

Genesis 30 v 24

" And she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son"

Preamble Re-Joseph

I want to give a brief résumé about Joseph before we actually look at his life, because he was an important character in the O.T. There are many characters in the O. T. who during their life had a predominant role to play in the life of Israel. The father of the Jewish nation was Abraham, whose wife Sarah gave birth to Isaac when she was well past the age of bearing children, God had made a covenant promise to Abraham who was an old man when the son promised him by the Lord was born.

Isaac was the father of Jacob whose name was changed to Israel following a divine encounter with The Lord at Peniel, he was the father of Joseph, who features greatly in the book of Genesis as we shall see.

The meaning of Joseph's name is '*Jehovah has added*'.

Nearing the end of his earthly journey just prior to his death, Jacob gathers all his children around him and prophesies over each one, in Genesis 49 v 22 to 26 it says this in relation to Joseph.

"Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall. With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility. But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed supple, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, because of your father's God, who helps you, because of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below, blessings of the breast and womb. Your father's blessings are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains, than the bounty of the age-old hills. Let all these rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince among his brothers".

What a remarkable prophecy this is, because in it is highlighted the fact that Joseph had been the recipient of trouble, but that he had remained stable right through his trials Now his brothers were looking up to him, having bowed the knee in acknowledging his supremacy,

Genesis 42 v 6 says *"And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth."*

I hope that our time spent considering Joseph and all the things that have transpired in his life will give us the confidence that when passing through a trial as long as we hold fast to our faith all things will work together for good, because this is what the story of Joseph teaches us.

There is something about Joseph that is never mentioned when his story is being spoken about. When Joseph was released from prison, we read in Genesis 41 v 42 *"And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck"*. Then notice in verse 45 it says *"And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt."*

Joseph was not only given new garments, he was given a new name. Zaphnath-paaneah, which means *'Treasury of the Glorious Rest'*.

Doesn't this set us thinking about the fact that when we came to the Lord, he clothed us in his righteousness, and gave us a new name and a new nature. It was similar with the Prodigal son; the father reclothed him.

Isaiah 61 says in the N.I.V. verse 3 says *"And provide for those who grieve in Zion to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor"*

Then in Genesis 41 v 50 to 52 we read *"Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh and said, 'It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.' The second son he named Ephraim and said, 'It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.'"*

It is clear that the scars of what he had been through were evident but only scars and not wounds, he refers to his experiences, and names his sons accordingly. The goodness of God actually eclipsed the things he had been through, so that Joseph was not bitter because of what had transpired during his difficult years.

He had these two sons who were given their fathers portion of the inheritance, which was in fact a double portion of the inheritance Jacob conferred upon Joseph. If you look at the twelve tribes of Israel you will have noticed that there is no tribe of Joseph, but there are the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph had a double portion, which was normally reserved for the eldest son. Here is the reason.

1 Chronicles 5 v 1 & 2 *"The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel he was the firstborn, but when he defiled his father's marriage bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel; so he could not be listed in the genealogical record in accordance with his birthright, and though Judah was the strongest of his brothers and a ruler came from him, the rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph"*

It was Reuben's sin, which was the reason the double portion was taken away from him.

I believe it is essential to remember our inheritance, which the apostle Peter says is incorruptible and undefiled, and fades not away reserved in heaven for us, it is vital therefore that we do not do anything, which will rob us of our inheritance.

The inheritance is definite, let's make sure we are in a definite place to take it up.

Jacob was his father, he had eleven brothers, Joseph had a wife and two sons, let us now consider him in more detail.

