

## LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

### 2. The Effects of Jealousy

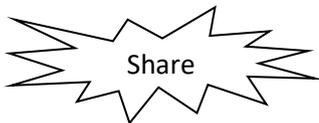
*(Leader's Notes)*



The story of Joseph is a very human one. In our previous study we saw how Joseph's father, Jacob, favored him above his brothers. This set the stage for dramatic events to take place that would affect the family forever.

#### **Scripture Reading: Genesis 37:11-36**

- ☆ How did Joseph's brothers feel when their father favored their younger brother? V4, 11  
*(They hated him and became increasingly jealous of him.)*
  
- ☆ Jealousy or envy often leads to destructive behaviour. In the case of Joseph's brothers, how did they respond? V19, 20, 32  
*(In the case of Joseph's brothers it led to mockery, deceit and revenge.)*
  
- ☆ Previously we saw that the life of Joseph foreshadowed that of the Lord Jesus. What part did jealousy or envy play in Jesus' crucifixion? Mark 15:9-14  
*(The religious leaders were envious of Jesus and this is why they wanted to kill him.)*



Have you experienced someone being jealous of you? How do you know they were jealous, and what did you do?

- ☆ Jealousy or envy is something we not only encounter in the world, but in the church. This was a problem in the church at Corinth. How does jealousy arise in our hearts, and how can we overcome it? Galatians 5:19-22, Titus 3:3, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 1 Peter 2:1-3  
*(Jealousy arises from our own fleshly desires and opens us to the evil one. In fact it can enslave a person and motivate them to do evil things. If we struggle with jealousy we are still acting in a worldly way. We need to admit it is wrong and ask God to change us.)*
  
- ☆ Jealousy that arises from our old nature is sinful, however the Bible says that God is a jealous God! What is the difference between Godly jealousy and sinful jealousy? Exodus 34:14, 2 Corinthians 11:2  
*(Godly jealousy is motivated by God's love in our hearts, whereas worldly jealousy is motivated by selfishness.)*

#### **Conclusion**

We have seen how Jacob's favouritism stirred jealousy in the hearts of his brothers, and this bore evil fruit. Joseph was sold as a slave to the Midianites! As the years went by the brothers attitudes changed. Joseph forgave his brothers, and God used all that had happened to save the entire family from starvation.

Have you struggled with jealousy of a brother or sister, another church member or friend? Why not ask God to forgive you for harbouring these things in your heart, and pray that he will change you. Perhaps you have experienced someone being jealous of you, like Joseph did. Follow his example and forgive that person. This opens the way for God to work in and through the situation for his glory.