

A Daily Devotional Study Guide

# The Book of Genesis

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth - Genesis 1:1

**WEEK 11**

## “Joseph’s Dreams”

**Study:** Genesis 36:1-37:11

**Reading:** James 3:1-18

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

### What Does the Bible Say?

Esau took his three wives and children to live in the land of Seir. We know that Esau had come to meet Jacob from Seir, but we must remember that the lifestyle of a herder was a nomadic one. Apparently, after the death of Isaac, Esau had moved his family and flocks back to Canaan. This didn’t last too long because there was not enough food for both Jacob’s animals and Esau’s animals. Since Esau had already established connections in Seir, he chose to move back down to Seir and was once again separated from Jacob and his family (vs 1-8).

Verses 9-43 of chapter one listed the descendants of Esau and kings of Edom. Though all Scripture is purposeful, for devotional purposes, we will skip over this portion of Scripture.

We were given a brief history of the descendants of Esau, but now we are given a much more thorough description of the descendants of Isaac. The narrative picks up when Joseph was 17 years old and was out in the fields taking care of the sheep with his brothers. Joseph was the 11<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob and was only older than his brother Benjamin. Joseph observed some of the things that his other brothers were doing that he did not like. We are not told what these things were, only that he reported them to his father. This did not bode well with the brothers of Joseph and they became more bothered when they started to realize that Jacob loved Joseph and treated him better than he treated the other brothers. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat of many different colors that most likely would have been a very expensive coat. The colorful coat would have been a reminder to Joseph’s brothers of the favor his dad showed upon him every time they saw him. This hatred grew to the point where they could not speak kindly to Jacob, but talked in a rude and unkind manner to him every time they talked to him (vs 1-4).

To make matters worse, Joseph told his brothers about a dream he had. In this dream he saw them binding sheaves in the field and saw his sheaf standing up and the sheaves of his brothers bowing down to his sheaf. His

brothers couldn't believe that Joseph would think he had a chance to rule over them. After all, in that society, it was normally the oldest brother who inherited the most and the blessings would normally be more for the older than the younger (vs 5-8).

Not learning from the first time, Joseph told his brothers about another dream. In this one, the sun, moon and eleven stars were bowing down to him. This time, he told his father also. Jacob (Israel) responded by questioning if he or his wives (because Joseph's mother was dead, this was probably a reference to the mothers of Joseph's brothers) would bow down to him. Though this caused the hatred from his brothers to grow, it caused the curiosity of Jacob to be perked and he kept thinking about some of the things his son had said (vs 9-11).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Should Joseph have told his dreams to his brothers? This is a question that can be debated from both sides. It appears that Joseph didn't reveal the dreams with an attitude of pride, but he was just revealing the dream that God had given him. Should Joseph had told Jacob about his brothers actions? He was probably right in doing this because the things his brothers were doing could have caused great harm to Jacob and the rest of the family. As we have read and will continue reading, Joseph's brothers did all sorts of things that were not godly or helpful. Sometimes your actions may be taken the wrong way by others around you. You may do something or say something that you think is good and you say it at the right time, but it may not be accepted. This doesn't mean that you have permission to say whatever you want when you want to say it (we are given many instructions about how to use our words in Scripture), but seeing the example here can remind you that you may not always win the hearts of everyone around you, even if you say something in humility and honesty.

## **Suggestions for Prayer**

\* *Ask God to help you have speech that is filled with wisdom.*

## **Thought for the day**

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Where did Esau choose to live (vs 6-8)? Why?

Who was Esau the father of (vs 9)?

## **Genesis 37**

Where did Jacob live (vs 1)?

What was Joseph doing with his brothers when he was 17?

What did Joseph report to Jacob (vs 2)?

What is Jacob called in verse three?

How did Jacob feel about Joseph (vs 3)? Why?

What did this cause among his brothers (vs 4)?

What caused Joseph's brothers to hate him more (vs 5)?

What did Joseph's sheaf do in his dream (vs 7)? What did his brother's sheaves do (vs 7)?

How did his brothers respond to this dream (vs 8)?

Why do you think Joseph told them the second dream if they didn't like the first one (vs 9)?

What did Joseph tell his family about his dream (vs 9)?

How did Jacob rebuke Joseph (vs 10)?

Why do you think Jacob thought this dream was inaccurate?

What attitude did Joseph's brothers have towards him (vs 11)?

What do you think the end of verse 11 means?

Why do you think we are told this about Jacob's thoughts?

# “Unfair Treatment”

**Study:** Genesis 37:12-36

**Reading:** Psalm 22:1-31

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

## What Does the Bible Say?

Yesterday we left off reading about Joseph being a 17 year old young man who was hated by his older brothers. Though this tension existed, when his father asked him to go check on his brothers who had traveled north to find grazing land for their animals, Joseph willingly went. The last Jacob knew is that they had gone to the area of Shechem so he sent Joseph there. Joseph traveled to Shechem which would have been about 45 miles away. When he made it there, he asked a man if they had seen his brothers. The man directed Joseph to travel towards Dothan, another 15 miles to the northwest (vs 12-17).

The coat of many colors that Joseph was wearing helped his brothers realize that the person they saw headed towards them was their younger brother. They decided that this was their chance to kill him and rid themselves of the problems they were having because of him. They made a plan to kill him and throw him into one of the empty wells, but Reuben heard their plans and didn't want to see Joseph dead. Being the firstborn, Reuben had the responsibility of taking care of the others. He must also have known how much it would hurt his father, so he talked his brothers into throwing Joseph into a pit. His plan was to come back later and rescue Joseph. When Joseph arrived, they grabbed him, tore his robe and threw him into an empty well (vs 18-24).

When they sat down to eat, they noticed that a caravan was coming their way and they found out that this was a caravan of Ishmaelites and Midianites who were headed down to Egypt to do some trading. Ishmael (was the son of Hagar) and Midian (the son of Keturah) were both descendants of Abraham and these were their children who were passing through the land. They agreed to buy Joseph from them for twenty shekels of silver so they could sell Joseph in Egypt as a slave (vs 25-28).

Reuben must have been gone when the traders came by because he was unaware that his brothers had sold Joseph. When he found that Joseph was gone, he was overwhelmed with sorrow knowing that he was

going to have to face his father and let him know that Joseph was gone. The brothers devised a plan and decided they would dip the coat of Joseph in animal's blood and tell their father they found the coat on their way back home. Once they arrived home, they showed the coat to Jacob and Jacob began to weep since he thought his son had been killed by a wild animal and was dead. Jacob mourned greatly for Joseph and could not be comforted for a long period of time after this had taken place. He declared that he would go down into the grave mourning over the loss of his son (vs 29-35).

While all this was taking place, Joseph was being taken down to Egypt where he was sold to a man named Potiphar, who was the captain of the guard in Pharaoh's army (vs 36).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

What had Joseph done wrong to deserve the treatment he received? Yes, he had told his brothers about his dream, but he didn't purposely do anything to deserve the treatment he received. Yet, God allowed these things to happen to Joseph that we would consider to be terrible. Can you imagine what was going through Joseph's mind when all this happened to him? He was just trying to be a good son and brother, doing as his father asked. One day, he was under the favor of his father, being showered with blessings and a few weeks later he found himself as a slave in the land of Egypt. Remember, he was only 17 at the time that all of this was happening to him. What does this mean to you? What are you going through right now that is difficult? Have you found yourself in an unexpected situation that leaves you wondering where God is? Do you find yourself asking "Why"? As we will see in the next several days, God's sovereign hand was on this whole event. From the life of Joseph you will see the amazing power and working of God.

## Suggestions for Prayer

- \* Thank God for the "bad" things that happen to you.
- \* Ask God to help you trust Him through everything.
- \* Praise God because He has the power to work all things out for good.

## Thought for the day

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Where had Joseph's brothers traveled to (vs 12)?

\*\*\**Shechem would have been around 60 miles north of Hebron.*

What did Israel decide to do (vs 13)? Why (vs 14)?

What did Joseph ask the man to help him with (vs 16)?

Where did the man direct Joseph to (vs 17)?

\*\*\**Dothan was about 20 miles north of Shechem.*

How do you think they recognized that it was Joseph coming (vs 18)?

What did Joseph's brothers decide to do (vs 18)?

What does verse 19 show about their attitude towards Joseph (vs 19)?

What did Reuben do (vs 21)? Why do you think he did this?

What was Reuben's plan (vs 22)?

What did they end up doing (vs 23-24)?

Who did the brothers see coming (vs 25)?

What did they decide to do when they noticed this (vs 26)? Why?

How much money did they receive from selling their brother (vs 28)?

How did Reuben respond (vs 29-30)?

What did they do with Joseph's robe (vs 31)?

How did they lie to their father (vs 32-33)?

How did Jacob respond (vs 34-35)?

What happened to Joseph (vs 36)?

## ***“Terrible Sin - Great Mercy”***

**Study:** Genesis 38:1-19

**Reading:** Romans 5:1-21

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

While Joseph was in Egypt adjusting to his new life, the sons of Jacob were continuing in their sinful ways. We are told of an incident where Judah went to the house of an Adullamite friend whose name was Hirah. Adulla was a Canaanite town in the vicinity of Hebron where Jacob was living. There, Judah met a woman, and, though we are not told, we will assume Judah married her because they had three children. They named their children Er, Onan and Shelah (vs 1-5).

As time passed, Judah decided to take a wife for his eldest son, Er, and found a woman named Tamar. Shortly after that, Er died as a result of the judgment of God for the great wickedness that he had committed. Judah told Onan that it was his responsibility to take Tamar as his wife. In those days, if an older brother died, the younger brother was expected to marry the older brother's wife (remember that most marriages were arranged). The first child of their relationship would carry on the name of the older brother and then the rest of the children would carry on the name of the real father. Onan didn't like that his oldest child would carry on the name of Er and chose not to allow his semen to enter into Tamar when they had sexual relations. As a result, God punished Onan by taking his life because he was not willing to carry out his responsibility. At this point, they had not been given the Law, but it should be assumed that Onan knew this was something God desired. Shelah, the third son of Judah, must have been a bit younger than his brother, and Judah told Tamar to wait until Shelah was old enough to be married. Judah didn't want to give Shelah to Tamar because he was afraid that Shelah would also die (vs 6-11).

After some time, Judah's wife died and he traveled to see Hirah the Adullamite. The area he went to was near Timnah where his sheep were being sheared. Tamar found out what Judah was doing and devised a plan to become pregnant since Judah had not given her a husband. Apparently, when a woman was ineligible to be married because she was a widow who

already had a marriage arrangement, she would wear certain clothing indicating her status in life. Tamar chose to dress up as a prostitute and sat along the road that she knew Judah would pass. He gave into her enticement and chose to have sexual relations with her. As a payment for the sexual act, Tamar asked what she would get. Judah promised her a young goat, but did not have the goat with him. He chose to give her his signet ring and his staff to hold onto until he could exchange it for a goat. Signet rings were used to sign official documents and were unique to that individual. She agreed to this, and, as a result of their sexual interaction, Tamar became pregnant. As we saw from the story of Jacob and Leah, it appears that it was common for sexual acts to be committed while the face of the woman was veiled. Through the whole time, Judah was unaware that it was Tamar. After their interaction she put her widow's clothing back on so no one else would know what happened (vs 12-19).

Judah sent Hirah with the goat to exchange for the ring and staff, but Hirah could not find the prostitute. When he asked others about the woman, no one knew who he was talking about. He returned to Judah with the goat because he was unable to find the woman. Judah didn't want to launch a big search for the woman so he decided that he would just forget about it (vs 20-23).

About three months later, Judah was told that Tamar had been involved in improper sexual relationship with a man and it was revealed that she was pregnant. The response of Judah was one of great hypocrisy as he declared that she should be killed for her actions. Tamar then sent the ring and staff to Judah, asking him to identify them for her. Judah remembered what had taken place a few months before and realized that he had done wrong by Tamar by not giving her his son Shelah (vs 24-26).

Tamar was pregnant with twins. When it came time for her to give birth, the first child came out and a scarlet thread was tied around his hand, to indicate which one was the first born. Somehow though, only the hand had come out and then went back in. The other brother then actually was born first. They named the oldest Perez and the one that came out with the thread was named Zerah.

## **How Does this Apply to Me**

It may be hard to get a clear lesson from the wicked acts that are recorded in this chapter, but one of the amazing thoughts about this passage is that these people are in the line of David and eventually in the line of Jesus. From this we can see the great and mighty redeeming power of God. He can take terrible situations and produce good from them.

Who did Judah father (vs 1-5)?

Why do you think we are told about who Judah fathered, but given little information about the private lives of the other sons of Israel?

Who did Judah pick for his oldest son to marry (vs 6)?

What happened to Er before he had children (vs 7)?

What was Onan expected to do (vs 8)? Why?

Why did Onan not carry out his duty (vs 9)?

What action did God take (vs 10)?

Why do you think He took this action?

What promise did Judah make to Tamar (vs 11)?

What did Tamar find out (vs 12-13)? What did she do (vs 14)?

What price did Tamar and Judah agree on for sex (vs 15-18)?

How had she deceived Judah (vs 19)? Why?

What happened when Judah sent the payment (vs 20-23)?

What did Judah find out (vs 24)? What was his response?

How can you be like Judah?

What did Tamar say when they came to get her (vs 26)?

Who were Tamar's children (vs 28-29)?

Why do you think we are told the story about the red thread?

*\*\*\*There are many thoughts about the reason for this, but there is no definitive answer to this question.*

# “Godly Character”

**Study:** Genesis 39:1-10

**Reading:** James 4:1-12, Ephesians 6:10-20

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

I have asked myself and others, “How would your life be different if you had a video camera recording every one of your actions?” What makes this question further convicting is when I add the thought that those who are closest to you – your parents, children, church members or pastor – will be watching the video. For some, this is a very scary thought, but for those with godly character, this thought does not phase them much because they are followers of God no matter who is watching.

Today, we are going to see the great importance of godly character. I have heard many times that your true character is who you are when no one is looking.

## What Does the Bible Say?

Though it seems a little odd to me to interrupt the story of Joseph with the information about Judah’s sin, I believe the first verse of chapter 39 helps shed some light on what happened in chapter 38. Judah, who had the privilege and blessing of living in freedom and having things go well for him, chose to sin and do wrong. In contrast to the life of Judah, Joseph was in slavery and had been treated badly, yet he chose to do what was right. It appears that one of the underlying lessons from this is that our circumstances don’t have to control our choice to live in righteousness.

The difficulties that Joseph faced did not turn him away from God and God blessed Joseph for the humility and faith which he displayed. He had been sold to Potiphar, who was a leader in the Egyptian army. Though he was in the terrible situation, God blessed him and the household of Potiphar prospered because of Joseph. It wasn’t long before Joseph was promoted to be the lead servant and Potiphar made him ruler over everything that he owned. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything because of the character that Joseph displayed. That trust was rewarded because God was blessing Joseph and Potiphar was prospering (vs 1-6).

Though things were now looking up for Joseph, the rags to riches story doesn’t end there. Joseph not only had godly character, but he also had

been blessed with good looks. His character and good looks were quite appealing to his master’s wife and she soon became enthralled with Joseph. She attempted to do what she could to get him to have sexual relations with her. Though she attempted to seduce Joseph, he refused to give in because he knew that she was not his to take for his own. He had been entrusted with everything in Potiphar’s house, with the exception of his wife. There was no way that Joseph was going to cause dishonor to himself or his God by giving into the temptation. He stood strong even though day after day Potiphar’s wife continually tempted him to lie with her (vs 7-10).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

What a difference there was between Judah and Joseph. Judah slept with a prostitute who ended up being his daughter-in-law. From the context of the passage it appears that being with prostitutes was not an uncommon thing for Judah, yet we see the example of Joseph and how he was the exact opposite. Joseph could have become discouraged and depressed because of everything that happened to him and could have rejected God, thinking that God rejected him. The response of Joseph indicates that there was no bitterness or anger towards God, but instead it seems that the difficulties caused him to turn to God and let God build his character through the negative circumstance. Instead of giving in to temptation, he fought it day after day. As a result, God was with him and God was blessing him, allowing him to prosper. What a great lesson there is to learn from this. Your choice to do what is right and godly should not be based on the circumstances you are in. Godly character will show up when no one is looking or when you think that no one will know.

Godly character will also be rewarded by God, though as we will see tomorrow, it won’t always be rewarded in the way you may think it should be. Take time to think about your character and ask God to reveal to you areas that need improvement.

## Suggestions for Prayer

- \* *Thank God for biblical examples that can encourage you to do what is right.*
- \* *Ask God to help you live a life of godly character.*
- \* *Praise God for the victory that He gives you over temptation.*

Where did Joseph end up after he was sold into slavery (vs 1)?

Who was his master (vs 1)?

Why is it significant to note that the Lord was with Joseph (vs 2)?

Why is it important for you to realize that the Lord is with you even when you go through very difficult times?

How was it evident that God was with Joseph (vs 2)?

What did Potiphar realize (vs 3)?

How was this evident (vs 3)?

What was the result of the blessing of God on Joseph's life (vs 4)?

How have you seen God faithful to you through difficult circumstances?

How far did God's blessings extend (vs 5)?

What position did Potiphar give Joseph (vs 6)?

How satisfied was Potiphar with the job Joseph was doing (vs 6)?

How is Joseph described (vs 6)?

Who started pursuing Joseph (vs 7)?

How did Joseph respond (vs 8)?

Why did Joseph refuse (vs 8-9)?

What does this response reveal about his character?

How persistent was the wife of Potiphar (vs 10)?

How do you display the character Joseph did?

## ***“Exalted By God”***

**Study:** Genesis 39:11-23

**Reading:** Matthew 23:1-36

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

**A** few years after we hired an assistant pastor at the church I pastored, we started to run low on money. After a time of discussion and prayer, we agreed that both me and the assistant pastor would have our pay reduced to part time pay. This was a step of faith for my family as I would have to find a second source of income to provide for our needs. The best second job for me was selling things on the internet, but there was a man in our church who didn't like me doing that business since he said computers were evil. He even stood up in one of our congregational meetings and threw a fit about me having a computer sales business. This was really frustrating for me because I was choosing to make a sacrifice for the sake of the church, and, as a result, I was facing opposition. I wanted to say a whole lot of things to that man, but the Holy Spirit was working inside of me and I chose to respond to that situation with great grace and humility. That was not what my flesh wanted to do, but I am so thankful that I yielded to the Spirit because, in the end, God worked things out in an incredible way for me.

Today, we are going to see that choosing to follow God will not always produce the short term results that we desire, but the long term benefits of obeying God are worth it.

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Joseph had continually resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife, but the advances kept getting stronger and stronger. One day, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, Potiphar's wife again took the opportunity to attempt to get Joseph in bed with her. She grabbed him by the coat and tried to force him to have sex with her. Joseph didn't want anything to do with her advances and ran away from her, leaving his coat with her. She was not happy because of the rejection she experienced and decided that she would make things miserable for Joseph. She called out to others who worked in the house, claiming that Joseph attempted to rape her, and ran away when she started screaming, leaving his coat behind.

She then kept his coat and waited for Potiphar to come home. She told him the same story and convinced Potiphar it really happened (vs 11-18).

When Potiphar heard what his wife had said, he felt betrayed by Joseph and became extremely upset. He had Joseph thrown into prison, the same prison where the personal prisoners of Pharaoh were kept. This must have been very hard on Joseph because he had done nothing wrong. He did nothing wrong to deserve to be in Egypt as a slave nor had he done anything wrong to be in prison. In fact, he was thrown in prison for choosing to do the right thing (vs 19-21).

Even though Joseph had been treated unfairly, he did not choose to blame God, and God blessed him while he was in prison. The keeper of the prison liked Joseph and could see the godly character shining through him. The keeper decided to put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. What exactly this meant is unclear, but the point remains that God's hand of blessing was still on Joseph. This blessing was so great that the keeper of the prison didn't have to worry about anything that went on in the prison because he trusted Joseph with it. Even through the negative circumstances in life, Joseph looked to God and God caused him to be successful (vs 22-23).

## **How Does this Apply to Me?**

Are you choosing to follow God no matter what circumstances come your way? Joseph lived a type of roller coaster life, but this was not from his own choices. Many people live with great highs and great lows, but those are often brought about by good and poor choices. Joseph continually made the right choices, but as he did, difficulties kept coming. At the same time, through the difficult times, God was continually with him and exalting him through the tragedies that had taken place. There will be times in your life when hard times will come, even when you are following God with your whole heart. Don't let these times detour you from living for Him. He will be with you and will help you through the lowest times as He did to Joseph. Ultimately, this was all part of His great plan to save the Israelites, though Joseph would have no way of knowing that at the time of his trials. Choose daily to humble yourself and submit to God's plan for your life. This plan may not always be easy and sometimes may even appear to be leading you the wrong direction, but His plan is always right. Jesus told us, "The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." (ESV Matt 23:11-12)

What had Potiphar's wife been trying to do (vs 6-10)?

What situation did Joseph find himself in (vs 11)?

What did Potiphar's wife attempt to do (vs 12)?

How did Joseph respond (vs 12)?

What can you see about the character of Joseph from this?

What can you learn about fleeing from temptation from this example?

What did Potiphar's wife decide to do (vs 13-14)?

What did she say had happened (vs 14-15)?

What did she tell her husband (vs 15-18)?

Have you ever been lied about? Explain.

How did Potiphar respond (vs 19)?

What did Potiphar do to Joseph (vs 20)?

What did God do for Joseph (vs 21)?

What can you learn from this?

What did the keeper of the prison do (vs 22)?

Why do you think Joseph earned favor with the keeper?

How does this reveal that Joseph had not become bitter?

How trusting was the prison keeper (vs 23)?

Why do you think it was emphasized that the "Lord was with him" (vs 23)?

# “Faithfully Waiting”

**Study:** Genesis 40:1-23

**Reading:** Habakkuk 1-3

**Memory:** Matthew 5 (Review)

## What Does the Bible Say?

We are not told how long Joseph had been a slave to Potiphar or how long he had been in jail, we are only told that “some time after” he was thrown in prison, the cupbearer and the baker for the Pharaoh were thrown into the same prison. Scripture doesn’t say why they were thrown in prison, but it just says that they committed some type of offense towards Pharaoh. Pharaoh told the “captain of the guard” to take the butler and baker to prison. Most likely this was Potiphar who was responsible to take these men to prison. He took them to the same prison Joseph was in.

We are not sure what this prison was like since different criminals were treated differently by different cultures and leaders. We are told that these men were put under the care of Joseph, which could very well mean that Potiphar’s heart had softened towards Joseph over time as Joseph’s character remained strong (vs 1-4).

After these men were in jail (we are not given a time frame) they both had strange dreams on the same night. Though not all dreams have a meaning, we do see that God used dreams a handful of times in the Scripture for His purpose. Today God uses His Word to speak to us, though we can’t rule out completely that people may occasionally have a dream given by God. (If a person claims they have a dream/vision from God, it must always be compared to Scripture and must never supercede the Word of God. Again, they did not have the Bible to direct them in those days like we have His Word today.) These dreams were so unusual that they troubled the baker and butler. When Joseph saw that they were troubled, he wanted to find out what was wrong. They revealed to him that they had strange dreams, something that Joseph understood, and Joseph replied to them that only God could interpret the dreams. Joseph wanted to know the dreams so he could ask God to reveal the meanings (vs 5-8).

The cupbearer described a dream in which he saw a vine with three branches that budded and eventually brought forth grapes. He took the

grapes and pressed them out into the cup of Pharaoh and then gave the cup to Pharaoh. It was a simple dream, but God revealed a special revelation of it to Joseph. He told him that in three days Pharaoh would restore the butler to his position and he would once again be the cupbearer for the king. Joseph also asked the butler to remember him when he arrived back in Pharaoh’s court, since he did not deserve to be in jail. He was hoping that the butler would tell Pharaoh and Pharaoh would do something to help get Joseph out of jail (vs 9-15).

The baker was quite excited when he heard about the favorable interpretation given to the butler and he decided to tell Joseph his dream. The baker dreamed that he had three baskets on his head but the birds were eating all of the varieties of bread that were in the top basket. The interpretation that Joseph gave was not what the baker wanted to hear. Joseph described how in three days the Pharaoh would take the baker out of jail, but he would choose to behead and hang the baker. The birds would then eat the flesh of the baker (vs 16-19).

We are not told, but I would think that the baker and butler most likely reacted differently to Joseph’s interpretation. I am sure the butler wanted to believe and the baker didn’t. When the third day had come, Pharaoh threw a birthday celebration and had the butler and baker brought to him from jail. He chose to restore the butler to his former position, but chose to hang the baker, just as Joseph had said. The butler must have been thrilled, and this amazement caused him to completely forget about what Joseph had asked and he said nothing to Pharaoh about Joseph (vs 20-23).

## How Does this Apply to Me?

Joseph must have thought that the dreams were his big chance to get out of jail. After all, he had done nothing wrong and didn’t deserve to be in the prison. The godly character of Joseph was still on display through his life by the fact that the king’s prisoners were placed under the authority of Joseph. You can also see the trust that Joseph had in God by describing how it was only God who could interpret dreams. Things were looking up for Joseph because he was doing right, but, once again, we see that he was let down. It is hard to put yourself in the shoes of Joseph, but try to imagine how he must have felt. He could have easily been doomed to prison the rest of his life. He didn’t know what was going to happen to him. He didn’t know if he was going to die in prison or somehow get out, yet he chose to remain faithful to God.

Who committed an offense against Pharaoh (vs 1)?

What was their punishment (vs 2-4)?

What happened to the baker and the butler (vs 5)?

What did Joseph notice (vs 6)?

What did Joseph say about their dreams (vs 8)?

What did the butler reveal about his dream (vs 9-11)?

What did Joseph say would happen (vs 12-13)?

What did Joseph ask the butler to do (vs 14-15)?

What does this show about the struggles Joseph was experiencing?

What did the baker note about Joseph's interpretation (vs 16)?

What had the baker dreamed (vs 17)?

What did Joseph say the dream meant (vs 18-19)?

What happened on the third day (vs 20)?

How did things work out like Pharaoh had said (vs 21-22)?

What did the cupbearer forget to do (vs 23)?

How do you think this would have caused Joseph to feel?

*\*\*\*It is important to remember that the people in the Bible we read about weren't just storybook characters. These were real individuals, with real feelings.*

Try to put yourself in Joseph's situation. How do you think you would have responded to all of this? Hint: How are you responding to the difficulties that come into your life today?

## MEMORY VERSES

*Matthew 5:25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. 27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell. 31 "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. 33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil. 38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*