



Joseph

Hebrews 11:22 *“By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones.”*

Joseph the virtuous! That’s how we remember him. He was given the coat of many colors. Joseph had the dreams and importance in Pharaoh’s kingdom. In the end, his brothers did indeed bow down to him as the dreams said. This boy’s story spans over 20 chapters. Why is he so important? He is not the first born or the last. Yet, this Jesus like figure grew in faith. He delivered his people to a land flowing with milk and honey.

Paul mentions Joseph because (by faith) Joseph believed God. That the promises from God to his for-fathers meant something. Having his bones remain in the promised land meant something. That is where faith does its real work. We believe what God said and go out of our way to make sure it happens. We do these deeds by faith. Joseph is not in the line of Jesus. He is not the head of all Israel. Yet, by faith, he wanted to honor God and those who went before him. We Christians are adopted into the family of God. Yet, we are not Jewish. However, we must honor the faith. Honor our God regardless of our position. Just like Joseph did.

The arc of Joseph is the real story. He was spoiled and arrogant. Yet clearly, Joseph was set aside by God. One of the most important things we could do for God is be a remnant that, by faith, believes. Someone who is willing to carry the kingdom forward without status or reward.

Joseph could also be called a foreshadowing of the first judge. He did judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph also rescued the nation from famine. In some ways Joseph represented what the first king of Israel should have looked like. Yet, his arc had to travel from foolish boy to humbled servant.

By faith is an interesting concept with Joseph. This is a very confident boy. Some people are timid about who they are. It takes years to gain confidence. Yet, for some, like Joseph it is not that way. He had an inner peace with who he was and who is his God. It is a rare gift. His confidence spoke through his dreams. He just believed in them. How many of us would have a weird dream and then proclaim it to the world as fact? Joseph did! He stayed true to God even though he was sold into slavery. He went from exalted in a robe to a servant. Yet, his faith never waivered.

How do we know Joseph had great faith? He stayed faithful to God in Jail. There were no verses that say “if I do this for you?” Instead, Joseph accepted his plight time and time again. He tried to serve Pharaoh. He did not complain about Potiphar’s wife. Joseph did not complain about jail or that the cupbearer did not remember him. Somehow Joseph had a deep belief that God would make it right. The cupbearer and Pharaoh had dreams. Joseph helped them without asking for reward. In-fact he didn’t crush his brothers for what they did to him.

Joseph believed God. How do we know that? He gave all the credit to God for Pharaohs dreams. Joseph says in Genesis 50:20 “*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.*” This man does not take credit at all. He learns compassion. Joseph can see the providence of God in the events surrounding him. Think about what Paul is saying in Hebrews 11. Joseph is thinking about the twelve tribes and their survival. The resurrection of his bones at a later date. Paul obviously was impressed with

the faith of this man. Joseph must have made an impression on Paul. Think about all the trials Paul went through. Yet, he never wavered. Why? I think it was because of the faith of Saints like Joseph.

Some characters in the Bible are mentioned in passing. We don't really get to know Moses or Abraham. Joseph, the father of Jesus never says a word. Neither does Timothy. Yet, others like Paul, Peter, and Joseph get more depth. It does not give those men more importance than others. Yet, we are allowed to see faith in action through them. We respect and honor Abraham. Joseph is relatable. Paul could be an inspiration. It is nice to know that God can work through older people like Sarah. It is great that we can see God working in a young life of Joseph. By faith these people rose up and did what God needed them to do. It is what makes the Bible believable. Ordinary people being used in extraordinary ways. By faith Joseph changed his destiny and the destiny of thousands. That is why his story was given 20 chapters.