
Inductive Study Curriculum
Student Guide

OLD TESTAMENT/*Character Study*

Joseph

Surrendering to God's Sovereignty

Joseph
INDUCTIVE STUDY CURRICULUM

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1. Inductive Bible Study - _____

2. There are _____ of Inductive Bible Study:

a. _____ - _____ ?

b. _____ - _____ ?

c. _____ - _____ ?

3. Tools of Observation

a. The _____ questions

b. Mark _____ and _____

c. Make _____

4. Tools of Interpretation

a. _____

_____ ! It rules interpretation.

b. _____

c. _____

5. Application

a. _____ - resulting in _____

Sibling Rivalry

Nearly 4,000 years ago a man named Joseph lived... a man who, like you, faced temptations and trials. You'll meet him first as a young man. His home life may seem familiar. Like many today, Joseph lived in a "blended family" with 11 brothers, only one brother with the same mother. **Strife, jealousy, and rivalry** dominated his childhood.



"They hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms... When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death."

- Genesis 37:4, 18

Along the way, Joseph fell victim to others' bad choices. But his faith in the One True God and His sovereign plan provides an epic story of redemption, salvation, and **restoration**. His story can help you navigate the twists and turns in your life. Diligently study and you will learn how to rise above your circumstances and live victoriously... even when your dreams are shattered.

PRAYER

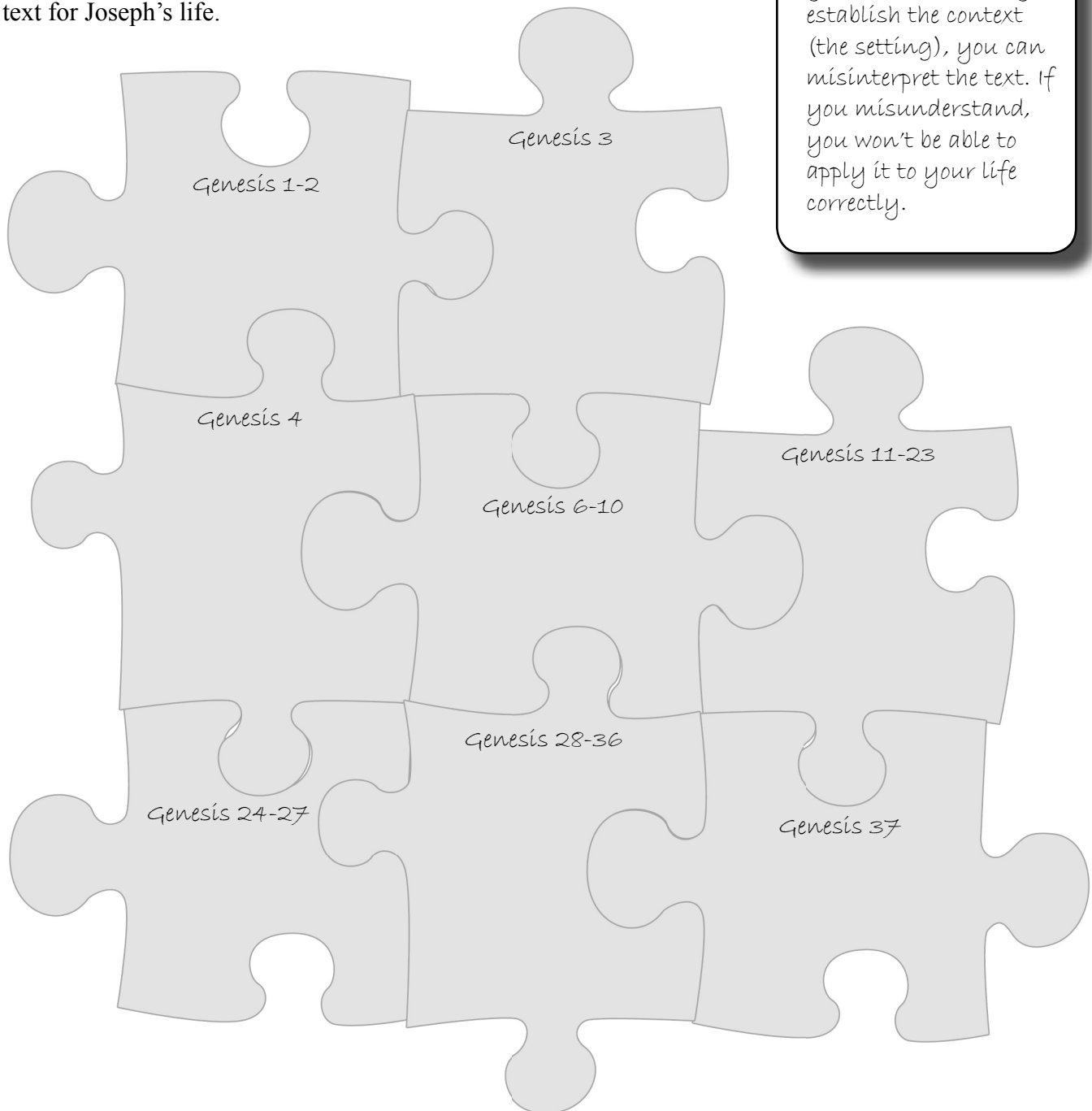
ONE ON ONE:

Now as with every study, begin with prayer, asking God to prepare your heart to receive His Word. Pray for diligence and perseverance when life's demands and circumstances compete for your time and attention. Pray that God's Holy Spirit will bless you with knowledge and understanding of His will and ways. Ask God to reveal Himself as you study Joseph's life. At the end of the study, look back at this prayer and record how God answered.



Before you begin the study of Joseph, look at what comes before his story in the book of Genesis. Fill in the puzzle pieces below with the main events and people recorded in Genesis prior to Genesis 37. Briefly describe the event or person in each reference. This establishes the context for Joseph's life.

Context rules interpretation! If you don't accurately establish the context (the setting), you can misinterpret the text. If you misunderstand, you won't be able to apply it to your life correctly.



LESSON ONE

Although Joseph is mentioned earlier in the book of Genesis, his story begins in chapter 37. You will study and complete your observations on the Genesis 37-50 Observation Worksheets located in the Appendix.

Observation Worksheets contain the scriptures you will be studying. The text is double spaced and pages have wide margins so you can easily mark words and make notes. They are worksheets for you to complete your observations on!

1. Read Genesis 37:1-4.



- a. Mark references to *Joseph* including pronouns in a distinct color.

- b. Then look at each reference to see if it answers the 5 Ws and H: who, what, when, where, why and how. These **investigative** questions help you understand what's written.

Look for:

- **who** Joseph is
- **whom** he belongs to or associates with
- **what** he does
- **where** he is
- **what** happens to him and **why**
- **when** this is occurring
- **why** he's treated as he is
- **how** he responds, etc.



- c. List everything these first four verses tell you about Joseph.



2. Now, if you have not completed character studies on Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Esau from Genesis, you need to gain a better understanding of Joseph's background.

- a. Joseph's father is referred to by two names: Jacob and Israel (Genesis 37:1-3). Jacob is the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. God made covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac, and their descendants.

In Genesis 28, He also gave promises to Jacob. Read Genesis 28:13-15 and write down what you learn about God's promises to Jacob.

- b. Genesis 32:22-30 explains how Jacob received his second name, Israel. Write down what you learn about this name: who changed it and why.

c. Read Genesis 35:22b-29, and record:

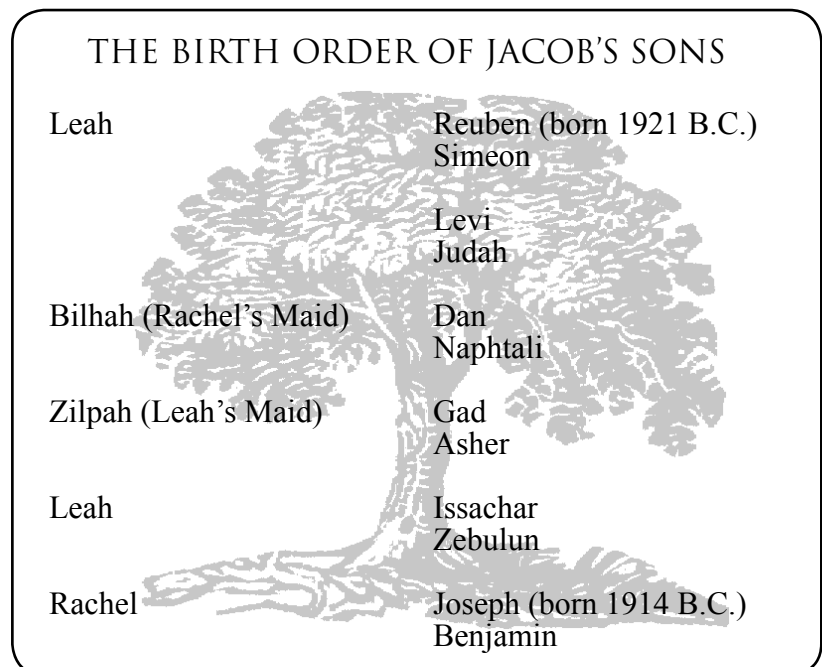
1) How many sons Jacob had.

2) Who Jacob's father was and how old he was when he died.

3) Jacob's brother's name.

4) The birth order of Jacob's (Israel's) sons and their mothers' names are listed in the chart.

Underline Joseph's name and note his mother's name.



3. Now look up the following verses to learn about Joseph's mother Rachel and list your insights.

a. Genesis 29:16-30



b. Genesis 29:31–30:8 (This will give you a glimpse of how Jacob fathered so many sons before Joseph was born.)



c. Genesis 30:17-24



d. Genesis 35:16-24



4. What did you observe that helps you understand Jacob's (Israel's) partiality toward Joseph and his brothers' **animosity** toward him?

In a time when there are so many blended families as a result of divorce and remarriage, can you see the relevancy of Joseph's story? If you are a child of divorce, Joseph's story will show you that because of the power of God in your life you do not have to be defined by your hurts and circumstances. And if you can't relate to Joseph's family life, you can still learn to be victorious over struggles, temptations, and hurt. And can learn to glorify God in the midst of them.

What gave Joseph the ability to glorify God during his difficult circumstances? Keep studying. If you apply what you learn, you will glorify God just like him.

LESSON TWO

Joseph
U-1, Lesson 2, Chapter 37

Today, read Genesis 37, observing and marking to see exactly what the text says.

1. Read Genesis 37:5-11.
 - a. List the main characters in this paragraph.



Whenever you study the Bible, you need to slow down to develop good observation skills. And since the Bible is God's Book, you need to ask God to help you see and understand what He has written and preserved. So always begin your study with prayer.

- b. Briefly summarize the main points of this paragraph.

When you observe a chapter, begin with the obvious: look for people first. See what the text says about them.

- c. How do Joseph's brothers feel about him? Describe their feelings (from the text).



- d. Mark occurrences of *hated* in Genesis 37:3-11. Draw a dark colored heart with a slash through it ♥️. Observe who hates whom, why, and how this hatred came about.

- e. Did you notice another important word repeated several times that helps you understand the text? Write it below then mark it in a distinctive way every time it occurs in Genesis 37:5-11. Also mark pronouns that refer to this key word.

- f. Carefully observe Joseph's dreams and briefly answer the following:

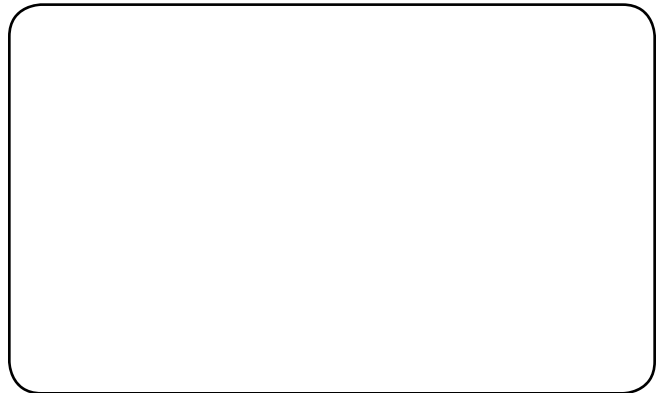
- 1) What Joseph dreamed

- 2) What his brothers understood the dreams to mean

- 3) What this evoked in Joseph's brothers

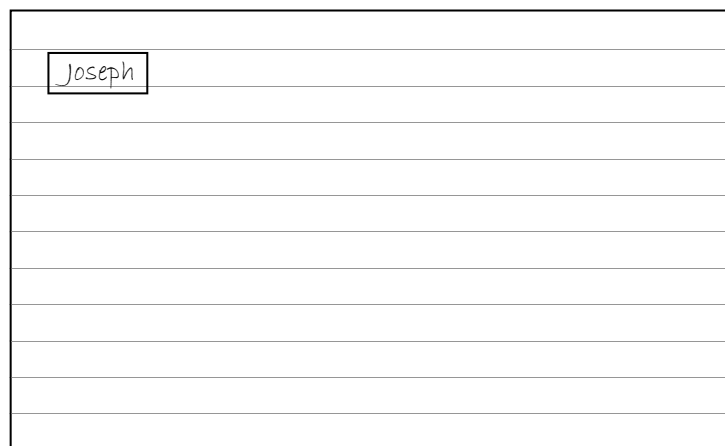
- 4) What Joseph's father understood the dream to mean and what he did with this information

2. In the space below, draw Joseph's two dreams. Don't worry about making them look perfect, just draw them well enough for you to look back at them and remember each dream's main points.



3. Using a 3x5 notecard, create a bookmark of key words and symbols you have used already. Add new key words you discover in the course of the study.

EXAMPLE:



Joseph

LESSON THREE

1. Read Genesis 37:12-17.



a. Double underline geographical locations in green. (Add “geographical locations” to your key word bookmark.) Trace Joseph’s journey on the map located in the Appendix.

Pay careful attention to geographical references to answer the investigative question “Where?”

b. Summarize what occurs in this paragraph in no more than two sentences. Pretend you are telling someone what’s covered.

2. Now read Genesis 37:18-24.

a. Who does “they” refer to in verse 18? When you observe the text, carefully check pronouns to know who they reference.



b. Do you see key words and synonyms you marked previously in Genesis 37:5-11? If so, mark them the same way. (Hint: Note how Joseph is referred to in verse 19.)

c. What do Joseph’s brothers want to do to him? Look for a key phrase and mark it the same way.

d. Which brother opposes this idea? Where is he in the birth order? Why do you think he was concerned?


e. What does this brother suggest they do with Joseph?

f. Now briefly summarize what occurs in this paragraph.

3. Now, let's move on to Genesis 37:25-28. Read this paragraph and then complete the following:

a. Who are the main characters? List them and give a brief description of their roles.



b. Mark the key words you marked in previous paragraphs and references to killing Joseph such as *shedding his blood* with a black tombstone . (Add this to your bookmark.) Also don't forget to mark geographical locations.

c. Briefly summarize what occurs in this paragraph.

4. Finally read Genesis 37:29-36.

a. Did you notice how often Joseph's tunic is mentioned? Mark it as a key word throughout the chapter. Ask the 5 W and H questions to get an idea of what this tunic meant to Jacob. List your observations below.





- b. Mark key words from your bookmark; look for geographical references.
- c. List what you learn about Reuben in this paragraph. How do Judah and Reuben **distinguish** themselves in this incident?
- d. Now summarize this paragraph in one or two sentences.
- e. Finally, at the beginning of your Observation Worksheets record where Joseph is as the chapter opens and at the end where he is as the chapter closes.
- f. Note Jacob's status at the beginning of the chapter and at the end..



- g. Record a theme for Genesis 37 on the "Genesis At A Glance" chart in the Appendix.

"For whatever was written
in earlier times was written
for our instruction, so that
through perseverance and the
encouragement of the Scriptures
we might have hope."

– Romans 15:4

At the end of your study,
you will have a handy
summary of this portion of
Genesis.

5. This chapter gives you a historical account of Jacob's sons and serves another purpose. Read Romans 15:4 in the pull-out box. Consider how this chapter can instruct you in similar situations: cause you to persevere, encourage you, warn you, and make you aware of hope. Reading

about others in similar situations and their dependencies on God (good or bad), helps you evaluate where you are and where you're headed.

For instance, has there been favoritism in your family? Have you dealt with jealousy? Have family members ever ganged up on you? Do you see yourself in any of these characters? Can you relate to Joseph, Reuben, Judah? Are you like Joseph's brothers, eaten up with jealousy and unable to talk to a sibling decently, kindly? Has your jealousy turned to hatred? Is there murder in your heart?



If you and/or others you know relate to this situation, then you want to pay careful attention to the chapters ahead. Take a moment now to pray. Consider writing a prayer to God and tell Him what you want to learn.

Record practical insights you gained from your observations of this chapter.



LESSON FOUR

Joseph

U-1, Lesson 4, Chapter 38

Genesis 37 opens with the phrase, “These are the records of the generations of Jacob.” The phrase “These are the records of the generations” first occurs in Genesis 2:4, the New American Standard Bible translating it, “This is *the account of the heavens and the earth...*” The phrase can be translated: *These are the generations of the heavens and the earth* (c.f. Genesis 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10,27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1,9; and 37:2).

In Genesis 37, we see God focusing first on Jacob’s son Joseph. Then in Genesis 38, He directs our attention to another son of Jacob.

1. Read Genesis 38 and note the main characters. List them below in order of their importance.

2. Now observe Genesis 38 the same way you did Genesis 37.



a. Mark key repeated words.

b. Double underline every geographical location.

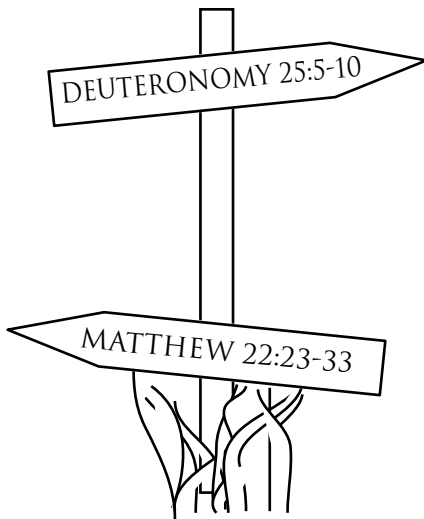
c. Mark time references with a green clock like this: 🕒 .

d. Watch for references to the *Lord* in this chapter. What do you learn about God? It is so helpful to keep a journal on God as you study the Word of God; it’s a real faith builder. Your “Journal on God” is located in the Appendix. Every time you come across a new insight on God, record the book, chapter, and verse, and what you learn about Him. The journal will then become a wonderful aid to worship – because true worship is acknowledging His worth and praising Him for it.

3. Although there is no record of the Law at this point in Israel’s history of Israel,¹ it’s apparent from the text that God revealed the duty of brothers-in-law (Genesis 38:8) that was later recorded in the Law.

Read the following scriptures and record what they say about carrying on the bloodline of a family member. As you look at these passages, you will see how long this custom of the law continued.

¹God gave the Law 430 years after the Abrahamic Covenant, when the children of Israel came out of Egypt (Genesis 15:12-17; Galatians 3:16-17).



4. Read the following verse and note key people in the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. Now, isn't it exciting to see the hand of God in this event in Judah's life?



5. Finally write out the Genesis 38 theme and record it on the "Genesis At A Glance" chart.

Isn't it encouraging to know that God can bring something wonderful from circumstances like these!?! No matter what has happened in your past, God is willing and able to use you to bring glory to His name. Submit yourself to Him and trust Him to use your weaknesses to show Himself strong!

LESSON FIVE

Joseph

U-1, Lesson 5, Chapter 39

1. Your assignment for today is simple – observe Genesis 39 as you have previous chapters and mark the text.



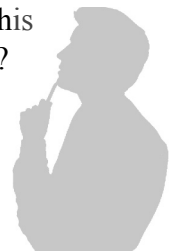
- a. Also mark *blessing* (*blessed*) in pink and *sin* in brown. Although *sin* is not repeated in the chapter, it's always good to mark it when you come across it in your Bible and consistently so it will be easy to find. Mark synonyms like *iniquity* and *transgression* the same way. Add these to your keyword bookmark.

- b. Also mark *Hebrew* with a blue Star of David ✡. This is the second time the word is used in the Bible. It first occurs in Genesis 14:13. Add it to your key word bookmark.



- c. List in the margin of your Observation Worksheets all you learn about *Joseph*. When you finish, reflect on these things. Beyond his physical appearance, do you admire, respect, or desire to **imitate** any other qualities of his?

2. Now put yourself in Joseph's place. How would you feel if you were him at the end of this chapter? How would you react if this happened to you? How would you feel about God? How would you respond to Him? Write out your answer.





3. Record your Genesis 39 theme on the “Genesis At A Glance” chart.

LESSON SIX

Joseph

U-1, Lesson 6, Chapter 39

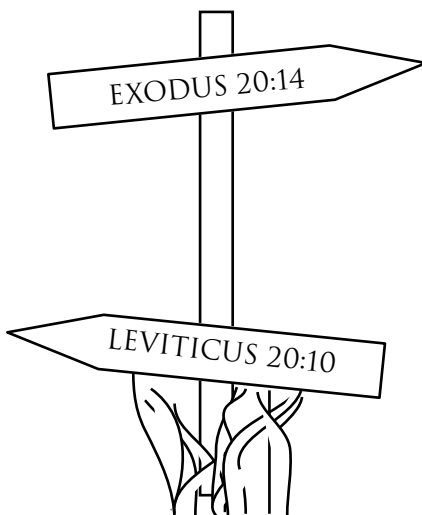
1. Think about what you observed in Genesis 39. Read the chapter one more time and then answer the following questions:

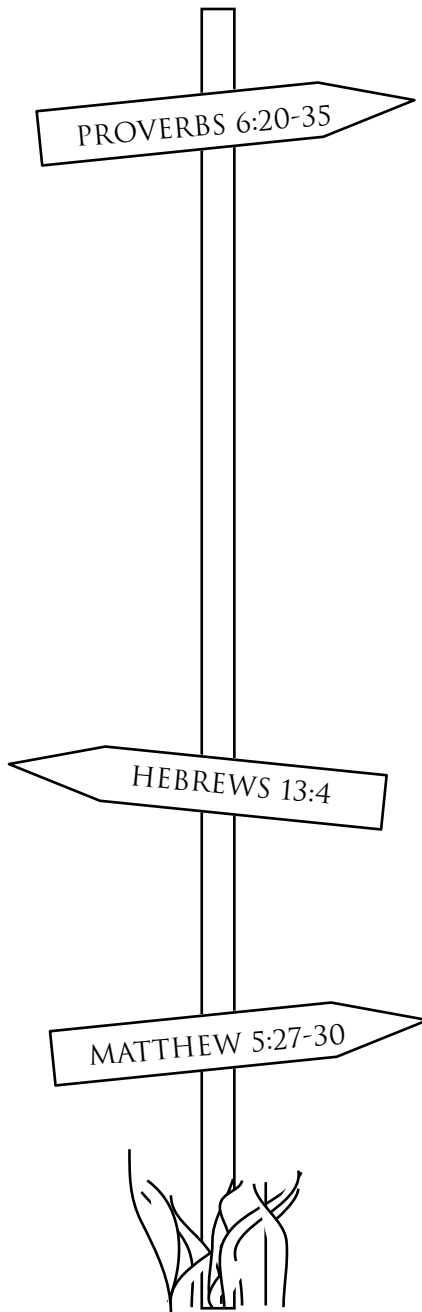
a. Was Joseph's response typical in today's **moral culture**? Explain your answer.



b. Would it have been a sin for Joseph to have sexual relations with Mrs. Potiphar? Why? Can you support your answer from the Bible? What scriptures can you use to show God's standard?

c. Now look up the following scriptures and record what they teach about sex outside of marriage and its consequences.





Describe the adulterer and some consequences when he's trapped.

If you want to know more, look up the following passages and note what they teach about sex outside marriage. If you are not familiar with these passages, write them somewhere in your Bible for future reference so you can share them with others.

- Deuteronomy 22:13-30
- Job 31:1, 9-12
- Proverbs 5:1-23; 7:1-27
- Ephesians 5:5-6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8
- Revelation 21:8

THE MORE YOU KNOW...

2. Most people in Joseph's position question God. If he honored God, why didn't God watch over him? Isn't God **obligated** to do so? Why did something bad happen to someone doing right? Is God fair? How would you answer this? Answer the question as if you were sitting in the prison with Joseph and *he* asked *you* why he was there.

Have you ever wondered why bad things happen to people? Maybe you have wondered why bad things have happened in your life when you were obedient and made the right choices. Keep studying! You will find answers as you look at Joseph's life.

ENRICHMENT WORDS:

Animosity – ill will; resentment; active hostility.

Culture – customary beliefs and social norms of a race, religion, country, or other social group.

Distinguish – separate; differentiate.

Imitate – follow a pattern, model, or example.

Investigate – closely examine and systematically ask.

Jealousy – hostility toward a favored person or competitor.

Moral – of or relating to principles of right and wrong.

Obligated – bound legally or morally.

Restoration – a bringing back to a former position or condition.

Rival – a competitor.

Strife – bitter, sometimes violent conflict.

