

## Abhir – The Mighty One

*The archers attacked him, shot at him, and were hostile toward him. Yet his bow remained steady, and his strong arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, by the God of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies below, and blessings of the breasts and the womb. The blessings of your father excel the blessings of my ancestors and the bounty of the eternal hills. May they rest on the head of Joseph, on the crown of the prince of his brothers. – Genesis 49:23-26 HCSB*

Talk about tough circumstances! Have you ever considered Joseph's life? God gave him great prophetic dreams and, being young and not particularly savvy, he shared them with his family. His brothers were driven to a jealous rage and at first, wanted to kill him. They eventually decided to sell Joseph into slavery and exile. Then they faked his death so that the rest of the family gave him up for dead. No rescue was possible.

Then his master had a libidinous wife who tried to get handsome Joseph into bed. When he refused, she framed him and he ended up in jail. He did what he was told, got a position of responsibility, and helped and comforted a prisoner. In return, the man promptly forgot all about Joseph when he got out of jail, leaving Joseph in the dank dungeons for a couple more years. The former prisoner only remembered Joseph when he NEEDED him. Joseph helped out the Pharaoh and ended up being the second in command of the whole kingdom of Egypt. Sounds great, doesn't it? But as he came into his position of power, Egypt headed for a seven year famine, and his job was to keep everything running smoothly! What a load!

He was diligent though, and got Egypt through the famine. In the process, his brothers came looking for food. After some initial testing, they had a family reunion and Joseph moved his whole family to Egypt to a fertile valley and a fairly high status. Years later, his dad pronounced on Joseph the deathbed blessing we just read.

Joseph was attacked by the archers of envy, hatred, temptation, persecution, neglect, ingratitude, doubt and fear. But it says "his bow remained strong and his arms were strengthened." Joseph didn't do it. Abhir did. Notice that Abhir (Hebrew for "Mighty One") did not keep Joseph from the difficulties of life. Instead, Abhir strengthened Joseph through it all.

Because Joseph was willing to go through whatever God sent his way, he found strength and blessing above and beyond all the blessings his ancestors had known. Who were his ancestors? Well, Abraham for one. I don't know about you, but I would consider Abraham blessed. The source of blessing; the source of strength and power; the source of hope in a cruel and indifferent world is Abhir – the Mighty One of Israel.