

## I AM JOSEPH YOUR BROTHER

### INTRODUCTION

The book of Genesis is the account of men of faith. By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice. By faith Enoch was taken from this life; so that he did not taste death. By faith Noah in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By faith Abraham sojourned even though he did not know where he was going. By faith Joseph when his end was near spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones. (Hebrews 11)

Who was Joseph and what is the lesson we might learn from his life? In many ways Joseph resembles Jesus Christ: he was beloved of his father; he suffered at the hands of jealous brothers; he was tempted to sin but resisted; he was a spiritually gifted man; he could interpret dreams and correctly predict future events; he was thrown in prison on a false charge; he was denied justice because of the corruption of the authorities; and above all, he forgave his brothers their sins against him.

Shortly after his election in 1960 Pope John XXIII interrupted a Good Friday liturgy when one of the celebrants used the word "perfidious" to describe the Jews. Pope John had the prayer repeated with the offending word omitted. Later Pope John met with a delegation of Jews and said, "**I am Joseph Your Brother**" marking the beginning of a new relationship between Jews and Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Was Pope John correct? Was he a fulfilment of Joseph in the Bible?

### JOSEPH'S DREAMS



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“Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated them the more. He said to them, ‘Listen to this dream I had: **We were binding sheaves in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.**’ His brothers said ‘Do you intend to rule over us?’ And they hated him all the more because of his dream... Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. ‘Listen’ he said ‘**I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.**’ When he told his father, his father rebuked him and said ‘What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?’ (Gen. 37:5-11)

<sup>1</sup> Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope\\_John\\_XXIII\\_and\\_Judaism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_John_XXIII_and_Judaism)

<sup>2</sup> Source: [rastafarirenaissance.wordpress.com](http://rastafarirenaissance.wordpress.com)

## **THE BIRTH OF JOSEPH**

Jacob served his father-in-law Laban in Syria and had many sons who were born there. But the moment Joseph was born, Jacob decided to leave Laban and return to the land of his fathers:

“Then God remembered Rachel: he listened to her, and opened her womb. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son and said, ‘**God has taken away my disgrace**’. She named him Joseph and said ‘**May the LORD add to me another son**.’” (Genesis 30:22-24)

“After Rachel gave birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, ‘**Send me on my way so I can go back to my own homeland**. Give me my wives and children, for whom I have served you, and I will be on my way. You know how much work I’ve done for you.’” (Genesis 30:25-26)

All the years of her marriage to Jacob, Rachel was barren. She was disgraced because the other wives of Jacob had children and she had none. **Finally, when Joseph was born Jacob realised something: it was a disgrace for him to be spending his days as the hired servant of his father-in-law.** It finally dawned on Jacob that he was the son of Isaac, a heir of the promise, a free man who belonged in his own land. He was a free man and he wanted Joseph to grow up as a free man. For that to happen, Joseph must be raised in Canaan. The other sons of Jacob had grown up in Syria under the shame of being sons of a hireling. They had been weaned on sour milk and they had become unpleasant people. Jacob wanted Joseph to grow in grace (not disgrace)! He wanted Joseph to breathe the air of freedom, and to walk without fear or reproach.

## **JACOB SEEKS FREEDOM**

When the LORD finally told Jacob it was time to leave, the bitterness in his own soul from the years of toil under Laban poured out:

“You know that I have worked for your father with all my strength, yet **your father has cheated me by changing my wages ten times**. However, God has not allowed him to harm me. If he said ‘The speckled ones will be your wages’ then all the flocks gave birth to speckled young; and if he said ‘The streaked ones will be your wages’ then all the flocks bore streaked young.” (Genesis 31:6-8)

## **JACOB FINDS FREEDOM**

Laban chased Jacob right up to the borders of Canaan. Laban and Jacob swore oaths and made a covenant to respect each other’s boundaries at Mizpah. The moment Laban was gone Jacob was met by a great company of angels:

“Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then he left and returned home. **Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him**. When Jacob saw them, he said ‘This is the camp of God!’” (Genesis 31:55 and 32:1-2)

Jacob sent all his possessions and his family over to the other side of the Jabbok River. That night he wrestled with a man. Jacob asked the man to bless him and the man said:

**“Your name will no longer be Jacob [Deceiver] but Israel [Prince of God], because you have struggled with God and man and have overcome.”** (Genesis 32:28)

**Jacob was now out from under the oppression of working for Laban. Jacob was finally a free man:**

walking in his true spiritual identity [Israel] and ready to enjoy his inheritance – the Promised Land. Most importantly to Jacob, his son Joseph would grow up breathing the free air of Canaan. In Jacob’s mind Joseph would walk with God in the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Joseph would become the patriarch who would carry forth the faith of his fathers to the next generation.

### **JOSEPH’S ROBE**

Israel’s overflowing love for Joseph was impossible to hide.

**“Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. When his brothers saw their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.”** (Gen. 37:3-4)

After the sons of Israel had sold Joseph to a caravan of Midianite merchants traveling to Egypt they disguised their wicked deed by dipping the robe of Joseph in the blood of a goat and presented it without explanation to their father:

**“They took the ornamented robe [soaked in goat’s blood] back to their father and said ‘We found this. Examine it to see if it is your son’s robe?’ He recognized it and said ‘It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph surely has been torn to pieces.’ Then Jacob tore his robes and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters came to comfort him but he refused to be comforted. ‘No’ he said, ‘in mourning I will go down to the grave to my son.’ So his father wept for him.”** (Genesis 37:32-35)

### **JOSEPH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST**

To this point in the story, the parallels between Joseph the son of Jacob and Jesus the Son of God are numerous. Like Joseph: Jesus was betrayed by his brothers; his betrayer took a small payment in silver coins for his life; the robe of a king was set upon him; and that robe was dipped in blood. In Jesus’ case, the blood was his own. Jesus was the sacrificial offering. He became the scapegoat and took the sins of Israel on his own head. Was the bitterness of the grief of Jacob tinged with repentance for his own sin? If he had not deceived Esau, he would not have fled to Syria. If he had not fled to Syria, he never would have become a hired servant. If had never been a hired servant, he would not have had to deceive Laban to gain wealth. He mused: was the death of Joseph judgment for my sins?

## **JOSEPH: BEFORE AND AFTER**

The early days of the life of Joseph are prophetic of events relating to the life and death of Jesus Christ. We will show in this paper that **the latter days in the life of Joseph are prophetic of the latter days of the church of Jesus Christ**. Some might like us to believe the latter days of Joseph are prophetic of the return of Jesus Christ at the rapture or at his second coming to earth. But, neither of these interpretations makes sense. At the rapture Christians will meet their glorious king. Joseph was never a king. He only ever achieves the status of exalted slave administrator. At the second coming the Messiah will usher in a thousand years of paradise. When Joseph reveals himself to his brothers, he ushers in 400 years of bondage!

## **JOSEPH IN EGYPT**

What irony! Jacob the hired servant of Laban had left Syria so Joseph could experience the freedom of Canaan. Now Joseph was reduced to an even lower position than hired servant, Joseph was a slave. Jacob had been hired by his relatives. The sister of Laban was Jacob's mother Rebecah. Joseph was a stranger in a foreign land. He had the comfort of no relatives: he lived in the midst of deceived idolaters. Joseph was a Shemite. His owners were Hamites. Joseph was completely alone and mired in a culture and in a people who lived completely contrary to his godly principles.

**In the beginning, Joseph kept his integrity and exercised his spiritual gifts**. He resisted the temptation to commit adultery with the wife of Potiphar (Genesis 39) and he correctly interpreted the dreams of the baker and the cupbearer (Genesis 40). He stood with humility before Pharaoh and gave God the glory for his ability to interpret dreams (Genesis 41:16). He governed the land of Egypt with diligence.

**But after a time in the service of Pharaoh, the spiritual standards of Joseph declined**. He took an Egyptian wife, who was the daughter of an Egyptian priest (Genesis 41:45). By marrying an Egyptian Joseph was already spiritually defeated: his children would be raised according to Egyptian beliefs and customs. But by marrying the daughter of an Egyptian priest, it was a foregone conclusion that his children's minds would be soaked in pagan idolatry and false teaching.

**In the fullness of time, Joseph become as cruel and hard hearted as the Pharaoh he served**. He cast aside every principle of justice and impoverished the free citizens of Egypt and made them slaves of Pharaoh by selling them grain at an inflated price. He used inside information on his own family to inflict mental anguish to the point of torture on his brothers. He falsely accused them of being spies. He imprisoned them without a trial. He planted evidence that would incriminate them. He even caused distress to his father by demanding that the youngest son, his brother Benjamin, be brought to him. All this, because his brothers came to his market to buy wheat for their starving families! The spiritual state of Joseph had degenerated to the point he behaved with the cunning and caprice of a wild animal. He ripped, he tore, and he maimed until he got his way.

## **JOSEPH, THE SLAVE DRIVER**

Joseph began life in Egypt as a slave but was elevated to become the driver of slaves. He ruthlessly ruled over his subjects with no respect for man or woman or child. His only concern was for the glory and riches and honor of his master, Pharaoh. Joseph possessed spiritual gifts and began his career with respect for God but in a short time Joseph had transformed. He devoted himself to ruling the kingdoms of this world as if he were a god.

The sons of Jacob were born in the house of a hired man. Their character reflected the bitterness of their father's long toil and the constant strife between their mothers. They became nasty brutes, capable of vile deeds when provoked.

Although he was raised as a free man in Canaan, Joseph lived his adult life in a dangerous world of rulers and slaves. The favor or disfavor of the Pharaoh meant either giddy privilege (cupbearer) or humiliating death (baker). No surprise then that Joseph became worse than his brothers. His brothers mistreated him because they had a personal vendetta. But Joseph was capable of mistreating people who had done no wrong to him. He became a terror to all!



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How could the vile behavior of Joseph in his latter days possibly be prophetic of the Lord Jesus? No. Jesus would never be so unjust and cruel. We believe the transformation of Joseph from innocent dreamer to ruthless overlord is prophetic of the transformation of the church through history: beginning at the death of Christ (Joseph in the pit) and then evolving into a slave-master relationship (Joseph ruling over his brothers, his mother, and his father).

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [us-en.superbook.cbn.com](http://us-en.superbook.cbn.com)

## JOSEPH, A TYPE OF RELIGIOUS BONDAGE

The gematria (the sum of the numerical value of the Hebrew letters) of the name 'Joseph' in the Bible is 156. The spiritual meaning of 156 is '**Man's Rules**'. **Joseph represents a man who makes his own rules and forces others to live by them.** The way Joseph mistreated his brothers violated principles of justice that fair minded people would agree is the decent way to treat customers in the marketplace, especially vulnerable foreigners visiting your land for a short time to buy food for their starving families. Joseph did not have to obey any principle of justice because there was no law that ruled over him. **His word was the law!** In his house guests and servants alike obeyed Joseph's rules: **man's rules.**



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When Joseph reveals himself to his brothers he said "**I am Joseph, your brother**" (Genesis 45:4). The gematria of that phrase in Hebrew is instructive:

- '**Joseph**' is 156. The spiritual number 156 means '**Man's Rules**'
- '**I am Joseph**' is 217 (61+156). The spiritual number 217 means '**Man of Faith in Hiding**'
- '**I am Joseph your brother**' is 296 (61+156+79). The spiritual number 296 means '**People Toil**'.

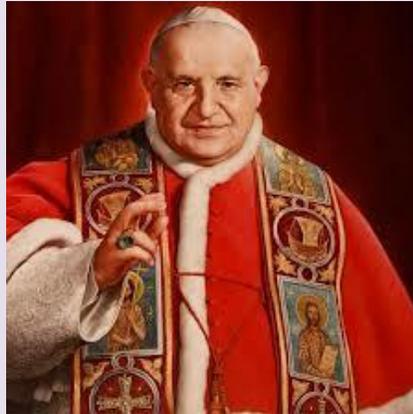
This event was happy news to Jacob and his sons because their families were starving. But spiritually this event was very sad news because the people of Israel remained in Egypt the land of bondage for 400 years until they were reduced to the lowest slaves! **They sold their souls for a peck of wheat!**

**That is what religion does.** It throws out the Rule of Law (God's Word) and replaces it with: '**Man's Rules**'. Men who believe in God are forced to keep their beliefs to themselves for fear of the governor: '**Man of Faith in Hiding**'. Finally, all of God's people become slaves to the governor. They work and sacrifice to erect buildings and pay tithes to glorify their religion and their governor: '**People Toil**'.

<sup>4</sup> Source: listverse.com

**WAS POPE JOHN CORRECT?**

When Pope John spoke to the Jewish rabbis and said “**I am Joseph, your brother**” he was speaking the truth. The Catholic Pope is the arch-type of the transformation of the people of God from a pastoral flock of free men to prison inmates inside a religious system ruled over by a man: a man with an inflated sense of self-importance. Jews are slaves of God’s Law. Catholics are slaves of the Pope’s laws. In that sense, they are very much brothers! **Notice the coat of many colors!**



**Protestants, before you cast stones look unto your own houses of glass!** Religion has crept in to almost every corner of Christianity. Look at all the magnificent buildings that have been erected in the name of religion. Look at how the ‘ministry’ of one man, one leader, dominates the weekly ‘service’. Look how the spiritual gifts of the people are stifled as everyone sits and listens to the ‘minister’. Look at the burdens religion places on the flock in terms of tithing to support the building and the ‘minister’. All of this is man-made. It is for the glory of religion, not for the glory of God. **Spiritual bondage!**



**Joseph is not our brother! Joseph is a slave (of religion) dressed up in robes (kingdoms of this world).**

Let’s be like Jacob, let us flee Laban and live as free men in Canaan. And let us never go down to Egypt.

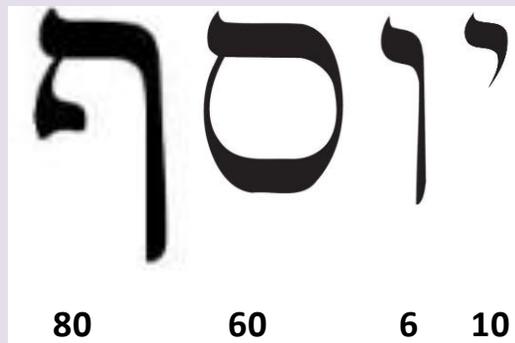
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<sup>5</sup> Source: Wikipedia.org

<sup>6</sup> Source: kids.britannica.com (see Protestantism)

## MEANING OF THE HEBREW LETTERS IN JOSEPH

The four letters in the name Joseph are: Yod (10) Vav (6) Sameck (60) and Fey (80)



The meaning of the Hebrew letters (read from right to left) is as follows:

**AUTHORITY (10) – MAN (6) – SAINTS SURROUNDED (60) – PRAYER (80)**

The interpretation of the letters of Joseph is as follows:

**Man's Authority** [takes power]. **The Saints are Surrounded.** [Our only hope is] **Prayer.**

The only godly reaction to a brother who takes the reins of power in the authority of his own name is to pray. The brothers of Joseph, when they heard Joseph might rule over them did not act in such a godly fashion. They took matters into their own hands, surrounded Joseph, and committed violence!

The meaning of the spiritual numbers in the name 'Joseph' tell a similar story:

**Yod (10) + Vav (6) = 16.** The spiritual number 16 means '**Sacrifice**'.

**Sameck (60) = 60.** The spiritual number 60 means '**Earthly King**'.

**Yod + Vav = 66.** The spiritual number 66 means '**Idol Worship**'.

When God's people appoint a leader over them, when they 'Sacrifice' to an 'Earthly King'; and the man takes authority over the flock of God, away from God, the sin of 'Idol Worship' has been committed.

**Fey (80) = 80.** The spiritual number 80 means '**Prayer**'.

When God's people appoint a leader, the appropriate response is 'Prayer', not assassination.

The **Fey** is a **Sofit Fey**. It has a different shape than a normal **Fey**. Therefore it can be interpreted with the numerical value 800 instead of 80. In this case the numerical value of Joseph is 876 = 12 x 73 which means '**Government**' (12) of '**Babylon**' (73)! This is a serious sin. No wonder his brothers wanted to kill him. As free men living under God in Canaan, having such a ruler over them would be horrendous.