

# Joseph: The Unexpected Provider

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[ 0 : 00 ] So, Joseph, the title for this morning's sermon, this morning's service, was Joseph, the unexpected provider.

Joseph, the unexpected provider.

And we'll get there in a short while as to what the really important things he provided were in terms of major significance, not just for his family and the wider Israelites, but also maybe for us as an example in the Old Testament of his character.

But along the way, he provided a lot of other things. He provided a reason to be jealous. He provided a reason to his brothers to be jealous.

Not only was he the favourite, but then he talked about his dreams that said, hey, I've had this dream, I'm going to rule over you lot. And he was given a special robe that none of the others were given.

[ 1 : 20 ] And it's not surprising that his brothers became jealous. They were provided with good reason to be jealous. Next slide. A focus for disgruntlement.

There they were, working out in the fields. Joseph, back. Relaxed. Chewing the cud, as it were, metaphorically, with his father and his younger brother.

While they had to do the hard work. They were doing the physical labour. He was perhaps allowed to be in intellectual pursuits. He provided an opportunity to his brothers to make money.

They were going to throw him in the pit and leave him to die. Although one of them was going to go back and rescue him. But then they saw these Ishmaelites, these Midianites.

And they thought, ah, let's make some money. This could be to our benefit. Let's sell him as a slave. Joseph was an opportunity to his brothers to make money.

[ 2 : 19 ] But as he went to Egypt, and he was sold into Potiphar's household, where he was sold as a slave. But through his hard work, through the things he did there, and the way he related, and the way he was presumably trustworthy, he demonstrated good stewardship and administration.

But he also provided a temptation to Potiphar's wife. Of course, she was in a position of authority over him. And it might have been that he felt that he couldn't do anything but accede to her demands.

But he resisted that temptation. He resisted the temptation. He provided interpretation of dreams. To the cupbearer, or butler, and to the baker.

And he gave true answers to those dreams. He provided brutal honesty. The baker, you're going to die, you're going to be killed.

He didn't hold back. He gave the truth, even however uncomfortable it was. Eventually, he was released from prison when the cupbearer remembered him, and his interpretation of dreams.

- [ 3 : 44 ] And Pharaoh had this dream that no one understood. And he remembered Joseph. Already two more years in prison that he felt he shouldn't have been there for. Pharaoh trusted Joseph with leadership.
- And Joseph provided foresight and planning as a result of understanding the dreams that God had given. And out of this, when the famine in Canaan became so bad and his brothers came looking for food, he provided food and money for his family.
- He also provided to them an opportunity to prove that they were now trustworthy. He put the cup, his own silver cup, in the bag of one of his brothers.
- Seeing what their reaction would be. Whether they would sell out Benjamin, just as they had sold out him. But they didn't. They perhaps now had more of an understanding of how important each of them was to Jacob.
- And that they shouldn't be looking just to themselves, but they should be thinking of themselves altogether as a family. He provided, or Joseph was provided with an opportunity for forgiveness.
- [ 5 : 08 ] To forgive his brothers. To forgive his brothers for what they had done to him. To forgive Potiphar's wife, who had caused him to be thrown into prison.
- To forgive Potiphar, who had believed his wife over Joseph. And in his position of authority and power and responsibility, he was able to provide a land for the Israelites to settle in.
- To settle in as Israelites, away from the rest of the Egyptians. Their own land. To be together as a people. Hold there just a second hand.
- Joseph was provided with the opportunities to be bitter towards his brothers. Because they disliked him.
- And wanted him dead. And if that wasn't going to happen, we'll sell him as a slave. Knowing the sort of life a slave could live. Joseph was provided with an opportunity to be unforgiving.
- [ 6 : 19 ] Why should I forgive them for what they've done to me? The joke's on them for being stuck in a land of famine. When I've organised things here, so that we have enough grain to keep going.
- He had an opportunity to be hateful. They hate me. Why should I love them back? I can just hate them as much, and then it's tit for tat. And he had the opportunity to ignore them.
- When they turned up from Canaan, he did recognise them. They didn't recognise him. He could have said, that's my life from the past. I don't need to have anything more to do with them.
- They're in their own mess. God has sorted me out. Let them sort themselves out. But Joseph didn't. Joseph was not bitter.
- He forgave. He was not hateful. He was loving. He did not ignore those who had turned against him.
- [ 7 : 25 ] He brought them back in to his family. And that gives us a bit of an example of what Jesus was like.
- He was sold by one of his friends. He was rejected by his disciples, who all ran away. But through his death and resurrection, he provides a place for us to come back to him.
- And he wasn't bitter at the treatment he got. He wasn't bitter with Peter. He gave him the opportunity to repent, and he forgave him. He did not ignore them, because they had ignored him.

He said, come into my kingdom. And Jesus does the same for us. He invites us to be a part of his family. And you may have felt a part of his family once before, but felt you no longer belong.

But Jesus doesn't say, too late. He says, come back into my family. Whatever you've done, I forgive you. I will ignore the things you've done that are bad, because my death on the cross takes care of it all.

[ 8 : 46 ] So, Joseph, rejected by his brothers, lost seemingly to death by his father, rose to a position of authority, and welcomed his family back with forgiveness and with love.

Let's stand and sing our final song together. Let's say, Jake, you you you you you