

Torah Studies

Genesis: In the Beginning

Joseph and His Brothers Genesis 37 – 38



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Torah Studies

The Goodness of God's Word

Torah Studies The Goodness of God's Word

- Psalm 119:69-72 (NKJV)

69 The insolent smear me with lies,
 but with my whole heart I keep your precepts;
70 their heart is unfeeling like fat,
 but I delight in your law.

Torah Studies The Goodness of God's Word

- Psalm 119:69-72 (NKJV)

71 It is good for me that I was afflicted,
that I might learn your statutes.

72 The law of your mouth is better to me
than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Introduction

- Previously in Genesis:

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Introduction

- Previously in **Genesis**:
- In **Genesis 35 – 36**, we looked at Jacob's return to Bethel, the site of his first major encounter with God.
- We also read about the deaths of Jacob's wife Rachel and his father Isaac.
- Finally, we saw a list of the descendants of Esau.

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Introduction

- In today's Chapters:
- **Chapter 37** starts with the story of Joseph's dreams.
- Joseph's brothers will then sell him to traders who take him to Egypt.
- In **Chapter 38** we will look at the unsavory story of Judah and Tamar – direct ancestors of Jesus.

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Outline

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Outline

- I. Joseph's Dreams 37:1-11
- II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt 37:12-36
- III. Judah and Tamar 38:1-30

I. Joseph's Dreams

37:1-11

I. Joseph's Dreams

37:1-11

- 37:2 generations or “history”
- Joseph was seventeen at the time of this story.
- sons of Bilhah = Dan, Naphtali
- sons of Zilpah = Gad, Asher
- Joseph brought a bad report ... to their father.
- There is nothing to indicate this was false, just that it was bad.

I. Joseph's Dreams

37:1-11

- 37:3 son of his old age Jacob was probably about ninety years old when Joseph was born.
- Robe of many colors
- People have translated this differently.
- It had a special appearance that made Joseph stand out in contrast to his brothers.

I. Joseph's Dreams

37:1-11

- 37:4 they hated him There was a lot of potential for rivalry within this family.
- 37:5-8 The dream didn't help.

I. Joseph's Dreams

37:1-11

- 37:9-11 The sun and the moon in the second dream seems to point to Jacob and Leah (Rachel had died).
- This only led to more jealousy from the brothers.
- As with Jesus, Joseph's future glory was predicted long before it could be understood.

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

- 37:12-17 From Hebron to Shechem is something like 80 miles.
- Dothan would be another 20 miles or so.

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

- 37:19 dreamer More literally, they say, “Behold, the Master of Dreams ...”
- 37:21-24 As the eldest, Reuben probably felt some responsibility to try to save Joseph.
- The pit was like a cistern, intended to hold water.

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

- 37:25-28 Joseph's troubles didn't affect their appetites.
- Ishmaelites and Midianites were both descendants of Abraham.
- Gilead was across the Jordan. The caravan was heading west.

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

- 37:25-28 A disciple named Judah (Judas in Greek) also betrayed Jesus by selling him.
- The price of a slave was later set at 30 pieces of silver.
- Joseph was still young, so this fits the normal price for a slave his age. (See Lev. 27:5).

II. Joseph's Sale into Egypt

37:12-36

- 37:34 First appearance of *sackcloth* – a coarse garment used in time of mourning.
- 37:35 First appearance of *Sheol*.
- The meaning varies – the grave, sometimes a world of departed spirits like *Hades* in Greek.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:1 Adullam was maybe 15 miles from Hebron.
- Hirah will remain friends with Judah but does not seem like a good influence.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:2-5 These are some details on Judah's family.
- 38:8 Go in to your brother's wife
- This was a common practice in those days.
- More on this in a bit.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:9 Onan wanted the rights of the firstborn.
- If he gave Tamar a son, then that son would become the chief heir.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:11 Judah thinks his sons' deaths were somehow Tamar's fault, so he sends her home to her dad.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:11 Cultural Insight:
- This name in English for marrying the brother is called levirate marriage.
- Levir = husband's brother in Latin.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:11 Cultural Insight:
- It was in the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, meaning it was expected practice in the days of the Patriarchs.
- Later, this will be how Ruth and Boaz end up married.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:18 Tamar asked for a pledge to guarantee later payment for her services.
- Judah gave her his own personal seal or signet, worn on a cord around his neck, and his staff.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:21-22 Canaanite Cultural Insight:
- The word for prostitute used by Hirah and the men in these verses is related to the word “holy”.
- In Canaanite society, “holy men” and “holy women” were male and female prostitutes.
- They worked in the shrines and temples.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:21-22 Canaanite Cultural Insight:
- In vv. 15 & 24, the Hebrew word used is related to “immorality” or “adultery.”
- In Deuteronomy 23 God will do more than strictly forbid these practices.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- Deuteronomy 23:17-18

17 None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute, and none of the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute. 18 You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a dog [male prostitute] into the house of the Lord your God in payment for any vow, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:26 Judah was wrong on two counts:
 1. He refused to give Tamar his son for her husband, which would have been right by their traditions.
 2. He had relations with her, thinking she was a prostitute.

III. Judah and Tamar

38:1-30

- 38:28 Perez meaning "breach" finds his way into the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:3).

Joseph and His Brothers

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Conclusion

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

The People God Uses

Conclusion

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Conclusion

The People God Uses

- If we were writing the Old Testament, we might have made the main characters more ideal heroes.
- Instead, we see rivalries, revenge, sexual sins and a whole assortment of deceptions.

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Conclusion

The People God Uses

- God never excuses sin.
- He redeems us from its penalty and often will negate its worst effects.
- And this is because of Christ, His cross and His resurrection.

Joseph and His Brothers

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37 – 38

Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- The first record we have of Jesus disclosing that He is the Messiah was to the Samaritan woman at the well.
- The one with five husbands and a live-in boyfriend.

Joseph and His Brothers

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- John 4:25-26

25 The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am he.”

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- She then went on to tell her whole town about Jesus.

Joseph and His Brothers

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- After casting out the “legion” of demons from the Gerasene man, the man wanted to follow after Jesus.
- Jesus refused.

Joseph and His Brothers

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- Mark 5:19-20

19 And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”

20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

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The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- We should not forget the Apostle Paul.

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- 1 Timothy 1:15-16

15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

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Conclusion

The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- Remember what Paul tells the Corinthians.

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The People God Uses: New Testament Examples

- 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ...

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The People God Uses

- 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

... 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

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Joseph in Egypt
Genesis 39 – 40



Two Men Studying – Boris Dubrov