

## Jealousy, Hatred, Envy, Joseph, and Me

This weeks reading is from Parashat Vayeshev (*Bereshit / Genesis 37:1-40:23*), we learn that Jacob loved Joseph more than his brothers (*37:3*, וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִכָּל-בָּנָיו). Joseph had a dream about his future (*37:5-10*) as a result his brothers become jealous (*37:11*). As the story continues, Joseph's brothers plot murder in their hearts (*37:18-22*) but instead they put him into a pit (*37:23*) and sell him to the Ishmaelites (*37:27-29*). The Ishmaelites sold Joseph to Potiphar in Egypt and God causes him to prosper. Potiphar's wife falsely accuses Joseph and he is placed in jail (*39:1-20*). The Lord God continues to make Joseph prosperous and he interprets dreams for the baker and butler of Pharaoh (*40:5-23*). In addition to this, there is a brief story about Judah in *Bereshit / Genesis 38:1-30*. Joseph was the eleventh son born to Jacob and was the first born of his wife Rachael. As a result, Jacob showed Joseph favoritism over his brothers. The favoritism of his Father caused Joseph to be a spoiled son based on what we read in *Bereshit / Genesis 37:2* וַיְבֵא יוֹסֵף וַיְבִיֵאֵם. He brought a bad report about his brothers. Though Joseph was spoiled by Jacob, he walked in righteousness (*וַיִּצְדָּקָה*) and justice (*מִלְשָׁפָט*) more so than his brothers. Interestingly, the two stories of Judah (*38:1-30*) and Potiphar's wife (*39:1-20*) illustrates that Joseph chose the path of righteousness and the Lord was with him (*וַיְהִי יְהוָה אִתּוֹ יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מְצַלִּיחַ*) prospering him and preparing him for the plans He has for him. Today do we choose the path of righteousness regardless of what comes our way in life?

<b>כתבי הקודש / The Holy Scriptures</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ספר בראשית פרק לו</b></p> <p>כד וַיִּקְחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלַכְהוּ אֶתוֹ הַבְּרֶה וְהַבּוֹר רַק אֵין בּוֹ מַיִם: כה וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לֶאֱכֹל-לֶחֶם וַיִּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיֵּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה אַרְבַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאלִים לַיִם בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמָלֵיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נָכָת וּצְרִי וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרָיִם: כו וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל-אֶחָיו מִה-בַּצַּע פִּי נִהְרַג אֶת-אֶחָיו וְכִסִּינוּ אֶת-דָּמוֹ: כז לָכוּ וְנִמְכְּרוּנוּ לְיִשְׁמָעֵאלִים וַיְדַנּוּ אֶל-תְּהִי-בוֹ כִּי-אֶחָיו בְּשָׂרְנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶחָיו: כח וַיַּעֲבֹר רֹו אַנְשִׁים מִדְּנִינִים סַחְרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף לְיִשְׁמָעֵאלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף וַיְבִיאוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִצְרָיִם:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">• • •</p> <p>לו וְהַמְדִּינִים מָכְרוּ אֶתוֹ אֶל-מִצְרַיִם לְפוֹטִיפָר סְרִיס פְּרַעֲהַ שֶׁר הַטַּבָּחִים:</p>	<p><i>Bereshit / Genesis 37:24-36</i></p> <p><i>37:24 and they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty, without any water in it. 37:25 Then they sat down to eat a meal. And as they raised their eyes and looked, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh, on their way to bring them down to Egypt. 37:26 Judah said to his brothers, 'What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood? 37:27 'Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother; our own flesh.' And his brothers listened to him. 37:28 Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">• • •</p> <p><i>37:36 Meanwhile, the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh's officer, the captain of the bodyguard. (NASB)</i></p>

In this weeks reading, we see how jealousy led Joseph's brothers to have murderous thoughts against him. Judah however reasoned with his brothers and convinced them not to kill Joseph but rather to sell him for profit. Have you ever sold a brother for profit before? How about talking behind someone's back? Would that be synonymous with selling a brother for profit, where the benefits might be to make you look good and the other person look bad? In the depths of our heart it is possible to conceive the most horrible things, even murderous thoughts just like Joseph's brothers were doing. In the Torah we are told *Devarim / Deuteronomy 23:19 'You shall not charge interest to your countrymen: interest on money, food, or anything that may be loaned at interest. 23:20 'You may charge interest to a foreigner; but to your countrymen you shall not charge interest, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all that you undertake in the land which you are about to enter to possess. (NASB)* These Scriptures say to not lend at interest or take any profit from your brother; we are to keep our hands from injustice. The Apostle Paul wrote in *Ephesians 4:29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 4:31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 4:32 Be kind to one another; tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. (NASB)* Being unkind to others grieves the Holy Spirit of God and effects our relationship with the Lord. What can we conclude for all of these things found in the Torah and the Apostolic Writings? These Scriptures serve as a call to be responsive to the Lord in light of His promise of faithfulness to those who are his. The way we can be responsive is to love unconditionally and forgive the sins of others. At times that is a hard one to follow, but if we do not forgive others are we truly trusting in the Lord and that He will one day exercise justice? The premise of this week's study is that we need to let God mold us, His children, into the people he wants us to be like the Lord was doing to Joseph. But, can we expect the Lord to make and mold us into the likeness of His Son if we are holding on to anger, distrust, and feel we are always deserving something? (*i.e. desiring to take interest from someone?*) In *Acts 2:45* we are told the people of faith were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing to all who had need and as a result the Lord moved mightily in that time. If you want the Lord to move mightily in your life, take lessons from this week's study, walk with innocence, a pure heart, and clean hands, turn in faith in Yeshua the Messiah, call upon the Name of the Lord and He will show you great and mighty things you have never known (*Jeremiah 33:3*). That's a promise!