

**Manitoulin Youth Conference 2002**  
**August 17-24, 2002 (God willing)**

# JOSEPH



**“I seek my brethren...” Genesis 37:16**

**Workbook Part 1**



## WORKBOOK INTRODUCTION

October, 2001

Dear Young Person,

Greetings in the Hope we share! The time has come for us to begin preparation for another Youth Conference, which will be held **August 17-24, 2002** God willing. Our subject for the week is Joseph (as you've already discovered from the front cover!). Joseph is a really fascinating character and as we take a look at different events in his life, we will hopefully appreciate his example more as we see some powerful lessons from his faith and commitment to serving God. Also, we will see some beautiful types of Christ in Joseph's life, that will help us better appreciate the life and example of our Lord Jesus.

The theme from Joseph's life that we've chosen is, **“I seek my brethren”** taken from Genesis 37:16. As you go through the study, this theme and idea will pop up, and hopefully it will be clear why we have chosen it! As well, probably the most valuable lesson we can take from Joseph's life is his perseverance in tribulation and faith in God's providence. So, as we go through tribulation now – as all true servants of God must – we can take comfort in his amazing example and learn to rely on God's providence.

This first part of the workbook, that we'd called “short answer questions”, should refresh your memory on some of the events you know well, and get you familiar with some of the details you may not know so well. This should provide a good basis for the second part of the book, that we'd call “research questions”. As well, this book will help prepare you for the discussion groups and classes that will take place up at YC. Both parts of the workbook will be divided up into the following sections:

1. Joseph and his brethren in Canaan (Gen. 37)
2. Joseph and the Egyptians (Gen. 39-41)
3. Joseph and his brethren – Tribulation (Gen. 42:1 – 43:14)
4. Joseph and his brethren – Purification (Gen 43:15 – 44:34)
5. Joseph and his brethren – Revelation (Gen. 45-46)
6. Joseph and his family in Egypt (Gen. 47-50)

The second part of the workbook, unlike past years, will be shorter than the first part ☺ and will have some options for you (for example, choose 6 research questions out of 20 to do). The second part will cover (for the most part) the same chapters as the first. But, we hope it will allow for a little more open and in-depth study – a chance for you to dig a little deeper into some specific events, places or ideas to help you get a better appreciation for Joseph and different events and people in his life.

Please feel free to contact either of us, if you have any comments or questions about the book! May God bless and guide each one of you as you endeavour to learn and grow from the amazing example God has given to us through His servant and our brother, Joseph. As we look at Joseph's life, may each of us through the “patience and comfort of the scriptures” learn to “seek our brethren” as we patiently wait for the soon return of our Lord.

Love in Christ Jesus,

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## USEFUL RESOURCES AND STUDY MATERIALS

### GENERAL REFERENCES:

1. Bible (different versions)
  - KJV (King James Version)
  - RV (Revised Version)
  - RSV (Revised Standard Version)
  - NKJV (New King James Version)
  - NIV (New International Version)
  - YLT (Young's Literal Translation)
  - The Emphasized Bible (Rotherham's)
  - The Septuagint (Greek translation of Old Testament)
2. Bible Dictionary
  - Smith's Bible Dictionary
  - The New Unger's Bible Dictionary
3. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
4. The New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance
5. Bible Program on computer (with different translations and Strong's #)

### CHRISTADELPHIAN BOOKS:

1. Instruction Unto the Kingdom (CSSA) – pg. 79 – 89
2. The Story of the Bible – Volume 1 (Logos Publications) – pg. 177 – 222
3. The Ways of Providence (Robert Roberts) – pg. 60 – 70
4. Joseph the Saviour (H. A. Whittaker)
5. Teenagers of the Bible (Shane Kingsbury) – pg. 8 – 98
6. Joseph and his Brethren (CSSS)

### WEB SITES:

Manitoulin Youth Conference 2002 – [www.youthconference.com](http://www.youthconference.com)

### STUDY SUGGESTIONS

1. Read the **whole story** of Joseph from different translations.
2. Read **each chapter** from the Bible before answering the questions for that section.
3. Work **together** with other young people!
4. Always **pray** for God's guidance before you begin!
5. Insert an **extra** piece of binder paper into your workbook if you need more space to answer a particular question.



**PART ONE: Short Answer Questions**

**SECTION 1: Joseph and his Brethren in Canaan**

**37:1-4 – Joseph – loved of his father, hated by his brethren**

1. In order to better understand the story of Joseph, we have to look at some background details of **Jacob and his family**.
  - a) Jacob was a man of ups and downs, spiritual highs and lows. He often relied on his own power to accomplish things, so he struggled throughout his life to trust in God’s care and guidance. Fill in this little biography about Jacob to refresh your memory about him, and the people and events in life:
    - **Name:** Jacob “supplanter, heel catcher” ( Gen 25:26 )
    - **Name changed to:** \_\_\_\_\_ “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( Gen 32:28 )
    - **Parents:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 25:28 )
    - **Brother:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 25:28 )
    - **Father-in-law:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 28:2 )
    - **Wives:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 29:21-24, 28-29 )
    - **Number of years he served for his wives:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 29:20, 27 )
    - **Concubines:** \_\_\_\_\_ ( Gen 29: 24, 29 )

b) Complete the following chart about Jacob's family:

| Wife                          | Son        | Meaning of Name (margin of KJV) | Birth (Genesis) | Comments  |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Leah                          | Reuben     | "Behold, a son"                 | 29:32           | -given by God when He sees Leah is hated<br>-Leah hopes Jacob will love her |
| "                             |            |                                 | 29:33           |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 29:34           |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 29:35           |   |
| Bilhah<br>(Rachel's handmaid) |            |                                 | 30:6            |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 30:8            |   |
| Zilpah<br>(Leah's handmaid)   |            |                                 | 30:11           |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 30:13           |   |
| Leah                          |            |                                 | 30:18           |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 30:20           |   |
| "                             | (daughter) |                                 | 30:21           |   |
| Rachel                        |            |                                 | 30:24           |   |
| "                             |            |                                 | 35:18           |   |



c) Do you think the sons of the wives and the bondwomen (handmaids) were born of love or envy? Given the **atmosphere** they were born into, what do you think their characters were like?

d) Where were Jacob and his family living at this time? (v. 1) What is significant about this place?

2. What does **Joseph** mean?

a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

b) From what you know already about the story, what is the significance of his name in his life?

3. It says that Joseph was with “the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah” (v. 2) From the chart on the previous page, we saw who these sons were. Why is Joseph with them and not with the sons of Leah?

4. How old is Joseph at this time? \_\_\_\_\_

Find at least 3 examples of people near his age, serving God in their youth:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)



5. Knowing Joseph's age, consider Genesis 47:9, 28. There is a beautiful **comparison** here in relation to Joseph's age. What's the comparison?

6. What was the reason Israel (Jacob) **loved** Joseph more than the other brothers?

A useful exercise for this study is to colour in “Jacob” and “Israel” in the book of Genesis (particularly from chapter 32 and onward). We start to realize that Jacob was his **natural** name and Israel his **spiritual** name! Grab a coloured pencil or highlighter and see what you can discover...when is he called Israel the most?



“I seek my brethren” Genesis 37:16

7. Jacob made Joseph a “coat of many colours.” (v. 3) There are a few different ideas as to what this phrase actually means. Here are some of the suggestions put forward:
- **“coat of many colours or pieces”** – made up of different lengths of material that contained the colours of the rainbow, a remainder of the covenant God made with Noah; very suitable for Joseph, a very “colourful” character
  - **“coat of many hands”** (literal translation) – covered to the hands and feet, a garment worn by a priest
  - **“coat of many hands”** – a coat that has been “handed down” from generation to generation, consistent with the idea of a priestly garment

What was the reason Jacob gave Joseph this coat? Which suggestion, from above, do you think is right, then? (*this might be a good question to discuss*)

8. Look up the word **peaceably** (v. 4)
- a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Where have you heard this word before?

**Joseph's Youth** - “Joseph was innocent and excellent, but Joseph was young and untried, and God had a great purpose with him that required that he should be matured and perfected in character as men only can be perfected – in the school of adversity.” - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 62)

**37:5-11 – Joseph's dreams**

9. **Dreams** have a lot to do with Joseph's life.
- a) How many sets of dreams can you find in his life?

b) Complete this chart to figure out the details of Joseph's dreams:

|                                    | <b>Symbols</b> | <b>What happened?</b><br>(who's involved?) | <b>When was it fulfilled?</b><br>(try to give a reference) |
|------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| <b>Dream 1</b><br><b>(37:5-8)</b>  |                |  |  |
| <b>Dream 2</b><br><b>(37:9-11)</b> |                |  |  |

c) In Joseph's dreams, was the interpretation the **same** for both? What does this mean?

10. There were two different reactions by Joseph's brothers to each of his dreams (v. 8, 11)



- a) What was each and why were they different?
- b) Although his brothers showed opposition and hatred when he told them about his first dream, Joseph told them his second dream, knowing their reaction wouldn't be good. What lesson does this teach us about **preaching** and **sharing** God's word with those around us?
11. When Joseph told his father his dreams, Jacob also had 2 different reactions.
- a) What was Jacob's initial reaction (v. 10)? \_\_\_\_\_
- b) What was Jacob's subsequent reaction (v. 11)? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Look up the word **observed** (v. 11)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Give an example of a person in the NT, who had the same 2 reactions.

**Joseph's Dreams** – "These dreams were of God, as we may understand Joseph afterwards recognized from his declaration to Pharaoh: 'It (the power to interpret dreams) is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace' and also his question to the butler and baker in prison: 'Do not interpretations belong to God?' These dreams were from God; 'If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself know unto him in a vision and will speak unto him in a dream.' (Num. 12:6)

This was the nature of Joseph's dreams – divinely communicated forecasts of coming events. They were communicated as a part of the agency that was to develop the future to which they pointed. The narration of them by Joseph filled the minds of Joseph's brethren with envy – a bitter feeling that banishes mercy. Their self-esteem was hurt by dreams that appeared to them the mere embodiment of a petted boy's complacency, and thus they were predisposed to act the part that was to send Joseph to the sphere to his discipline and promotion. 'They could not speak peaceably to him.' Their feelings settled into hatred, and hatred was ready to seek and find an opportunity of putting its object out of the way. Joseph was perfectly innocent of anything to justify their malignity. He was free of guile, a lover of righteousness, loved of his father, and loved of God; and behold him the object of gathering clouds of enmity!" - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 61)

### **37:12-17 – Joseph seeks his brethren at Shechem, but finds them at Dothan**

12. Joseph's brothers were supposed to be feeding their flocks at Shechem.
- a) What does **Shechem** mean? (v.12)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Where was Shechem located? (use a Bible dictionary for the next few questions)



- c) There were 2 well-known mountains, one on either side of Shechem. What were the names of these mountains and what happened on these two mountains?
  
- d) Was Shechem a good place to feed flocks?
  
- e) Did Jacob have reason to worry that his sons were in Shechem? What happened recently in Shechem? (34:1-5, 25-31)

13. Joseph was found **wandering** (v. 15) What does this word mean?

- a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- b) Using this definition, describe the state of mind Joseph was in when he couldn't find his brethren.

14. The theme of Joseph "**I seek my brethren**" is in v. 16.

- a) When it states that he sought his brethren, in what **way** did he do that?
  
- b) Based on what you know about the story of Joseph, find as many examples as you can in the life of Joseph where he sought the welfare of his "brethren" or those around him (you may want to leave this question and come back to it).

**Joseph stayed spiritually strong and tried to raise others to God's level – he didn't sink to their level!**

15. Upon the advice of the "certain man" Joseph goes to Dothan to look for his brothers.

- a) Look up the meaning of **Dothan** (v. 17)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- b) With it's meaning in mind, what is ironic about where they were and the conditions that existed? (To get the full meaning look up "pit" in verse 20 – use other translations to make the verse clearer)





- c) In comparison to Shechem, which was the better place to feed their flocks?
- d) Why do you think Joseph's brothers went to Dothan?

### **37:18-24 – Joseph cast into the pit**

- 16. "When they saw him afar off...they conspired against him to **slay him**" (v. 18)
  - a) What does this tell us about how much they **hated** him?
  - b) What was ironic about their statement "...and we shall see what will become of his dreams"? (v. 20)
  - c) What would it have been like in the pit for Joseph? How did Joseph feel while in it? (see Genesis 42:21)
  - d) What did the brothers do after they threw Joseph into the pit? What does this tell us about their hatred and insensitivity?
- 17. We learn a lot about **Reuben's** character in this chapter.
  - a) In v. 21-22, what had Reuben tried to do?
  - b) In this situation, does Reuben remind you of a character in the NT? In what way?
  - c) In v. 29-30, it says "Reuben returned" to the pit to find Joseph was not in it. Where had Reuben gone?
  - d) Why was Reuben so upset that his brothers had sold Joseph? What was he **really** upset about?
  - e) As we saw earlier, Reuben was the oldest of the brothers. Did he have the status and privileges that went along with this? What had he done to impact his standing with his father? (35:22)



- f) From the events of this chapter, does it seem that Reuben is the leader of the brothers? Do they respect him as the eldest?
- g) If Reuben isn't the leader of the brothers, **who is?**

**Let down into a living death** - "The object of Joseph's brethren was to kill him. They proposed to do this out and out before casting him into the pit; but this would have interfered with the purpose of God. They were therefore diverted from their purpose. Reuben was touched with compassion for his brother, and purposed that they should do nothing violent to him, but merely put him into a pit, and let him come to die there – his object being to release him afterwards, and take him back to his father. Reuben's proposal was accepted; and Joseph, arriving, was seized and stripped of his outer coat. Nothing is said in the narrative of Joseph's terror; but it comes out in their remarks one to another in Egypt twenty years afterwards, 'We saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear.' The poor boy was let down into a living death, as it seemed, appealing in vain to the mercy of his hard-hearted and grown-up brothers." - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 62, 63)

### 37:25-30 – Sold to the Ishmeelites

18. The brothers sell Joseph for 20 pieces of silver to a caravan of merchantmen called both "Ishmeelites" and "Midianites". It is likely that these men were:

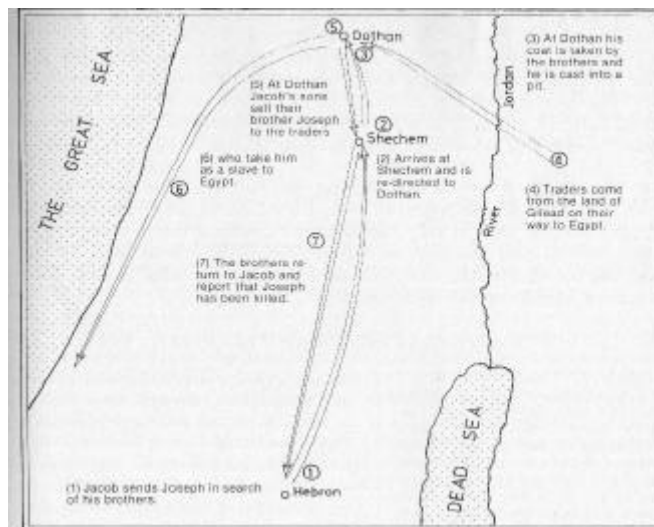
**Ishmeelites** by descent,  
**Midianites** by country,  
**Merchants** by profession.

- a) Who were the **Ishmeelites**? (Gen 16:15)
- b) Were they allies or enemies of Israel? (Gen 21:9-11)
- c) Why is it significant that they took Joseph down to Egypt?
- d) What is the significance of the 20 pieces of silver? (see Lev 27:5 and Ex 21:16, 32)





This might help you visualize what has happened so far in the story. **The events of Genesis 37** are outlined on this map. Take note of the places that we've looked at already in our study!



### 37:31-35 – Jacob's grief

19. Joseph's brethren try to cover up what they had done to Joseph and make it look like it wasn't their fault at all.
- Why is it significant that they killed a **kid of the goats** for blood to stain Joseph's coat? (see Lev 4:23, 28; Num 7:16)
  - Do you think the noise of the young goat would have reminded them of something? What?
  - Joseph's brothers tried to comfort their father in his time of sorrow. What does this tell us about their characters and **consciences**?
  - Do you think Jacob had second thoughts about what really happened to Joseph? Are we given any clues in this chapter?

**Follow Joseph** – "Follow Joseph in his journey. From one dreadful experience he has plunged into another, and far worse. A father's favourite, accustomed to the ways of love and the surroundings of comfort, he finds himself in the hands of unfeeling and mercenary strangers, who regard him as a chattel, and think only of how much he will fetch when they arrive in Egypt...exhausted with grief, broken down, unable to cry any more. It is not possible for human situation to be more agonizing; human prospects to be darker...and yet 'God was with him,' and was directing his way, and fitting him for exaltation and for untold usefulness in the execution of the divine purpose. The kingdom of God lies ahead, and Paul has told us that 'through much tribulation we must enter therein.' How much, and what sort we require, God knows, and not we ourselves. Therefore, let us 'humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God; and He will exalt us in due time.' Joseph's agonizing journey to Egypt was a journey to exaltation; and so is ours, if, like Joseph, we fear God, do His commandments, and commit our way to Him. But exaltation comes not at once. There were dark and dreary years before Joseph. Let us not be impatient." - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 63, 64)



## Chapter 38

We have chosen not to consider this chapter in the first part of our studies. It will be considered in the second part of our studies, God willing, when we will look at it quite closely. If you've ever looked at this chapter, or are looking at it now for the first time (just because of the fact we're not going to cover it now!), you might be a little surprised at what it's about - it seems a little out of context and a little disgusting! But, not if we look at it carefully: if we do, it presents to us a picture of the sad **lack of moral restraint** that surrounded Judah. This chapter, then, is a stark contrast to the **moral integrity** Joseph showed in an immoral and foreign land, which we will see in the coming chapters.

The **Christadelphian Expositor** makes this interesting comment about chapter 38:

"Why was this story, so crude in it's details, recorded in Holy Writ? It appears as a harsh intrusion into the account of Joseph. We pass for a moment out of the environment of faith, goodness and purity, into one of lust, evil and intrigue. It is not even in proper chronological sequence, for much of the story occurred before those events recorded in the previous chapter. Nevertheless, its inclusion comprises a proof of the impartiality of Inspiration; and its appearance, in this place, is obviously divinely selected to emphasize a most important principle. The facts, considered in themselves, reflect no credit in Judah, but reveal why he was disqualified to be the fourth-generation leader among the sons of Jacob, after Reuben, Simeon and Levi had demonstrated their incompetence for the position. At the same time, it was revealed to Jacob, that ultimately the royal dignity would be vested in the Lion of Judah (Gen 49:10); but the incidents of this chapter show that this would be done on a basis of divine selection and foreknowledge, not on personal or fleshly merit as far as the tribe was concerned.

As exhortation, this chapter sets forth the acute moral temptations which living among the Canaanites brought into the lives of Jacob's sons, and offers a partial explanation for the move into Egypt. If the integrity of a covenant people was to be preserved, they must, for a time – until properly constituted as a nation under God-given Laws – be removed from the corrupting influence of Canaan's religious and social life. It is obvious from the record that first Dinah, then Reuben, and now Judah were exposed to Canaanitish influences from which they had to be guarded. By manipulation of famine, Yahweh drew his people into an area where separation was forced upon them (Gen 46:34), the design being to save lives (Gen 50:20)."



## SECTION 2: Joseph and the Egyptians

### 39:1-6 – Joseph elevated in Potiphar's house

1. "Joseph was brought down to Egypt." **Egypt** in the Bible is a symbol of great note.
  - a) What is it a symbol of? (Deut 5:6; Psa 89:10 margin; Hosea 11:1; Rev 11:8)
  - b) Give an example of somebody else "going down" to Egypt \_\_\_\_\_ (reference)
  - c) From these passages, how does God view "going down to **Egypt**"?

**Think about what kind of atmosphere Joseph (only 17) was being thrown into! How would he feel?**

2. What does the name **Potiphar** mean? (v. 1)
 

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

  - a) What does the word "captain of the guard" signify? (try your margin)
  - b) What does this tell us about his occupation?
  - c) Keeping comparisons of Christ in mind, how can the events of Joseph being sold to Potiphar be likened to what happened to Christ? (think about "going down to Egypt" as well)
3. "The Lord was with Joseph" while he was in Potiphar's house (v. 2)
  - a) How many times is this phrase used in this chapter?
  - b) What does this say about how our Father felt about Joseph?
  - c) Find some verses that also mention how God protects and cares for His children.
  - d) What does this verse tell us about bad situations in our lives and the perspective we should have?



- e) Joseph had to maintain a spiritual, positive attitude despite the terrible conditions that he was placed in. How can we also like Joseph maintain this same **attitude** in difficult circumstances we find ourselves in?
4. Potiphar trusted **everything** he owned into the hand of Joseph, because Potiphar could see that God was with Joseph.
- a) In what way can we relate this to our work environment?
- b) Do you think that God will bless us, and those around us at work because of our actions? (provide some passages to support your answer)
5. What does the phrase "found grace in his sight" signify? (v. 4)
- a) Find 3 other places where this phrase is used again in the life of Joseph.
- 1)
  - 2)
  - 3)
- b) Who else in the Bible uses this phrase?

**Joseph's Faithful Service** - "Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard, buys him of their hands, and takes him into his house as a servant. Here we have to consider an instructive feature of the case. Joseph cheerily and faithfully addresses himself to the duties of his position. Had he been like some, he might have considered himself justified in sulking and dawdling, seeing that he was stolen and unjustly brought into his position. In that case, the Lord would not have been with Joseph; for the Lord is not with those who are slothful and contemptuous, from whatever cause. He is only with those who faithfully act their part in the circumstances into which He may bring them...there was nothing to tell Joseph that the act of his brethren was the act of God: but he feared God and submitted himself, knowing (as all true sons of God know and recognize) that God ruleth in the kingdoms of men even now, and orders the steps of those who please Him by their faith and submission." - *The Ways of Providence* (pgs 64-65)

### 39:7-12 – Joseph resists Potiphar's wife

6. We see in v. 6 that Joseph was a "goodly and well favoured" (KJV) young man.
- a) What does each of these words mean? (try other versions, like the NIV and NKJV)
- "goodly" –
  - "well favoured" –
- b) Find at least one woman and one man who were described in similar ways.



- Man –
- Woman –

c) For the examples you found, were good looks a positive or negative thing in their life? What lesson does this teach us?

7. Take a moment to consider the situation that v. 7 suggests.

a) How old would Joseph be here? \_\_\_\_\_ (approximately)

b) Do you think he'd ever faced a situation like this, or seen anything like this before?

c) List off the possible ways Joseph could have dealt with this situation, and the pros and cons for each situation. How would **you** have dealt with the situation?

| Possibility... | Pros + | Cons - |
|----------------|--------|--------|
|                |        |        |
|                |        |        |
|                |        |        |

d) What is the best way for us to deal with sin and temptation? (provide a reference or two)

8. Joseph produced 3 reasons why he could not lie with Potiphar's wife.

a) What were these reasons?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

b) Ultimately, whom did Joseph say he would be sinning against? \_\_\_\_\_

c) Find 2 other references that state the same attitude about whom sin affects the most.

- 1)
- 2)

9. In v. 8-12, we see Potiphar's wife tried 3 different ways to seduce Joseph. Or you could say, Joseph tried 3 different ways to **stop** the temptation.



- a) Fill in the chart and show what we can learn from each (how **we** should deal with temptation!).

|   | What Potiphar's wife did... | How Joseph reacted... | What we can learn... |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 |                             |                       |                      |
| 2 |                             |                       |                      |
| 3 |                             |                       |                      |

- b) What was the final act in this temptation and how did Joseph react?

- c) There is a series of verses in the New Testament that deal with **temptation**, which without a doubt are based on this event here. What are those verses? \_\_\_\_\_

**39:13-23 – Joseph falsely accused and cast into the king's prison**

10. Potiphar's wife has only two female peers even close to her in the bible for the evil mind she had, and the passionate turn in anger she displayed for being rejected. Name those other 2 women and briefly describe how each was similar to Potiphar's wife.

|   | Woman | How is she similar to Potiphar's wife? |
|---|-------|--|
| 1 |       |  |
| 2 |       |  |

11. Given what we know of Potiphar's occupation, the evidence in the hands of Potiphar's wife, and the status of Joseph as a slave, what would Joseph be feeling about his chances of survival in this situation? How would you feel if you were in this situation?

12. Potiphar's wife blames Potiphar for the embarrassment that "happened".

- a) How many times did she accuse Potiphar?

- b) There is another very similar situation in the OT where blame was put upon another's shoulders in a very similar manner. Can you think of that situation and who was involved?

13. What does the word **mock** mean? (v. 14)

- a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_





b) Using your Strong's or Englishman's Concordance (or a computer Bible program), find where else this word is used in the OT? (be sure to note any special significance)

14. There are several things we can take from Potiphar's reaction to the situation (v. 19-20).

a) Why wasn't Joseph killed for his indiscretion?

b) Do you think Potiphar knew who the real guilty party was?

c) Why did Potiphar still punish Joseph?

d) Name another person faced with a similar situation to Potiphar's. What was the result on that occasion and what was the reason he meted out the punishment?

15. Look up the word **prison** (v. 20)

a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

b) Has this word been used before in the story? If so, where?

c) What would the conditions of the prison have been like?

d) How would Joseph be feeling at this time, after his **moral integrity** got him thrown in this prison?

16. Look up the word **bound** (v. 20)

a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

b) In Numbers 30:2 the same word is used. What does this verse tell us?

c) How is this word related to the trial Joseph was enduring here?

d) How does this relate to **us** today?

17. In v. 21, we have described two words to describe how God took care of Joseph: **mercy** and **favour**.



- a) Look up each of these words (and look up “kindness” as well)

**Mercy**

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

**Favour**

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

**Kindness**

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

- b) How is the word “kindness” almost always translated in the Old Testament?
- c) How many times is this word used in the life of Joseph? What is significant about this number? (try using a computer Bible program or Englishman's Concordance)

18. Three times in the life of Joseph the text of v. 23 is stated or implied.

- a) List these three occurrences.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

- b) This gives us great insight into the man Joseph, for immediately each of these rough, godless men saw in Joseph something remarkable and of great value. There is a lesson for us in this as we interact in the world. What exhortation can we take from this point about Joseph's **character**?

19. Joseph, although bound, showed remarkable poise while in prison. His attitude (as attested in the former chapter) allowed all those around him to admire his fortitude and faith, although they themselves were unbelieving.

- a) In Acts, there is a very similar event, where some brothers' **attitude** in prison invoked a very strong reaction. What was the situation and describe what happened?

- b) In what way does this teach us about **how** we should endure trials? Come up with at least 3 passages that reinforce this idea of how we should bear our trials.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)



- c) What is the **value** of bearing our trials in this way?

**A Prisoner and an Outcast** - "Joseph is suddenly plunged into a lower deep than ever. He is not only in a strange land, but disgraced, and in a position debarring hope—not only a slave, but a branded slave; not only a prisoner, but a prisoner under circumstances that shut off all prospects of a possible release. In the first moments of his incarceration, Joseph must have been in a dreadful state of mind. We know what came after, which makes it difficult for us to realize the darkness of his situation. Joseph did not know what was coming after. He only knew the dreadfulness of his position—a prisoner and an outcast, unjustly banished from his country in the first instance, and now the victim of a false accusation. He had said, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' and this was the consequence....He was prostrate in an affliction, which seemed to lack a single ray of hope, yet in which God was guiding him to great blessedness. Joseph had to be fitted for exaltation and the exercise of power, and therefore he had to suffer for his own good, and for the bringing about of a great result to the whole house of Israel." - *The Ways of Providence* (pgs 66, 62)

#### **40:1-4 – Pharaoh's Butler and Baker cast into prison**

20. We're told in v. 1 that the butler and baker are put in prison because they "offended their lord." What do you think they had done to offend Pharaoh?
21. What is the location of the prison Joseph is in? (Look closely at v. 3)

Do you think that Joseph would have felt secure or comfortable, believing he was out of danger from Potiphar's wife?

22. Joseph is assigned to look after the chief butler and baker (v. 4)
- a) Who actually assigned Joseph to look after these two men?
  - b) What does this tell us about this man that we didn't know before, about how he viewed Joseph?
  - c) What then does it tell us about how this man viewed these prisoners?

#### **40:5-19 – Joseph interprets the Butler's and Baker's dreams**

23. In v. 5, it is stated, "they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night" and in v. 8, "We have dreamed a dream". What do you think these phrases are telling us?



“I seek my brethren” Genesis 37:16

24. Look up the word **sad** in v. 6. What does it literally mean?
- a) Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) How does this change your image of how these dreams affected the Butler and Baker?

25. Our theme “**I seek my brethren**” comes up again.
- a) What do v. 6-7 tell us about Joseph's character?
- b) How does Joseph's concern for these men relate to the theme “I seek my brethren”?

26. What does v. 8 tell us about Joseph?

27. **The chief butler's dream** (v. 9-13)

a) Fill in the chart to describe the details of the Butler's dream and the interpretation.

| Details of Butler's dream | Interpretation given by Joseph |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                           |                                |

b) When the butler dreamed of the vine, there is a 3-stage process that happened to that vine (v. 10). List these 3 stages and find the meaning of each of them. (maybe try a Bible program)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

c) There is another event in the OT where this 3-stage process takes place - but not with a vine.

- What was the item? \_\_\_\_\_
- What were the events surrounding it? (Num 16, 17)



d) In answer to c), where was that item kept? What was the significance of where it was kept?

e) How can this item relate to the Butler's dream and its interpretation?

f) There are obvious allusions to Christ in this dream. What did this dream signify in type? Why **three** branches?

g) What did this dream signify to the Butler? \_\_\_\_\_

When relating this to the symbol of Christ's sacrifice, what then does the **wine** really mean?

28. Joseph chose to use this opportunity to ask that his life be spared from the prison (v. 14)

a) Why, if he trusted in God, would he ask such a favour?

b) From Section 1 question #9a) we saw that there are 3 sets of dreams that Joseph is "involved" with in his life. This is the second set of dreams. Did these dreams mean anything or signal something to Joseph?

c) How did Joseph describe being brought to Egypt? (v. 15) Compare what is stated in Deut 24:7 with what Joseph stated. What did the Law state about this?



- d) It is not very often that the word "Hebrew" is used. At this time, Jacob was a small nation and owned no land. Why did Joseph describe himself as coming from the land of the Hebrews? What does "Hebrew" mean?

29. **The chief baker's dream** (v. 16-19)

- a) "When he (the baker) saw that the interpretation was good..." What was going through the baker's mind here? Are **we** ever like this?

b) Fill in the chart to describe the details of the Baker's dream and the interpretation.

| Details of Baker's dream | Interpretation given by Joseph |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                          |                                |

- c) What was the significance of the 3 baskets? The literal Hebrew for **baskets** is "three wicker baskets" or "three baskets full of holes" – how does this relate to what the 3 baskets signified?



- d) What are bakemeats? (try other translations) \_\_\_\_\_

- e) What is the difference in significance between the **grapes** and the **bakemeats**?

30. If we compare the 2 dreams and the 2 interpretations...

- a) Was the interpretation of both dreams the same? Taking it a further step, does the **bread** and the **wine** mean the same thing?



- b) Why in both interpretations does Joseph state that Pharaoh shall "lift up thy head". In each case, relating to this the symbolism of the bread and wine, what does that phrase suggest about our **choices** in life?

### 40:20-23 – Interpretations are vindicated

31. Verse 20 states that on Pharaoh's birthday he made a feast unto all his servants. If the interpretations of the dreams come to pass on Pharaoh's birthday, what could this in type signify? (relate it to Christ) What event will take place on this significant day?
32. Consider for a moment why these dreams were given. What was the intent of the Father in giving these dreams? Did He particularly care about these two men? (more than likely, unbelievers)
33. Joseph asked the chief butler to remember him. What in actual fact happened? Relating this to Christ and ourselves, in what way can we be similar to the Butler?

**The Chief Butler Forgets Joseph** – "Joseph made the most of the circumstances to bring about his release to no purpose. When apprising the butler of his coming liberation, he said, 'Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house. For indeed, I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and here (in Egypt) also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.' But alas! The butler was like the ordinary run of mortals. When he found himself in prosperity, he was satisfied to enjoy his portion without a thought for the welfare of others. 'Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.' However, the butler was to be made use of. Joseph's deliverance was not to come through the butler's gratitude, not at once. It was to come after a considerable patience-requiring lapse of time, through the providentially developed baser desire of the butler to please Pharaoh." - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 68, 69)

### 41:1-13 – Pharaoh's two dreams

34. Joseph is described as a "young man" in this chapter (v. 12)
- What is his age? \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 46)
  - Who else in Genesis is described as a "young man"? \_\_\_\_\_ (before the time of Joseph)
  - How does this make the story in b) more powerful?



35. Joseph was in prison **another** 2 years after he interpreted the dreams of the butler and baker (v. 1)
- a) Why did God allow Joseph to stay in prison another 2 years?
  
  - b) What does v. 9-13 indicate about Pharaoh?
  
  - c) The butler remembered his faults (v. 9) What were his “faults”?
36. Pharaoh's dreams are a background for Joseph's release from prison. His dreams are the third and final set of dreams in Joseph's life.
- a) What does Job 33:15-17 tell us about dreams? How do these verses apply to Pharaoh?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b) Why did God give these dreams to Pharaoh? Why was it necessary for Pharaoh to have his dreams as a background for Joseph's release?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c) What verse does v. 25 and 28 remind you of? What does this tell us about how God used Pharaoh?

***Prophecy is not given so that we can see what happened afterwards –  
It is given for a guiding light for the future!***

### **41:14-36 – Joseph before Pharaoh**

37. What is the significance of Joseph shaving and changing his raiment before he appeared before Pharaoh? (v. 14). How is this linked to the Law of Moses?
- 
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- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
38. Joseph is brought before Pharaoh to interpret his dreams (v. 15)





a) In v. 16, Joseph made it clear to Pharaoh it was God, not himself, that knew the interpretation of the dreams. What lesson can we take from this?

b) Fill in the details of Pharaoh's 2 dreams (v. 17-21, 22-24)

| Details of first dream... | Details of second dream... |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
|                           |                            |

c) If you're using the KJV, what are "kine" and "ears"? Why are these two things chosen to convey the sense of the dreams?

d) Why are 2 dreams with the same interpretation given to Pharaoh?

e) Why would Pharaoh listen to this amazing interpretation of a young **foreigner** and **prisoner**?

39. There are some amazing connections in this chapter to the **book of Daniel** (particularly Dan. 2).

a) List as many comparisons between Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar as you can find.

- 
- 
- 
- 

b) List as many comparisons between Joseph and Daniel as you can find.

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

40. Joseph not only gives the interpretation – he has a **plan** (v. 33-36)

a) What was the plan he suggested to Pharaoh?

b) What does this tell us about his character?





*"I seek my brethren" Genesis 37:16*

- a) What does **Asenath** mean?  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Who was she? Where is On? (try a Bible dictionary)
- c) What does this tell us about Joseph's ranking?
- d) Does this mean that Joseph married a woman "in the world"?
- e) Look at 1 Chron. 4:18. If Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, was included in the genealogy of Judah, what does this imply about Joseph's wife?

44. Names in the Bible always have meaning and significance – how is this true for Joseph's 2 sons?

- a) **Manasseh** (v. 51)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

How does this meaning relate to both Joseph and Asenath, his wife?

- Joseph -
- Asenath -

- b) **Ephraim** (v. 52)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

How is his name significant?

45. Pharaoh obviously believed Joseph's interpretation and plan were valid.

- a) Did the people believe this young "Hebrew" as well?
- b) Do you think they were bringing 1/5 of their corn in faith or just because they had to?
- c) Would **you** have had faith in a young foreigner?

46. Joseph gathered corn "as the sand of the sea" (v. 49) Find other references where this phrase occurs and figure out what it is used to describe? (a Bible computer program will help with this)



Other occurrences:

Meaning (what is it used to describe?): \_\_\_\_\_

47. "Joseph was thirty years old when he **stood before Pharaoh**".

- a) Where is similar language used of Jacob? Genesis \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Where is similar language used of Moses and Aaron? Exodus \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Why do you think this was the case? Why are their ages revealed when they stand before Pharaoh?

### **41:53-57 – The seven years of famine**

48. The seven years of plenty are finished and the seven years of **famine** have begun (v. 54)

- a) Why did God choose to cause the times of plenty and famine to last for 7 years? What does 7 represent in the Bible?

b) What is the significance of the famine being throughout the **whole earth**?

c) What role do famines play in the Bible? Find other places where famines occur (look for **literal** and **spiritual** famines). What we can learn from these occurrences?

d) Does v. 55 remind you of a similar statement in the NT?



**Transferred in a Moment** – “Joseph is hurriedly summoned. The rest is familiar as a household word. Joseph finds himself transferred in a moment from a dungeon to a throne. The blackness of midnight gives way to a sudden burst of noonday splendour which abides with him through a long and illustrious day. God delivers him from all adversity, and, as he expressed it, ‘made him forget his toil and his father’s house.’ From a prison keeper’s servant, he is transformed into a governor of Egypt – the king’s minister: an object of universal defense, and controller of the land’s pouring treasure. It was God’s work in providence. God’s hand was visible at one or two points; but in the main, it was accomplished in an unseen manner by means of perfectly natural circumstances.” - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 69)



## SECTION 3: Joseph and His Brethren - Tribulation

### 42:1-5 – The sons of Israel come to buy corn

1. We're taken back to Jacob and his family in the land of Canaan.
  - a) Why is Jacob called "Jacob" here and not "Israel"? (v. 1)
  
  - b) The brothers "look one upon another". What does this phrase mean? (try other translations) What does it imply they were thinking and doing?
  
2. Upon Jacob's instruction, Joseph's brothers go to buy corn in Egypt (v. 2-3)
  - a) Where had Judah gone in chapter 38? If he is back with his brothers now, what does this mean?
  
  - b) Why do **all 10 brothers** go down to Egypt to buy corn? Why not just send a few brothers to get food for all of their families?
  
  - c) Jacob would not let Benjamin go down with his brothers (v. 4). How old was Benjamin at this time? What does this tell us about Jacob?
  
  - d) Why didn't Joseph go back home and find his family, after he'd been released from prison?

### 42:6-17 – Joseph imprisons them

3. Joseph is governor over Egypt and selling food to all the people (v. 6)
  - a) Why do you think Joseph is selling the food himself? (can't somebody else do this??)
  
  - b) Look up **Governor** (v. 6)
 

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Strong's Number: _____ | Meaning: _____ |
| Hebrew word: _____     | _____          |

**One of the Hyksos rulers was called Solatis! Was it Joseph?**



4. When Joseph's brothers come to buy food, he recognizes them, but they don't recognize him (v. 7, 8)
- Why doesn't Joseph **reveal** himself immediately to his brothers?
  - In v. 6, what do Joseph's brothers do? \_\_\_\_\_  
Find the other 4 times they do this:
    - 42:6
    - 
    - 
    - 
    -
  - What does this **fulfill**?
  - How would Joseph have felt when this happened? Do you think it was reassuring for him?
  - What does v. 9 show us? Why did Joseph speak so roughly to them?
  - What lessons can we learn from Joseph's **attitude** toward his brothers?
5. The brothers are shocked when Joseph accuses them of being spies! (v. 9)
- Why did they say they were all **one man's sons**? What was the point of saying that? (v. 11)
  - How do you think Joseph felt when the brothers mentioned Benjamin? (v. 13)
  - How do you think Joseph felt when they mentioned him? ("one is not")
  - Why would they mention Joseph and Benjamin at all? Does this tell us anything about their spiritual growth up to this point?
6. "By the life of Pharaoh" (v. 15) How did the Egyptians esteem Pharaoh? Why would Joseph use this oath?

### **42:18-28 – They are released on the condition of Benjamin's return**



*"I seek my brethren" Genesis 37:16*

7. Joseph is testing and trying his brothers to see how much they have grown spiritually (v. 15-20)
  - a) How many did he say he would send back **originally** to fetch Benjamin? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Joseph gave his brothers 3 days to decide which one would go back. Who did they decide would go back? Could they decide?
  - c) Joseph decides to only keep one. **Who** did he choose to keep and **why**?
  - d) Why did he "bind him before their eyes"? (v. 24)
  - e) Joseph said that when they brought Benjamin, their "words (would) be verified." (v. 20). How does this principle apply to us? (1 Cor 3:13)
  - f) Why did Joseph insist on Benjamin coming to Egypt, knowing full well his father's sorrow over this?
  
8. We see in v. 21 how alive the brothers' consciences are!
  - a) How long had it been since they sold Joseph into Egypt? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) What insight does this give us into the condition of the **pit** they threw Joseph into?
  - c) What does this tell us about how Joseph felt in the pit?
  - d) The word "guilty" in v. 21 is usually used in the sense of the infringement of the rights of another. What had Joseph's brothers taken away from him?
  
9. Look up **interpreter** (v. 23)
 

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

Why would Joseph use an interpreter?
  
10. This is the first of 7 times that Joseph **cries** (weeps) in the story.
  - a) Find the 7 times and the reason why he cries each time.

| Reference | Reason why Joseph cried... |
|-----------|----------------------------|
|-----------|----------------------------|





|   |       |  |
|---|-------|--|
| 1 | 42:24 |  |
| 2 |       |  |
| 3 |       |  |
| 4 |       |  |
| 5 |       |  |
| 6 |       |  |
| 7 |       |  |

- b) What does this tell us about his life?
- c) How many recorded times does Jesus cry (weep)?
- d) How was Joseph's life the same as Christ's life in this respect? (take a look at Isa 53:1-4)
- e) What lesson is there for **us**?

11. When one of the brothers discovers his money in his sack, what is their response? (v. 28)

- a) Find 2 other references where they have the same feeling and tell why in each case.
  - 1)
  - 2)
- b) How are we to read their response in v. 28? Are they blaming God or are they realizing God acting in their lives to test them?

**42:29-38 – Jacob’s dilemma and concern for Benjamin**

12. When the brothers returned to Jacob, they give their father a report of what happened in Egypt.

- a) What do they tell him? (v. 29-34)
- b) Compare their report here to the report they gave to their father about Joseph over 20 years earlier (37:32). Have they changed?
- c) How have they grown **spiritually**?
- d) How has their **attitude** to their father changed?



13. When they discover all the brothers have their money in their sacks, again it says, "they are afraid" (v.28, 35).
- a) Why are Jacob and the brothers so shocked to find their money returned?
  
  - b) In what way was Joseph testing them by giving them their money back?
14. Jacob says, "All these things are against me" (v.36)
- a) Was there a reason for all these things happening to him?
  
  - b) Did Jacob realize what the reason was?
  
  - c) What does this teach us in our lives?
  
  - d) What does v. 36 tell us about Jacob's suspicions of Joseph's disappearance?
15. **Reuben** offers his 2 sons to his father if he doesn't bring Benjamin back safe (v. 37)
- a) Did Jacob have any reason to trust Reuben?
  
  - b) How many sons did Reuben have? (49:6) What does this tell us about Reuben?
  
  - c) Was it a good or bad idea for Reuben to offer the lives of his 2 sons in exchange for Benjamin? Why?
  
  - d) Knowing the situation they were in, how could Jacob justify his refusal to let Benjamin go down to Egypt?
16. In v. 38, Jacob makes the comment about Benjamin that "he is left alone."
- a) Does this show Jacob's favouritism? Or is it something else?
  
  - b) Do **all** the other brothers not matter? How would **you** feel if you were one of the brothers?

### 43:1-14 – Jacob relents under Judah's surety



17. Jacob is again called Israel (v. 6, 8, 11). Why?
  
18. Compare v.7 to 42:13. Did Joseph ask them these questions or had they given this information?
  
19. In v. 8 Benjamin is called a "lad". In fact, he is about 30 at this time. Find other occurrences of "lad" in the OT and see how elastically it is used. (try a computer Bible program)
  
20. **Judah** pledges his own life to spare Benjamin's (v. 8-10)
  - a) What mistakes had Judah made? (ch. 38)
  
  - b) Why did Jacob trust Judah? Did he have any reason to?
  
  - c) How does this incident show that Judah has grown spiritually?
  
  - d) This incident is a foreshadowing of a later close association of Judah and Benjamin. Where do we see them together later in scripture?
  
  - e) Judah became **surety** for Benjamin. What is surety? Find a couple of references that refer to surety that help us understand what it is (maybe start with Proverbs 6:1 and 11:15)
  
21. In v. 10, we get an idea of how long they waited to return to Egypt.
  - a) How long do you think they waited? How badly did they need food?
  
  - b) Where did they get the "best fruits in the land" during a famine?
  - c) What 6 gifts did they take with them? What is the significance of the gifts?
    - 
    - 
    - 
    - 
    - 
    -



d) Where else in the story are **balm, spices** and **myrrh** used? What is the irony in this?

e) Is there any significance of these gifts related to Christ?

22. On top of gifts, Jacob tells them to take extra money.

a) How much money did Jacob tell them to take with them? (v. 12, 15)

b) What law in the Law of Moses is perhaps based on this?

23. Jacob says farewell to his sons, including Benjamin, with the words: "God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved" (v. 14)

a) Was this a big step for Jacob? Why?

b) What does this example teach **us**?

c) What is Hebrew for **God Almighty**? (v. 14)

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

Where else is it used?

What does it reveal to us about Jacob in this situation?

d) "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." Who in the OT made a similar statement? (not dealing with children though) \_\_\_\_\_



## SECTION 4: Joseph and His Brethren - Purification

### 43:15-25 – The brethren return to Egypt

1. Joseph's brothers go to Egypt with the present and the money their father instructed them to take. They present themselves before Joseph, and after about 22 years, Joseph finally sees Benjamin again.
  - a) Do you think Joseph **really** expected to see Benjamin with his brothers? (v. 16)
  - b) Why did Joseph bring them into his house?
  - c) Why did Joseph put on a banquet for his brothers?
  
2. The brothers are **afraid** again (as we saw in 42:28, 35).
  - a) Why did they think they were taken into Joseph's house?
  - b) How afraid do you think they are?
  - c) Why do they try to explain their situation to the steward?
  - d) Look up **seek occasion** (v. 18). What does this phrase mean? (using a Bible program will help)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
 How does it apply in this situation?
  
3. The steward makes a **remarkable** statement in v. 23.
  - a) How did the steward know about the "God of their father"?
  - b) If we compare Joseph to Christ, who would the steward represent? Who does this teach us?
  - c) Name another person in the OT who had a Gentile steward that was familiar with the God of Israel. Who was the steward?
  - d) What do these 2 examples teach us about **preaching**, especially to our friends and family?



### 43:26-34 – Joseph entertains his brethren

4. In v. 26 and 28, we see Joseph's brothers bowing down to him again.
  - a) How many times have they bowed down to Joseph now? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) What do you think was going through **Joseph's** head at this time?
  - c) How would **you** have felt if you were in Joseph's position?
  
5. When the brothers sat down in Joseph's house for a meal, they were seated apart from the Egyptians and in order of age from oldest to youngest (v. 32-33)
  - a) Why were they not seated with the Egyptians?
  - b) What does the order they were seated in tell us about Joseph's attitude toward Reuben (the firstborn)?
  
6. Benjamin's "mess" was 5 times as much as the other brothers (v. 34)
  - a) What's a **mess**?  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (try other translations as well, like the NIV)
  - b) What does 5 represent? Why was this significant?
  - c) Do you think the brothers were just as **jealous** of Benjamin now as they were of Joseph years earlier?

### 44:1-13 – Joseph again deceives his brethren

7. In these verses, Joseph gives specific commands to his steward regarding his **silver cup** (v. 1-2)
  - a) Whose sack was the steward to place the silver cup in? \_\_\_\_\_



- b) Why this brother's sack? What was Joseph's purpose in doing this?
- c) If we relate this to Christ, what is the significance?
8. Joseph sent for his brothers when they were out of the city, but "not yet far off" (v. 4)
- a) Why did he do this?
- b) What is the city mentioned in v.4? (you may have to look at a study book for the answer)
9. "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" (v. 4, 6) Joseph is trying to test and prove his brothers – to see how much they have grown spiritually. It may seem like Joseph is acting revengefully and hatefully, but really this is not the case. Comment on how you think this final test of his brothers relates to the theme **"I seek my brethren."** What feelings is Joseph experiencing?
10. The steward says Joseph uses the cup for "drinking" and for "divining". What do you think it means by "divining"? (try your margin)
- a) Look up **cup** (v. 2)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Find other occurrences of this Hebrew word that show us how it was used elsewhere in the OT.  
 (hint: Ex. 25:31; Jer 35:5)
11. When the steward accuses the brothers of stealing the silver cup, they are shocked (v. 7-8)
- a) What do they offer as a logical reason why they couldn't have done this?



- b) "Let him die" (v. 9) - The code of Khammurabi (laws that existed before the Law of Moses) decreed that theft from a palace was restoration 30-fold or death! Here, the brothers pronounced judgment of death on the man who was found with the cup. Who else in the OT pronounced judgment of death upon himself, but was spared from it?
  
  - c) Why does the search for the cup start at the oldest (Reuben) and go to the youngest (Benjamin)? (v. 12)
  
  - d) Where in the NT is there a "search" made of the oldest to the youngest? What was the outcome of that "search"?
  
  - e) When the search was on, do you think they thought twice when it was Joseph's turn? (if he had of been there!)
12. Take note of the brothers' **reaction** when the cup was discovered in Benjamin's sack (v. 13)
- a) What was their reaction?
  
  - b) Did they blame Benjamin? Did they abandon him?
  
  - c) What does this tell us about the brothers?

### **44:14-34 – Judah's confession and plea for Benjamin**

13. Why did **Judah** become the spokesman on behalf of the brothers? (v. 16)
14. In v. 16, the brothers recognize what the cause of all this trouble is.
- a) What did they recognize was the cause? Why is it so amazing that they realize this now?
  
  - b) Why did Judah admit guilt and iniquity when he was sure that none of his brothers were guilty of stealing the cup? Did he know that it was planted there?
15. Consider Judah's speech in v. 18-34:
- a) How does Judah acknowledge Joseph's power?





- b) Does Judah sound envious that their father loves Benjamin? Why / why not?
- c) Judah offers his life for Benjamin's. This is a **changed** Judah - what has caused the change?
- d) Contrast Judah now with Judah of chapters 37 and 38.

| Judah then... | Judah now... |
|---------------|--------------|
|               |              |

- e) In v.28, Joseph finds out for the **first** time what his brothers told Jacob after they had sold him into Egypt. How would Joseph feel right now?
- f) Benjamin is described as a "little one" in v. 20. Why? (remember we already saw that he is about 30!)
- g) "...his life is bound up in the lad's life" (v.30). Who is the same language used of in the OT?
- h) In v.33, Judah requests that he be made a "bondman" or hired servant to Joseph. What story in the NT does this make you think of? Are there any more parallels to this story in the life of Joseph?



## SECTION 5: Joseph and His Brethren - Revelation

### 45:1-15 – Joseph reveals himself to his brethren

1. When Joseph made himself known to his brethren, he ordered all the Egyptians to leave (v. 1)
  - a) Why did he do this?
  
  - b) What's the type of Christ?
  
2. Read v. 2 and notice "...and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard." Is this talking about Joseph's actual crying or the news of his reunion?
  
3. "Doth my father yet live?" (v. 3)
  - a) Where else had Joseph enquired about his father? \_\_\_\_\_
  
  - b) Why did Joseph ask **again** about Jacob?
  
4. When Joseph revealed himself, his brothers were obviously shocked.
  - a) Look up **troubled** – what does it mean? (v. 3)  
 Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_
  
  - b) How do you think **you** would have felt if you were one of Joseph's brothers when he revealed himself? Would you have felt the same way his brothers did?
  
  - c) Take a look at Zechariah 12:9-11. What is described here is similar to the situation we are looking at. What are these verses in Zechariah talking about? What comparison can be made to Joseph's brothers?
  
  - d) Why did Joseph say, "...whom ye sold into Egypt"? (v. 4)
  
  - e) How else would they have been sure it was really Joseph?
  
  - f) Why did Joseph say what he said in v. 12?
5. In v.5-8, Joseph's makes an amazing declaration of his understanding of **God's providence**.



- a) What is providence? (try a Bible dictionary or a standard English dictionary)
  
- b) How did Joseph show his **understanding** of providence?
  
- c) How would you have reacted if you were Joseph? (honestly!)
  
- d) What lesson can we learn from Joseph's **forgiveness**?
  
- e) What was the **first** word of the message Joseph wanted his brothers to pass along to their father? (v. 9) What does this teach us?

**God's Providence** - "It could not be imagined that the objects of the Father's love should be left to the operations of chance; that he should leave undirected, in the morass of human life, the steps of those whose eyes, affections and trust are directed to him in daily prayer. The righteous fall into trouble, but it is for their good. They come out of it to find themselves benefited. When trouble comes, do not think it is not from God because it is natural. It may not differ from the trouble of other men in apparent origin and form, but it differs from theirs in being under an invisible supervision which aims at a result, and will say, at a certain point, 'Thus far and no farther'." - *The Ways of Providence* (pgs 16, 28)

6. What did Joseph mean when he said "God....hath made me a **father** to Pharaoh"? (v. 8)

7. Look up **come to poverty** (v. 11). What does it literally mean?

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

What does this tell us about the severity of the famine?

8. In v. 15, it says that Joseph's brothers "talked with him". **Try to put yourself in the story** – what did his brothers say??? Use your imagination.....

**45:16-24 – Pharaoh's invitation to dwell in Egypt**



*"I seek my brethren" Genesis 37:16*

9. "It pleased Pharaoh well and his servants" (v. 16) that Joseph's brothers had come. Look at this section of verses and list some things that show us how highly esteemed Joseph was both by Pharaoh and the people.
  - 
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  - 
  -
  
10. "Come unto me: and I will give you..." (v. 18). Where are these words echoed in the NT? Who said this and why did he quote these words of Pharaoh?
  
11. "Now thou art commanded" (v. 19) Take a look at what the Septuagint translates this phrase as. What does it really mean?
  
12. When his brothers left to return to their homes to bring their families to Egypt, Joseph gave each of them changes of clothes. Benjamin, however, was given 300 pieces of silver and 5 changes of clothes (v. 22).
  - a) How much is 300 pieces of silver in today's terms?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Do you think his brothers were at all jealous of what Joseph gave Benjamin?
  
13. Joseph tells his brothers, "see that ye fall not out by the way" as they return to their father (v. 24).
  - a) What does this phrase mean? (try other translations)
  
  - b) What would have caused them to "fall out of the way"?

### **45:25-28 – Jacob receives the news and rejoices**

14. When reading Bible stories, we often lose the impact of certain events because we know the story **too** well. Clear your mind and try to see things from Jacob's perspective:
  - a) Do you think there is **any** chance that your son Joseph is still alive? (42:38)
  
  - b) Your sons return from Egypt and tell you that Joseph is **alive** and that he is the **governor** of Egypt. How do you feel? Do you believe them?
  
15. "...the spirit of Jacob their father revived" (v. 27) when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent.
  - a) What does **revived** mean?  
Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_



Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

- b) What does this tell us about Jacob's state of mind when he heard the news that Joseph was alive?

**46:1-7 – Migration to Egypt**

16. Why is Jacob called Israel here? And then back to Jacob? Why the changing?

17. Jacob set out for Egypt "with **all** that he had" (v. 1)

- a) Is this typical of Jacob? In what way?

- b) In 45:20, what had Pharaoh told Joseph to tell his family?

18. At Beersheba, Jacob offers sacrifices to the "God of his father Isaac".

- a) What does **Beersheba** mean? (v. 46)

Strong's Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrew word: \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Where is Beersheba?

- c) What happened at Beersheba? Why did Jacob go **here** to make an offering?

19. When God speaks to Jacob in a vision, Jacob responds by saying "Here am I." (v. 2)

- a) Who used this phrase earlier in the story? \_\_\_\_\_ (reference: \_\_\_\_\_ )

- b) Where else is this phrase used in the Bible? Who used it in each case?

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- c) V.3 is a confirmation of a **promise** God made earlier to Jacob. When and where was the promise first given?

- d) "...the God of thy Father" (v. 3). Where else is this used in Genesis?

- 
- 
-



- e) Why is Jacob told not to fear? What would he fear at this time?
- f) "I will there make of thee a great nation." Who was this promise first made to? Where?

20. In v. 4, what 3 additional things did God promise Jacob?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

- a) "...bring thee up again" What does this phrase signify? Where and how is it used elsewhere in the story?

- b) Where is the second part of this promise fulfilled? Does the promise have a greater fulfillment?

**Jacob goes down to Egypt** – "Jacob having received information of all that had been transacted, proceeded to break up his encampment, and go down into Egypt as Joseph and Pharaoh had invited him to do. Isaac had been dead ten years, and Jacob had attained the age of one hundred and thirty. Having arrived at Beer-sheba on his way thither, he offered sacrifices to the God of Isaac. On this occasion, God spake unto him, and said, 'I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt: for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.' In this promise Jacob was reassured of a resurrection to life. The action of putting the hand upon the eyes represents death. Hence, to tell Jacob he should die, and yet that he should be brought up again, was telling him in effect that he should rise from the dead again to possess the land." - *Elpis Israel*

### 46:8-27 – The descendants of Jacob

21. In this section of verses, we have listed all the children and grandchildren of Jacob.
- a) According to v. 26, how many people came into Egypt with Jacob? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) In Stephen's speech in Acts 7, he makes mention of Jacob and his family going into Egypt. How many people does Stephen say went down into Egypt? (Acts 7:14) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Is there a mistake? How is the **difference** accounted for?

### 46:28-34 – Jacob meets Joseph in Goshen

22. Enter into the feelings of both **Jacob** and **Joseph** as they meet.
- a) What is Jacob feeling?





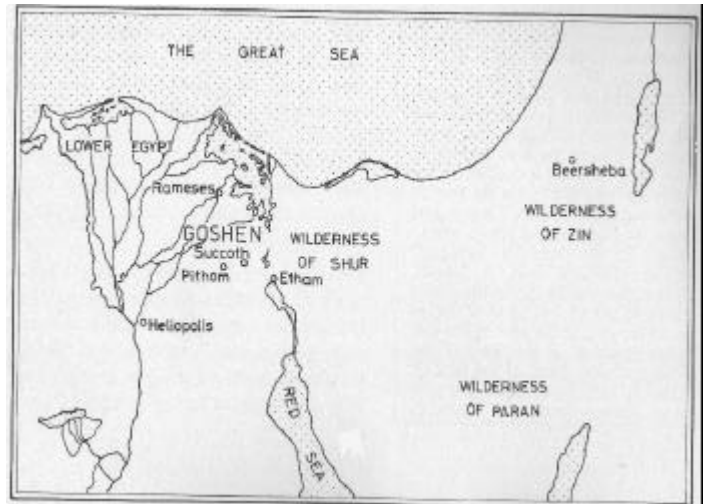
- b) What is Joseph feeling?
  
  - c) Compare/contrast their reunion to the father and son in Christ's parable of "The Prodigal Son".
23. Joseph weeps for a "good while" when he meets his father (v. 29). We already looked at the seven (recorded) times that Joseph weeps. In this instance, what does this reveal about Joseph?
24. Israel makes an amazing statement in v. 30. Who in the NT made a similar statement? About whom?
25. Joseph made sure his brothers told Pharaoh right away that they were shepherds (v. 33-34).
- a) Why did he do this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b) Joseph's brothers would be an abomination in **whose** eyes?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c) Knowing this, Joseph was not ashamed of his brothers. Where is the same principle mentioned, that Christ isn't "ashamed" of us, his brethren?



## SECTION 6: Joseph and His Family in Egypt

### 47:1-10 – Jacob presented to Pharaoh

1. Joseph chose only 5 of his brothers to appear before Pharaoh (v. 2).
  - a) Why did he do this? Why **five**?
  - b) The number 5 is significant in the story. Use your concordance to find at least 4 references to "5" in the story of Joseph. Do you think that 5 was a special number in Egypt? (see Isa 19:18)
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    - 
    - 
    -
  - c) We aren't told whom Joseph picked - who do you think he picked?
  - d) Who would you have picked?
2. Joseph chose to put his family in the **land of Goshen**. The Egyptian name for this place was Rameses (v.11) and in Psalms 78:43, it is called the "field of Zoan". Agriculturally, Goshen was one of the best pieces of land in Egypt. It was located in the extreme NE of Egypt, and surrounded by mountains, which kept it separate and isolated from the rest of Egypt.
  - a) Do you think this was a good place for Joseph to put his family? Why?
  - b) Why did Joseph not put them in one of the cities of Egypt?
3. When Jacob meets Pharaoh, he blesses him twice (v. 7, 10).
  - a) How does this, in a small way, fulfill God's promise to Abraham in Gen 12:3?
  - b) Why does he bless Pharaoh **twice**?







c) "...the less is blessed of the greater" (Heb 7:7) Is this the case here?

4. When Pharaoh asks Jacob his age, Jacob says his days had been "few and evil" (v. 9)
  - a) How old is Jacob at this time? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Why does Jacob describe his life in this way?

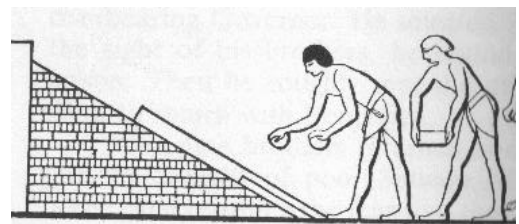
**47:11-12 – Israel possesses the best of the land**

5. We saw in an earlier question where Rameses (Goshen) was located. We're told Joseph places his family there and takes care of them "according to their families" (v. 12).
  - a) What does this phrase mean? (look in your margin and also find a cross reference)
  - b) What does this tell us about how much they **needed** Joseph now? How would they have felt about this?
  - c) Joseph was, in fact, their saviour. How much do we **need** our saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ?

**47:13-21 – Egyptians made bondservants to Pharaoh**

6. The famine becomes "very sore" in the land (v. 13). People from all over Egypt and Canaan come to Joseph to buy food from him – Joseph becomes a "saviour" for the **whole world!**
  - a) The Egyptians soon run out of money, and give their belongings to Joseph in exchange for food.
    - What did they give Joseph **first**? (v.15-17) \_\_\_\_\_
    - What was **second**? (v.18-22) \_\_\_\_\_
    - What was **last**? (v.23-25) \_\_\_\_\_

b) How does this relate to our life in Christ?



7. Look up v. 21 in other translations (try the NIV).
  - a) How is it translated?

b) Why is this significant? (consider what happens to the children of Israel after Joseph dies)



8. "We and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh" (v. 19)
- a) The Law of Moses speaks of land being redeemed or given back to its owner in Lev 25:23-28.  
**When** was the land given back? **Why** was this done?
- b) Do you think Egyptian law was the same as Jewish law? Do you think the Egyptians got their land back?

### **47:22-26 – The priests' land tax-exempt**

9. The Egyptian priests had a portion of land assigned to them by Pharaoh and Joseph was not able to buy this portion of land (v. 22).
- a) What was the **Jewish** law about priests' land? (Lev 25:32-34)
- b) Was Jewish law the same or different than Egyptian law in this respect?
10. Joseph took **one-fifth** of the people's crops (v. 24). How would you feel if the government of your country introduced a **20% income tax**?? ☺
- a) How much was the Jewish tithe? (hint: look up the word **tithe** in your concordance)
- b) Is there a practical lesson for us (in our service to God) with regards to these amounts?

### **47:27-31 – Jacob's command concerning burial**

11. How old is Jacob when he dies? \_\_\_\_\_ years
- How long has he been in Egypt now? \_\_\_\_\_ years (look back at v. 9)
- When did this number come up earlier in the story?
12. Jacob made it clear to Joseph that he did not want to be buried in Egypt (v. 29)
- a) Jacob made Joseph put his right hand **under his thigh**. Find other references to this (**under his thigh**) and to **thigh**. What did this represent?
-



- b) Why did Jacob make Joseph swear to take him to where his fathers were buried? Why was it so important to Jacob?
- c) What do these verses reveal about the **relationship** Jacob and Joseph had? Why didn't Jacob tell Reuben, his eldest son, where he wished to be buried?

13. "If now I have found grace in thy sight." (v. 29). Where did we first see this phrase occur in the story of Joseph? Why would Jacob use this phrase when speaking to Joseph?

14. Look up "bed's head" (v. 31) in the Septuagint – what does it say? \_\_\_\_\_  
In Hebrews 11:21, it says Jacob leaned upon "the top of his staff" when he blessed the sons of Joseph (ch. 48).

Why did Jacob need a **staff**? (Gen 32:24-32)

What do you think the staff is a symbol of?

### Chapters 48, 49

We have chosen not to include these 2 chapters in this section of the book. In the second part of the book, we will be looking at some aspects of these chapters, specifically the blessing of Joseph and his sons by Jacob in chapter 48, and the blessings of Reuben, Judah and Joseph in chapter 49.

### 50: 1-14 – Joseph buries his father in Canaan

15. In v. 2, Jacob, at the end of his life, is called **Israel**. From what we've seen so far, what does this indicate to us?
16. Joseph had his father embalmed by the physicians (v. 2).
- a) Was Joseph following the customs of Egypt by doing this? If so, do you think it was a good or bad idea to do this?
- b) **Why** did Joseph have his father embalmed? Was there a practical reason?



17. Compare how long the Egyptians mourn for Jacob and how long his family mourns for him.
- a) How long did the Egyptians mourn for Jacob? (v. 3) \_\_\_\_\_ **This was the period of mourning for a Pharaoh!**
  - b) How long did the "children of Israel" mourn for Jacob? (v. 10) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Does this difference tell us anything?
  - d) Where are we told in the NT not to mourn like those around us without hope, when our brothers and sisters die?
  - e) List examples of people in the Bible who were mourned for, **even though they had the hope of the resurrection** (try to provide references).
    - 
    - 
    - 
    -
18. Jacob told Joseph to bury him "in my grave which I have dug for me in the land of Canaan" (v. 5).
- a) **Where** was this burying place? (v. 13) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Who had **bought** it originally? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) From v. 5, what does it seem Jacob had done to it?
19. Where is the **threshingfloor of Atad**? (v. 10). Why did they mourn for Jacob here? (try a Bible dictionary or atlas).
20. When Joseph made his request to go and bury his father in the land of Canaan, Pharaoh allowed him to go (v. 5-6)
- a) Would you expect Pharaoh to say anything else?
  - b) Why would Joseph even ask?
  - c) What is the type of Christ in this?
21. Who went up with Joseph to bury his father? (v. 7-9). What does this tell us about Joseph?



**Bury me not in Egypt** – "Seventeen years having passed after his arrival in Egypt, the time drew nigh that Jacob must die. This residence in the land of Ham had not at all diminished his attachment to the land of Canaan. When, therefore, he found his end approaching, he took an oath of Joseph, saying, 'Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: but I will like with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place.' And Joseph promised to do as he had said. But why was Jacob thus anxious? All his care was for his body after death that it might be duly deposited in the cave of Machpelah where Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah, were sleeping." - *Elpis Israel*

### 50:15-21 – Joseph reassures his fearful brethren

22. Joseph's brothers were extremely **afraid** that Joseph would take revenge on them now that Jacob was dead (v. 15)
- a) Where else did we see his brothers feeling totally scared?
  
  - b) Did they have reason to be afraid here?
  
  - c) How well did they **really** know Joseph if they thought he would take revenge now?
  
  - d) In v. 17, we have the last recorded time that Joseph weeps. **Why** does he weep here?
  
  - e) In John 11:35, Jesus weeps. Do you think Jesus wept for the same reason Joseph did?
  
  - f) **"I seek my brethren..."** Joseph again displays his mercy and love, and understanding of God's providence to his brothers (v. 19-21). How do you think his brothers felt when they heard and saw this now?
  
  - g) Joseph comforted them and "spake kindly unto them" (v. 21).



- What does your margin say about this phrase?
  
- Find others places where this phrase is used and who it is used of. (use your margin to get you started)

|   | Reference     | Who is it used of?                          |
|---|---------------|---|
| 1 |               |   |
| 2 |               |   |
| 3 |               |   |
| 4 | 2 Chron 30:22 | Hezekiah “spake comfortably” to the Levites |

**50:22-26 – Joseph’s long life, message of Redemption and death**

23. We see Joseph was very blessed by God in the latter end of his life, **after** going through so much trial and hardship. Joseph was blessed by being able to see his great-grandchildren. Who else was blessed in the latter end of their life like Joseph, after going through so much pain and trial?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (reference: \_\_\_\_\_ )
  
24. Joseph declares to his brethren that God would visit them, bring them out of that land, and take them to the land that he promised to give to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (v. 24)
  - a) How did Joseph know God would bring them out of the land of Egypt?
  
  - b) Do you think his brothers knew this as well?
  
  - c) What does this tell us about Joseph’s understanding of **spiritual** things? What does it teach **us**?
  
25. Joseph made an oath with his brethren that they would carry his bones out when the “children of Israel” left Egypt (v. 25).
  - **Where** is it recorded that they did this? \_\_\_\_\_
  - **When** were Joseph’s bones buried? \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Who** brought his bones up out of Egypt? \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Where** were Joseph’s bones buried? \_\_\_\_\_
  - **Why** is this place significant? **When** else did this place come up in the story?
  - a) Why didn’t Joseph have the children of Israel take him back to Canaan as soon as he died?



b) Where in the NT is this commandment about his bones shown to be an act of faith?

c) Why was **this** an act of faith?

26. How old was Joseph when he died? (v. 26) \_\_\_\_\_ *One scholar has counted 27 references in ancient Egyptian literature to this as an ideal age to live to!*

Referring back to #25, what great leader of Israel died at the same time that Joseph's bones were buried? \_\_\_\_\_

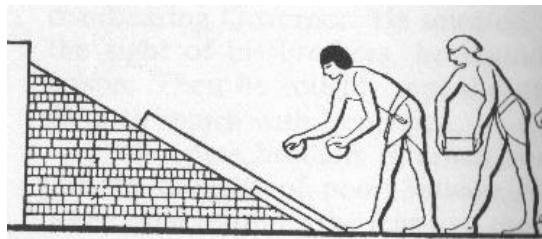
How old was this leader when he died? \_\_\_\_\_

27. Think about everything we've considered. What is the greatest lesson for you **personally** from the life of Joseph? (remember to share and discuss your answer with others!)

**Suffering before Salvation** - "In studying the events of Joseph's life, therefore, we are studying a case in which God was at work beyond all question; and from which, therefore, we shall be able to learn instruction with regard to the experiences of our own lives, if our lives like his are framed in the fear of God and committed to His keeping in prayer and well-doing; for his case, like all the others, was "written for our learning"...It may seem to them that God is not only working with them, but actually working against them. Let them remember the agony of Joseph in the pit, in slavery, in false imprisonment and learn the darkest paths of their life may be the ways appointed for them to reach liberty and life, wealth and honour – yea, a throne in the Kingdom of the antitypical Joseph (Jesus Christ) who himself had to tread the dark and tearful valley of humiliation, and who in the day of his glory, will introduce all of his brethren, amongst many bright stars, to the most interesting of Jacob's sons." - *The Ways of Providence* (pg 60, 70)

**Manitoulin Youth Conference 2002**  
**August 17-24, 2002 (God willing)**

# JOSEPH



**“I seek my brethren...” Genesis 37:16**

**Workbook Part 2**





## WORKBOOK INTRODUCTION

February, 2002

Dear Young Person,

Greetings in the Amazing Hope we share! By now, we hope you've completed Part 1 of the study, or have at least gotten into the amazing story of Joseph! God willing, this second part of the workbook will build on the details and lessons we've gained from looking at the story already in a general way. We will dig deeper into the story now... but don't let this scare you! We may say we're dealing with the "story" of Joseph, but remember it's actually an "account" of his life, and we should be able to identify with Joseph and others in his life. They went through the same difficulties we go through, had to grow in the same way we have to grow, and many overcame in the same way we hope to overcome by the grace of God!

Because the "account" of Joseph's life is so practical, we have chosen not to divide Part 2 "Research Questions" into the same six sections as we divided Part 1 into (those six divisions will be of use during the discussion groups during the Youth Conference, God willing). Instead, we've chosen to divide this part of the workbook up in a more practical way. ☺ There will be three sections: **1. ACKNOWLEDGE** **2. CHOOSE** **3. TRY**

As you may have noticed, if you combine the first letter of each of the words, it spells "ACT!" Joseph's example teaches us that we must ACT, that we must be "doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). We can see from so many signs in the world that Jesus is coming back very soon (perhaps even before Youth Conference comes!) and there is such a need for us to ACT – and not make excuses! As you progress through each section, we will explain why each word has been chosen.

Here's a few general guidelines we have for you with regards to Part 2:

1. **Please complete Part 1** to the best of your ability before starting Part 2 (you will need the background knowledge from Part 1 to use and build on in this section)
2. **Be sure to work in a group**, if this is possible, to share and discuss ideas!
3. **Don't be scared by the apparent length of some of the questions** – often, a lot of typing is needed to steer you in the right direction, so the point we are trying to make gets across.
4. **You are able to choose** some questions out of each of the sections (although we won't be upset if you do them all!) ☺ We hope this makes the study more enjoyable and beneficial.
5. **Because you can choose, be sure to share** (now and up at YC) your ideas and discoveries from this section!
6. **Answer questions on separate pieces of paper.** There is basically no space for your answers.
7. **Try to get your hands on "Teenagers of the Bible" and read it!** (pg 8-98) It's an easy read and we guarantee you won't regret it!
8. **Be sure to pray for God's guidance** as you study His word and as you seek to live the lessons and principles you discover!

We would like to thank everyone who helped us – in so many different ways – put this workbook together. Most importantly, we thank our Heavenly Father for recording the life of Joseph in His Word, to allow us to learn from our Brother's wonderful example. Please feel free to contact either of us, if you have any comments, questions or difficulties...or to share some points with us! We look forward to sharing ideas with you during the week of the Youth Conference, God willing. May God bless and guide each one of us as we endeavour to learn and live these wonderful lessons of perseverance, faith, forgiveness and love. As we all grow in the Truth, may our goal be to "seek our brethren" in these last days, so that when the Lord Jesus Christ returns, we will be waiting and hoping for his appearing!

Love in Christ Jesus,

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## PART TWO: Research Questions

### ACKNOWLEDGE

"God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20)

Our first action word is **ACKNOWLEDGE**. When we look at Joseph's life and the lives of those around him, we can see that **self-acknowledgement** was a vital factor in their spiritual development. When they acknowledged their weaknesses and sins, and sought to change, then God was able to work with them and develop in them godly characteristics. This section ACKNOWLEDGE involves the **character development** of Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Joseph's brothers and Joseph. Character development occurred at different times, stages and rates for each of the people we will look at in this section.

Four very important lessons we learn from the examples in this section are:

1. God can and wants to develop our character
2. We are never too young or too old to grow and develop spiritually
3. Our example can have a huge impact on the spiritual development of others
4. God doesn't give up on people, so we can't either! (if you think somebody has gone too far or sunk too low to turn back to God, then just think of Joseph's brethren...how low they sank and how long it took for them to turn back to God!)

In our lives in the Truth, in order for us to grow and become more like the Lord Jesus Christ (as the people we'll consider in this section did), we must **acknowledge**:

- where we have come from (spiritually speaking)
- how useless the things of the world are
- what our character is
- our sins and failures
- in what ways God wants us to change
- the power of God and His Word to transform our minds and lives
- that being part of God's family (the ecclesia) is the best way for us to truly develop spiritually



When we **acknowledge** these things, our attitude and our perspective are dramatically impacted as we live each day. If we develop a faithful perspective like Jacob, Joseph and his brethren, then we will realize that no matter what good or bad happens to us, God is in control. He can change us, He wants to change us and if we **acknowledge** this, He will "create in us a clean heart" (Psalms 51:10) and make "all things work together for our good" (Romans 8:28) so that we might praise and honour Him, and share in His glorious Kingdom with these faithful examples.

"God is not willing that any be lost, and He will go to incredible lengths of time and circumstance to draw people back to Him. This is called the 'overall picture.' We only see the small part of His omniscient view of things – the part that has to do with our situation, and it is only by studying the lives of faithful men and women that we can really understand His wonderful ways"

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 25)

**Please choose 4 of the 7 research questions in this section to do**



### Question # 1- JACOB

When we look at the development of Jacob's character, we will quickly see a tremendous lesson of the **dramatic spiritual impact that we (especially young people!) can have on others in the Ecclesia.**

1. Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" in **Genesis 32:24-32.**
  - a) Make a list of the details of the events that happen in this section of verses.
  - b) How do we know that Jacob wrestled with an angel? What was the outcome?
  - c) What are the meanings of both names?
  - d) Why did God change his name?
  
2. God gives Jacob a "wakeup call" in **Genesis 35:1-15**
  - a) Jacob is told to build an altar for God. Building altars and sacrificing to God has to do with dedication to God, as well as preaching to those around (it was something others could see!) Find 3 occurrences of Abraham building altars in Gen 12 and 13.
  - b) What does Jacob tell his family in v.2-3? What does this tell us?
  - c) Since his name was changed to "Israel" in Gen 32, Jacob has not been called "Israel" up to this point. What does God say to him in 35:9-12? Why is this a wakeup call for Jacob?
  - d) In v. 21, 22 we have "Israel" twice, but in v. 22-29 we have "Jacob." What does this tell us?
  
3. Joseph comes on the scene in **Genesis 37.**
  - a) Jacob is called "Israel" twice in this chapter. Find these 2 places and show why he is called "Israel" in these places.
  - b) We see that when Jacob is called Israel, he is seeing things through eyes of faith and often demonstrating divine will (as in 43:11-13). Also, when Jacob is mentioned in context with Joseph, he is often referred to as "Israel." Show how this is true for:
    - 43:8      45:28      46:29, 30      48:11-14
  - c) Jacob took a long time to learn to live up to the name God had given him! We have a name to live up to - what name is that? How do we live up to our name?
  - d) What does young Joseph's spiritual impact on Jacob teach us?

"When teenagers respond to the call of the Truth, what a reaction it has in the ecclesia! The spiritual pulse beings to quicken; there is a stirring amongst the members. They all join in transformation."

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 95)**

4. **Gen 37:11** tells us that Jacob "observed the saying" (regarding Joseph's dreams).
  - a) Look up the word "observed" (Strong's). What does this suggest about how Jacob viewed Joseph's dreams?
  - b) Each of the following 4 passages have the same word in them, which is translated "observed" here in Genesis. Look up the passages and describe of whom and what each passage is speaking of.
    - **Ex 20:19** – "Keep"
    - **Isa 62:6** – "Watchmen"
    - **Psa 103:17-18** – "to such as keep"
    - **Luke 2:51** – "kept"
  - c) Using these verses as a guide, what does Gen 37:11 tell us about Jacob's thought process, and what lessons are there in this for us to consider?
  - d) **Mary**, the mother of Jesus, went through a very similar process. There are 3 different ways in which Mary's thought process is described in **Luke 1 & 2** (1:29 "cast in her mind," 2:19 "pondered them in her heart," 2:51 "kept these sayings"). Look up each word used to describe how Mary reacted to the information that was given to her (each word has a different meaning, and sheds light on how intent Mary was on listening and understanding what God was saying to her)



- e) "**Listening attentively**" is a dying art. Consider others who attentively listened and come up with at least 3 additional examples. For starters look at **Mark 12:41-42** (hint: the money was deposited in great copper drums, shaped like a funnel. When you threw money into it, it rolled around with an enormous clatter for all to admire and see! What did Jesus hear?)
5. There **is little mention of God** by Jacob or his sons during the time that Joseph is in Egypt.
- In **Gen 42:36**, Jacob says "all these things are against me." He didn't ACKNOWLEDGE the reason for these things happening to him. What was the reason? How can we sometimes be like Jacob in responding to events in our lives?
  - In **Gen 43:13-14**, Jacob seems to be re-energized in spiritual things and declares "God Almighty give you mercy before the man." What has caused Jacob to be re-energized spiritually? (v. 3-9)
  - Remembering he is re-energized at this point, **Gen 43:13** is a huge display of self-sacrifice on Jacob's part. Why?

"During the long period of Joseph's captivity in Egypt, Jacob had mourned, as only a father can, for the loss of a son who was a ray of sunshine in the Truth amidst the darkness of an evil world and the disappointment of unheeding members of his own family...which of the brethren would respond to the anguish of their father? To our surprise it is Judah...with these words from the lips of Judah, there is a dramatic effect on his father Jacob. Jacob could see that his son was maturing in spiritual things, and that his hard heart had been touched by the things he had suffered. And that is an effect that can still be seen today in the lives of those who allow the Word of God to direct their thinking."

- **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 63-65)**

6. Take a look at **Gen 45:25-28**. Jacob thinks his sons have told him the biggest lie of their lives in v. 26 when they return from Egypt and tell him that Joseph is alive! But something changes his mind - what is it that actually convinces him that Joseph is alive? (read carefully...is it what he sees or what he hears?) What can we learn from this about influencing others by the example we show?

"...from this point onward in the narrative, an entirely new spirit sweeps through the record, evidencing the dramatic change that has taken place in Jacob. There is an important lesson here for young people. Their attitudes and frame of mind have a great bearing on the atmosphere of ecclesias...when the young people are active and joyous in the work, a remarkable change can come over a meeting."

- **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 94-95)**

7. Have a look at Jacob's blessing of Joseph's sons in **Gen 48**.
- Jacob is called "Jacob" 2 times and "Israel" 9 times in this chapter. Why?
  - Read v. 5. Joseph's sons are counted as Jacob's sons and given inheritance. Who do they replace? Why? (Numbers 1:10, 47-49)
  - What's amazing about v.11?
  - Read v. 8-20. What is unusual about this blessing?
  - Jacob is mentioned in the "Faith Chapter" (Heb 11:21). Of all the events in Jacob's life, this blessing is mentioned as the pinnacle of his faith. Why?
8. Take a look at Jacob's blessing of his sons in **Genesis 49**. Take special note of v. 18. It is between the blessings of Dan and Gad.
- Is it spoken directly to any of his sons?
  - What does it reveal about Jacob's level of spirituality at the end of his life? Why is this verse so remarkable?



## **Question # 2 - REUBEN**

This question has to do with **going against the flow**. Reuben was the oldest of Jacob's 12 sons, born to Leah (Gen 29:31-32). But as we've seen, he was not respected as or given the privileges of the eldest brother. He was a very weak and unstable man (Gen 49:3-4) who learned lessons very slowly. Take a look back at page 8 (Part 1) and go over your answers for the question about Reuben.

In **Gen 37:21-29** we saw Reuben had to speak up against his brothers and stand alone when he tried to deliver Joseph out of their hands. Reuben pleaded for mercy (for Joseph), because Reuben acknowledged Joseph's innocence and his own standing with his father. Reuben was living with a conscience of personal failure and he did not want to disappoint his father again (think back to what he had done in Gen 35:22). But, unfortunately he was not strong enough to persuade his brothers from their evil plot. Reuben wanted to deliver Joseph and bring him back to Jacob their father, but did not ACT quickly enough. When he returned to the pit to deliver Joseph, Joseph was gone!

1. Give **background** to Reuben's character:
  - a) What privileges and responsibilities did a firstborn child have? (for starters, Gen 27:26-29, 32-40)
  - b) What was the "birthright"?
  - c) Reuben did not receive the birthright. Who did it go to? Why? (1 Chron 5:1)
  - d) Who else in Genesis received the birthright, even though they weren't the firstborn?
  - e) List everything you know so far about Reuben, considering his age, status, family situation, Ecclesial situation, etc. (provide references wherever possible)
  
2. Think about what happened in **Gen 37:21-29** again.
  - a) "Not being part of the solution means you're part of the problem." Do you think this was true in Reuben's case?
  - b) We saw from Part 1 that Reuben, in this situation, reminds us of Pilate. Pilate acknowledged Christ's innocence, but was not strong enough to deliver him from the Jews. In what way can we be like Pilate and Reuben?
  - c) What does this situation teach us about standing up for what is right and taking action? (both in the world and even among our brethren)
  - d) What are some situations that require us to speak up and take action?
  
3. Now consider what happens in **Gen 37:29-35**.
  - a) Do you think the brothers ever told Reuben what they had done with Joseph? (consider 42:22 also – what did Reuben think had happened to Joseph?)
  - b) Why would they not tell Reuben?
  - c) If this is the case, do you think Reuben was genuinely lamenting for Joseph with his father?
  - d) In different situations at work or school or even in the ecclesia, people may know us as "goody two shoes." What lessons can we learn from Reuben's example?
  
4. We are not told much more about Reuben, besides **Gen 42:37-38**.
  - a) Compare what Reuben offered as surety for Benjamin as opposed to what Judah offered (42:8-9).
  - b) Jacob says, "My son won't go with YOU." Why did Jacob not trust Reuben, but trust Judah?
  - c) Reuben and Judah both fell into the darkness of sin, but had rebounded and were growing spiritually. Who was more loving and spiritually mature at this point? Why?
  - d) What does this tell us about Reuben?
  - e) What can we learn?
  
5. What further insight into Reuben's character are we given from his blessing in **Gen 49:3-4**?
  
6. What is the **most important lesson** you think we can learn from Reuben?



### **Question # 3 - SIMEON**

In this question, we're going to take a look at **dealing with anger and cruelty** and **punishment**. We aren't told a lot about Simeon, but we are told enough to realize what sort of man he was and to take lessons from this. We do know that he was the second oldest son of Jacob, born to Leah (Gen 29:33). He didn't receive the blessing after Reuben, because he also proved himself unworthy (the blessing went to Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim)

1. Let's start off with **some things we know** about Simeon:
  - a) What do we know Simeon had done in his life? (Gen 34:25-31)
  - b) How would you describe his character?
  - c) Why didn't he receive the blessing?
  - d) Can you find any other passages in Genesis where Simeon is mentioned? What are we being told?
  
2. In **Gen 42:24**, we see Simeon was the one brother that Joseph kept in prison in Egypt, while the other brothers went back for Benjamin.
  - a) Why was Simeon kept?
    - What was Joseph's real reason for keeping one of his brothers in Egypt?
    - How did keeping Simeon help in that purpose?
  - b) Why didn't Joseph keep Reuben the oldest?
  - c) Why didn't Joseph keep Judah the leader?
  - d) What does this teach us about how God deals with us? (ie. "punishment")
  - e) While in prison, do you think Simeon ACKNOWLEDGED why he was there?
  
3. **Simeon and Levi** are mentioned together a lot (Gen 34:25, 30)
  - a) Although they were not the leaders, they probably aided Judah (their younger brother!) in his cruel plots. What does this teach us?
  - b) Being around people that think the same way as us will cause us to do the things we'd probably do anyway! How is this true in their case?
  - c) What's the lesson for us?
  
4. Take a look at Jacob's "blessing" of Simeon and Levi in **Gen 49:5-7**.
  - a) Why does Jacob "bless" them together?
  - b) What do these verses reveal to us about Simeon's character?
  - c) What other verses in the Bible talk of how God views anger and cruelty?
  - d) What are some practical ways for us to control our anger?
  
5. What is the **most important lesson** you think we can learn from Simeon?



## Question # 4 - JUDAH

This question has to do with **leadership** and **repentance**. Judah was the fourth oldest son of Jacob, born to Leah, after Reuben, Simeon and Levi (Gen 29:35). He didn't receive the blessing either, however the lineage of Christ came through Judah, and we'll soon see why.

1. First, start at **Gen 37**.
  - a) What indications in this chapter are we given that Judah has become the leader of the brothers?
  - b) Who do you think came up with the plot to stain Joseph's coat with blood, in order to deceive their father?
  - c) Is Judah a positive or negative influence on his brothers?
  - d) What is his attitude toward his father in this chapter?
  - e) How would you describe his character at this point in the story?
  
2. Now, let's look at **Gen 38**!
  - a) Judah went down from his brethren. What does this one word tell us?
  - b) Who did Judah become friends with? Was his "friend" a good influence? (v. 12, 20)
  - c) Read v. 12 –26. What sin did Judah commit?
  - d) What lessons do you think he learned from this?
  - e) Is this chapter in chronological order? Why is it right in the middle of the story of Joseph?
    - Contrast this story to Joseph's example in 39:7-12.
  - f) Why did God allow this story to be in the Bible?
  - g) V. 26 – Did Judah learn his lesson? What does this teach us? (consider John 8:11)
  - h) Look at v. 27-30. Where else does a scarlet cord come up in the Bible? Can you figure out how the two events are connected?

"Judah is shown to be a mindless, insensitive man, lumbering through life with his chief concern of having a good time. Unbeknown to him, God's ministering angels were nearby, watching all and recording all. Judah might have been appalled to realise that his escapades would be exposed through the Inspired record for all generations to see. The reason why God has preserved this story is to warn those who are following the same course of self-destruction. It is a reminder of the consequences of our actions, for flesh has not changed, and we are subject to the same propensities...leaving us with strong warnings about the frailty of human nature"

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 32)**

3. If we have a look at **Gen 44:8-10**, we see Judah is well on the road to spiritual growth at this point.
  - a) Pick out some words that indicate to us that Judah has grown spiritually.
  - b) Why has he changed? What lesson does this provide us?
  - c) Jacob said he would not send Benjamin down to Egypt with his brothers – that was final! (42:38). Why does he take that back now and why does he trust Judah?
  
4. Now, take a look at **Gen 44:14-17**.
  - a) What is the situation? Why does Judah take charge in this incident?
  - b) V. 16 is an amazing confession and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT by Judah on behalf of all the brothers. What does he confess?
  - c) Why is it amazing, that out of all the brothers, Judah is the one to acknowledge this?
  - d) Is he a positive influence/example to his brothers now? Why?
  
5. Consider Judah's speech in **Gen 44:18-34**.



- a) What is so memorable about his speech?
- b) Count up the number of times "father" appears in the speech, and then "brother" or "lad." What does this teach us?
- c) How would you describe his character now?
- d) What has brought about this change?
- e) Gen 44:34 "...lest I see the evil that shall come upon my father." Here is the final stage of true repentance and mature love. What do we learn from Judah's attitude here about how our attitude should be towards sin?

"Judah is not pleading on the basis of a protestation of their innocence, but on the devastating effect their conviction would have on the one who was now so dear to them all. He spoke eloquently of his father, an old man and Benjamin, the little one, the son of his old age. Never before had he thought so dearly about his father and family."

- *Teenagers of the Bible* (pg 82)

6. Judah's blessing is recorded in **Gen 49:8-12**.
  - a) What does this blessing tell us about how Jacob feels and how God feels about Judah now?
  - b) Who or what is "Shiloh"? Where else is Shiloh mentioned in the Bible?
  - c) What amazing promise is in this passage?
  - d) What lessons does Judah's remarkable change teach us:
    - About God?
    - About ourselves?
    - About the influence we can have on others?
7. Judah made an **extraordinary turnaround** and, above the others in this story, changed his heart to be in tune with God.
  - a) When did God openly establish that Christ was to come through Judah's lineage? (reference)
  - b) Although God knows the end from the beginning, we do not. In your opinion, was this event of Judah's repentance the key to Judah being named heir to kingship? Explain and find precedence for your answer (think of one of Judah's brothers).

"Judah is the man who represents the greatest conversion from the depths of sin to manifestation of spirituality. He is the man who proves that 'with God nothing is impossible'...Judah chose a careless and selfish course of action, leaving a trail of confusion behind him, and yet many years later, under the influence of Joseph, he became a humble and godly man. This teaches us that nobody is beyond the merciful arm of God, providing they are prepared to repent and seek a new way of life."

- *Teenagers of the Bible* (pg 32, 97)





## Question # 5 - JOSEPH'S BROTHERS

Joseph's brothers went through a huge change in their characters – both individually and together. As you go through this question, you will see Joseph had a huge part in organizing circumstances so that he could test his brothers and lead them along the long road of repentance (just as God will do for us!) Joseph's brothers had to learn vital lessons about **loving God**, **caring for their father and families**, and **forgetting about material things**. We must also learn these lessons – we may accept and practice them, or we may learn them the hard way, as Joseph's brothers did.

"If we were to draw a line here at Gen 37:36, and ask ourselves who was worthy of salvation and who was not, we would soundly condemn Joseph's brethren, determining they should be suitably punished...but the wonder of Yahweh is that he through His divine grace and mercy He redeems men like Joseph's brethren. Yahweh uses men like Joseph as a vehicle for turning others towards the Truth."

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 31)

### 1. Developing a love for God displayed by love and compassion for others

- a) Trace this list of verses through, making note of what each verse shows us about Joseph's brothers regarding their love and care for their father, children and each other (be sure to note the positive progression).
- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| ➤ Gen 37:4, 5                                       | ➤ 42:29                  |
| ➤ 37:18   | ➤ 43:3-5                 |
| ➤ 37:23-25 and 42:21                                | ➤ 43:8, 9                |
| ➤ 37:28 (how much silver each?)                     | ➤ 43:15                  |
| ➤ 37:32 ( <u>sent</u> the coat to Jacob)            | ➤ 43:23                  |
| ➤ 37:33-34 (not <u>one</u> of them said something?) | ➤ 43:34                  |
| ➤ 37:35   | ➤ Gen 44:2 (final test!) |
| ➤ 42:1  | ➤ Gen 44:9               |
| ➤ 42:3 (why aren't they called "Jacob's sons"?)     | ➤ 44:10, 13              |
| ➤ 42:11 (this is the first of many confessions)     | ➤ 44:16, 17              |
| ➤ 42:13 (why mention Joseph and Benjamin?)          | ➤ 44:33,34               |
| ➤ 42:26 (leaving Egypt without Simeon)              | ➤ 46:5                   |
| ➤ 42:27, 28   |                          |
- b) What does their development in these things teach us? How long did this "process" take?
- c) Find some other verses that speak of loving God and displaying this love by how we treat those around us.
- d) This development has to do with taking responsibility. In what ways today do we have to learn to take responsibility?

### 2. Getting rid of their greed and materialism

- a) Trace this list of verses through, making note of what each verse shows us about Joseph's brothers regarding their **greed**, their love for **silver** and their **attitude** towards material things (note, again, the positive progression). We'll see by the end of these events that Joseph's brothers hated the sight of silver!
- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| ➤ 37:13 (feed themselves, not the flock!) | ➤ 43:15              |
| ➤ 37: 28 (how much silver each?)          | ➤ 43:18 -22          |
| ➤ 42:2 (why did they fear <u>Egypt</u> ?) | ➤ 44:2 (final test!) |
| ➤ 42:27, 28                               | ➤ 44:8               |
| ➤ 42:35                                   | ➤ 44:11, 12          |
| ➤ 43:11 (tiny gift for a <u>king</u> !)   | ➤ 45:22              |
- b) What other verses in the Bible talk about the love or money (and the evil this causes)?



- c) It has been said that Christadelphians today face 2 major problems: unfinished preaching work and materialism. Does materialism affect you? Why or why not?
  - d) What are some practical ways for us to overcome materialism?
3. **Bonus:** On this long road to repentance, there were some "strange" events that Joseph's brothers encountered. Why was each of the events in the following list very "strange" to the brothers? (Is there a lesson for us?)
- 43:17; 43:23; 43:27; 43:29; 43:33; 44:17

"...(Joseph's brethren) had come to understand that the most important things in life revolved around the welfare of their brethren, their families and their father...As we grow and mature in the Truth we become aware that the world does not revolve around us and our desires. There must be compassionate concern for others who are sometimes greatly dependent on us for sustenance, guidance and protection."

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 76, 96)**



## **Question # 6 - JOSEPH**

Joseph was the 11<sup>th</sup> of Jacob's 12 sons, born to Rachel (30:22-24). His two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) received the blessing from Jacob (Gen 48), because all the other brothers proved themselves unworthy. In the next section TRY, we're going to consider part of Jacob's blessing to Joseph (question #1), as well as many different aspects of Joseph's life and character (questions #2-9). Right now, we're going to look at the central theme of Joseph's life "**I seek his brethren.**" In this, we see how Joseph ACKNOWLEDGED what God had given him, how he CHOSE to dedicate his life to the things of God, and then how he TRIED to "**seek his brethren**" in a self-sacrificing and humble way. He took responsibility for himself – then went after his brothers. "**I seek my brethren**" - above all in Ecclesial life, this is what God calls us to do. Joseph's life revolved solely on this fact. So must ours.

1. Although the phrase "**I seek my brethren**" only occurs once in the story, this idea comes up throughout the story.
  - a) Find as many examples in Joseph's life where he sought the welfare of others ahead of his own (remember Christ's response in Luke 10:29 to being asked, "Who then is my neighbour?")
  - b) Joseph looked out for all aspects of his brethren's welfare, and we are exhorted to do the same. Find at least 5 ways we are to care for each other in the ecclesia. Think physically, emotionally and spiritually.
  
2. Find passages that speak of one "**seeking**" someone out. Look at parables, visions, and real life events. Come up with a minimum of 7 examples. How do these examples add to Joseph's "seeking" of his brethren?
  
3. In **Genesis 42**, Joseph, as governor of Egypt, sent his brothers away the first time they came to buy corn.
  - a) Why did he do this?
  - b) What was he looking for in them?
  - c) What was he looking for when he imprisoned all 10 of them and asked 1 of them to go back to their father to get Benjamin?
  - d) When he kept Simeon in prison, what was he looking to learn about them here?
  
4. Turn to **Genesis 50:14-21**.
  - a) What was the concern of Joseph's brethren?
  - b) How did Joseph react to their words and why?
  - c) Turn to the following passages and discuss what they state about forgiveness.
    - Matthew 18:21-22
    - Matthew 5:23-24 (be careful when reading this one, who was wronged here?)
  - d) Practically, how can we become more forgiving like Joseph? (remember ACKNOWLEDGE)
  
5. **Joseph changed and matured spiritually as he grew from a boy into a man.** His circumstances refined him into the great man of faith we have witnessed. We often get the impression that the same faith Joseph had at 17 is the same he had at 30 – this is not necessarily the case. One area in which he noticeably changed was in his attentiveness to listen and understand what his brothers really needed (Joseph was not wrong in how he dealt with his brothers at 17, but he definitely changed his approach when he was older)
  - a) What differences in Joseph's dealings with his brethren can you see from 17 as opposed to 30?
  - b) If you can find differences, what does that teach us as young people?
  - c) Compare this now to David's life:
    - How did David start out? How did he finish up?
    - Was he stronger or weaker spiritually at the end of his life?
    - If stronger, how?



**Question # 7 – JOSEPH, A TYPE OF CHRIST**

Joseph is an excellent example for us to learn from and follow. **The Lord Jesus Christ is, of course, the perfect example for us to follow;** but the details of Joseph’s life can help us better understand the life of Jesus. Joseph was just a “shadow” or “type” of Jesus and the amazing things Jesus did in order to “seek his brethren.” In Part 1, at different points, we considered some of the ways that Joseph was a type of Jesus. Now, we’re going to get serious! ☺

Find 30 types or comparisons relating Joseph’s life to Jesus’ life (don’t just think of Joseph...think of Judah, Pharaoh, Potiphar, Jacob, Simeon, Benjamin, etc.) We realize that the first 10 or 15 types may be fairly easy for you to get, but make sure you do your best to get 30 – the last 20 or so may really require you to think hard! A good way to set up your page might be like this:

|       | <b>The life of Joseph</b> | <b>Reference</b> | <b>The life of Jesus</b> | <b>Reference</b> |
|-------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1     |                           |                  |                          |                  |
| 2     |                           |                  |                          |                  |
| ...30 |                           |                  |                          |                  |

**This is a great discussion question...we encourage you to trade answers!**

“There may be (young people) today who endeavour to walk in the steps of Joseph and after the greater example of our Lord Jesus Christ. These young people may be called upon to love their brethren as Joseph did, and to show faithful obedience towards God, after the fashion of Joseph and the Lord Jesus Christ. There are still people as hard-hearted and spiteful as Joseph’s brethren...sometimes such people are drawn to the Truth by examples in their own age group which illustrate and manifest some of Joseph’s maturity of sacrificial love.” - **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 27)**



## CHOOSE

"Joseph went after his brethren" (Genesis 37:17)

Our second action word is **CHOOSE**. After acknowledging their need for change and the power of God to change them, the examples we looked at in the first section had to **choose** the path they wanted to take. As character development was very different and unique to the individuals, so this process of **decision-making** is just as varied.

Jacob **chose** to follow the "God of his fathers" but struggled daily to place his total dependence on God. Joseph's brothers **chose** to ignore God's ways and go their own way for so many years, which disappointed and hurt their father Jacob. Joseph **chose** from a young age to serve God and love His ways (just as the Lord Jesus Christ did!) – and ignore the things of the world, the things his brothers were pursuing. Eventually, through God's providence and the power of Joseph's amazing example of love and self-sacrifice, Joseph's brethren came to acknowledge their responsibility to God and to each other. And finally they **chose** to "seek their brethren" as Joseph had. Joseph could only "go after his brethren" because he had decided to first take responsibility for his own spiritual development and actions. Serving God and putting the world aside was a clear **choice** for Joseph, and he strived to help his brothers see this.

In Deuteronomy 30:19, Moses set before the children of Israel a **choice**:

**BLESSING & LIFE**

or

**CURSING & DEATH**



Moses counselled them to "**choose life.**" It was clear to Moses, just as it was clear to Joseph. How clear is this decision to us?

Whether we've just started studying the Bible or whether we've studied it for years, we all acknowledge our own sinfulness and weaknesses, and the need for God in our lives. Now, we must also **choose** who we want to serve:

- Do we want to be like Joseph's brothers (at the beginning of the story) and forget about God and others, serve ourselves and end up on the path to death?
- Or, do we want to be like Joseph and serve God, ignore the distractions of the world, seek to help others, and end up on the path to life?

This section **CHOOSE** involves the **decisions** we have to make in the Truth. When we acknowledge our sinfulness and need for God's mercy, and **choose** to be baptized in Jesus Christ, we become a part of the Ecclesia of God. This section also involves things related to **Ecclesial life**.

"Throughout this traumatic period in a strange city (Egypt), Joseph hung on to his understanding of the Truth. It was all he had in the world. It may be that God will lead us into trials for the same reason...to learn that the Truth is all that matters in a world of mirages and false values"

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 36)

**Please choose 😊 4 of the 7 research questions in this section to do**



## **Question # 1 - CHOICES WE MUST MAKE IN ECCLESIAL LIFE...**

The theme of **Shechem** is one of the most intriguing and exciting parallels in the story of Joseph. From this theme comes the foundation point of the entire story "I seek my brethren".

1. As you might have already found, the root word for **Shechem** means "the neck (between the shoulders) as the place of burdens" or figuratively, "the spur of a hill". What is your initial thought as to the meaning of this in the story of Joseph?
2. Look up **Shechem on a map**.
  - a) Where is it?
  - b) What surrounded it on both sides?
3. Shechem was known significantly in Scripture for a number of **key events** taking place there. Look at the following verses and explain what is happening in each passage (Shechem is not mentioned, but we know Joshua and Moses stood in Shechem with Israel around them at these times). Make a list of the **key themes** that emerge from these passages:
  - a) Deut 11:29 – 32
  - b) Josh 8:33-39
4. **Joseph** was buried in Shechem.
  - a) Find the passage that shows us this.
  - b) Jacob was buried in the cave of Machpelah, in Hebron (Gen 50:13). Why wasn't Joseph buried with his father here?
  - c) Detail the events that were involved in Joseph's burial (think who, what, when, why, how...)
  - d) What does this tell us about the significance of Shechem to Joseph and to those after him?
5. Turn to **John 4:1-42** and read this passage at least 2 times. How do we know this is Shechem?
6. Read **John 4:1-4** again and turn to a **map of Israel**.
  - a) Where had Jesus been and where was he going?
  - b) What then is strange about verse 4? (think of the topography of the land...taking the same journey, how would you get to where you were going?)
  - c) What then does this tell us about why Jesus came here? Was meeting the woman a chance encounter?
  - d) How does Christ's attitude about this woman shed light on Joseph's character?
7. As one of the theme of Shechem is to CHOOSE, another important theme is "**mercy and truth.**" Look at the following verses and discuss how each deal with the seeking of truth and once truth was revealed, how mercy played a part.
  - a) John 4:16-24
  - b) Deut 27:9-13; 30:15- 20 (end of Moses' address)
  - c) Gen 37:12-18
  - d) Josh 21:21
  - e) Psalm 108
8. CHOOSING God's way means **servicing Him correctly** – in spirit (sincerity) and in truth (John 4:24). List ways we can practically involve these 2 aspects in our service and worship:
  - a) in our ecclesias
  - b) in our personal lives



## **Question # 2 - PREPARATION FOR ECCLESIAL LIFE**

Acknowledging our need for God's mercy and choosing to be baptized, comes at different stages for everyone. But, no matter what age this happens, we need time to **prepare** (whether this means learning the first principles of God's Word or just simply maturing naturally/spiritually). We also need time to **prepare** for different activities in the Truth – going to Youth Conference, going to another country to do mission work, organizing a study day or CYC activity, teaching Sunday School, giving exhortations and talks (for the brothers), etc. We're often required to do things sporadically (like personal preaching or helping someone in need), but never forget the importance of **preparation**.

1. **Joseph** was 17 years old (Gen 37:2) when he was sold as a slave into Egypt and he was 30 years old (Gen 41:46) when he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and became governor over all of Egypt. It's evident he had a lot of time to prepare before he become second in command over Egypt.
  - a) How do you think Jacob prepared Joseph in his early years? (ie. what did he teach Joseph?)
  - b) In the 13 years before he became governor in Egypt, what situations/trials did Joseph face? (use what we're told in Scripture and your imagination)
  - c) How did these situations help prepare him for his role as governor?
  
2. There are at least three other times in the Bible where the **age 30** comes up.
  - a) Find these references and who they are talking about.
  - b) What do these occurrences teach us about preparation?
  
3. **Christ was 30** when his ministry began.
  - a) How do you think Mary and Joseph prepared Christ when he was young?
  - b) How do you think Christ prepared for his ministry during his teens/twenties? (think about Luke 2:42-47)
  - c) What was Christ's mission that he was preparing for?
  - d) How was Joseph's mission similar to Christ's?
  - e) Is our "mission" similar to Christ's? Explain.
  
4. What are some practical ways that we can prepare for **Ecclesial activities** today?
  
5. Preparation often involves **making the right CHOICES**.
  - a) In small things and big things, how is this the case?
  - b) What role does prayer play? (try to find some references)
  
6. We have a '**time of plenty**' now – a wonderful chance to open and read God's Word, without fear of much persecution. As we've seen, times of plenty should be used to store up for times when we only have the basic necessities of life. What does this have to do with preparation?
  
7. Ultimately, we want to prepare, so that **when Christ returns**, we can be **rulers with him**.
  - a) Where does it say that we will reign with Christ in the kingdom if we prepare now?
  - b) How must we prepare and ACT now, if we want to reign with Christ?



### **Question # 3 - CHANGE YOUR WAYS...AND YOUR CLOTHES?**

The act of **renting (or tearing) one's clothes** is similar to the act of **baptism**. In the Bible, the clothes (garments) represent the old way of life, which must be torn or 'put off' and replaced with new, clean garments, or a new way of life. In Ephesians 4:22-24, Paul tells us to 'put off' our old way of life and 'put on' the new man.

1. There are 3 occurrences of **clothes being rent** in the story of Joseph.
  - a) Find these 3 occurrences and state who was involved.
  - b) In each case, what did they do after they had rent their clothes? Did the renting of the clothes represent a true change?
  - c) Was does this teach us about how the act of baptism must be done?
  
2. Keeping the **spiritual significance** of garments in mind...
  - a) Look at Gen 45:22 – What could this be telling us about the brethren at this point?
  - b) Look at Gen 49:11- Why could this verse be describing Judah's "baptism"?
  - c) Find some verses in the NT that talk of 'putting off' the old man and 'putting on' the new man in baptism.
  
3. There is tremendous significance in the **coat that Joseph wore**, both physical and more importantly spiritual. Let's take a look at the deeper aspects of this theme.
  - a) Look up and describe what this coat was like:
    - Coat (Strong's)
    - Colours (Strong's)
  - b) Going through the story of Joseph, find as many occurrences as possible where Joseph "wore" that robe (spiritually speaking) so that those around him could see it.
  
4. Look up the following passages using the same word for "**coat**"
  - a) What does the "coat" represent to each of person in these passages?
    - Exodus 28:4 "garments"
    - 2 Samuel 13:18 "garment"
    - Isaiah 22:21 "robe"
  - b) Using these 3 passages, describe what this coat symbolized in relation to Joseph and his character. What does it tell us about Joseph, and how his father viewed him?
  
5. Think about how this relates to us as young people? Whatever the coat was made of, it was no doubt a **visible reminder** of his status before God and men.
  - a) Do we wear a "coat" in any way?
  - b) Find at least 3 passages that describe either:
    - how we "wear" a spiritual garment
    - how our actions appear as a garment to those around us.
  
6. Look at **Genesis 39:12**. In relation to Joseph's spiritual garments, what is ironic about this situation? In what way must we act the same? Find some verses that appropriately describe how we are to act in temptation such as this.
  
7. **Clothing** is a hot topic for young people today. We have to CHOOSE every day what we wear to school, work and the Ecclesia. When our elders speak about "modesty" we often get our backs up because we often believe their view of modesty is outdated. Come up with some reasonable guidelines for young people to live by when it comes to dress and appearance.
  - Warning: Do **NOT** fall into the trap so often used "We are free to do as our conscience dictates. If others don't like it, too bad." Think first of others, then ourselves. Scriptural proof and precedence is a must in this question. No "I feel this" or "In my opinion". Let your mind be led by spirit, not the flesh and be truly honest with yourself.





### **Question # 4 - THE BREAD AND WINE**

In our consideration of the dreams of the butler and baker, the idea of **self-examination** (in the bread and the wine) enters the picture.

1. The dreams of the butler and the baker are of course linked to the memorials. Find as many occurrences where **bread and wine** are used in the Bible, other than in the last supper.
2. Think of the **baker's dream**.
  - a) What did the baker's dream signify? (what happened to the baker?)
  - b) What does the bread represent in the sacrifice of Christ?
3. Now, think of the **butler's dream**.
  - a) What did the Butlers dream signify? (what happened to the butler?)
  - b) What does the wine signify to us relating to the sacrifice of Christ?
  - c) In the Butler's dream, there were 3 stages to the growth of the grapes (we looked at this in Part 1). Recall some of the details...
    - What were those 3 stages?
    - In Numbers 17:1-10, the same process came to pass. What happened in this passage and what was God teaching in this? (look at the last phrase of v. 10)
    - How does this help us better understand what the wine represents?
4. Let's now focus on the "**memorials**" (**bread and wine**) that those who are baptized partake of each week. It can be a struggle to find the value and true impact of this feast. Making this feast live and impact us every single week is imperative to our growth and well being in Christ.
  - a) What did the symbol of bread and wine mean to the butler and baker?
  - b) What should they mean to us? (you may want to discuss this)
5. Consider **Peter and Judas**. Both partook of the bread and wine, both betrayed their Lord. When they examined themselves, they came to different conclusions.
  - a) After self-examination, what CHOICE did each make?
  - b) How do their conclusions relate to how we could "eat and drink unworthily"? (1 Cor 11:29) Weren't they both unworthy?
  - c) With regards to the bread and wine:
    - How can we sometimes have the same attitude as Judas?
    - How can we sometimes have the same attitude as Peter?
6. Consider the **thieves on the cross**, one on either side of Jesus. Although bread and wine are not there, the impact of what each truly meant was there (Luke 23:39-43).
  - a) Explain what went on during this incident with the 2 thieves.
  - b) What did the partaking of Christ's sacrifice mean for these two men?
  - c) What sort of self-examination did these men go through?
  - d) What CHOICE did each of them make?
7. The fundamental aspect of the memorials is **self-examination**. Joseph must have examined his life on an ongoing basis.
  - a) Although the record does not recount for us when he did this, using your imagination, in what events could you see him assessing his life?
  - b) What do you think about during times of self-examination?
  - c) What should we be thinking about? (try to provide references)



**Question # 5 - FAMILY LIFE IN THE ECCLESIA**

We've seen how that **Jacob's family is a picture of the Ecclesia.** We've also seen how dysfunctional his family was! There were 66 people in Jacob's family living in Canaan (Gen 46:26), so this Ecclesia was not much different in size to some Ecclesias today. Think about the conditions and people that made up this Ecclesia – and then think of your own Ecclesia. How more amazing Joseph's example becomes when we see what kind of Ecclesia he came from! Joseph made no excuses because of his Ecclesial situation and we can't either!

1. The **problems in Joseph's Ecclesia** were not, of course, unique to that time. Fill in this chart by identifying specific examples of each of the conditions or situations in both Ecclesias – don't forget Leah, Rachel and Jacob for Joseph's Ecclesia. For the First Century Ecclesia, think about the Ecclesias in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Phillipi, etc. (you may not find some examples for the "First Century Ecclesia" but do your best!)

| Condition / Situation              | Joseph's Ecclesia | First Century Ecclesia |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Wide range of ages                 |                   |                        |
| Polygamy (multiple wives)          |                   |                        |
| Cruelty and heartlessness          |                   |                        |
| Constant fighting                  |                   |                        |
| Instability                        |                   |                        |
| Disloyalty/disobedience to parents |                   |                        |
| Motherless sons                    |                   |                        |
| Lovers of money                    |                   |                        |
| Friends of the world               |                   |                        |
| Marriage out of the Truth          |                   |                        |
| Envy amongst brethren              |                   |                        |
| Bitter hatred                      |                   |                        |
| Incest                             |                   |                        |
| Adultery                           |                   |                        |
| Rape                               |                   |                        |
| Murder                             |                   |                        |

2. It may come as a shock to us, but our **Ecclesias are not perfect!** Joseph teaches us unbelievable lessons in patience, endurance, longsuffering, meekness and faith.
  - a) What does the above chart tell us about how we should view our Ecclesial family?
  - b) How are we to treat our brethren and sisters in light of these difficult situations and circumstances? Provide scriptural guidance for your answers.
  - c) How does the theme "I seek my brethren" apply?
3. Let's look at **God's response** to these problems in the Ecclesia.
  - a) What was God's response, if any, to all of these sins? Did He take action, or allow them to continue on unpunished?
  - b) The theory of Job and his friends was, "God rewards good people with good things, and punishes wicked people with evil things." What was the conclusion God drew their minds to at the end of the book of Job?
  - c) In everyday life, does punishment for sin happen immediately? Why wouldn't God remove these horrible people from his plan and purpose? (consider Paul – 1 Cor 15:9-10)
4. Consider **our response** to difficult, worldly situations that invade our Ecclesia.



- a) How did Jacob deal with the problems that invaded his Ecclesia? Did he deal with them at all?
- b) How did Paul, Peter or John attempt to solve these issues in the first century Ecclesia?
- c) What lessons about dealing with each other's faults does Joseph teach us?
- d) What was Joseph's main goal? Why did he do the things he did for his brethren?
- e) What does Christ teach us about our ecclesial family? (find chapters and verses for support)

"The only thing that kept Joseph's brethren from becoming mixed up with the world, was their godly home environment...we might feel at times that our home environment is a little too strict for our liking. It is only so for our own good. It takes very little time in bad company, for the influences that surround us daily to assert themselves into our lives and destroy good, wholesome values that bind a family together"

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 21)**



## **Question # 6 - HANDLING DISAGREEMENTS IN THE ECCLESIA**

After revealing himself to his brothers, Joseph sends them back to their father with clothes, silver and food, and wagons to bring their families and Jacob to Egypt. As they are leaving, Joseph says, **"See that you fall not out by the way"** (Gen 45:24). After much patience and many tears on Joseph's part in "seeking his brethren", Joseph's brothers had finally reached a high level of unity and spirituality. They had just been 'converted' and Joseph did not want their old selfish, envious desires to once again cause disputes among them.

1. Let's first take a look at the word **"fall"** (Gen 45:24)
  - a) What does it mean? (look it up in Strong's)
  - b) Does anger have any place in our Ecclesias? (James 1:20)
  - c) How should we handle our own anger / temper? (Eph 4:26, 29)
  - d) How can we deal with others in the Ecclesia who can't control their anger / words?
  - e) List some practical ways that we can handle disagreements in the Ecclesia before others become angry.
  
2. Next, we'll look at the phrase **"the way."**
  - a) Trace this phrase through the Bible, thinking about...
    - In the way / by the way (is there a difference?)
    - The Way of the LORD
    - "I am the way" (John 14:6)
  - b) What can we do to make sure we are keeping "in the way"?
  - c) What can we do to help others when they are straying out of "the way"? (keep in mind the theme of "seeking our brethren")
  
3. Obviously, there were **problems in Joseph's Ecclesia**. When Joseph told the chief butler that he had been "stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews" (Gen 40:15) he didn't tell the butler that it had been his wicked, deceitful brothers that had sold him. What example does this give us as to how we deal with problems in the Ecclesia?
  
4. Because the Ecclesia is made up of weak and imperfect people (us!), there are no doubt going to be **disagreements**, both small and large. Even Christ's own disciples had disagreements! We can't change the fact that there will be disagreements, but we can determine the attitude we have and how we react to the situation. Let's look at one disagreement that the disciples had in John 20:19-25, 26-29.
  - a) What was the disagreement that the disciples had? Was it a small or big concern?
  - b) What does v. 26-29 show us about the attitude of the disciples? (who was there?)
  - c) What do these verses show us about how they reacted to the situation?
  - d) Find other verses in the NT that talk of:
    - Unity
    - Being likeminded
    - Handling Ecclesial disagreements

"Joseph is not just saying to his brethren 'do not quarrel on the way home.' He is saying that after twenty years and more of agonised waiting, Joseph has finally guided his brethren to 'the Way of Truth.' It would be an absolute tragedy if his brethren NOW lapsed back into their old ways...What is one of the greatest dangers to ecclesial unity? Tempers that are held unchecked, words spoken that ought not to come out of the lips of a disciple of Christ...uncontrolled anger has NO place in the ecclesia of God and if we have any doubts about this, then read the story of Joseph again."



## **Question # 7 - IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT PART OF THE WORLD**

This question has to do with **Egypt**. Of all the places from which Abraham and Isaac had been commanded to stay separate, Egypt was the worst! We looked at 'going down to Egypt' in Part 1 (pg 12) and what that meant in a spiritual sense. But, now we'll look at **Egypt** in a very real, literal way and see how it was just like any modern city is today (whether Toronto, Detroit, London or Adelaide). We'll see what Joseph had to face! Joseph was in **Egypt** at about 1700 BC. He was the only 'Christadelphian' in this huge, ungodly city. He faced many of the same problems that we face at school or work today. He was all alone, without a friend, without his Ecclesia and surrounded by people that constantly tried to appeal to his lusts and desires. Consider the following quotation:

"Joseph is thrust into the slave markets of Egypt. What scenes must have met his haunted eyes! Here was the place he had only been told about in hushed tones. Here was a huge metropolis with every kind of excess and superstition. Rulers rode in golden chariots and enjoyed every kind of luxury. Medicine was advanced and the arts had reached a level where the Sphinx and Pyramids were everyday events. There were universities and shopping malls full of alluring goods. People dealt in the slavery of human beings...we could easily be describing any large city in the world today. The scene has not really changed much at all over the years."

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 36)**

1. Research **Egypt** at about the time that Joseph was there. Try to find information that will help you, in some way, better understand the story of Joseph. Think about the following areas:
  - a) King – who was the pharaoh at this time? how was he treated by the people?
  - b) Gods – what were some of the predominant gods?
  - c) Business and education – what sort of facilities did they have?
  - d) Common people – what was daily life like for a common person?
  - e) Entertainment – what forms of entertainment did they have?
  - f) Wars – did the Egyptians have enemies at this time? were they at war with any nations?
  
2. One very real **temptation** (that we probably haven't thought of!) that Joseph likely faced was when he came before Pharaoh. Pharaoh was treated as a "god" and all who came before him were expected to bow down to him. Think hard about this situation! Imagine what happens...
  - a) Does Joseph bow down to Pharaoh when he comes before him to interpret his dreams? Why or why not?
  - b) Why is this a real temptation for Joseph?
  - c) How can we face the same temptation today?
  - d) List some practical ways that we can be 'in the world, but not be a part of it,' like Joseph (Phil 2:14-16; 1 John 2:15-16).

"...rarely, if ever are the desirable qualities of humility, modesty and acceptance of reproof taught (in the world). These matters are left to the family and the ecclesia, and we can thank God that we have a divinely patterned institution, a haven where these principles are upheld and encouraged in the midst of an intolerant world."

**- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 63)**

*Joseph's excellent education at home in his early years allowed him to withstand extreme pressure and temptation in Egypt! If God has given you with parents and other family members in the Truth, and they've taught you God's ways...then thank God for that blessing! If they're still trying to teach you...then thank God as well, and don't ever take it for granted or ignore the lessons they're trying to teach you!*



## TRY

### "the LORD was with Joseph" (Genesis 39:2)

Our third action word is **TRY**. It's such a simple word, but it has such huge implications. We've seen that Joseph, as a young person in the Truth, acknowledged his sinful nature and his need for God, choose to dedicate his life to God, and then **tried** his best to serve God! As we saw in the first section ACKNOWLEDGE, even Joseph, a very spiritual young person, had to grow and mature in the Truth.

So, now that you've had a chance to get to know "Brother Joseph", think about this...

- Was Joseph the oldest or most influential brother?
- Did he apply for the job God set out for him to do?
- Do you think he completely understood what his dreams meant?
- Do you think he knew exactly how to handle his brothers' wickedness, hatred and deceitful attitudes?
- Did he deserve to be treated by his brothers the way he was?



**NO!** But, all of this did not stop Joseph from **trying** his best to please God! It didn't matter whether Joseph was among his brethren, in the dirty prisons of Egypt or in Pharaoh's courts, he was always telling others about his God that he loved and served. And Joseph's belief and trust in his Heavenly Father motivated him to stay separate from all the wickedness around him, both in the world and in the Ecclesia (among his brethren). But, Joseph did not give up on those living sinful lives – he **tried** to "seek his brethren" in all situations, by telling others the wonderful ways of God and demonstrating to them the impact that his knowledge of God had on his life.

Joseph's awareness of God shone through in every aspect of his life. Because Joseph always **tried** to please God, "God was with him" and helped him to overcome in his own life, and eventually to save his brothers. The words of 1 Timothy 4:12-16 (RSV) are very fitting words to describe Joseph's situation and the wonderful dedication and self-sacrifice he displayed in his life:

*"Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching...devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers."*

God wants us to **try** our best and trust in Him, like Joseph. God won't ask us to do better than our best, because that's all we can do! Your best is YOURS – and nobody else's! But God wants us to **try** to do the small things consistently everyday. He wants us to share with others the glorious hope He has given us, and allow the power of His word to dramatically change our lives – the **words** we speak, the **choices** we make, the **actions** we take, and the **attitude** we have. This section involves the practical issues that Joseph faced daily and that we will face as we strive to follow in Jesus' footsteps as we await his return to the earth. God has promised that if we sincerely **try** our best to live His truth by applying the lessons we learn from Joseph and other examples in the Bible, then we will receive the awesome promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

"Despite the traumatic events that happened to Joseph as a teenager, he never lost faith in God, and thereby saved not only himself but all his brethren as well, though it took many years. This is an important principle to understand. Faithful adherence to the Truth in the tempestuous early teenage years can have a far reaching impact on others. The fruit of a good example may not be realised for some time."

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 32)

**Please choose 5 of the 9 research questions in this section to do**



### **Question # 1 - SEPARATE, YET A SAVIOUR!**

The **Nazarite vow** has to do with separation. In Jacob's blessing to Joseph (Gen 49:26), Jacob says that Joseph was "**separate** from his brethren." This is one of the most amazing aspects of Joseph's life – that he was constantly "seeking his brethren" yet he was still separate from their evil ways! This is what we should all be striving for!

1. Read **Genesis 49:22-26**, the blessing of Joseph. Note the phrase, "they shall be on the head of Joseph and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."
  - a) In relation to "him that was separate" (Strong's #5139 – Nazyr), the same Hebrew word Nazarite. Where in the law is the Nazarite vow spoken of? Once you find that chapter read it a minimum of at least 2 times.
  - b) There were 3 separate aspects of a Nazarite vow. What were they?
  - c) The true meaning of the Nazarite Vow was so that a common Israelite, male or female could become a high priest (in figure), normally reserved only for the Levites. Bearing this in mind, what did each of the 3 parts of the vow signify in relation to the priest?
2. Of Joseph it was said "the blessings shall be on **the head** of Joseph, on **the crown** of him that was **separate** (Nazyr) from his brethren." This is the first time Nazarite is used in the scripture and it is without doubt who the Nazarite vow was modeled after. Find all 3 aspects of the vow at work in Joseph's life.
3. The root of the word Nazarite comes from the word meaning "an unpruned vine." Turn to **Leviticus 25:1-5** where this principle is taken from.
  - a) After reading about the Nazarite vow in question #2, how does this relate to this passage?
  - b) What was the law in this passage supposed to be teaching Israel?
  - c) How does that compare with a Nazarite's oath?
  - d) Which part (out of the 3) of the Nazarite vow compares to Leviticus 25? What did this part of the vow symbolize?
4. **Samson** was a Nazarite (Judges 13-16). He broke the first 2 aspects of his vow with little consequence until he toyed with the third.
  - a) When did he break the first 2 aspects?
  - b) What was that part, and what did it symbolize in his walk to the Kingdom?
  - c) After falling, Samson returned to God in prison. What interesting event took place to signal his return to Yahweh?
5. **Bonus:** Find other Nazarites in the Bible. What was strange about each person? Did any of them keep their vow totally? If the object of being a Nazarite was to be a priest, why was John the Baptist a Nazarite? (hint: tribe?) What then was the vow truly to symbolize?

**The next 8 questions deal with different ways that illustrate how Joseph stayed separate, but was able to become a saviour for his brethren...**

- Trusted in God, even though alone and surrounded by evil (question #2)
- Awareness of God watching over him (question #3)
- Fled from temptation and stayed pure (question #4)
- Positive attitude (question #5)
- Always spoke words full of grace (question #6)
- Concerned about how God saw him, not man (question #7)
- Ready and willing to forgive others (question #8)
- Preached to those around him (question #9)



## **Question # 2 - LOOKING FOR FRIENDS...AND DEALING WITH LONELINESS**

God has created us with a desire and need for **friends**. We often have the choice who we want to have as friends...we should TRY to choose friends who will help us on the road to the kingdom – and remember that to have friends, we must be a friend! (Prov 18:24)

1. **Dinah**, Joseph's sister, went looking for friends in the wrong place (Gen 34).
  - a) Where did she go looking? (v. 1)
  - b) What happened to her because of looking here? (v. 2)
  - c) What did Simeon and Levi do because of this? (v. 25-27)
  - d) What sort of status did this give Jacob's family (the Ecclesia) with their neighbours? (v. 30-31)
  - e) What lessons are to be learnt out of all of this?
  
2. **Judah**, Joseph's brother, also went looking in the wrong place (Gen 38).
  - a) Where did he go looking? (v. 1)
  - b) What was the outcome (v. 2-11, 12-26)
  - c) In v. 12 and 20, Hirah the Adullamite is called Judah's "friend". What sort of a friend was Hirah?
  - d) What does Judah's terrible experience teach us?
  
3. **Joseph** was the only 'Christadelphian' in the huge city of Egypt. He was all alone, without a friend, without his Ecclesia and surrounded by ungodly people. How did Joseph deal with his loneliness? Did he get depressed and down? (think realistically about this...Joseph was like you and me!)
  
4. Let's think about **friendship** for a minute:
  - a) What advice does the Bible give us about choosing our friends?
  - b) Name some examples of good friends in the Bible.
  - c) What should we be looking for in our friends? (or, looking at it a different way, what should we be showing to those around us?)

"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." - **Proverbs 18:24**

5. Now, let's consider **loneliness** and **living in isolation**:
  - a) What advice does the Bible give us about dealing with loneliness?
  - b) Who in the Bible felt loneliness and how did they deal with it?
  - c) What are some practical ways to deal with loneliness?
  - d) What can those living in isolation do to cope with not having any other Christadelphians around?
  - e) How can those living in areas with large Ecclesias TRY to do to help those living in isolation? (you may want to discuss these questions)

"Joseph was in Egypt without a friend in the world. He was particularly vulnerable to temptation because of his grief and loneliness...but let us remember that Joseph was not entirely alone, for God's angel was still with him... there are moments when our vision of the kingdom needs to be rekindled, and true friends will encourage us in that direction" - **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 39)**





### **Question # 3 - GOD IS WATCHING!**

This question has to do with **Joseph's God-consciousness**, or his acknowledgement that God was watching Him and caring for him – in everything he went through.

1. "**God**" is mentioned 38 times in the story of Joseph, most of them related directly to Joseph.
  - a) Find these 38 occurrences and mark them in your Bible with a coloured pencil.
  - b) What does this reveal about Joseph?
  - c) How does Hebrews 11:6 apply to Joseph?
  - d) How can we TRY to become more God-conscious in our lives?
  
2. "The LORD was with Joseph." Where is this mentioned in Gen 39? Remembering the rollercoaster of events in this chapter, what does this teach us:
  - About God?
  - About Joseph?
  
3. In Part 1 (pg 7), we saw that Joseph went to Dothan to look for his brothers on the advice of a "**certain man**" (Gen 37:15). This man was likely an **angel!** Let's see why...
  - a) Did Joseph find this man or did the man find him?
  - b) The man asked him a question: "What seekest thou?" Find other occurrences in the Bible where angels appear to men and women, and ask them questions.
  - c) Where else do we find angels working in disguise?
  - d) What other passages talk about the work of the angels?
  
4. Joseph saw God's **providential hand** working in his life.
  - a) Find all the occurrences of God's hand acting in Joseph's life.
  - b) Where does Joseph himself show his understanding of God acting in his life?
  - c) How did Joseph's understanding change his character, attitude and perspective?
  - d) What other verses can you find that talk about God's providence?
  - e) What can we learn about God working in our life? What does it teach us about our attitude and perspective?

"In a trial far worse than the treatment he had received from the Ishmeelites, Joseph only survived by elevating God in his mind, and distancing himself as far as possible from seductive temptation. But let us remember that Joseph was not entirely alone, for God's angel was with him."

- *Teenagers of the Bible (pg 39)*



## **Question # 4 - COPING WITH TEMPTATION**

By the time we are about 17, most of us spend 2/3 of our time in the world (school, work, etc.) We're often alone, surrounded by people that don't care about God and often want to take us away from God! There are also people, billboards, magazines and Internet sites all around us that try to appeal to our sexual desires and cause us to sin (even in our minds!). So, what can we do about it? We know that we can't become hermits and live totally secluded lives – **God wants us to live in the world, but not be a part of it.** Often, friends in the Truth can encourage us and help us stay focused when we are slipping into temptation.

Joseph spent 100% of his time 'in the world' when he was sold into Egypt. He faced the same problems that we face today. He had no friends in the world and he was particularly vulnerable to temptation because of grief and loneliness. When he was tempted, Joseph presented the Truth and had strong personal action!

1. List some ways that **Joseph** dealt with the problems of:
  - a) Being all alone surrounded by ungodly people
  - b) Sexual temptations and desires
  
2. Everyday, we are faced with **temptations** through what we see and what we hear.
  - a) Name some everyday situations that are temptations to many people.
  - b) What are some of your personal temptations? (to overcome temptation, it is necessary to identify what our temptations are!)
  
3. **Dealing with temptation...**
  - a) What verses in the Bible provide us with practical advice in dealing with temptation?
  - b) How did people in the Bible deal with temptation? (ie. David, Samson, Christ, Peter)
  - c) What are some practical ways for us to deal with temptation?
  - d) It's often the case that when we have "free time" or "nothing to do" that temptation presents itself. What can we do to TRY to avoid this?
  
4. **"Temptation, unlike opportunity, always gives you a second chance!"**
  - a) How did Joseph deal with the constant temptation that Potiphar's wife presented to him?
  - b) What does this teach us about dealing with temptation?
  
5. **Keeping our bodies pure** and having a **pure conscience** are very important in God's eyes.
  - a) What does the NT tell us about our bodies? (1Cor 6:19-20; Rom 12:1)
  - b) What does the NT say about staying pure and separate from sexual immorality?
  - c) Practically, how can we TRY to stay pure, both physically and spiritually?

"Joseph knew that his hope lay in Yahweh and vowed that he would abide by the lessons that he had been taught. He knew that a good conscience is priceless in the sight of God. A good conscience is only possible if we set our heart firmly on living by God's principles."

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 38)



## COPING WITH TEMPTATION

What temptations do you find most difficult? Alcohol? Temper? Immoral thoughts? Laziness? Try writing down the two or three sins which you find most difficult to avoid. You can't begin to cope with your temptations unless you have first identified them. Now that you know what temptations you are needing to cope with, you can begin to think about how you can do it.

Here are two very useful Bible verses on the subject of coping with temptation:

**2 Timothy 2:22** "Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

**Matthew 26:41** "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Together, these verses provide us with the Bible's advice on coping with temptation and suggest the following action plan to help us.

Step 1 Watch: identify your major weaknesses in temptation

Step 2 Run: get right away from whatever it is which is causing your temptation

Step 3 Pray: ask God's help in overcoming your temptation problem.

You have already done Step 1 - you have identified the two or three major sources of your own temptations. Now think about Step 2. What do you need to do to avoid the temptation in the future? If it is alcohol, don't go anywhere where you will be tempted and don't mix with people who will lead you into temptation. If it is laziness, change your daily schedule so that you are less likely to fall for the same problem. It is a good idea to tell one or two close friends what you are doing, because they can help you keep to your aim. Finally, Step 3. Take the two or three temptations you have identified and talk to God about them. Ask Him to strengthen you in resisting the temptation.

Have you ever noticed that these three steps are exactly the approach **Jesus** used to deal with his own temptations? One of his temptations was the desire to have great political power. He had identified it as a problem when he was in the wilderness (Matthew 4:8-10 - Step 1). Later, when the crowds following him sought to make him king in defiance of the Roman government, he withdrew to an isolated mountain (Step 2) on his own to pray (Step 3) (John 6:15; Matthew 14:23). We can learn from his example: get right away from the source of temptation and talk to your Heavenly Father.

Another good example is **Joseph**. When tempted by Potiphar's wife to commit adultery, he refused to even be with her (Genesis 39:10). He was following Step 2 and getting right away from the source of temptation. We can be sure he was also praying regularly about it (Step 3).

When we begin to fight against our temptations, it is easy to think it is all too hard. But remember the promise God has given us in 1 Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." God allows us to be tempted because it tests our faith and desire to serve Him. But he prevents the temptations becoming too much for us. So whatever you are fighting against, you know you can overcome it with God's help. Resisting temptation is really important. God sends you these temptations to test you and He doesn't want you to fail. But if you are to cope with temptation and not sin, you need to be serious about working on your temptations. Follow the action plan: **Watch, Run, Pray**. And remember the help that Jesus can give: "Because he suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." (Hebrew 2:18)



### **Question # 5 - ATTITUDE**

Joseph had a **positive attitude** to the circumstances that God brought into his life. He realized God had chosen the "Hebrews" to be His special people and he TRIED to share the hope of the promises to Abraham with all around. He realized that he was a "**stranger and pilgrim**" awaiting God's kingdom (Heb 11:13-16), and this helped him to accept the circumstances that God had brought in his life. Joseph also had a very **humble** attitude towards others.

1. Take a look at the word "**Hebrew**"
  - a) What does "Hebrew" mean?
  - b) Who was first called a "Hebrew"? (Gen 14:13)
  - c) Find the 3 places in the story where Joseph is referred to as a "Hebrew."
  - d) How did the Egyptians know Joseph was a "Hebrew"? What does this teach us?
  
2. Joseph knew the **promises God made to Abraham**. He viewed the land of promise as the "land of the Hebrews." (Gen 40:15)
  - a) What were the "promises made to Abraham"? (list the main details)
  - b) What does this tell us about Joseph's faith in the promises to Abraham?
  - c) How can we TRY to develop the same faith, as Joseph, in the promises to Abraham?
  
3. Joseph could have had a pyramid built for him, because of his high position in Egypt, but we know he didn't!
  - a) Where and when was Joseph buried?
  - b) What does this add to our view of Joseph "the pilgrim"?
  - c) What does it teach us about humility and worldly accomplishments?
  
4. **Joseph's brothers** didn't have the same attitude as Joseph concerning the "pilgrim life." How did they view themselves and where they came from? (Gen 42:7, 13) We are just like Joseph's brothers sometimes – how?
  
5. **Jacob** knew that he was to be a stranger and a pilgrim in the land (Gen 37:1)
  - a) What does Gen 36 tell us Esau, Jacob's brother was doing? (v. 36:39-43)
  - b) What does Gen 47:9 reveal to us about Jacob and about the principles of "pilgrim life"?
  - c) Jacob went down to Egypt when he knew Joseph was still alive. Was he still being a "pilgrim" by doing this? (consider 46:4)
  
6. **We** must TRY to live as "pilgrims" now.
  - a) How can we do this?
  - b) How can we develop humble attitudes and learn to accept what God gives us in life?
  
7. **Joseph's positive attitude** had an impact on those around him. It's evident that Joseph had a happy countenance, or he would not have been able to ask why the butler and baker were so sad (Gen 40:7).
  - a) What does this teach us about how we should live our daily lives?
  - b) What kind of attitude should we have towards people and the events that happen in our lives?

"We are shown here the alertness of Joseph's mind to the presence of God, and the acceptance of his lot without complaint...We don't know what Joseph felt, for we are not told. But we may fairly assume that he had moments of sadness, placed the matter before God in prayer, and got on with his duties, knowing that he had done all that was possible. Therein lies a great example for us."

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 43, 45)

**Question # 6 - WATCH WHAT YOU SAY!**

We know how Joseph was always "seeking his brethren" in his actions and his words. **Joseph's speech** was always positive, constructive and full of grace, even when others were negative and resentful.

1. **Joseph and his brothers:**
  - a) How would you describe Joseph's brothers' speech? (did it change?)
  - b) How would you describe Joseph's speech? (did it change?)
2. The word "peace" or Hebrew "shalom" is a hallmark for Joseph.
  - a) Find all the occurrences of the word SHALOM (Strong's # 7965) in the story of Joseph (Gen 37-50). It should come up 9 times.
  - b) Show the significance of each one of these occurrences.
  - c) "Peace" was the first word Jesus spoke to his disciples when he appeared to them after his resurrection (John 20:19, 26). Why was this his first word? Is there an application for us?
3. In the CHOOSE section (question 8 – "Handling disagreements in the Ecclesia"), we saw that when Joseph told the chief butler that he had been "stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews" (Gen 40:15) he didn't tell the butler that it had been his brothers that had sold him. What does teach us about watching our words, particularly when **talking about Brothers and Sisters**?
4. The **words we choose** are very important!
  - a) What warning does Matthew 12:36-37 give us?
  - b) What other passages in the Bible indicate how vitally important our words are?
  - c) What are some practical for us to TRY to choose the right words and "watch what we say"?



## **Question # 7 - LOOKING GOOD...IN WHOSE OPINION?**

In Genesis 39, Joseph's good looks got him in trouble. Of course, it wasn't his fault that God had made him a good-looking young man! What's important is that Joseph realized that **God "doesn't look on the outward appearance, but on the heart"** (1 Sam 16:7). He also wasn't concerned with "appearances" like his brothers often were!

1. **Joseph** was good looking, but more importantly, we've seen many examples of how beautiful his character was.
  - a) What makes Joseph such a beautiful character?
  - b) Think of some people you know (all ages) that are just beautiful people – people you just love to be around. What makes them beautiful? Does their age or physical appearance affect their beauty?
2. We often see pictures and paintings of **Jesus** (what people think he looked like!)
  - a) What are we told about Christ's appearance? (Isa 52:13-15; 53:1-5)
  - b) What does John 8:58 tell us regarding Jesus' appearance?
  - c) We know that little children loved to be around Christ. What made Christ so "beautiful"?
3. Many young people today are concerned with **image** and **appearance**, and forget about true "inner beauty." The NT provides some good advice about appearance and how we present ourselves.
  - a) What does the NT tell us about our appearance?
  - b) What does the NT teach us about "inner beauty"?
  - c) How can we help each other and ourselves TRY to get rid of the whole "**image thing**"?



## **Question # 8 - GIVE AND FORGIVE...A GOOD WAY TO LIVE!**

We've looked at many instances where Joseph gave of himself to help others. Now, let's look **Joseph's forgiveness** – another amazing quality shown to us in this young man, that we all should seek to have.

1. Thinking back to what **Joseph endured at the hands of his cruel brothers...**
  - a) Why did God allow Joseph to suffer through all of this? (consider Psa 105:17-22)
  - b) Why did God subject Joseph to the humiliation of being sold as a slave into Egypt?
  - c) What can we learn from Joseph's example in this?

"...there may not be a CAUSE for our suffering, but there is always a REASON."

2. Now, **having considered that...**
  - a) Show the instances where Joseph displays his forgiveness to his brothers.
  - b) In Gen 50:17, Joseph's brethren didn't think that Joseph had completely forgiven them for what they had done to him. But, he had! What does this teach us about forgiveness? (with regards to others)
  - c) Find 2 or 3 other passages about forgiveness in the OT and NT.
  - d) With Joseph's amazing example and these other passages, how can we TRY to become more forgiving?
3. Forgiveness involves **patience** – to try to work with others, to truly forget others' mistakes, and to allow God to work with that individual to change them.
  - a) Show specific instances where Joseph had patience and self-control, both in his own situations and in his dealings with others (think especially of when his brothers come to Egypt!)
  - b) Find other passages in the Bible that talk about patience. What do they teach us?
  - c) Trace the idea of "waiting on God" in the Bible (find 4 or 5 occurrences at least)
    - What did this phrase mean to those in the Scriptures?
    - What should this phrase mean to us?
  - b) What encouragement does Hebrews 6:12 give us?

"Just pause and think what could have been going through Joseph's mind. He had pleaded with his brethren and they had not listened. Here he was, a lad of seventeen years being sold as a common slave. What bitter thoughts might have gone through his mind. Joseph could have made a vow for revenge. But his record shows that he overcame all thoughts of hostility and malice and instead wondered at the providence of God; what was the purpose of this? How would the dream of his brethren bowing before him ever be fulfilled? He believed the vision, and knew that God would somehow bring it to pass. And, with this belief, Joseph had confidence that, one day, he would have opportunity to convert his brethren and direct them toward principles of truth and honesty."

- Teenagers of the Bible (pg 27)



## **Question # 9 - PREACHING AND PERSISTENCE**

**Preaching** is very important aspect of our walk in the Truth. Christ commanded us to preach the gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15-16) and sharing God's Word with those around us should be natural, if it truly means something to us! Often, preaching can seem a little daunting, because nobody seems to be listening. But, this shouldn't stop us from TRYING our best! Even if people don't listen, telling others what we believe and where we stand keeps us honest and consistent. And, the power of God's word (together with our godly example) will change people in time, if they allow it!

1. Think about **Joseph's background** and the circumstances he faced in Egypt.
  - a) Make a list of as many points as you can with regards to this, considering the following: Joseph's age, experience, family situation, Ecclesial situation, friends, the environment in Egypt, etc.
  - b) Did Joseph have any reason to make excuses about why he shouldn't preach?
  - c) What are some typical excuses we make as to why we can't preach to those around us?
  
2. Joseph made **no excuses** when it came to preaching – he ACTED! He TRIED his best to use every opportunity he had to share the hope of the "promises made to Abraham."
  - a) List all the people that we know that Joseph preached to (in today's terms, he preached to his family, boss, co-workers, employee, leaders, people that didn't care about God, etc.)
  - b) Some people from part a) saw that Joseph was "different." What was it that made Joseph different from those around him?
  - c) What does Joseph's example teach us? How should we be different from those around us?

"He wished all to know that he believed in Yahweh and that he was a Hebrew. Every time this young man spoke, the word of God was on his lips."  
 - **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 37)**

3. **Preaching is definitely something every Christadelphian should be doing everyday.**
  - a) Give some verses that illustrate how important preaching is.
  - b) Give 3 examples from the Bible of Brothers who preached
  - c) Give 3 examples from the Bible of Sisters who preached.
  - d) How can we preach the Truth in our Ecclesias, at work, at school, in our neighbourhoods, etc?
  
4. **Joseph's brothers** didn't listen to him when he shared God's Word with them (his dreams) and they even mistreated and abused him because of it. But he continued to share God's Word and TRY his best to bring them to the Truth.
  - a) How long did it take for Joseph's brethren to be 'converted'?
  - b) Can you think of any other examples in the Bible of people who rejected God's word at first, but eventually accepted and believed it?
  - c) How can/do we suffer for preaching the Truth?
  - d) How can we apply the lesson of Joseph's persistence in our preaching?
  - e) Is there ever a point when we should give up on people?
  - f) Prayer is a huge part of preaching. How?

"No opposition young people might suffer when engaged in gospel proclamation today, should sway them from presenting their knowledge of God's Word. It might take many years for that message to be appreciated, but with consistency of example there is often fruit developed. In the case of Joseph, his patient persistence was rewarded, for eventually his envious brethren understood and responded."  
 - **Teenagers of the Bible (pg 14)**





“Reconciliation (being joined to God) was the fire that burnt in Joseph’s heart and he spared not himself to bring his brethren along the long road of repentance. As Joseph persevered, so will the Lord Jesus Christ with his brethren...those who are prepared to acknowledge their sinful past, and to seek full reconciliation with Yahweh through the work of his beloved Son. We can take heart that at the end of days we might be counted amongst the godly young people of the Bible, like Joseph, who did all to the glory of God.”

- *Teenagers of the Bible (pg 98)*