

People of the Bible

Joseph

Joseph was the son of the patriarch Jacob and Rachel.

The favorite son of his father, Joseph incurred the jealousy of his older brothers, who sold him into slavery in Egypt and told their father he was dead (Genesis 37).

In Egypt, Joseph became the chief servant in the home of Potiphar, a military official. Because he refused to commit adultery with his master's wife, he was unjustly accused of attempted rape and thrown into jail (Genesis 39).

Years later, he interpreted dreams for Pharaoh, who then freed Joseph from prison and placed him in charge of the entire country.

When his brothers came from Canaan to Egypt in search of food, they did not recognize Joseph. He eventually revealed his identity to them, forgave them, and invited both them and his father to live in Egypt.

Joseph is especially remembered and honored for his moral uprightness (Genesis 39) and for his willingness to forgive his brothers (Genesis 45 and 50).