Main Thought  The way up is down — before we can be exalted, we must first be humbled” (Jam. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5-6).

INTRODUCTION  Three compelling reasons to study Joseph:
(1) The story is great literature (great characters and plot).
(2) The story is great theology (the providence of God).
(3) The story is great typology (illustration of Christ).

HATRED  (1-4).  The older stepbrothers hate Joseph
·  Joseph is a 17 year old (Jacob would spend the last 17 years of his life with Joseph in Egypt – 47:28) tattletale (Prov. 10:12).
·  Jacob (Rachel too – 25:28) naively showed favoritism toward Joseph (and Benjamin – 42:38) for they were sons of Rachel born in his old age.
·  Robes are symbols throughout the story: (1) coat of many colors (3, 23); (2) cloak grabbed by Potiphars wife (39:12); (3) new clothes (41:14). This robe signified Jacob’s choice of heir to be Joseph (2 Sam. 13:18-19) but we know it was to be Judah.

ENVY  (5-11).  “the most precious daughter of the devil” (14th century)
·  God speaks to Joseph through two dreams – the first dream where God does not speak directly (20:3; 28:12-15; 31:11, 24). God first spoke directly (THEOPHANIES) to men (1-11; TORAH), then through visions and dreams (12-35; PROPHETS), but now through providence (36-50; HISTORY). Today he speaks to us through his Son – the living (JESUS) and written (BIBLE) word of God (Heb. 1:1-2).
·  God set (dreams) the joy before him so he could endure his cross (Psa. 105:16-22). The brothers did not accept the dreams (like Cain – Gen. 4:4-5), but Jacob pondered these things in his heart (like Mary – Luke 2:19).
·  The brothers would bow down once (42:6), twice (43:26: 28), then throw themselves down at his feet (50:18). All will bow one day (Phil. 2:10-11).

VIOLENCE  (12-28).  from man’s sinful heart (Mark 7:22; Gal. 5:21).
·  Why so far from home (50 miles)? Secrecy. Why Shechem (400 murdered)? Why did Jacob send Joseph? God sent him (Psa. 105:17).
·  Perhaps Simeon was the ringleader (42:24) again (he was bound – 34:25).
·  Reuben’s desire to rescue is to regain Jacob’s favor (35:22). But he has lost his status with the brothers and is spineless (42:37-38). In contrast Judah takes the lead (26) and latter offers himself (43:9).

DECEPTION  (29-36).  “the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (Prov. 12:10).
·  Jacob deceived his father with killing a goat; now he is deceived in like kind. Joseph and Christ are both sold for silver (Matt. 26:15-16).
·  Jacob interpreted life as Everything is against me (42:36) when everything was working for him (50:20; Rom. 8:28; Acts 2:23).