseph never let the difficult times in life, nor the prosperous times of life, turn him away from his God. We today could learn a great lesson from Joseph to follow God no matter what our situation in life might be. Also, Joseph teaches a great lesson of forgiveness. He had every right to hate his brothers, and make them pay for their sin. Joseph never held such an attitude though, and quickly and freely forgave his brothers of their sin. The world would be a much better place if people could learn to forgive like Joseph.

Joseph's example, although millennia old now, still teaches great lessons for us today. We would all do well to read and learn the story of Joseph, and apply his attitudes and characteristics to our own lives, so that we might be faithful servants of God just like Joseph was.

Article By: Nate Bibens

## March Teaching Schedule

### Wednesday, Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup>

7:00 Reading  
1 Timothy

### Sunday, Mar. 6<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Roger Owens  
4:00 Randy Blankenship  
Jeremiah Part 1

### Wednesday, Mar. 9<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Lee Owens  
2 Corinthians 2

### Sunday, Mar. 13<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Nate Bibens  
4:00 Randy Blankenship  
Jeremiah Part 2

### Wednesday, Mar. 16<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Nate Bibens  
2 Corinthians 3

### Sunday, Mar. 20<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Roger Owens  
4:00 Lee Owens:  
Lamentations

### Wednesday, Mar. 23<sup>rd</sup>

7:00 Roger Owens  
2 Corinthians 4

### Sunday, Mar. 27<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Lee Owens  
4:00 Nate Bibens

### Wednesday, Mar. 30<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Nate Bibens  
2 Corinthians 5

### Contact Information:

For a ride to church, questions, or more information about the work at Freeman Road Church of Christ, contact:

Roger Owens, Evangelist      776-8123  
rowens700@yahoo.com

Nate Bibens, Evangelist      389-5179  
nbibens@neoshococ.org