

The Joseph Cycle (Genesis 37-50)
Genesis: The Foundations of Our Faith
April 21, 2024

1. Opening Prayer

2. Review

- A. The “Plot Arc” of Genesis: *Will the Promised Seed be Righteous?*
 - B. The Climax of Sin in Abraham’s Family (Gen. 34; 37; 38)
-

3. Overview of the Joseph Cycle

A. Joseph’s Brothers Attempt to Kill Joseph (Gen. 37:1-30)

-----**B. Jacob Mourns Joseph’s (Apparent) Death (Gen. 37:31-36)**

-----**C. Judah Goes Down to Canaan Freely and Sins (Gen. 38)**

Tamar leads Judah to *repentance*

-----**D. Joseph Goes Down to Egypt Enslaved, Does not Sin; Raised Up (Gen. 39-41)**

- 1. Joseph in the “House” of the Bodyguard “Captain” (39:1-19)
 - Joseph’s first promotion (39:1-6) *Yahweh is “with” Joseph (39:2, 3)*
 - Joseph’s first descent (39:7-19)
- 2. Joseph in the “House” of the Prison “Captain” (39:20-40:23)
 - Joseph’s second promotion (39:20-23) *Yahweh is “with” Joseph (39:21, 23)*
 - Joseph’s second descent (40:1-23)
- 3. Joseph in the “House” of Pharaoh (41:1-45)
 - Joseph’s third promotion (41:1-45) *God’s Spirit is “in” Joseph (41:38)*

-----**E. Joseph Leads His Brothers to *Repentance* (Gen. 42:1-45:28)**

- 1. Journey #1 to Egypt: Joseph’s Brothers (42:1-38)
 - Joseph’s First Test (42:25-38)
 - Turning Point: Judah’s self-sacrificial speech moves Jacob (43:3-15)*
- 2. Journey #2 to Egypt: Brothers + Benjamin (43:1-45:28)
 - Joseph’s Second Test (44:1-34)
 - *Turning Point: Judah’s self-sacrificial speech moves Joseph (44:18-45:28)*
- 3. Journey #3 to Egypt: Brothers + Benjamin + Jacob/Family (46:1-47:12)

**Center/Climax→*

-----**D'. Joseph, Raised Up, Enslaves Egyptians; Saves Their Lives (Gen. 47:13-26)**

-----**C'. Judah Raised Up (Gen. 47:27-49:28)**

Jacob’s Blessing on Joseph’s Sons (47:27-48:22)
Jacob’s Blessing on His Twelve Sons (49:1-28); *Judah Singled Out (49:8-12)*

-----**B'. Joseph Mourns Jacob’s (Actual) Death (Gen. 49:29-50:14)**

A'. Joseph Reassures His Brothers and Refrains from Killing Them (Gen 50:15-21)

Conclusion (Gen. 50:22-26): God’s Promise is Trustworthy!

Main Message: *In his providence, God turns evil into good for the sake of his people and his saving purposes in Jesus Christ*

**Gen. 45:5, 7, 8; 50:20; compare Romans 8:28*

***This strengthens the foundations of our faith!*

5. Foreshadowing in the Joseph Cycle

A. Joseph as a Type of Christ¹

Joseph	Jesus
Storing up Memories: Joseph’s father rebuked Joseph, yet “stored up” memories of Joseph’s youth in his heart (Gen. 37:10, 11)	Storing up Memories: Jesus’ parents (wrongly) rebuked Jesus, yet his mother “stored up” memories from Jesus’ youth in her heart (Luke 2:48, 51)
Betrayal: Jacob “sent” his “beloved” son Joseph to his brothers (Gen. 37:3, 14,) who conspired against him, saying, “Come, let us kill him” (37:20), because they didn’t want him to reign over them (37:24)	Betrayal: God “sent” his “beloved” Son Jesus to the Israelites, who conspired against him, saying, “Come, let us kill him” (Matt. 21:37-39), because they didn’t want him to reign over them (Luke 19:14)
Sold for Silver by <i>Youdas</i>: Judah (Gk. <i>Youdas</i>), one of Jacob’s twelve sons, greedily betrayed and sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver (Gen. 37:26-28)	Sold for Silver by <i>Youdas</i>: Judas (Gk. <i>Youdas</i>), one of the twelve apostles, greedily betrayed and sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26:14-15; 27:9-10)
Violence: Joseph’s brothers “stripped off” his “robe,” “cast him” into a pit, and handed him over to foreigners (Gen. 37:23, 24, 26-28)	Violence: Israel’s leaders “stripped off” his “robe” (Matt. 27:28, 31; John 19:23), “cast” him out (Matt. 21:39), and handed him over to foreigners (Mark 15:1)
Incarceration with Two Convicted Criminals: Joseph, though innocent, was imprisoned with two offenders (Gen. 40), one of whom Joseph asked to “remember me...when it goes well with you” (40:14), and the other of whom was hanged for treason (40:22)	Crucifixion between Two Convicted Criminals: Jesus, though innocent, was crucified between two criminals, one of whom asked Jesus to “remember me when you enter into your kingdom,” and the other of whom died in his sin (Luke 23:33, 39-43)
Divine Vindication: “God made [Joseph] lord of all the land of Egypt” (Gen. 45:9), and his brothers “bowed down” to him (42:6; 43:26, 28)	Divine Vindication: “God made [Jesus] both Lord and Christ” at his resurrection (Acts 2:36), and his disciples “bowed down” to him (Matt. 28:17; Luke 24:52)
30 Years Old: Joseph began serving as Pharaoh’s grand vizier when he was thirty (Gen. 41:46)	30 Years Old: Jesus began his public ministry when he “was about thirty years old” (Luke 3:23)
Provision of Bread: Joseph’s first act as grand vizier was to provide bread for Egypt (Gen. 41:46-57). When bread ran out, Pharaoh told his subjects, “Go to Joseph, and whatever he says to you, do” (Gen. 41:55)	Provision of Wine: Jesus’ first act in ministry was to provide wine for a wedding celebration (John 2:1-11). When wine ran out, Mary told the servants, “Whatever he says to you, do” (2:5)
Unrecognizability: Joseph disguised himself so that his brothers “did not recognize him” (Gen. 42:8); but after he ate “bread” with them, he revealed himself to his “troubled” brothers, saying, “I am Joseph” (43:16, 31; 45:1, 3, 4). Joseph’s father did not “believe” Joseph was alive and needed visual proof (45:26-28)	Unrecognizability: Jesus disguised himself so that two disciples “did not recognize him” (Luke 24:16), but after he ate “bread” with them, they recognized him (24:31, 35). Then Jesus revealed himself to his “troubled” apostles, saying, “It is I myself” (24:38-39). They did not “believe” Jesus was alive and needed visual proof (Luke 24:11, 40-43)
Commission: Joseph commissioned his eleven brothers to go and “Tell...my father” to come to Egypt to see him (Gen 45:13) and to proclaim that he was alive and was ruler over all Egypt (45:9, 26)	Commission: Jesus commissioned the women at the tomb to go and “Tell my brothers” to come to Galilee to see him (Matt. 28:10) and then sent his eleven disciples to proclaim his resurrection and lordship over all the earth (28:18-20)
Salvation for Israelites and Foreign Nations: God used the evil event of Joseph’s betrayal for the good purpose of preserving a remnant of Israelites (Gen. 45:7) and many others in Egypt and abroad (45:5; 47:25; 50:20)	Salvation for Jews and Gentiles: God used the evil event of Jesus’ death for the good purpose of saving a remnant of Jews and many Gentiles (Rom 11:11-15; Acts 2:33; 4:27-28)

B. The Great “Plot Twist”

Judah, the “Dark Horse,” Intercepts Joseph’s Promise (Gen. 49:8-12)

Jesus Christ as the “Righteous Seed”

6. Closing Prayer

¹ A few of the following connections were drawn from studies such as James M. Hamilton, Jr., “Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?” (2008); Samuel Emadi, “Covenant, Typology and the Story of Joseph” (2018); Nicholas P. Lunn, “Allusions to the Joseph Narrative in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts” (2012); Timothy J. Stone, “Joseph in the Likeness of Adam” (2012); and Pete Wilcox, *Living the Dream: Joseph for Today* (2007).