

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for ... the saving of many lives” (GENESIS 50:20, NIV).

## Bible Study 7 Joseph Forgives

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Read Genesis 42-47 and 50:15-21.

How did Joseph meet his brothers again? (*Genesis 42:1-24*)

What evidence is there that he did not hate his brothers? (*Genesis 42:24; 45:5; 50:19-21*) \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think Joseph responded to his brothers' request the way that he did? (*Genesis 42:25-38*)

Why do you think he put their money back in their sacks?

How do we know that Joseph felt love for his brothers, despite the way they had treated him? (*Genesis 43:1-34*)

**T**he story of Joseph's love and forgiveness for his brothers is one of the most touching scenes in the entire Bible. In many ways, the life of Joseph was a foreshadowing of the life of Christ. Joseph was betrayed for money; he was tempted but did not sin; he was falsely accused and punished; he came back from his adversity to a position of power and authority; his mission was to preserve life; and he unconditionally forgave those who had wronged him. He even appeared (to his father and brothers) to have been resurrected from the dead and glorified in a position of honor and supreme power.

How did Joseph show his forgiveness to his brothers? (*Genesis 45:1-24*)

How do we know that Joseph's actions were a positive witness to the pagan Egyptians?

### Why do you think he told his brothers not to quarrel on their way home?

Joseph did not let the treacherous acts of his brothers affect his own character. Even though their actions would appear unforgivable from a human standpoint, Joseph was able to forgive them. There is no evidence from Scripture that he ever plotted revenge against them. As a trusted official in Egypt, Joseph certainly could have had his brothers punished when he recognized them in Egypt. Forgiving your brother (or other family members) when they wrong you is sometimes very difficult.

### What are three effects of unforgiveness?

Matthew 5:23-24 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 6:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 2:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_

### What effect did forgiveness have on Joseph's credibility as a witness for his God?

Certainly Pharaoh must have known the circumstances of how Joseph came to be a slave in his country. What an example Joseph must have been for everyone who knew his story. Not only did Joseph live a moral life and give God credit for his wisdom; his life was actually controlled by God's love and grace.

What about your life? Are non-Christians able to see God's love and forgiveness in action through you? Do you allow the actions of others to sidetrack you from your mission, or are you able to see God at work through the circumstances of your life, regardless of whether or not they seem fair?

Who do you need to forgive today? \_\_\_\_\_

As you think about God's incredible forgiveness for all of your sins, ask Him to help you model this same quality of forgiveness for others.

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