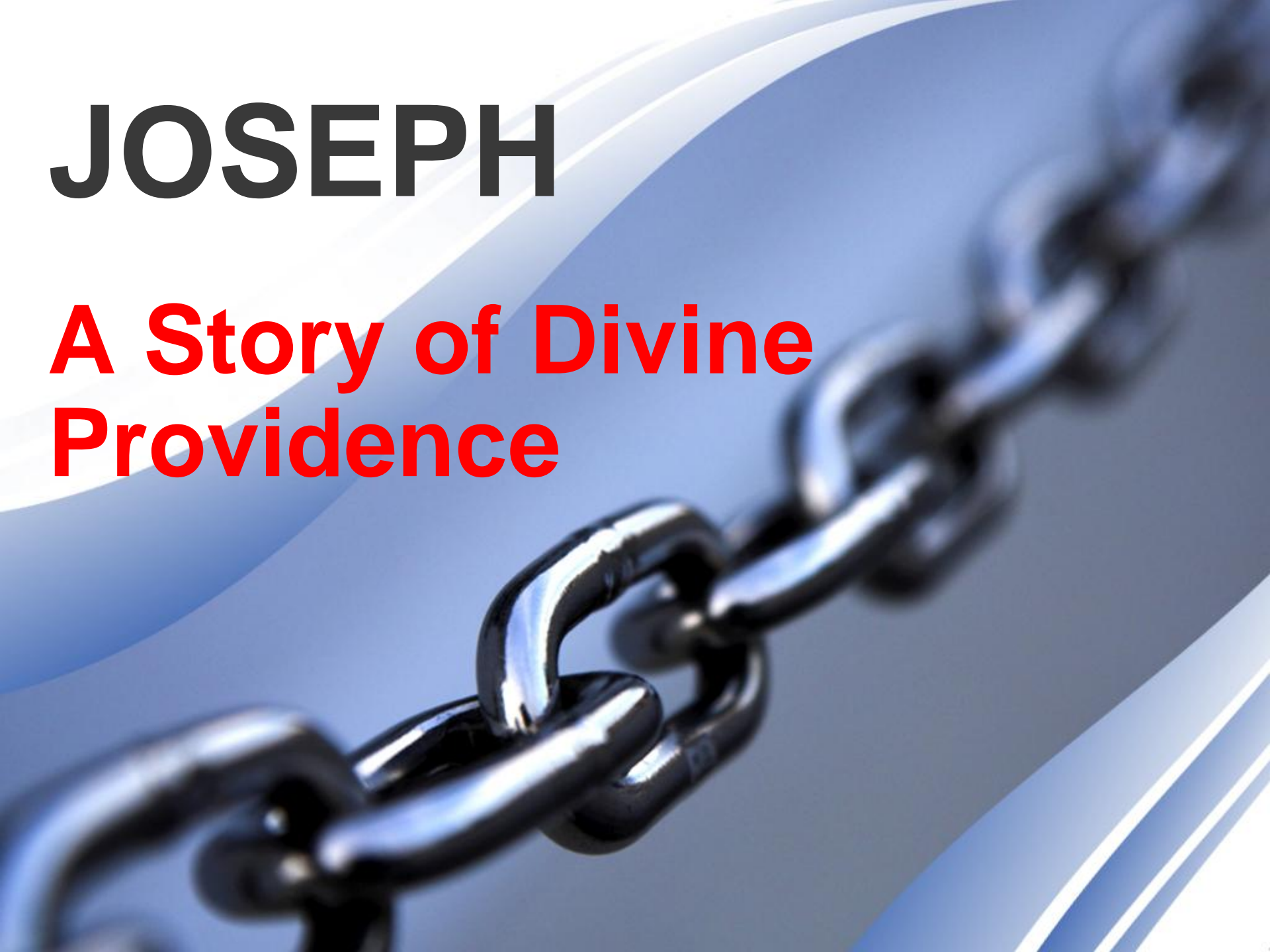


JOSEPH

A Story of Divine Providence



Genesis 45:4-8

And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years, the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.”



Joseph in Genesis

When you read about Joseph, do you come away with more questions than answers?

- Why does Joseph's story receive so much coverage in Genesis?
- After becoming Governor, why didn't Joseph go visit his family during the 7 good years?
- Given what his 10 older brothers did to him, why would God select them to be heads of 10 tribes of His chosen people?
- **Let's answer these questions in light of the providence of God**

To understand Joseph's story...

- Gen. 12:1-3 – God makes promises to Abraham
- Gen. 15:13-14 – God's plan for fulfilling promises to Abraham
 - Even though Abraham lived in Canaan, specifically Hebron (13:14, 18)
 - Isaac lived and died there, at 180 yrs old (35:27)
 - Jacob lived in Promised Land (37:1)
 - Descendants would be afflicted in a foreign land for 400 years
 - No reason given



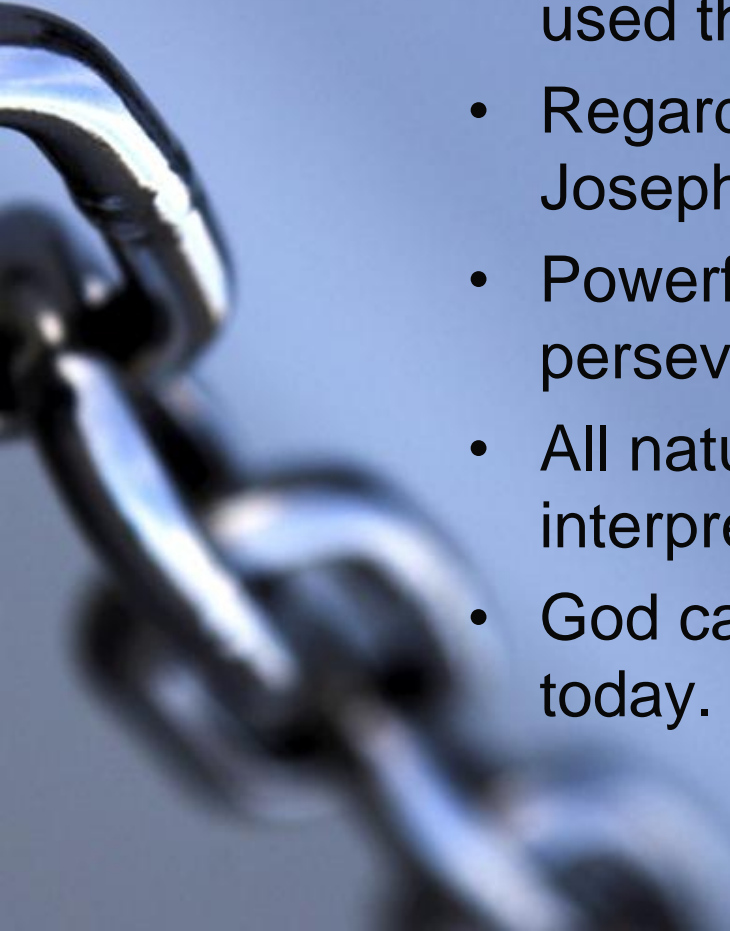


The Links in the Chain...

1. What caused Israel to migrate to Egypt? (41:39-41)
2. How did Joseph become Governor? (41:29-33)
3. How did Joseph predict the famine? (41:16)
4. How did Joseph interpret Pharaoh's dreams? (41:8)
5. How was Joseph called on to interpret? (41:9-13)
6. How did he interpret the butler's dream? (40:3-4)
7. How did Joseph have control of the prisoners? (39:22)
8. How did Joseph wind up in prison? (39:17-20)
9. Why didn't Potiphar kill Joseph? (39:21)
10. How was Potiphar's wife able to accuse Joseph? (39:4)
11. How did Joseph become Potiphar's servant? (39:1)
12. How was Joseph available in the slave market? (37:27-28)
13. What if slave traders had come by an hour later?
14. Why was Joseph in a pit? (37:21-22)
15. Why did his brothers want to kill him? (37:19-20)
16. Why did his dreams make them jealous? (37:4, 10-11)

The Providence of God

- God used these events to effect His promise that Israel would inherit Promised Land after 400 years of slavery
- Many of these events involved sin, but God used them for His purpose
- Regardless of circumstances, consider Joseph's attitude (39:21, 23)
- Powerful example for us to keep faith & persevere
- All natural events except for Joseph interpreting dreams
- God can use natural events for His will, even today.





Why Didn't Joseph Ever Visit?

- Went to find brothers, unaware of their conspiracy (37:14-18)
- They sold me to slave traders for 20 silver coins (37:28)
- *My father loves me—how soon till he rescues me?*
- *Years of slavery & prison—does my family care?*
- Consider meaning of Manasseh's name (41:51)
- Treats brothers roughly at first reunion (42:6-9)
- Change of heart upon learning truth? (42:20-24)
- Returns their \$\$ (42:25) — act of kindness or test?
- Plans for Benjamin to join him, or test? (44:2)
- Judah intercedes for Benjamin (44:33-34)

- **Joseph recognizes God's providence at work (45:5)**



Heavenly Wisdom in Action

- They once sold a brother for 20 shekels, now willing to become slaves themselves to save a brother...
- Joseph's brothers had changed and showed fruits of repentance.
- God chose the brothers on His timeline for His purpose.
- Do we recognize everyday opportunities to carry out God's will?
- When we reach our Promised Land, it will be because we changed to put God's will first!