**It’s Thrive Time Podcast Teaching Notes**

**Teacher:** Minister Rachel Howard

**Series:** Determined and Intentional Thriving In Perilous Times

**Lesson:** Determined and Intentional - The Life of Joseph

**Text:** Genesis

The Determined and Intentional Life of Joseph

A Man With a Divine Purpose

*Name:* Joseph- means “He shall add”

He was also called “The Dreamer”

Joseph was one of the patriarchs of Israel. Both the tribe of Manasseh and Ephraim were descended from Joseph. His father and his brothers were shepherds, like Isaac and Abraham before them. At the time Joseph was sold into slavery he was the youngest of all his brothers. His father loved him more than all the rest of his children and gave him a special multi-colored coat. This led to much jealousy on that part of Joseph’s brothers. His [family had a godly heritage](https://studyandobey.com/build-a-godly-family-deuteronomy-6/) and worshiped the true God, though they also committed a number of serious sins.

**Events surrounding birth:**Rachel and Leah were in a struggle over who would be loved most by Jacob. Both desperately desired to bear children for their husband. After Leah had already born several God finally opened up Rachel’s womb and she gave birth to Joseph. This was while [Jacob](https://studyandobey.com/character-studies/jacob-character-study/) was still with Laban.

**Training and occupation:**Joseph appears to have began as shepherd and errand boy under his family. Under Potiphar he was a steward, a manager of Potiphar’s estates. He excelled at this both under Potiphar and at the jail. Eventually he became second-in-command over all of Egypt, making him a world-leader and practically adopted royalty.

**Place in history:** Joseph holds a huge place in the history of Israel, Egypt, and all believers. It is probable that most of Joseph’s immediate family would have died off unless he ended up in Egypt and able to divert the famine catastrophe. Through him much of Egypt was saved from the famine as well as Israel. If Joseph and his family died there would have been no Israel. God used Joseph to keep the line of the Messiah alive.

**Weaknesses:** We’d have a difficult time listing his weaknesses, as we don’t read them in the Scriptures. Of course, it is safe to say he had some weaknesses as we are born into sin.

**In my own studying, I do see some possibilities.** *Pride and immaturity -* using poor judgement by telling his brothers about his dream, and how they would one day bow to him. It doesn’t mention it explicitly, but Joseph did end up marrying a foreign wife, the daughter of a priest of a false god (41:45)

**Strengths:**Faithfulness, Forgiver, Patience, Wise

**Discernment/wisdom (41:33-37; 41:47-49)** Joseph very wisely devised a way to see if his brothers repented from their behavior towards him previously or if they would treat Benjamin in a similar way (cf. 44:17). Looking at the world and his own situations from God’s perspective (45:7-8). Forgiveness (50:17-21).

**Important acts and events:** Sold into slavery (37:25-28). Put into prison (39:20). Made ruler over Egypt (41:39-43). Visited by his brothers (42:6-7). Reunited with his father (47:29-30). Blessed (49:23-26).

**How he died:** Joseph died peacefully. He had forgiven his brothers. He had seen God’s plan for his life. He had been blessed by his father .He had lived to see his great-great-grandchildren. He died at the age of 110, apparently younger than most of his brothers.

**Lessons from his life:**

1. Use godly discernment when God reveals something to you- Not everyone will understand, or appreciate it. Not everyone needs to know.
2. No individual can derail God’s plans- He will take that which was meant to be a sinking ship to take you down, and He will use it as a rocket launcher to propel you into His plan.
3. In difficult times, we can be confident in this - God is right there with you. He was with Joseph, Noah, Abraham, the 3 Hebrew boys, Daniel and will do the same for you.
4. Joseph didn’t play with temptation - He did not want to sin against his God. He could have given in to Potiphar’s wife. Instead, he fled and took the “way of escape” from this temptation. It was costly! He ran so fast, he ran out of his coat. That coat was evidence for Potiphar’s wife in her lie- as she lied said that Joseph tried to seduce her and she held the coat to “prove” it. As a result, Joseph faced prison due to the false accusation of an evil woman.
5. Integrity and obedience trumps deception every time.
6. Be faithful and honest **now**, in the small things **now**, demonstrate faith **now**, trust God **now**
7. **God’s sovereignty**- Joseph’s life is also a great example of the sovereignty of God. A number of seeming disasters piled up. Many would have pronounced it God’s judgment or even ill fate. However, God was so great He used all of the evil actions of man to bring about His perfect plan. Through Joseph His people were preserved as well as many in Egypt. Joseph’s brothers and he himself learned much from the experience. In the end God greatly blessed Joseph and didn’t abandon him.
8. **Forgiveness**- Joseph was treated worst by his own family than any of us have almost surely ever been treated, or ever will be. He was made a slave in a foreign country. However, he didn’t grow bitter. He didn’t hold a grudge against his brothers. Instead he forgave them, recognizing God’s sovereignty. Joseph showed true compassion and true forgiveness.
9. **Take advantage of opportunities given us by God**- Joseph had a prime opportunity when he met Pharaoh and he fulfilled what God wanted him to do with it. God can take you from a prison to a palace!

Joseph in the NT. Hebrews 11:22, Ps 105

**The following is from an article by Randy Alcorn**

I draw a lot of inspiration from the story of Joseph. There were plenty of unfortunate mishaps in Joseph’s life, like being tossed by his envious brothers into a pit and left to die. But later on, after more mishaps, Joseph told his brothers, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives” ([Gen. 50:20-21](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.%2050.20-21)).

I like that word, *intended*. He is a God of intention—He has a purpose, a target, a goal, and a plan. Joseph’s problems did not catch God off guard. From the beginning, God calculated for Joseph to experience all these things. Why? For the salvation of others.

God is not a sweep-up boy who follows you with a dustpan and brush, second-guessing how everything will fit into a divine pattern for good. God’s hands stay on the wheel of your life from start to finish so that everything follows His intention for your life. This means your trials have more meaning—much more—than you realize.

Consider this: If Joseph had not been sold to those caravan traders by his wicked brothers, he would not have been sold as a slave to Pharaoh. And if Joseph had not become Pharaoh’s right-hand man, no one would have built giant grain silos to ward off the famine. And if the famine hadn’t happened, Jacob and his family would never have come to Egypt for food and safety. And if Jacob’s family weren’t in Egypt, there would have been no slave laborers. And if no slaves, no Exodus, and no giving of the law to Moses. And no Promised Land. And, finally, no line of Judah from which the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would come.

What an amazing example of the providence of God! It is enthralling to see how the troubles of one young man named Joseph could kick-start a whole chain of earth-shaking events which would ultimately lead to our salvation.

Joseph’s story could be yours. Only heaven will reveal the incredibly complex intertwining of events in which you have played a pivotal role. Like Joseph, you may not be able to discern it at the time, but God has it all in hand. He has it all in control. And you, dear friend, are needed in His marvelous plan to spread His kingdom in your corner of the world.