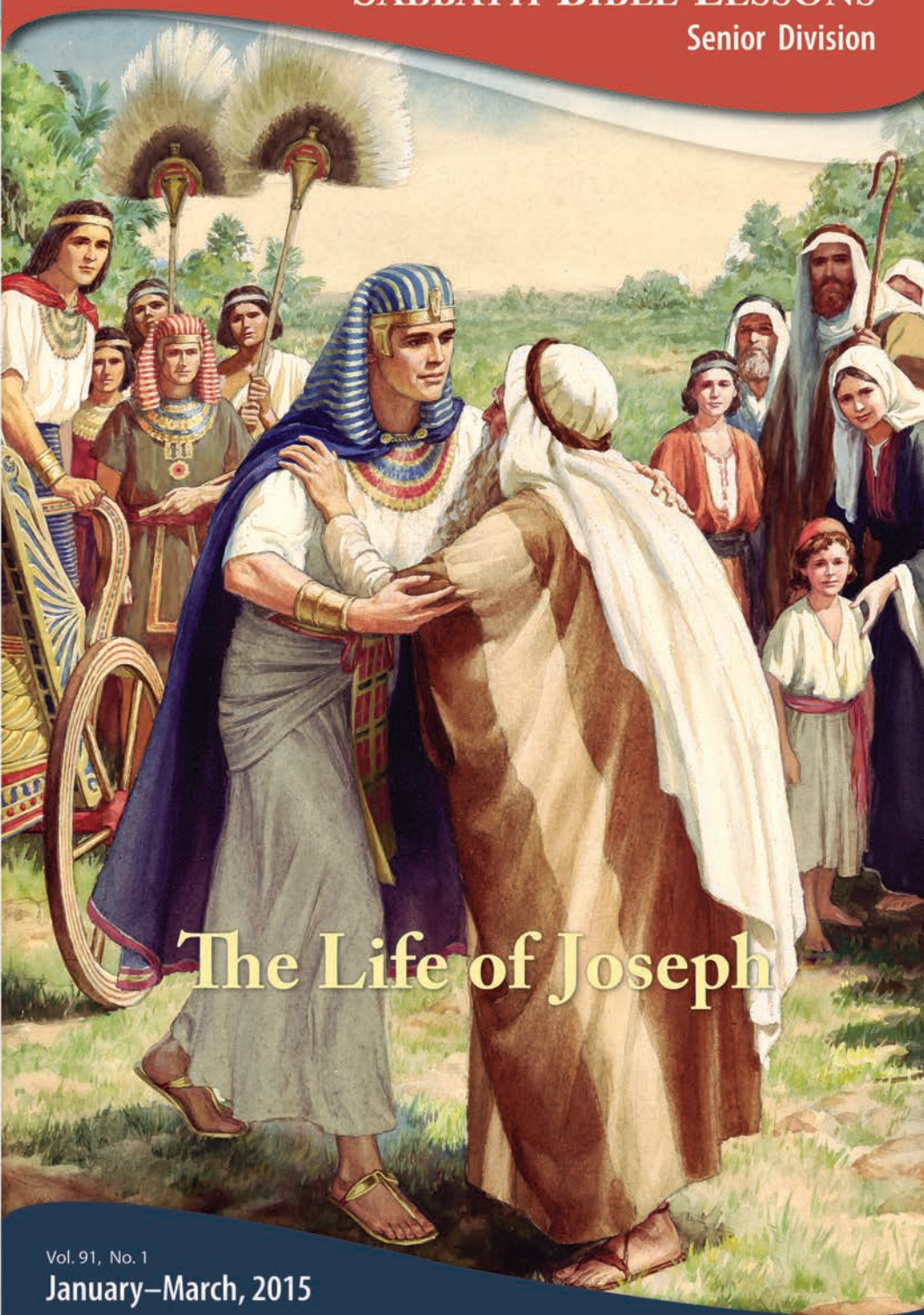


# SABBATH BIBLE LESSONS

Senior Division



## The Life of Joseph

Vol. 91, No. 1

January–March, 2015

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*Sabbath Bible Lessons*, a daily study program, is based solely on the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy without additional comments. The quotations are as brief as possible to provide concise, direct thoughts. Brackets [ ] are supplied in some cases to ensure clarity, proper context, and smooth readability. Further study in the source materials is strongly recommended.

**Illustrations:** Goodsalt on front cover; MapResources on pp. 4, 51, and back cover.

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# Foreword

We live in an age of unprecedented wickedness. The Bible aptly compares our day to the days of Noah. Human beings eat and drink, marry and are given in marriage without regard to a future judgment. Yet the judgments of God are falling around us, warning us of an impending crisis.

Surrounded by a similar degree of wickedness and worldliness, Joseph lived a pure and holy life. Most of his life was spent in Egypt, the greatest nation of his time. He lived through varying circumstances, yet he was faithful wherever he was called. His life of faithfulness amidst difficult, trying surroundings is an example for us.

“Especially was Joseph subject to the temptations that attend great changes of fortune. In his father’s home a tenderly cherished child; in the house of Potiphar a slave, then a confidant and companion; a man of affairs, educated by study, observation, contact with men; in Pharaoh’s dungeon a prisoner of state, condemned unjustly, without hope of vindication or prospect of release; called at a great crisis to the leadership of the nation—what enabled him to preserve his integrity? . . .

“A shepherd boy, tending his father’s flocks, Joseph’s pure and simple life had favored the development of both physical and mental power. By communion with God through nature and the study of the great truths handed down as a sacred trust from father to son, he had gained strength of mind and firmness of principle. . . . Loyalty to God, faith in the Unseen, was Joseph’s anchor.”—*Education*, pp. 51–54.

Joseph proved faithful wherever he was called, whether in adversity or in prosperity. God permitted great trials to come upon him, and though the way was rough and long, Joseph was faithful to the end. Through studying his life, we can see how we too can be overcomers. Joseph was a type of Christ, especially in the way he bore adversity.

Joseph was rewarded for his faithfulness. He was elected the prime minister of Egypt. After his death, he was also given two portions among the twelve tribes (Ezekiel 47:13). The twelve tribes are specifically mentioned by John as he describes the 144,000. This group of the redeemed is represented by the twelve tribes of Israel, and Joseph and one of his sons are both included. (Revelation 7:4–8.)

“The history of Joseph . . . is an illustration of what [God] will do for those who yield themselves to Him and with the whole heart seek to accomplish His purpose. . . .

“But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.”—*Ibid.*, p. 57.

*The General Conference Sabbath School Department*

## First Sabbath Offering for a church in Nigeria

Nigeria is a vast country, situated in the west central part of Africa. It borders Niger to the north, Benin to the west, Chad and Cameroon to the east, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. With around 174 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and the seventh most populous nation in the world. It was recently recognized as having the largest economy in the African continent.



The official language is English, though there are a large number of native languages spoken in the country.

The main religions are Islam (50.4%) and Christianity (48.2%). Among Christians: 24.8% are Catholic and 74.1% are Protestant.

The message of Reformation came to Nigeria decades ago, but the conflict between Islam and Christianity has hampered the growth of our work. By God's grace our brothers and sisters, moved by missionary zeal and love for Christ, are spreading the message to thirsty souls.

There are two missions in Nigeria—the Nigerian Central Mission and the Nigerian East Mission. The believers in the Central Mission have made great missionary efforts and new interests have joined them as a result. However, their place of worship now needs to move from a private home to something more representative of our church.

A brother from the U.S.A. generously donated almost 5 acres of land. However, the resources are still scarce for the construction of a house of worship. Therefore, we call upon the help of our brothers and sisters around the world to give generously of their means to help us with this construction project.

“The Lord has marked every phase of missionary zeal that has been shown by His people in behalf of foreign fields. He designs that in every home, in every church, and at all the centers of the work, a spirit of liberality shall be shown in sending help to foreign fields, where the workers are struggling against great odds to give the light to those who sit in darkness.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 465.

We pray the Lord will bless all who directly or indirectly respond to this appeal for our brethren and sisters in Nigeria.

*The Regional Secretary for Africa*

# Joseph the Dreamer

**“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Hebrews 12:11).**

“Faith, patience, forbearance, heavenly-mindedness, trust in your wise, heavenly Father, are the perfect blossoms which mature amidst clouds and disappointments and bereavements.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 934.

**Suggested Reading:** *Selected Messages*, bk. 2, pp. 96–100.

## 1. JOSEPH'S FIRST DREAM

- a. Who was Joseph, and what did he dream about? Genesis 30:22–24; 37:1–7.

“There was one [of Jacob’s sons] . . . of a widely different character—the elder son of Rachel, Joseph, whose rare personal beauty seemed but to reflect an inward beauty of mind and heart. Pure, active, and joyous, the lad gave evidence also of moral earnestness and firmness. He listened to his father’s instructions and loved to obey God.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 72.

“The angel of God instructed Joseph in dreams which he innocently related to his brethren.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 138.

a. Genesis 30:22-24 And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. 23. And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: 24. And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.

Genesis 37:1-7 And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. 3. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. 5. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7. For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

# Sunday

## JOSEPH'S FIRST DREAM

- b. How did Joseph's brothers understand the meaning of his dream with reference to themselves? Genesis 37:8.
- 

“Joseph dreamed that while they were all engaged binding sheaves of grain, his sheaf arose and stood upright, and the sheaves of all the rest stood round about and bowed before his sheaf. No sooner was his dream related than they all understood its significance. His brothers exclaimed with indignation, ‘Shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?’”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

- b. Genesis 37:8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

## 2. JOSEPH'S SECOND DREAM

- a. In which way was the second dream different from the first dream? Genesis 37:9.
- 

“Soon the Lord gave Joseph another dream of the same import, but more strikingly significant. This dream he also related to his father and his brethren.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

- a. Genesis 37:9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

## 2. JOSEPH'S SECOND DREAM

b. How did Joseph's father react to his dream? Genesis 37:10.

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“Soon [Joseph] had another dream, of similar import, which he also related: ‘Behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.’ This dream was interpreted as readily as the first. The father, who was present, spoke reprovingly—‘What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?’ (Genesis 37:9, 10).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets* p. 210.

b. Genesis 37:10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

## 2. JOSEPH'S SECOND DREAM

- c. How was Jacob's reaction to the dream different from Joseph's brothers' reaction? Genesis 37:11.
- 
- 

“Jacob appeared to regard the dreams of his son with indifference. But he had been often instructed by the Lord in dreams himself, and he believed that the Lord was teaching Joseph in the same manner. He reproved Joseph that his true feelings might not be discovered by his envious brothers.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 139.

“Notwithstanding the apparent severity of his words, Jacob believed that the Lord was revealing the future to Joseph.

“As the lad stood before his brothers, his beautiful countenance lighted up with the Spirit of Inspiration, they could not withhold their admiration; but they did not choose to renounce their evil ways, and they hated the purity that reproved their sins.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 210.

“The Lord works in His own way and according to His own devising. Let men pray that they may be divested of self, and may be in harmony with heaven.”—*The Review and Herald*, May 5, 1896.

- c. Genesis 37:11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

## 3. TIME REVEALS ALL

- a. Many years later, how would Joseph eventually recognize the fulfillment of his first dream about the sheaves of grain? Genesis 42:6–9.

“[During the famine, Jacob’s sons] were directed to the king’s deputy, and with other applicants they came to present themselves before the ruler of the land. And they ‘bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.’ ‘Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him’ (Genesis 42:6, 8). His Hebrew name had been exchanged for the one bestowed upon him by the king, and there was little resemblance between the prime minister of Egypt and the stripling whom they had sold to the Ishmaelites. As Joseph saw his brothers stooping and making obeisance, his dreams came to his mind, and the scenes of the past rose vividly before him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 224.

- a. Genesis 42:6-9 And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. 7. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. 8. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

**3. TIME REVEALS ALL**

- b. How many years passed before the first dream would be fulfilled?  
Genesis 37:2; 41:46, 53, 54; 42:6; 45:6.
- 

b. Genesis 37:2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.  
Genesis 41:46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

Genesis 41:53-54 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. 54. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

Genesis 42:6 And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.

Genesis 45:6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.

### 3. TIME REVEALS ALL

- c. Why did God allow such a length of time to pass before the vision would be fulfilled? 2 Peter 3:8, 9; compare Genesis 37:4, 11 with Genesis 45:15.
- 

“Many who have never been placed in positions of trial appear to be excellent Christians, their lives seem faultless; but God sees that they have traits of character that must be revealed to them before they can perceive and correct them. . . . In the providence of God we are placed in different positions to call into exercise qualities of mind calculated to develop character under a variety of circumstances. . . . Professed Christians may live unexceptionable lives so far as outward appearance is concerned; but when a change of circumstances throws them into entirely different positions, strong traits of character are discovered, which would have remained hidden had their surroundings continued the same.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, pp. 55, 56.

“God designed that [Joseph] should obtain an experience by temptations, adversity, and hardships, to prepare him to fill an exalted position.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

c. 2 Peter 3:8-9 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Genesis 37:4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Genesis 37:11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Genesis 45:15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

#### 4. TESTING MOMENTS

- a. Discuss some other reasons why God allows certain experiences to last longer than we would like. Psalm 26:2; Hebrews 12:11; James 5:7–11; Revelation 14:12 (first part).

“None who receive God’s word are exempt from difficulty and trial; but when affliction comes, the true Christian does not become restless, distrustful, or despondent. Though we cannot see the definite outcome of affairs, or discern the purpose of God’s providences, we are not to cast away our confidence. Remembering the tender mercies of the Lord, we should cast our care upon Him, and with patience wait for His salvation. Through conflict the spiritual life is strengthened. Trials well borne will develop steadfastness of character and precious spiritual graces. The perfect fruit of faith, meekness, and love often matures best amid storm clouds and darkness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 60, 61.

- a. Psalms 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

Hebrews 12:11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

James 5:7-11 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10.

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11.

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Revelation 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. (first part).

#### 4. TESTING MOMENTS

- b. What is the greatest challenge to our faith during a prolonged trial? Hebrews 10:35–39; Psalm 27:14.
- 

“Because circumstances change and disappointments come, because you do not have as much help as you hoped to receive for the building up of the work, you are not therefore to become disheartened. Lay every care at the feet of the Redeemer. ‘Ask, and ye shall receive’ (John 16:24). Do your best, and then wait, patiently, hopefully, rejoicingly, because the promise of God cannot fail. Christ’s life of untiring effort has been recorded for our encouragement. He did not fail nor become discouraged. In time of trial, be patient. Patience is a precious jewel. It will bring health to heart and mind. Wait on the Lord until He sees that you are ready to receive and appreciate the blessings for which you ask. Exercise faith, even though the trials are severe. ‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ (Hebrews 11:1). Of faith hope is born.

“It requires self-control to accept disappointment meekly; but Jesus understands your needs. Every prayer offered to Him in sincerity and faith will be answered. Having done your best, refuse to give way to discouragement and despair. When hedged about with apparently insurmountable difficulties, then is the time above all others to trust in the Lord.”—*The Review and Herald*, May 30, 1912.

- b. Hebrews 10:35-39 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.  
Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

## 5. A DIVINE REVELATION

- a. How did Joseph ultimately believe that these particular dreams were divine revelations, despite his brothers' prior rejections? Genesis 40:8; 41:15, 16.

“Joseph did not take the glory to himself. He pointed Pharaoh to God, saying, ‘It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace’ (Genesis 41:16).

“Through the wisdom given him of God, Joseph could see the true meaning of the dream. He saw the wonderful workings of God, and he laid the whole matter distinctly before Pharaoh.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, March 11, 1897.

“Joseph's reply to the king reveals his humility and his faith in God. He modestly disclaims the honor of possessing in himself superior wisdom. ‘It is not in me.’ God alone can explain these mysteries.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 220.

- a. Genesis 40:8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.  
 Genesis 41:15-16 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. 16. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

## 5. A DIVINE REVELATION

## b. What is God's purpose in giving certain dreams and visions in the last days? Joel 2:28–31; Acts 10:9–28.

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“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘*last days*’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles.”—*Early Writings*, p. 78.

b. Joel 2:28-31 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: 29. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. 30. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

Acts 10:9-28 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: 10. And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, 11. And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: 12. Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. 14. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. 15. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. 16. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven. 17. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, 18. And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. 19. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. 20. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. 21. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? 22. And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. 23. Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24. And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 25. And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. 27. And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. 28. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why should we be careful not to mock someone who has had a dream?
2. Explain why human nature doesn't like to bow to another in authority.
3. What is the purpose of trials in the Christian's life?
4. Which characteristic of our faith will trials help us develop?
5. Should we expect more dreams and visions to come in the future?

# God's Plan for Joseph

**“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12, 13).**

“God’s way, not man’s way, is to be taken as the guide of action. He has a plan, well and wisely ordered. He has revealed this plan to us in His Word, and He expects us to take it as our guide in all things, great and small. Man is not to make plans according to his finite judgment. He is to search for and find God’s plan.”—*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, pp. 270, 271.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

## 1. JOSEPH'S FIRST JOURNEY ALONE

- a. Why was it significant that Joseph set off to find his brothers alone? Genesis 37:12–14.
- 

“[Jacob] . . . sent Joseph to find [his brethren] and bring him word as to their welfare. Had Jacob known the real feeling of his sons toward Joseph, he would not have trusted him alone with them; but this they had carefully concealed. With a joyful heart, Joseph parted from his father, neither the aged man nor the youth dreaming of what would happen before they should meet again.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 210.

a. Genesis 37:12-14 And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. 14. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

## 1. JOSEPH'S FIRST JOURNEY ALONE

- b. Why was it essential for Joseph to meet the man who told him his brothers' whereabouts? Genesis 37:15–17, 28.
- 
- 

“When Joseph arrived at the place where his father supposed his brethren were, he did not find them. As he was traveling from field to field in search of them, a stranger learned his errand and told him they had gone to Dothan. He had already traveled fifty miles, and, a distance of fifteen more lay before him. This was a long journey for the youth; but he performed it cheerfully.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

b. Genesis 37:15-17 And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? 16. And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. 17. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

Genesis 37:28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

## 2. THE BROTHERS' PLOT

- a. **What was the first thing that came to the brothers' minds when they saw Joseph coming, and why? Genesis 37:18–20.**
- 

“At length [Joseph] saw his brethren in the distance and hastened to greet them. They also saw him coming, his gay colored coat making him easily recognized; but as they beheld it, their feelings of envy, jealousy, and hatred were aroused. They did not consider the long journey he had made on foot to meet them; they did not think of his weariness and hunger, and that as their brother he had claims upon their hospitality, their tender consideration and brotherly love. The sight of that coat which signalized him in the distance filled them with a Satanic frenzy.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

- a. Genesis 37:18-20 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 19. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

## 2. THE BROTHERS' PLOT

- b. How was the devil trying to thwart God's plan to use Joseph to save His people? Genesis 15:12-14; 37:20; Ephesians 6:11, 12. In the long run, who would the brothers really be killing had they succeeded in their plans against Joseph? Genesis 42:1, 2.
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b. Genesis 15:12-14 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. 13. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 14. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Genesis 37:20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Ephesians 6:11-12 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Genesis 42:1-2 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2. And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

## 2. THE BROTHERS' PLOT

- c. In his efforts to spoil God's plan for Joseph and his family, what ultimate plan was the devil trying to thwart? Genesis 3:15; 22:16–18; Galatians 3:16.

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“The murder of Abel was the first example of the enmity that God had declared would exist between the serpent and the seed of the woman—between Satan and his subjects and Christ and His followers.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 77.

“By leading Israel to this daring insult and blasphemy to Jehovah [at Sinai, when Moses found them bowing in adoration before a golden image], Satan had planned to cause their ruin. Since they had proved themselves to be so utterly degraded, so lost to all sense of the privileges and blessings that God had offered them, and to their own solemn and repeated pledges of loyalty, the Lord would, he believed, divorce them from Himself and devote them to destruction. Thus would be secured the extinction of the seed of Abraham, that seed of promise that was to preserve the knowledge of the living God, and through whom He was to come—the true Seed, that was to conquer Satan. The great rebel had planned to destroy Israel, and thus thwart the purposes of God.”—*Ibid.*, p. 335.

c. Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 22:16-18 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: 17. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

### 3. THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL

- a. Upon whom did God's Spirit move to save Joseph from death, and why did God select this particular brother? Genesis 37:19–22; 29:31, 32.

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"[Joseph's brothers] would have executed their purpose but for Reuben. He shrank from participating in the murder of his brother, and proposed that Joseph be cast alive into a pit and left there to perish."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 211.

"[Reuben] pleaded for Joseph, showing with clear arguments what guilt would ever rest upon them, and, that the curse of God would come upon them for such a crime."—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

a. Genesis 37:19-22 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. 21. And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. 22. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

Genesis 29:31-32 And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. 32. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

## 3. THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL

- b. What was God's plan for Joseph at this point? Psalm 105:16, 17. What was Reuben's plan? Genesis 37:22 (last part).
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"[Reuben] proposed to have him cast alive into a pit, and left there to perish, meaning to take him out privately and return him to his father."—Ibid.

b. Psalms 105:16-17 Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread. 17. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:

Genesis 37:22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. (last part).

### 3. THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL

- c. On which other brother did God then have to work to carry out His plans, and why did God have to ensure that Reuben was not around at the time? Genesis 37:25–30.
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“Having persuaded all to consent to this plan, Reuben left the company, fearing that he might fail to control his feelings, and that his real intentions would be discovered. . . .

“Judah now proposed to sell their brother to these [Ishmaelites] heathen traders instead of leaving him to die. While he would be effectually put out of their way, they would remain clear of his blood; ‘for,’ he urged, ‘he is our brother and our flesh’ (Genesis 37:27). To this proposition all agreed, and Joseph was quickly drawn out of the pit. . . .

“Reuben returned to the pit, but Joseph was not there. In alarm and self-reproach he rent his garments and sought his brothers, exclaiming, ‘The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?’ (Verse 30). Upon learning the fate of Joseph, and that it would now be impossible to recover him, Reuben was induced to unite with the rest in the attempt to conceal their guilt.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 211, 212.

- c. Genesis 37:25-30 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. 29. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

#### 4. OUR PROTECTOR

- a. Even though Joseph was outside of the protection of his earthly father, who was still with him? Genesis 39:2; Psalm 103:13.
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“Joseph’s brethren flattered themselves that they were taking a sure course to prevent the fulfillment of Joseph’s strange dreams. But the Lord controlled events and caused the cruel course of Joseph’s brethren to bring about the fulfillment of the dreams which they were laboring to frustrate. Joseph was greatly afflicted to be separated from his father, and his bitterest sorrow was in reflecting upon his father’s grief. But God did not leave Joseph to go into Egypt alone. Angels prepared the way for his reception.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 130, 131.

- a. Genesis 39:2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. Psalms 103:13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

**4. OUR PROTECTOR**

- b. What do we always need to keep in mind regarding God's control and jurisdiction over all human life? Job 2:3–6; Psalm 56:11.**
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“Study the history of Joseph and of Daniel. The Lord did not prevent the plottings of men who sought to do them harm; but He caused all these devices to work for good to His servants, who amid trial and conflict preserved their faith and loyalty.”—*Gospel Workers*, p. 477.

b. Job 2:3-6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. 4. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. 6. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Psalms 56:11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

## 4. OUR PROTECTOR

- c. What assurance can a believer in Christ have in God's care for him or her? John 10:27–29; 1 Peter 5:6, 7.
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“Christ says to man, You are mine. I have bought you. You are now only a rough stone; but if you will place yourself in My hands, I will polish you, and the luster with which you shall shine will bring honor to My name. No man shall pluck you out of My hand. I will make you My peculiar treasure. On My coronation day, you will be a jewel in My crown of rejoicing.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 267.

“The present and eternal security of men is their surety, Jesus Christ the righteous. No man will be able to pluck the believing soul out of His hands. . . . By keeping the love of God in the heart, the love of the world is kept out, and we become built up in the most holy faith.”—*The Youth's Instructor*, February 17, 1898.

c. John 10:27-29 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

**5. COOPERATING WITH GOD**

- a. To those who put their trust in God as Joseph did, what is the promise? Psalm 37:4, 5; Proverbs 3:5, 6.

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“Spread every plan before God with fasting, [and] with the humbling of the soul before the Lord Jesus, and commit thy ways unto the Lord. The sure promise is, He will direct the paths. He is infinite in resources. The Holy One of Israel, who calls the host of heaven by name, and holds the stars of heaven in position, has you individually in His keeping. . . .

“I would that all could realize what possibilities and probabilities there are for all who make Christ their sufficiency and their trust. The life hid with Christ in God ever has a refuge; he can say, ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me’ (Philippians 4:13).”—*Country Living*, p. 28.

- a. Psalms 37:4-5 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.  
Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

## 5. COOPERATING WITH GOD

- b. In the Christian journey, what are we to work out and how? Philippians 2:12, 13.

“No man can of himself work out his own salvation, and God cannot do this work for him without his cooperation. But when man works earnestly, God works with him, giving him power to become a son of God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 372.

“God and the human being are to cooperate. All are to work out that which God works in.”—*To Be Like Jesus*, p. 120.

“It means everything to us to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. God works in us, to will and to do of His good pleasure. If we let Him work, He will work. Our reward in heaven above depends on our daily walk and conversation here below. We can be Christians here. And to be a Christian, it is not necessary that we live in depression, mourning because we cannot have our own way. If we are Christians indeed, Christ is formed within, the hope of glory.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 204.

- b. Philippians 2:12-13 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Explain why seemingly small decisions can be life-changing.
2. In what kind of warfare are Christians involved?
3. How can the Spirit of God influence us to allow God's will to be done?
4. Why should we not fear what man can do to us?
5. Is it God or humanity that is to work for our salvation?

# Jacob's Influence

**“Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).**

“In the formation of character . . . , no other influences count so much as the influence of the home.”—*Education*, p. 283.

**Suggested Reading:** *Child Guidance*, pp. 17–25.

## 1. JACOB'S PARENTAL MISTAKE

- a. Where did Jacob go wrong in rearing his children? Genesis 37:2, 3.
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“Parents should show no partiality, but should treat all their children with tenderness, remembering that they are the purchase of Christ’s blood. Children imitate their parents; hence great care should be taken to give them correct models.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 319.

- a. Genesis 37:2-3 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. 3. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.

## 1. JACOB'S PARENTAL MISTAKE

b. How did this mistake affect the rest of the brothers? Genesis 37:4.

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"[Joseph's] mother being dead, his affections clung the more closely to the father, and Jacob's heart was bound up in this child of his old age. He 'loved Joseph more than all his children' (Genesis 37:3).

"But even this affection was to become a cause of trouble and sorrow. Jacob unwisely manifested his preference for Joseph, and this excited the jealousy of his other sons."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 209.

"Fathers and mothers should carefully and prayerfully study the characters of their children. They should seek to repress and restrain those traits that are too prominent, and to encourage others which may be deficient, thus securing harmonious development. . . . The ill-balanced mind, the hasty temper, the fretfulness, envy, or jealousy, bear witness to parental neglect. These evil traits of character bring great unhappiness to their possessors."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pp. 66, 67.

b. Genesis 37:4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

## 2. FROM CAUSE TO EFFECT

- a. In what way did Jacob's wives foster a wrong spirit in their children? Genesis 29:30–32; 30:1–8, 20.

“The sin of Jacob . . . revealed its bitter fruit in the character and life of his sons. As these sons arrived at manhood they developed serious faults. The results of polygamy were manifest in the household. This terrible evil tends to dry up the very springs of love, and its influence weakens the most sacred ties. The jealousy of the several mothers had embittered the family relation, the children had grown up contentious and impatient of control, and the father's life was darkened with anxiety and grief.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 72.

“Rachel was ever the one best loved; but [Jacob's] preference for her excited envy and jealousy, and his life was embittered by the rivalry between the sister-wives.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 189, 190.

a. Genesis 29:30-32 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. 31. And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. 32. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

Genesis 30:1-8 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. 2. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? 3. And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. 4. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. 5. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. 6. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. 7. And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. 8. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.

Genesis 30:20 And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six<sup>16</sup> sons: and she called his name Zebulun.

## 2. FROM CAUSE TO EFFECT

- b. How can a wrong spirit manifested by the parents affect the character development of the children? Ephesians 6:4; Ezekiel 16:44; Romans 2:21. How can we set the right example? 1 Corinthians 9:27; 1 Peter 2:21–23.

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“When fathers and mothers realize how their children copy them, they will watch carefully every word and gesture.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 6, p. 1118.

“How earnestly and perseveringly the artist labors to transfer to canvas a perfect likeness of his model; and how diligently the sculptor hews and chisels out the stone into a counterpart of the copy he is following. So the parents should labor to shape, polish, and refine their children after the pattern given them in Christ Jesus. As the patient artist studies, and works, and forms plans to make the results of his labors more perfect, so should the parent consider time well spent that is occupied in training the children for useful lives and fitting them for the immortal kingdom.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 476, 477.

“When I have felt roiled and was tempted to speak words that I would be ashamed of, I would keep silent and pass right out of the room and ask God to give me patience to teach these children. Then I could go back and talk with them, and tell them they must not do this wrong again. We can take such a position in this matter that we shall not provoke the children to wrath. We should speak kindly and patiently, remembering all the time how wayward we are and how we want to be treated by our heavenly Father.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 254, 255.

- b. Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.  
 Ezekiel 16:44 Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.  
 Romans 2:21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?  
 1 Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.  
 1 Peter 2:21–23 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

### 3. THE BROTHERS' DECEPTION

- a. **When is the temptation to tell a lie the strongest? Genesis 37:27–32; 3:11–13; 4:9, 10.**

“How true it is that one sin leads to another; and how forcibly is this truth illustrated in the case of Cain! He seemed surprised at the question, ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ (Genesis 4:9). He had gone so far in sin, had so far yielded himself to the influence of Satan, that he had lost a sense of the presence of God, and of His greatness and knowledge. So he lied to the Lord to cover up his guilt.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 16, 1886.

“While Satan can employ fraud and sophistry to accomplish his objects, God cannot lie; while Lucifer, like the serpent, can choose a tortuous course, turning, twisting, gliding, to conceal himself, God moves only in a direct, straightforward line.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, p. 319.

a. Genesis 37:27-32 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. 29. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? 31. And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; 32. And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

Genesis 3:11-13 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12. And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

Genesis 4:9-10 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? 10. And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

### 3. THE BROTHERS' DECEPTION

- b. How did the brothers' deceptive trickery bring upon themselves trouble and heartache? Genesis 37:34, 35; 42:36–38.
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“‘Know now,’ [Joseph’s brothers] said, ‘whether it be thy son’s coat or no’ (Genesis 37:32). They had looked forward to this scene with dread, but they were not prepared for the heart-rending anguish, the utter abandonment of grief, which they were compelled to witness. ‘It is my son’s coat,’ said Jacob; ‘an evil beast hath devoured him. Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces’ (Verse 33). Vainly his sons and daughters attempted to comfort him. . . . Time seemed to bring no alleviation of his grief. ‘I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning’ (Verse 35), was his despairing cry. The young men, terrified at what they had done, yet dreading their father’s reproaches, still hid in their own hearts the knowledge of their guilt, which even to themselves seemed very great.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 212.

b. Genesis 37:34-35 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

Genesis 42:36-38 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. 37. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. 38. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

### 3. THE BROTHERS' DECEPTION

- c. Explain why the deceptive deeds under which Jacob was now suffering due to his children's deceit can be linked to his own misleading ways of the past. Genesis 27:8–38; Galatians 6:7.

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“Every seed sown produces a harvest of its kind. So it is in human life.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 84.

c. Genesis 27:8-38 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. 9. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: 10. And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death. 11. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: 12. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. 13. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. 14. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. 15. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: 16. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: 17. And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. 18. And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? 19. And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. 20. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me. 21. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. 22. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. 23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. 24. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. 25. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. 27. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed: 28. Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: 29. Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee. 30. And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. 32. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. 33. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. 34. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. 35. And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. 36. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? 37. And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? 38. And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

#### 4. THE FRUITS OF SIN

- a. What were the sinful passions which Jacob's sons cherished towards Joseph? Genesis 37:3–5, 11, 23, 24.
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“The favor with which Jacob regarded Joseph could not be concealed, and the gorgeous colored coat which he had given him was a clear evidence to his sons of his partiality. This they thought gave them sufficient reason for harboring jealousy, hatred, and revenge in their hearts.”—*The Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1879.

“The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action because the opportunity, not the will, has been wanting.”—*Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 526.

a. Genesis 37:3-5 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. 4. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. 5. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

Genesis 37:11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Genesis 37:23-24 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24. And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

#### 4. THE FRUITS OF SIN

- b. When you harbor these sinful passions, where can they lead—and who leads us there? Proverbs 27:4; James 1:13–15.
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“Envy and jealousy are like two sisters who blend together in their workings. Envy will lead a man to desire some good which another possesses, and will urge him to use every means in his power to bring down and injure the character and reputation of one in whose place he desires to be.”—*The Signs of the Times*, November 2, 1888.

“The love of Jesus in the soul never leads to malice and envy.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 234.

- b. Proverbs 27:4 Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

James 1:13-15 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

4. THE FRUITS OF SIN

- c. When these sinful passions are cherished in the heart, what are humans capable of doing? Genesis 37:18–20; Proverbs 6:34, 35; 1 John 3:11–15.

“[Joseph’s siblings] had observed their father’s strong love for Joseph and were envious at him. Their envy grew into hatred and finally to murder.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 127.

“Envy is the offspring of pride, and if it is entertained in the heart, it will lead to hatred, and eventually to revenge and murder.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 651.

“Murder first exists in the mind. He who gives hatred a place in his heart is setting his feet in the path of the murderer, and his offerings are abhorrent to God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 310.

c. Genesis 37:18-20 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 19. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Proverbs 6:34-35 For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. 35. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

1 John 3:11-15 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

## 5. THE CHRISTIAN HOME

- a. Name some important guidelines for speech within a Christian home. Ephesians 4:21–27, 31, 32; Revelation 14:5.
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“There is a sacred circle around every family which should be preserved. No other one has any right in that sacred circle. The husband and wife should be all to each other. The wife should have no secrets to keep from her husband and let others know, and the husband should have no secrets to keep from his wife to relate to others.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 177.

“If, in their early childhood, children are not perseveringly and patiently trained in the right way, they will form wrong habits. These habits will develop in their future life and will corrupt others. Those whose minds have received a low cast, who have been cheapened by wrong home influences, by deceptive practices, carry their wrong habits with them through life. If they make a profession of religion, these habits will be revealed in their religious life.”—*Child Guidance*, pp. 200, 201.

a. Ephesians 4:21-27 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24. And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27. Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Revelation 14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

## 5. THE CHRISTIAN HOME

- b. Why is it important that we take warning from the sin of deception manifested in the lives of Jacob and his children? John 8:44; 1 Peter 2:1-3; Revelation 21:27.

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“Truth is of God; deception in all its myriad forms is of Satan, and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Those who have learned of Christ will ‘have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness’ (Ephesians 5:11).”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 252.

“The Lord hates all deception, secrecy, and guile. This is Satan’s work; the work of God is open and frank.”—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 274.

b. John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

1 Peter 2:1-3 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2. As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why is it vital to love all our children equally?
2. What should parents be mindful of when rearing their children?
3. Is there any safety in telling lies, even so-called white lies?
4. How can we commit murder in our heart?
5. How can lies and deceit destroy a Christian home?

# The Journey to Egypt

“He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant” (Psalm 105:17).

“What Abraham was in the land of his sojourn, what Joseph was in Egypt, and Daniel in the courts of Babylon, the Hebrew people were to be among the nations. They were to reveal God to men.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 27.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 126–131.

## 1. GOD'S PROVIDENCE AT WORK

- a. List at least seven acts of providence which God had to arrange before Joseph could be sent to Egypt? Psalm 105:17; Genesis 37:13–28.
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“The way of God’s choosing may seem dark, yet it is the surest way to the light. In the midst of apparent disaster and defeat, God’s providence is working out His purposes.”—*The Signs of the Times*, July 26, 1883.

- a. Psalms 105:17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Genesis 37:13-28 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. 14. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. 15. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? 16. And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. 17. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan. 18. And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 19. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. 21. And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. 22. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. 23. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24. And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. 25. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

## 1. GOD'S PROVIDENCE AT WORK

- b. Out of all of Jacob's sons, why did God select Joseph as the one to be sent to Egypt for a great work? Genesis 37:2; 39:6; Acts 7:9.
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“Joseph listened to his father’s instructions and feared the Lord. He was more obedient to his father’s righteous teachings than any of his brethren. He treasured his instructions, and, with integrity of heart, loved to obey God. He was grieved at the wrong conduct of some of his brethren, and meekly entreated them to pursue a righteous course, and leave off their wicked acts. This only embittered them against him. His hatred of sin was such that he could not endure to see his brethren sinning against God. He laid the matter before his father, hoping that his authority might reform them.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 126.

b. Genesis 37:2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Genesis 39:6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.

Acts 7:9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

## 2. THE LONELY JOURNEY

- a. In his journey to Egypt as a slave, how might Joseph have felt about God's leading in his life? Genesis 37:28; Psalms 88:3-5; 73:13, 14.
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“As the caravan journeyed southward toward the borders of Canaan, the boy could discern in the distance the hills among which lay his father's tents. Bitterly he wept at thought of that loving father in his loneliness and affliction. . . . With a trembling heart he looked forward to the future.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 213.

a. Genesis 37:28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Psalms 88:3-5 For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. 4. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: 5. Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand.

Psalms 73:13-14 Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. 14. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

## 2. THE LONELY JOURNEY

- b. **When are we tempted to question God's leading the most? Job 2:7-10; Exodus 16:2, 3; 17:1-3.**

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"Many who sincerely consecrate their lives to God's service are surprised and disappointed to find themselves, as never before, confronted by obstacles and beset by trials and perplexities. They pray for Christlikeness of character, for a fitness for the Lord's work, and they are placed in circumstances that seem to call forth all the evil of their nature. Faults are revealed of which they did not even suspect the existence. Like Israel of old they question, 'If God is leading us, why do all these things come upon us?'"—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

b. Job 2:7-10 So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. 8. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. 9. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. 10. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Exodus 16:2-3 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: 3. And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

Exodus 17:1-3 And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? 3. And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

## 2. THE LONELY JOURNEY

- c. Why did God allow lonely times to come upon Joseph? 1 Peter 4:12, 13; Hebrews 12:5, 6; Romans 8:28.
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“What a change in situation—from the tenderly cherished son to the despised and helpless slave! . . .

“But, in the providence of God, even this experience was to be a blessing to him. He had learned in a few hours that which years might not otherwise have taught him. His father, strong and tender as his love had been, had done him wrong by his partiality and indulgence. This unwise preference had angered his brothers and provoked them to the cruel deed that had separated him from his home. Its effects were manifest also in his own character. Faults had been encouraged that were now to be corrected. He was becoming self-sufficient and exacting. Accustomed to the tenderness of his father’s care, he felt that he was unprepared to cope with the difficulties before him, in the bitter, uncared-for life of a stranger and a slave.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 213.

c. 1 Peter 4:12-13 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Hebrews 12:5-6 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

### 3. FROM CHILDHOOD TO MANHOOD

- a. **What promise can all God-fearing parents hold onto as they rear their children? Proverbs 22:6.**
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“[When sold into slavery, Joseph’s] thoughts turned to his father’s God. In his childhood he had been taught to love and fear Him. Often in his father’s tent he had listened to the story of the vision that Jacob saw as he fled from his home an exile and a fugitive. He had been told of the Lord’s promises to Jacob, and how they had been fulfilled—how, in the hour of need, the angels of God had come to instruct, comfort, and protect him. And he had learned of the love of God in providing for men a Redeemer. Now all these precious lessons came vividly before him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 213, 214.

- a. Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

**3. FROM CHILDHOOD TO MANHOOD**

- b. Who only could Joseph call upon in his lonely exile? How would this decision change his life? Psalms 27:10; 34:18, 19; Romans 10:13.**
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“[Joseph’s] soul thrilled with the high resolve to prove himself true to God—under all circumstances to act as became a subject of the King of heaven. He would serve the Lord with undivided heart; he would meet the trials of his lot with fortitude and perform every duty with fidelity. One day’s experience had been the turning point in Joseph’s life. Its terrible calamity had transformed him from a petted child to a man, thoughtful, courageous, and self-possessed.”—*Ibid.*, p. 214.

b. Psalms 27:10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

Psalms 34:18-19 The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. 19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

### 3. FROM CHILDHOOD TO MANHOOD

- c. When we are tempted to feel forsaken and that all is lost, what should we remember? Psalms 37:25; 33:18, 22; 73:25, 26; Hebrews 12:1-3.

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“In every affliction God has a purpose to work out for our good. Every blow that destroys an idol, every providence that weakens our hold upon earth and fastens our affections more firmly upon God, is a blessing. The pruning may be painful for a time, but afterward it ‘yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness’ (Hebrews 12:11). . . . The very trial that taxes our faith the most severely and makes it seem as though God had forsaken us, is to lead us more clearly to Him. . . . Let no Christian feel that he is forsaken when the hour of trial comes upon him.”—*The Review and Herald*, April 10, 1894.

Psalms 37:25: I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Psalms 33:18: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Psalms 33:22: Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

Psalms: 73:25-26: 25. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. 26. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

Hebrews 12:1-3: 1. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

#### 4. FAITH THAT OVERCOMES

- a. Despite his youth, what victory did Joseph gain over the circumstances he faced? Genesis 39:1, 2; Psalm 40:1–4.

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“God in His great mercy will give to all His believing people efficiency and power for His work and service, even as He gave power to Joseph, Samuel, Daniel, Timothy, and scores of others who availed themselves of His promises. They believed Him and relied upon Him, and this was their righteousness. Men and women have to move by faith. They have to press their way through the cloud of objections which Satan brings up to hinder their progress. When God sees that they will trust Him as their helper and their efficiency, they may pass safely through the great darkness of men’s unconsecration.”—*The Upward Look*, p. 206.

- a. Genesis 39:1-2 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. 2. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. Psalms 40:1-4 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. 4. Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

## 4. FAITH THAT OVERCOMES

- b. What does the Bible say about those who allow circumstances to override their faith? Numbers 13:32, 33; Hebrews 3:17-19; James 1:8.
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“The living Christ demands self-denial and strong faith. Circumstances are not to rule the life. The child of God, the heir of heaven, cannot drift hither and thither.”—*The Review and Herald*, November 9, 1897.

b. Numbers 13:32-33 And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. 33. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Hebrews 3:17-19 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18. And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19. So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

#### 4. FAITH THAT OVERCOMES

- c. What promises are given if we overcome our trials, and how can we overcome? Numbers 14:24; 1 John 5:4; Revelation 3:21.
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“Now is the time to show who are the true Calebs, who will not deny that the walls are high, the giants mighty, but who believe that this very fact will make the victory more glorious. There are great difficulties and trials before us. It will require strong courage and persevering effort to go forward. But all now depends on our faith in the Captain who has led us safely thus far. Shall we let unbelief come in now? Shall we weakly yield to distrust and fear? Shall we compromise with the world, and turn away from the heavenly Canaan?”—*Ibid.*, November 29, 1881.

“While the cowards and murmurers perished in the wilderness, faithful Caleb had a home in the promised Canaan. ‘Them that honor Me I will honor,’ saith the Lord.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 304.

- c. Numbers 14:24 But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.
- 1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
- Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

## 5. ALL IN GOD'S PLAN

- a. Upon Joseph's arrival in Egypt, why was it important that he meet Potiphar? Genesis 39:1, 2. How did God use this meeting to further His plan for Joseph? Genesis 37:36; 39:20; 41:9-14.

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“Joseph regarded his being sold into Egypt as the greatest calamity that could have befallen him; but he saw the necessity of trusting in God as he had never done when protected by his father's love. Joseph brought God with him into Egypt, and the fact was made apparent by his cheerful demeanor amid his sorrow. As the ark of God brought rest and prosperity to Israel, so did this God-loving, God-fearing youth bring a blessing to Egypt.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1096.

a. Genesis 39:1-2 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. 2. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. Genesis 37:36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

Genesis 39:20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Genesis 41:9-14 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: 10. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: 11. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. 12. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. 13. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged. 14. Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

## 5. ALL IN GOD'S PLAN

- b. Why is it that God's plans do not always reflect our personal desires? Proverbs 16:9; Isaiah 55:8, 9; Romans 8:26.
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"To every sincere prayer an answer will come. It may not come just as you desire, or at the time you look for it; but it will come in the way and at the time that will best meet your need. The prayers you offer in loneliness, in weariness, in trial, God answers, not always according to your expectations, but always for your good."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 258.

"We all desire an immediate answer to our prayers and are tempted to become discouraged if our prayer is not immediately answered. Now, my experience has taught me that this is a great mistake. The delay is for our special benefit. We have a chance to see whether our faith is true and sincere or changeable like the waves of the sea."—*Counsels on Health*, pp. 380, 381.

b. Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Isaiah 55:8-9 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Explain how God's providence works.
2. How can trials cause us to question our faith?
3. Why is our salvation more important to God than our temporal condition?
4. What are we to do when we meet trying circumstances?
5. How should we expect God to answer our prayers?

# Faithfulness in All Things

**“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much” (Luke 16:10).**

“If you are faithful in a few things, your faithfulness will testify that you are a student in the school of Christ.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, November 7, 1895.

**Suggested Reading:** *Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 272–283.

## 1. A RIGHT ATTITUDE

- a. **How can we tell that Joseph always manifested a right attitude, regardless of what happened to him? Genesis 39:2, 23.**

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“Joseph did not complain at his lot, nor question why the Lord permitted him to suffer for righteousness’ sake. He did not allow any cloud of despondency to settle upon his heart. He believed in God and patiently waited for his salvation. He determined that this affliction [while in prison] should serve as an occasion to glorify God and benefit his associates.”—*The Review and Herald*, February 21, 1888.

a. Genesis 39:2-23 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3. And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. 4. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. 5. And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. 6. And he left all that he had in Joseph’s hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. 7. And it came to pass after these things, that his master’s wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9. There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10. And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. 11. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14. That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15. And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18. And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20. And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison. 21. But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

## 1. A RIGHT ATTITUDE

- b. What will others see when we have the right attitude in being faithful to God? Genesis 39:3; Matthew 5:16; 2 Corinthians 3:2.
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“From the palace of the Pharaohs [Joseph’s] influence was felt throughout the land, and the knowledge of God spread far and wide.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 332.

“Joseph carried his religion everywhere, and this was the secret of his unwavering fidelity.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

“The good works of God’s people have a more powerful influence than words.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 443.

- b. Genesis 39:3 And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.  
Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.  
2 Corinthians 3:2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

## 2. BEING FAITHFUL

- a. **Why did Potiphar promote Joseph to be a ruler over his household? Genesis 39:3, 4.**
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“The marked prosperity which attended everything placed under Joseph’s care was not the result of a direct miracle; but his industry, care, and energy were crowned with the divine blessing. Joseph attributed his success to the favor of God, and even his idolatrous master accepted this as the secret of his unparalleled prosperity. Without steadfast, well-directed effort, however, success could never have been attained. God was glorified by the faithfulness of His servant.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 214, 217.

- a. Genesis 39:3-4 And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. 4. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

## 2. BEING FAITHFUL

- b. What are we instructed regarding faithfulness to our duties? Luke 16:10–12; Colossians 3:22, 23.
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“The humble, common duties of life are all to be performed with fidelity; ‘heartily,’ says the apostle, ‘as to the Lord.’ Whatever our department of labor, be it housework or field work or intellectual pursuits, we may perform it to the glory of God so long as we make Christ first and last and best in everything.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 459.

“If man will discharge his duties faithfully wherever he may be, he will become a power for good. God gave Joseph favor with the keeper of the prison, and to faithful Joseph was committed the charge of all the prisoners.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1880.

“Heart and soul are to be put into work of any kind; then there is cheerfulness and efficiency. . . . Faithfulness in the discharge of every duty makes the work noble, and reveals a character that God can approve.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 5, p. 1112.

b. Luke 16:10-12 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12. And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

Colossians 3:22-23 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: 23. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

## 2. BEING FAITHFUL

- c. How was Joseph's faithfulness as a lowly servant finally rewarded by God? Genesis 41:41-43; Proverbs 22:29.
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"A strong, well-balanced, symmetrical character is built by the thorough and faithful performance of duty. Joseph had an unblemished character, and as he was found faithful in that which was least, he was finally entrusted with the affairs of a nation."—*The Signs of the Times*, May 25, 1891.

c. Genesis 41:41-43 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; 43. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. Proverbs 22:29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.

### 3. FROM BONDAGE TO SONSHIP, AGAIN

- a. How much trust did Potiphar have in Joseph's integrity of character? Genesis 39:6; 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12.

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"It was [God's] purpose that in purity and uprightness the believer in God should appear in marked contrast to the worshipers of idols—that thus the light of heavenly grace might shine forth amid the darkness of heathenism.

"Joseph's gentleness and fidelity won the heart of the chief captain, who came to regard him as a son rather than a slave."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 217.

a. Genesis 39:6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 11. And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; 12. That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

### 3. FROM BONDAGE TO SONSHIP, AGAIN

- b. **What kind of influence will true men and women of God bring to those with whom they associate? Genesis 39:5; 30:27.**
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“As the ark of God brought rest and prosperity to Israel, so did this God-loving, God-fearing youth bring a blessing to Egypt. This was manifested in so marked a manner that Potiphar, in whose house he served, attributed all his blessings to his purchased slave, and made him a son rather than a servant. It is God’s purpose that those who love and honor His name shall be honored also themselves, and that the glory given to God through them shall be reflected upon themselves.”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, March 11, 1897.

- b. Genesis 39:5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.  
Genesis 30:27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake.

### 3. FROM BONDAGE TO SONSHIP, AGAIN

- c. How easy will it be to find honest, upright men and women in the last days? 2 Timothy 3:1–4. How do we know that the warning in Timothy refers to the professed people of God? 2 Timothy 3:5–9; 2 Peter 2:1–3.

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“The cause of present truth is suffering for men who are loyal to a sense of right and duty, whose moral integrity is firm, and whose energy is equal to the opening providence of God. Such qualifications as these are of more value than untold wealth invested in the work and cause of God.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 23.

“When the Lord makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be looked upon with pleasure. Angels are employed in making crowns for such ones, and upon these star-gemmed crowns will be reflected, with splendor, the light which radiates from the throne of God.”—*Maranatha*, p. 309.

c. 2 Timothy 3:1-4 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

2 Timothy 3:5-9 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. 9. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

2 Peter 2:1-3 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

#### 4. THE SPIRIT OF A LEARNER

- a. What is significant about Joseph becoming the slave of a high-ranking officer of the Egyptian army? Genesis 39:1; 41:33–37.

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“Arriving in Egypt, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, captain of the king’s guard, in whose service he remained for ten years. . . .

“The youth was brought in contact with men of rank and learning, and he acquired a knowledge of science, of languages, and of affairs—an education needful to the future prime minister of Egypt.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 214, 217.

a. Genesis 39:1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. Genesis 41:33-37 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. 35. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. 37. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

#### 4. THE SPIRIT OF A LEARNER

- b. Name some great leaders and their previous occupations. 1 Kings 19:19–21; Exodus 3:1; Matthew 4:18, 19. Why does God often choose people who are engaged in life's simple vocations? 1 Corinthians 1:26, 27.
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“As the time comes for [the message of the third angel] to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open.”—*Evangelism*, pp. 699, 700.

b. 1 Kings 19:19-21 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. 20. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? 21. And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

Exodus 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Matthew 4:18-19 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

1 Corinthians 1:26-27 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

## 4. THE SPIRIT OF A LEARNER

- c. How is God's choice of workers different from a human choice? 1 Samuel 16:6–13. What is the Lord looking for? Acts 13:22; Psalm 143:10.

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“The elder [sons of Jesse], from whom Samuel would have chosen, did not possess the qualifications that God saw to be essential in a ruler of His people. Proud, self-centered, self-confident, they were set aside for the one whom they lightly regarded, one who had preserved the simplicity and sincerity of his youth, and who, while little in his own sight, could be trained by God for the responsibilities of the kingdom.”—*Education*, p. 266.

c. 1 Samuel 16:6-13 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. 7. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart. 8. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. 9. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this. 10. Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these. 11. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. 12. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. 13. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

Acts 13:22 And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Psalms 143:10 Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

## 5. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

- a. How faithful is God in His dealings with men and women? Lamentations 3:22, 23; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; Revelation 19:11.

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“Will the Lord forget His people in this trying hour? Did He forget faithful Noah when judgments were visited upon the antediluvian world? Did He forget Lot when the fire came down from heaven to consume the cities of the plain? Did He forget Joseph surrounded by idolaters in Egypt? Did He forget Elijah when the oath of Jezebel threatened him with the fate of the Baal prophets? Did He forget Jeremiah in the dark and dismal pit of his prison house? Did He forget the three worthies in the fiery furnace? or Daniel in the den of lions? Christ cannot forsake those who are as the apple of His eye, the purchase of His precious blood.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 4, pp. 445, 446.

a. Lamentations 3:22-23 It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

5. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

- b. What should give us confidence in God's faithfulness to both save and direct our lives? Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:3.

"We lose many precious blessings by failing to bring our needs and cares and sorrows to our Saviour. He is the wonderful Counselor. He looks upon His church with intense interest and with a heart full of tender sympathy. He enters into the depth of our necessities. But our ways are not always His ways. He sees the result of every action, and He asks us to trust patiently in His wisdom, not in the supposedly wise plans of our own making. . . .

"Every sincere prayer that is offered is mingled with the efficacy of Christ's blood. If the answer is deferred, it is because God desires us to show a holy boldness in claiming the pledged word of God. He is faithful who hath promised. He will never forsake the soul who is wholly surrendered to Him."—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 74.

b. Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why is it important to have the right attitude as a Christian?
2. How should we conduct ourselves in whatever line of work we undertake?
3. What is the greatest witness we can give to the world?
4. What is God looking for today in the hearts of men and women?
5. How can we be assured that the Lord will never let us down?

## First Sabbath Offering for the General Conference Educational Center

Roanoke is an American city with a population of just over 300,000—including the surrounding area. It is nestled in the Blue Ridge mountains of southwest Virginia. In 1984, the SDA Reform Movement General Conference moved its headquarters from New Jersey to a scenic valley here. In 1995, a modest and attractive



office building was constructed on an adjoining parcel. Surely we can heartily declare, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us” (1 Samuel 7:12).

Now it’s time for more significant expansion. The worshippers on Sabbath have outgrown the little office sanctuary, and as our outreach has developed around the world, there is a heightened need to represent more effectively the Lord’s work. As a result, the proposed building plan includes a larger chapel, expanded publication offices to spread light-out-of-darkness worldwide, educational facilities for the presentation of training seminars and eventually a missionary school for higher education, as well as a simple wellness facility to bring health and comfort to the infirm, that the name of the Lord may be glorified.

To rightly represent our denominational work on an international level is indeed a costly undertaking, so your prayers and financial help are greatly needed in order to make this expansion a reality.

“Those who are seeking to advance [God’s] work should give the very best they have, that the work may illustrate the perfection God requires.

“God must be honored by the work that is done for Him at this time. His work must move forward with stability. Faithfulness and fitness must appear in its every line. The buildings that are erected must correspond with the providences of God and with their relation to the work to be done in other places.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 24, 1902.

The project is great—the time is now. Please do consider how the Lord may be calling you to contribute to this project. Like the widow’s mite, your outstretched hand and generous donation can really go a long way in ministering worldwide through this expanded facility. Thank you in advance, and may God bless you!

*Your brethren from the General Conference Council*

# Joseph's Greatest Test

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body” (1 Corinthians 6:18).

“Through the integrity of Joseph the life of that [ancient Egyptian nation] was preserved.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 13.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, pp. 81–98.

## 1. TAKE HEED LEST YOU FALL

- a. **When things are running smoothly, of what should we always be aware? 1 Corinthians 10:12; Matthew 26:41.**
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“We should now seek a deep and living experience in the things of God. We have not a moment to lose. Events of vital importance are taking place around us; we are on Satan’s enchanted ground. Sleep not, sentinels of God; the foe is lurking near, ready at any moment, should you become lax and drowsy, to spring upon you and make you his prey.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 601.

- a. 1 Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

## 1. TAKE HEED LEST YOU FALL

- b. While God was blessing Joseph abundantly, what was the devil trying to do? Genesis 39:5-7; 1 Peter 5:8.
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“Our great adversary has agents that are constantly hunting for an opportunity to destroy souls, as a lion hunts his prey.”—*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 52.

“Man is naturally inclined to follow Satan’s suggestions, and he cannot successfully resist . . . unless Christ, the mighty Conqueror, dwells in him, guiding his desires, and giving him strength. God alone can limit the power of Satan. He is going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it. He is not off his watch for a single moment, through fear of losing an opportunity to destroy souls.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 341.

b. Genesis 39:5-7 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. 6. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured. 7. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

## 2. THE DEVIL'S TRAPS

- a. **What was the purpose of the devil in laying the trap of adultery before Joseph's eyes? Genesis 39:7; Proverbs 5:1-5; 7:22, 23, 27.**

"Few temptations are more dangerous or more fatal to young men than the temptation to sensuality and none if yielded to will prove so decidedly ruinous to soul and body for time and eternity. The welfare of his entire future is suspended upon the decision of a moment."—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

"A little time spent in sowing your wild oats, dear young friends, will produce a crop that will embitter your whole life; an hour of thoughtlessness, once yielding to temptation, may turn the whole current of your life in the wrong direction. You can have but one youth; make that useful. When once you have passed over the ground, you can never return to rectify your mistakes."—*The Adventist Home*, p. 59.

- a. Genesis 39:7 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.  
 Proverbs 5:1-5 My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: 2. That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. 3. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: 4. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. 5. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.  
 Proverbs 7:22-23 He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; 23. Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.  
 Proverbs 7:27 Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

## 2. THE DEVIL'S TRAPS

- b. Under which circumstances is a person most prone to fall into the sins of immorality? Genesis 39:11, 12 (first part); Proverbs 7:13–21.
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“All who willfully depart from God’s commandments are placing themselves under the control of Satan. Many a man tampers with evil, thinking that he can break away at pleasure; but he is lured on and on, until he finds himself controlled by a will stronger than his own. He cannot escape its mysterious power. Secret sin or master passion may hold him a captive as helpless as was the demoniac of Capernaum.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 312.

“One may conceal his sin from father, mother, wife, and friends, and yet all lies open before God and is placed in His book of record.”—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 89.

b. Genesis 39:11-12 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. (first part)

Proverbs 7:13-21 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, 14. I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows. 15. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. 16. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. 17. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. 18. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. 19. For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey: 20. He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. 21. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

## 2. THE DEVIL'S TRAPS

- c. Why are we to avoid being alone in compromising situations with the opposite sex? 1 Thessalonians 5:22.
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“All who love Jesus and keep the commandments will seek to avoid the very appearance of evil; not because they are constrained thus to do, but because they are copying a pure model and feel averse to everything contrary to the law written in their hearts.”—*Ibid.*, p. 81.

- c. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

### 3. THE CENTER OF OUR THOUGHTS

- a. When Joseph was confronted with the seducing temptation of Potiphar's wife, where were his thoughts centered? Genesis 39:7–9; Colossians 3:1–3.

“Joseph's answer reveals the power of religious principle. He would not betray the confidence of his master on earth, and, whatever the consequences, he would be true to his Master in heaven. Under the inspecting eye of God and holy angels many take liberties of which they would not be guilty in the presence of their fellow men, but Joseph's first thought was of God. ‘How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’ (Genesis 39:9) he said.”—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 75.

“When assailed by temptation, look not to circumstances or to the weakness of self, but to the power of the word. All its strength is yours. ‘Thy word,’ says the psalmist, ‘have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee’ (Psalm 119:11).”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 123.

a. Genesis 39:7-9 And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9. There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

Colossians 3:1-3 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

### 3. THE CENTER OF OUR THOUGHTS

- b. What was it that made Joseph recoil from her advances? Genesis 39:9; Hebrews 8:10; Psalm 119:10, 11. What happens when we hide God's promises in our heart? 2 Peter 1:4.
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"The fear of God, united with the love of that which is noble, pure, and elevating, will guard you from a dishonest action. . . . What a lesson for all youth we have in the history of Joseph. Here moral integrity was preserved under the strongest temptations. How fierce and seductive was the assault upon his virtue! Coming from such a source and in such a form, it was the most likely to corrupt a youthful mind. Joseph was saved by his religious principles, which led him promptly and firmly to resist the device of Satan."—*Christ Triumphant*, p. 97.

"We shall be tempted in a variety of ways, but when we are tempted we need to remember that a provision has been made whereby we may overcome. . . . Those who truly believe in Christ are made partakers of the divine nature and have power that they can appropriate under every temptation. They will not fall under temptation and be left to defeat. In time of trial they will claim the promises and by these escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust."—*Ibid.*, p. 197.

"Let the youth be taught to give close study to the word of God. Received into the soul, it will prove a mighty barricade against temptation."—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 121.

b. Genesis 39:9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

Psalms 119:10-11 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

2 Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

#### 4. FLEEING FROM TEMPTATION

- a. What is the only way to meet any sexual temptations? Genesis 39:12; 1 Corinthians 6:18.
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“Joseph calmly casts his eyes to heaven for help, slips off his loose outer garment, leaving it in the hand of his tempter and while his eye is lighted with determined resolve in the place of unholy passion, he exclaims, ‘How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?’ The victory is gained; he flees from the enchanter; he is saved.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

“Do not stop for one moment to reason. Satan would rejoice to see you overthrown by temptation. Do not stop to argue the case with your weak conscience. Turn away from the first step of transgression.”—*Counsels on Health*, p. 587.

- a. Genesis 39:12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

## 4. FLEEING FROM TEMPTATION

- b. In times when the devil is trying to destroy the purity and innocence of children and youth by promoting licentiousness, what can we learn from Joseph? 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Timothy 4:12.
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“To shield their children from contaminating influences, parents should instruct them in the principles of purity. Those children who in the home form habits of obedience and self-control will have little difficulty in their school life and will escape many of the temptations that beset the youth. Parents should train their children to be true to God under all circumstances and in all places. They should surround them with influences that tend to strengthen character.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 113.

- b. 2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.  
1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

## 4. FLEEING FROM TEMPTATION

- c. What practical measures can we take to avoid falling into the way of temptation? Romans 13:14; Psalm 101:3.
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“Those who would not fall a prey to Satan’s devices, must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind must not be left to dwell at random upon every subject that the enemy of souls may suggest. The heart must be faithfully sentineled, or evils without will awaken evils within, and the soul will wander in darkness.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 403.

Romans 13:14: But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Psalm 101:3: I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

## 5. HEAVEN IS WATCHING

- a. Who was watching Joseph when he was faced with the greatest temptation of his life? Genesis 39:2; Proverbs 5:20, 21; 1 Corinthians 4:9.
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“Fiery trials were to test still more severely the faith and integrity of Joseph. The morals of the Egyptians were very low. His master’s wife was a licentious woman, and now a temptation to deviate from the path of right, to transgress the law of God, is presented before the youthful exile. His future welfare depends upon the decision of the moment. Will Satan triumph? Will principle now garrison Joseph’s heart? Will he now have the fear of God before him? Will he be loyal and true to the divine law? Angels were regarding this servant of God with intense interest.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1880.

a. Genesis 39:2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

Proverbs 5:20-21 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? 21. For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

1 Corinthians 4:9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

## 5. HEAVEN IS WATCHING

- b. **Although human eyes may not see what we do and we may hide our private sins from human eyes, what reality should we ever keep before our mind? Hebrews 4:13; Ecclesiastes 12:14.**
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“If we were to cherish an habitual impression that God sees and hears all that we do and say and keeps a faithful record of our words and actions, and that we must meet it all, we would fear to sin. Let the young ever remember that wherever they are, and whatever they do, they are in the presence of God. No part of our conduct escapes observation. We cannot hide our ways from the Most High. Human laws, though sometimes severe, are often transgressed without detection, and hence with impunity. But not so with the law of God. The deepest midnight is no cover for the guilty one. He may think himself alone, but to every deed there is an unseen witness. The very motives of his heart are open to divine inspection.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 217, 218.

b. Hebrews 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why should the Christian always be vigilant?
2. How can one sin change the direction of our life?
3. How can we best prepare to meet temptation?
4. What steps can we take to avoid falling into licentious sins?
5. When we are alone, away from human beings, and are tempted to sin, what should we ever remember?

# Purity in an Age of Decay

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

“What a lesson for all youth we have in the history of Joseph. Here moral integrity was preserved under the strongest temptations.”—*Christ Triumphant*, p. 97.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 390–411.

## 1. GOD CALLS JOSEPHS TODAY

- a. What is God calling young people like Joseph to be today? Genesis 39:9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Proverbs 31:10–12.
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“Do not see how close you can walk upon the brink of a precipice and be safe. Avoid the first approach to danger. The soul’s interests cannot be trifled with. Your capital is your character. Cherish it as you would a golden treasure. Moral purity, self-respect, a strong power of resistance, must be firmly and constantly cherished. There should not be one departure from reserve; one act of familiarity, one indiscretion, may jeopardize the soul in opening the door to temptation, and the power of resistance becomes weakened.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 404.

a. Genesis 39:9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Proverbs 31:10-12 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. 11. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. 12. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

## 1. GOD CALLS JOSEPHS TODAY

- b. What damage is done when sexual sins are practiced? Proverbs 6:27–33.
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“Few temptations are more dangerous or more fatal to young men than the temptation to sensuality, and none if yielded to will prove so decidedly ruinous to soul and body for time and eternity.”—*Letters to Young Lovers*, p. 69.

“David was a repentant man, and although he confessed and hated his sin, he could not forget it.”—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 89.

b. Proverbs 6:27-33 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28. Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? 29. So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. 30. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; 31. But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. 32. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. 33. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

## 2. MARRIAGE UNDER ATTACK

- a. What is the only intimate physical relationship which God regards as moral and pure? Genesis 2:21–25; Hebrews 13:4.
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“When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this [marital] relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man’s social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 26.

a. Genesis 2:21-25 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22. And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. 25. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

## 2. MARRIAGE UNDER ATTACK

- b. **What happens when the marriage institution, as given by God, is no longer recognized by society as the standard of sexual morality?** Isaiah 5:20; Romans 1:26–32; John 3:19, 20.

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“Everywhere are seen wrecks of humanity, broken-down family altars, broken-up families. There is a strange abandonment of principle, the standard of morality is lowered, and the earth is fast becoming a Sodom. The Sodomitish practices which brought the judgment of God upon the world, and caused it to be deluged with water, and which caused Sodom to be destroyed by fire, are fast increasing. We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world depart from all iniquity.”—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, pp. 120, 121.

- b. Isaiah 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

Romans 1:26-32 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. 28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; 29. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, 30. Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31. Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: 32. Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. John 3:19-20 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

## 2. MARRIAGE UNDER ATTACK

- c. What happens when God's church allows sexual immorality to exist within her borders? Ephesians 5:11, 12; Romans 2:21-24; Jude 5-7.
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“Licentiousness, unlawful intimacy, and unholy practices are coming in among us in a large degree; and ministers who are handling sacred things are guilty of sin in this respect. They are coveting their neighbors' wives, and the seventh commandment is broken. We are in danger of becoming a sister to fallen Babylon, of allowing our churches to become corrupted, and filled with every foul spirit, a cage for every unclean and hateful bird; and will we be clear unless we make decided movements to cure the existing evil?”—*Ibid.*, p. 188.

c. Ephesians 5:11-12 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Romans 2:21-24 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22.

Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23. Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

Jude 1:5-7 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. 6. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. 7. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

### 3. VISUAL SINS ON THE RISE

- a. **With easy access to the Internet through personal computers and other portable electronic devices (smartphones, tablets), which sins of impurity are on the increase? Matthew 5:27, 28; 1 John 2:16.**

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“Exciting love stories and impure pictures have a corrupting influence. . . . This is an age when corruption is teeming everywhere. The lust of the eye and corrupt passions are aroused by beholding and by reading. The heart is corrupted through the imagination. The mind takes pleasure in contemplating scenes which awaken the lower and baser passions. These vile images, seen through defiled imagination, corrupt the morals and prepare the deluded, infatuated beings to give loose rein to lustful passions.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 410.

a. Matthew 5:27-28 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

### 3. VISUAL SINS ON THE RISE

- b. What can be done to protect ourselves and our children against such strategies of the devil? Luke 11:34, 35; Psalm 101:3; Job 31:1.
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"If parents desire their children to be pure, they must surround them with pure associations such as God can approve.

"With what care parents should guard their children from careless, loose, demoralizing habits! Fathers and mothers, do you realize the importance of the responsibility resting on you? Do you allow your children to associate with other children without being present to know what kind of education they are receiving? Do not allow them to be alone with other children. Give them your special care. Every evening know where they are and what they are doing. Are they pure in all their habits? Have you instructed them in the principles of moral purity?"—*Child Guidance*, p. 114.

b. Luke 11:34-35 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. 35. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

Psalms 101:3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

Job 31:1 I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

### 3. VISUAL SINS ON THE RISE

- c. With immorality abounding around us, where should our mind and affections be? Philippians 4:8; 2 Peter 1:4; Colossians 3:1, 2.
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“If in their tender years the minds of children are filled with pleasant images of truth, of purity and goodness, a taste will be formed for that which is pure and elevated, and their imagination will not become easily corrupted or defiled.”—*Ibid.*, p. 116.

“Recreation in the open air, the contemplation of the works of God in nature, will be of the highest benefit.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 653.

“Parents and guardians must themselves maintain purity of heart and life, if they desire their children to be pure.”—*Child Guidance*, p. 27.

c. Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

2 Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Colossians 3:1-2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

#### 4. STANDING FIRM FOR GOD

- a. Why is it so important to stand up for purity now than it has been in any other time? 2 Timothy 3:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9–11.
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“Immorality abounds everywhere. Licentiousness is the special sin of this age. Never did vice lift its deformed head with such boldness as now. The people seem to be benumbed, and the lovers of virtue and true goodness are nearly discouraged by its boldness, strength, and prevalence. . . . The iniquity which abounds is not merely confined to the unbeliever and the scoffer. Would that this were the case, but it is not. Many men and women who profess the religion of Christ are guilty. Even some who profess to be looking for His appearing are no more prepared for that event than Satan himself. They are not cleansing themselves from all pollution.”—*The Adventist Home*, p. 328.

a. 2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

## 4. STANDING FIRM FOR GOD

- b. What kind of mind will highly principled, Christian men and women possess? What will this enable them to do? 2 Timothy 1:7; Ephesians 4:13, 14; James 1:6–8.
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“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.”—*Education*, p. 57.

- b. 2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.  
Ephesians 4:13-14 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;  
James 1:6-8 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

4. STANDING FIRM FOR GOD

- c. How can we have a mind governed by principle and truth rather than by policy and inclination? Philippians 2:5; Psalm 40:8; Matthew 4:4.
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“Those who have never learned their duty from God, and acquainted themselves with His purposes concerning them, are not reliable in times of severe conflict with the powers of darkness. They are swayed by external and present appearances. . . .

“In the renewed heart there will be a fixed principle to obey the will of God, because there is a love for what is just, and good, and holy. There will be no hesitating, conferring with the taste, or studying of convenience, or moving in a certain course because others do so. Everyone should live for himself.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 487, 488.

- c. Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:  
Psalms 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.  
Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

## 5. AN UNCHANGEABLE PRINCIPLE

- a. What happened when Joseph chose to stand firm for God? Genesis 39:12–20. Why shouldn't we be surprised by this? 2 Timothy 3:12.

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“Joseph’s faithful integrity led to the loss of his reputation and his liberty. This is the severest test that the virtuous and God-fearing are subjected to, that vice seems to prosper while virtue is trampled in the dust. The seducer was living in prosperity as a model of virtuous propriety, while Joseph, true to principle, was under a degrading charge of crime the most revolting.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

- a. Genesis 39:12-20 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14. That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15. And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18. And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.
- 2 Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

## 5. AN UNCHANGEABLE PRINCIPLE

- b. How firmly should we be prepared to stand in upholding the purity of the marriage institution? Matthew 14:3–10.
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“Marriage was from the creation constituted by God a divine ordinance. . . . Then let this, God’s institution of marriage, stand before you as firm as the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.”—*Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce*, p. 159.

“Why need [John the Baptist] have provoked the anger of Herodias by telling Herod that it was unlawful for him to live with his brother’s wife? The forerunner of Christ lost his life by his plain speaking. Why could he not have moved along without incurring the displeasure of those who were living in sin?

“So men who should be standing as faithful guardians of God’s law have argued, till policy has taken the place of faithfulness, and sin is allowed to go unreprieved. When will the voice of faithful rebuke be heard once more in the church?”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 141.

b. Matthew 14:3-10 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. 4. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. 5. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6. But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod. 7. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. 8. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger. 9. And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her. 10. And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why is the violation of the seventh commandment so treacherous to the soul?
2. How is society today fast fulfilling the prophecies relating to Christ's return?
3. How can technology become a deadly weapon in the hand of the user?
4. What is the greatest need in the world today?
5. Would you be willing to lay down your life in defending God's institutions?

# The Development of Christian Character

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (James 1:2, 3).

“There are few who realize the influence of the little things of life upon the development of character. Nothing with which we have to do is really small. The varied circumstances that we meet day by day are designed to test our faithfulness and to qualify us for greater trusts.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 222, 223.

**Suggested reading:** *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 557–567.

## 1. THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIALS

- a. Why was Joseph permitted to enter yet another trial in his life?  
Genesis 39:20; Psalm 105:17, 18; 1 Peter 4:14–16.
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“The part which Joseph acted in connection with the scenes of the gloomy prison, was that which raised him finally to prosperity and honor. God designed that he should obtain an experience by temptations, adversity, and hardships, to prepare him to fill an exalted position.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

- a. Genesis 39:20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Psalms 105:17-18 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: 18. Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:

1 Peter 4:14-16 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 16. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

## 1. THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIALS

- b. What promises can we keep in mind when passing through a trial? Genesis 39:21; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:19.
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“God safely guarded that reputation [of Joseph] that was blackened by a wicked accuser, and afterward, in His own good time, caused it to shine.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 145.

“With every temptation we have the promise of God that there shall be a way of escape. Why, then, are so many overcome? It is because they do not put their trust in God.”—*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 22.

b. Genesis 39:21 But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

## 2. TOTAL CONTENTMENT

- a. **How was Joseph's faith unshaken by this severe yet unjust trial? Genesis 39:22, 23.**
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“At the first Joseph was treated with great severity by his jailers. The psalmist says, ‘His feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in chains of iron: until the time that his word came to pass; the word of the Lord tried him’ (Psalm 105:18, 19, RV). But Joseph’s real character shines out, even in the darkness of the dungeon. He held fast his faith and patience; his years of faithful service had been most cruelly repaid, yet this did not render him morose or distrustful. He had the peace that comes from conscious innocence, and he trusted his case with God.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 218.

- a. Genesis 39:22-23 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

## 2. TOTAL CONTENTMENT

- b. **When tempted to question God because of the severity of an injustice, whom should we remember? Isaiah 53:7; 1 Peter 2:21–23.**
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“Are you tempted? [The Elder Brother] will deliver. Are you weak? He will strengthen. Are you ignorant? He will enlighten. ‘He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds’ (Psalm 147:3). Whatever your anxieties and trials, spread out your case before the Lord. Your spirit will be braced for endurance. The way will be opened for you to disentangle yourself from embarrassment and difficulty. The weaker and more helpless you know yourself to be, the stronger will you become in His strength.”—*The Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1902.

b. Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

1 Peter 2:21-23 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

## 2. TOTAL CONTENTMENT

- c. What is evident that Potiphar didn't fully believe his wife's accusation? Genesis 39:20; Proverbs 6:34.
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“Had Potiphar fully believed the charges of his wife, Joseph would have lost his life. But his past conduct, his modesty and firm integrity, were convincing proof of his innocence; and yet, to save the reputation of his master's house, Joseph was sacrificed, while the sinful wife was exalted in the estimation of her friends as if a model of virtue.”—*Ibid.*, January 8, 1880.

c. Genesis 39:20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Proverbs 6:34 For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

### 3. THE TESTING OF A CHARACTER

#### a. What did Joseph's attitude in prison reveal? **Philippians 2:4.**

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"[Joseph] was condemned as a criminal to a gloomy prison, yet he did not become morose and look upon the discouraging features of his case. He kept his patience and his hope and faith. He did not close his heart against suffering humanity, he did not turn his attention to himself, but entered into the troubles of his fellow-prisoners, giving them his kindly sympathy. He found work to do, even in the prison. He was indeed a servant of servants. God was fitting him, in the school of affliction, for greater usefulness. He was learning to govern himself. From a position of honor and trust he had been suddenly abased to one of apparent degradation; but integrity, innocence, and virtue can never be degraded. God's will had been his ruling motive in prosperity, and he shows the same high regard for that will now that he is enclosed in prison walls. He carried his religion with him wherever he went, and in whatever situation he was placed."—*The Signs of the Times*, January 8, 1880.

a. **Philippians 2:4** Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

### 3. THE TESTING OF A CHARACTER

- b. While in prison, what type of qualities was God trying to inspire in Joseph? Genesis 40:1-4; 41:33, 38, 39; Proverbs 1:1-5; 14:35.

“[Joseph] did not brood upon his own wrongs, but forgot his sorrow in trying to lighten the sorrows of others. He found a work to do, even in the prison. God was preparing him in the school of affliction for greater usefulness, and he did not refuse the needful discipline. In the prison, witnessing the results of oppression and tyranny and the effects of crime, he learned lessons of justice, sympathy, and mercy, that prepared him to exercise power with wisdom and compassion.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 218.

“The formation of a noble character is the work of a lifetime and must be the result of diligent and persevering effort. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them.”—*Ibid.*, p. 223.

“We become overcomers by helping others to overcome. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. The keeping of the commandments of God will yield in us an obedient spirit, and the service that is the offspring of such a spirit, God can accept. . . . How many in our churches will seek to set such an example as will reflect to mankind the Light of the world?”—*The Review and Herald*, February 25, 1909.

b. Genesis 40:1-4 And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt. 2. And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. 3. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. 4. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward. Genesis 41:33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

Genesis 41:38-39 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

Proverbs 1:1-5 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; 2. To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; 3. To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; 4. To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. 5. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: Proverbs 14:35 The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causeth shame.

## 4. ANOTHER STEP IN GOD'S PLAN

- a. Through God's providence, how was Joseph able to minister to Pharaoh's butler and baker? Genesis 40:5–8 (first part). In whom did Joseph place his confidence when offering the interpretation? Verse 8 (last part); James 1:5.
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“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him’ (James 1:5). Such a promise is of more value than gold or silver. If with a humble heart you seek divine guidance in every trouble and perplexity, His word is pledged that a gracious answer will be given you. And His word can never fail.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 427.

- a. Genesis 40:5-8 And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison. 6. And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. 7. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? 8. And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.  
James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

#### 4. ANOTHER STEP IN GOD'S PLAN

- b. What was the dream of the chief butler, and how did Joseph interpret it? Genesis 40:9–13.
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“Then the butler related to Joseph his dream, which he interpreted, that the butler would be restored to the king’s favor, and deliver Pharaoh’s cup into his hand as he had formerly done. The butler was satisfied with the interpretation, and his mind was at once relieved.

“Joseph told the chief butler that in three days he would be no more a prisoner. He felt very grateful to Joseph because of the interest he had manifested for him, and the kind treatment he had received at his hands, and, above all, for helping him when in great distress of mind, by interpreting his dream.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 147.

- b. Genesis 40:9-13 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; 10. And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: 11. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. 12. And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: 13. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

## 4. ANOTHER STEP IN GOD'S PLAN

- c. The baker was excited to find out about his dream, but what was its meaning? Genesis 40:16–19. How accurate were Joseph's interpretations? Verses 20–22.

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“When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good’ (Genesis 40:16), he took courage and made known his dream. As soon as he related his dream, Joseph looked sad. He understood its terrible meaning. Joseph possessed a kind, sympathizing heart, yet his high sense of duty led him to give the truthful, yet sad, interpretation to the chief baker’s dream. He told him that the three baskets upon his head meant three days. And that, as in his dream, the birds ate the baked meats out of the upper basket, so they would eat his flesh hung upon a tree.”—Ibid., pp. 147, 148.

c. Genesis 40:16-19 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: 17. And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. 18. And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: 19. Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee. Genesis 40:20-22 And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. 21. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: 22. But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

## 5. LEARNING THE LESSONS OF TRUST

- a. After giving the interpretation of the butler's dream, what did Joseph ask of him, and why? Genesis 40:14, 15. How did the butler repay the kindness of Joseph? Verse 23.
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“The butler was guilty of the sin of ingratitude. After he had obtained relief from his anxiety, by the cheering interpretation of Joseph, he thought that he should, if brought again into the king's favor, certainly remember the captive Joseph, and speak in his favor to the king. He had seen the interpretation of the dream exactly fulfilled, yet in his prosperity he forgot Joseph in his affliction and confinement. Ingratitude is regarded by the Lord as among the most aggravating sins. And although abhorred by God and man, yet it is of daily occurrence.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 148.

- a. Genesis 40:14-15 But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: 15. For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.  
Genesis 40:23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him.

## 5. LEARNING THE LESSONS OF TRUST

- b. What important lesson did God desire Joseph to learn while in prison? Jeremiah 17:5; Isaiah 49:14–16. Why? 1 Corinthians 1:31.
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“For two years longer Joseph remained a prisoner. The hope that had been kindled in his heart gradually died out, and to all other trials was added the bitter sting of ingratitude.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 219.

“Faith is trusting God—believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness. Our lives, ourselves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessing. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life’s success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles.”—*Education*, p. 253.

b. Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

Isaiah 49:14-16 But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

1 Corinthians 1:31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What means does God use to develop character?
2. Why can we look to Him when facing trials?
3. How should we act when going through trials and difficulties?
4. How do we truly receive wisdom?
5. What should we remember when disappointed by human neglect?

# From a Dungeon to a Palace

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:10).

“From the dungeon Joseph was exalted to be ruler over all the land of Egypt. . . . The same fidelity to God was manifest when he stood in the palace of the Pharaohs as when in a prisoner’s cell. . . . Faithful attention to duty in every station, from the lowliest to the most exalted, had been training every power for its highest service.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 222.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1880.

## 1. PHARAOH'S DREAM

- a. After letting Joseph wait for two years from the time the butler was released, what dream did God give to Pharaoh? Genesis 41:1–7.
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“The king of Egypt had in one night two dreams, apparently pointing to the same event and seeming to foreshadow some great calamity. He could not determine their significance, yet they continued to trouble his mind. The magicians and wise men of his realm could give no interpretation.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 219.

a. Genesis 41:1-7 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. 2. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fattleshed; and they fed in a meadow. 3. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. 4. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. 5. And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. 6. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. 7. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

## 1. PHARAOH'S DREAM

- b. How was God trying to reveal Himself to Pharaoh, as He later did to Nebuchadnezzar? Genesis 41:8; Daniel 2:1–11, 29.

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“[Pharaoh] called for the magicians of Egypt and the wise men. The king thought that they would soon help him to understand these dreams, for they had a reputation of solving difficulties. The king related his dream to them but was greatly disappointed to find that with all their magic and boasted wisdom, they could not explain them.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 149.

- b. Genesis 41:8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Daniel 2:1-11 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. 2. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. 3. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream. 4. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. 5. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. 6. But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof. 7. They answered again and said, Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation of it. 8. The king answered and said, I know of certainty that ye would gain the time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. 9. But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof. 10. The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. 11. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. Daniel 2:29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

## 2. THE INTERPRETATION

- a. How did Pharaoh's predicament remind the butler of Joseph again? Genesis 41:9–13.

“The king’s perplexity and distress increased, and terror spread throughout his palace. The general agitation recalled to the chief butler’s mind the circumstances of his own dream; with it came the memory of Joseph, and a pang of remorse for his forgetfulness and ingratitude. He at once informed the king how his own dream and that of the chief baker had been interpreted by a Hebrew captive, and how the predictions had been fulfilled.

“It was humiliating to Pharaoh to turn away from the magicians and wise men of his kingdom to consult an alien and a slave, but he was ready to accept the lowliest service if his troubled mind might find relief. Joseph was immediately sent for; he put off his prison attire, and shaved himself, for his hair had grown long during the period of his disgrace and confinement. He was then conducted to the presence of the king.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 219, 220.

- a. Genesis 41:9-13 Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: 10. Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: 11. And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. 12. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. 13. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

## 2. THE INTERPRETATION

- b. What should we learn from Joseph's practice of sharing his knowledge of God with others? Genesis 41:14–16; 1 Peter 3:15.
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“Joseph’s answer to the king shows his strong faith and humble trust in God. He modestly disclaims all honor of possessing in himself superior wisdom to interpret. He tells the king that his knowledge is not greater than those whom he has consulted. ‘It is not in me’ (Genesis 41:16). God alone can explain these mysteries.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 150.

“Joseph brought God with him into Egypt, and the fact was made apparent by his cheerful demeanor amid his sorrow. . . .

“Joseph’s religion kept his temper sweet and his sympathy with humanity warm and strong, notwithstanding all his trials. There are those who if they feel they are not rightly used, become sour, ungenerous, crabbed and uncourteous in their words and deportment. They sink down discouraged, hateful and hating others. But Joseph was a Christian.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 320.

b. Genesis 41:14-16 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. 15. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. 16. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

1 Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

## 2. THE INTERPRETATION

- c. What prophecy was God revealing to Pharaoh through Joseph's interpretation, and why? Genesis 41:25–32; 2 Peter 1:19.
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c. Genesis 41:25-32 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do. 26. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. 27. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. 28. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. 29. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: 30. And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; 31. And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. 32. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

2 Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

### 3. EXALTED BY GOD

- a. What advice did Joseph give Pharaoh after interpreting the dream, and what can we learn from Joseph's experience? Genesis 41:33–37; James 4:10.
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“The king believed all that Joseph said. He believed that God was with him and was impressed with the fact that he was the most suitable man to be placed in authority at the head of affairs. He did not despise him because he was a Hebrew slave. He saw that he possessed an excellent spirit. ‘And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?’ (Genesis 41:38)—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 151, 152.

“He who receives Christ by living faith has a living connection with God and is a vessel unto honor. He carries with him the atmosphere of heaven, which is the grace of God, a treasure that the world cannot buy.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1097.

a. Genesis 41:33-37 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. 35. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. 37. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

### 3. EXALTED BY GOD

- b. How did all the trials and difficulties transform Joseph, and how did Pharaoh acknowledge this? Genesis 41:38–45; Acts 4:13.

“In all the realm Joseph was the only man gifted with wisdom to point out the danger that threatened the kingdom and the preparation necessary to meet it; and the king was convinced that he was the one best qualified to execute the plans which he had proposed. It was evident that a divine power was with him, and that there were none among the king’s officers of state so well qualified to conduct the affairs of the nation at this crisis. The fact that he was a Hebrew and a slave was of little moment when weighed against his evident wisdom and sound judgment. ‘Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?’ (Genesis 41:38) said the king to his counselors. . . .

“Joseph’s character bore the test alike of adversity and prosperity. The same fidelity to God was manifest when he stood in the palace of the Pharaohs as when in a prisoner’s cell. He was still a stranger in a heathen land, separated from his kindred, the worshipers of God; but he fully believed that the divine hand had directed his steps, and in constant reliance upon God he faithfully discharged the duties of his position. Through Joseph the attention of the king and great men of Egypt was directed to the true God; and though they adhered to their idolatry, they learned to respect the principles revealed in the life and character of the worshiper of Jehovah.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 221, 222.

- b. Genesis 41:38-45 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; 43. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. 44. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. 45. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt. Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

4. BLESSED BY THE LORD

- a. How many years of trials did Joseph pass through before finding his true freedom again? Genesis 37:2; 41:46. Why did it take so long? Psalms 27:14; 34:8.

“Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God’s purposes know no haste and no delay.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 32.

“The Lord permits those He loves to be brought into trial, that they may learn the precious lessons of trust and faith. If trials are received aright, they will prove of the highest value to us in our religious experience. As they lead us to put our trust more firmly in God, we become better acquainted with His character.”—*The Signs of the Times*, March 10, 1881.

“There is an evidence that is open to all—the most highly educated, and the most illiterate—the evidence of experience. God invites us to prove for ourselves the reality of His Word, the truth of His promises. He bids us ‘taste and see that the Lord is good’ (Psalm 34:8). Instead of depending upon the word of another, we are to taste for ourselves. . . . And as we draw near to Jesus, and rejoice in the fullness of His love, our doubt and darkness will disappear in the light of His presence.”—*The Faith I Live By*, p. 16.

- a. Genesis 37:2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.
- Genesis 41:46 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.
- Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.
- Psalms 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

4. BLESSED BY THE LORD

- b. What shows that Joseph truly believed the dream of Pharaoh to be a prophecy of the future? Genesis 41:46–49; James 2:17–22. How did God bless his faith? Genesis 41:53–57.

“Although Joseph was exalted as a ruler over all the land, yet he did not forget God. He knew that he was a stranger in a strange land, separated from his father and his brethren, which often caused him sadness, but he firmly believed that God’s hand had overruled his course, to place him in an important position. And depending on God continually, he performed all the duties of his office, as ruler over the land of Egypt with faithfulness. ‘And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering, for it was without number’ (Genesis 41:47–49).

“Joseph traveled throughout all the land of Egypt, giving command to build immense store-houses, and using his clear head and excellent judgment to aid in the preparations to secure food, necessary for the long years of famine.—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 152, 153.

b. Genesis 41:46-49 And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. 47. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. 48. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. 49. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

James 2:17-22 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22. Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? Genesis 41:53-57 And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. 54. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55. And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do. 56. And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. 57. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

## 5. GOD WILL RAISE US UP

- a. **How can we rise above any trials and difficulties which come our way? Isaiah 40:31; Psalm 11:1.**
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“Take the word of Christ as your assurance. Has He not invited you to come unto Him? Never allow yourself to talk in a hopeless, discouraged way. If you do you will lose much. By looking at appearances and complaining when difficulties and pressure come, you give evidence of a sickly, enfeebled faith. Talk and act as if your faith was invincible. The Lord is rich in resources; He owns the world. Look heavenward in faith. Look to Him who has light and power and efficiency.

“There is in genuine faith a buoyancy, a steadfastness of principle, and a fixedness of purpose that neither time nor toil can weaken.”—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 146, 147.

a. Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Psalms 11:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?

## 5. GOD WILL RAISE US UP

- b. Even though some things may look impossible through human eyes, what does Joseph's experience teach us? Compare Genesis 39:20 and Genesis 41:41; Mark 10:27.
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"The Lord chose Joseph, through much affliction to him, to carry a heavy burden in an idolatrous nation. He was to work in the line God had chosen for him, that the knowledge of God might shine forth in the kingdom of Egypt. Joseph did not betray his sacred trust."—*The Review and Herald*, May 25, 1897.

"The obstacles that are piled by Satan across your path, though apparently as insurmountable as the eternal hills, shall disappear before the demand of faith. 'Nothing shall be impossible unto you' (Matthew 17:20)."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 431.

"Man's extremity is God's opportunity."—*Conflict and Courage*, p. 336.

b. Genesis 39:20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Genesis 41:41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

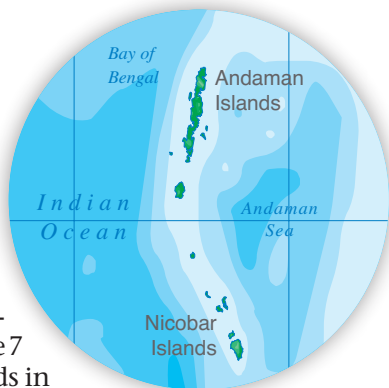
Mark 10:27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why did God give a heathen Pharaoh a prophetic dream?
2. More than anything else, why does prophecy testify to God's power and existence?
3. In what attitude should we be if we are to be used by God?
4. What experience does God want us all to have?
5. What should we remember the next time we find ourselves in a trial?

## First Sabbath Offering for a church in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

India is a federal constitutional republic governed under a parliamentary system consisting of 29 states and 7 union territories. It is a pluralistic, multilingual, and multi-ethnic society. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are one of the 7 union territories. There are 572 islands in the territory of 7,950 km<sup>2</sup> (3,070 sq. miles). Of these, about 34 are permanently inhabited.



In the early part of 2009 we learned of the reformation message through the *Sabbath Bible Lessons* received from a member of the church. We also studied further through a church website and expressed our interest to know more about the Reform Movement doctrines. No sooner had we expressed our interest, some brethren from the Reform Movement visited us. Shortly thereafter a group of six people were baptized and, in 2010, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Mission was formed.

As a newly established group we have been worshipping in a private house. We have now acquired a piece of land where we can erect a monument for the Lord. This would cost us about \$ 80,000, of which we have \$ 20,000. Since this is an island territory totally cut off from the Indian mainland, the costs of building materials are generally higher due to escalated air cargo and shipping costs.

The words of the Lord's messenger echo to us today: "The need for a meeting house where there is a newly formed company of believers has been presented before me in a panoramic view. I saw workmen building humble houses of worship. Those newly come to the faith were helping with willing hands, and those who had means were assisting with their means."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 435.

It is our prayerful and earnest request to all our beloved brethren and sisters, friends, and visitors from around the world that you consider and support this project with your kindness and generosity. The Lord, in turn, will surely enrich you with His grace.

May the peace of God be with you and help open your hearts to be a prayerful and giving soul towards this project in this difficult and unreached part of the world.

*Your brethren and sisters in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands*

# The First Encounter

**“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (1 Peter 4:12).**

“We are standing before God on test and trial to see if we can individually be trusted to be of the number of the family who shall compose the redeemed in heaven.”—*Christian Education*, p. 145.

**Suggested Reading:** *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 224–227.

## 1. THE REASON FOR FAMINE

- a. What hidden purpose did God have in allowing the famine to reach Canaan? Genesis 42:1, 2; 46:3. When we can't see God's purpose in our trials, what should we do? Proverbs 3:5, 6; Hebrews 11:6. Why?

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"We all desire immediate and direct answers to our prayers, and are tempted to become discouraged when the answer is delayed or comes in an unlooked-for form. But God is too wise and good to answer our prayers always at just the time and in just the manner we desire. He will do more and better for us than to accomplish all our wishes. And because we can trust His wisdom and love, we should not ask Him to concede to our will, but should seek to enter into and accomplish His purpose. Our desires and interests should be lost in His will.

"These experiences that test faith are for our benefit. By them it is made manifest whether our faith is true and sincere, resting on the word of God alone, or whether, depending on circumstances, it is uncertain and changeable. Faith is strengthened by exercise. We must let patience have its perfect work, remembering that there are precious promises in the Scriptures for those who wait upon the Lord."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 219.

- a. Genesis 42:1-2 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? 2. And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. Genesis 46:3 And he 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: Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

## 1. THE REASON FOR FAMINE

- b. Why did Jacob send only ten sons to Egypt; what was he scared of? Genesis 42:3, 4.
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b. Genesis 42:3-4 And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. 4. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

## 2. A TEST OF SINCERITY

- a. What did Joseph immediately think of when he recognized his brothers bowing down to him when they came for food? Genesis 42:5–9; 37:5–8.

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“As Joseph saw his brothers stooping and making obeisance, his dreams came to his mind, and the scenes of the past rose vividly before him. His keen eye, surveying the group, discovered that Benjamin was not among them. Had he also fallen a victim to the treacherous cruelty of those savage men? He determined to learn the truth.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 224, 225.

a. Genesis 42:5-9 And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. 6. And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. 7. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. 8. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. Genesis 37:5-8 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7. For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. 8. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

## 2. A TEST OF SINCERITY

- b. Why did his brothers fail to recognize Joseph? Genesis 42:8, 23; 41:42, 43, 45.
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“[Joseph’s] Hebrew name had been exchanged for the one bestowed upon him by the king, and there was little resemblance between the prime minister of Egypt and the stripling whom they had sold to the Ishmaelites.”—Ibid., p. 224.

b. Genesis 42:8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. Genesis 42:23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

Genesis 41:42-43 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; 43. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Genesis 41:45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

## 2. A TEST OF SINCERITY

- c. Why did Joseph put his brothers in prison for three days, and what would have been on their minds during this time? Genesis 42:9–17.
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“[Joseph] wished to learn if [his brothers] possessed the same haughty spirit they had when he was with them. . . .

“The three days of confinement were days of bitter sorrow with Jacob’s sons. They reflected upon their past wrong course, especially their cruelty to Joseph. They knew if they were convicted of being spies, and they could not bring evidence to clear themselves, they would all have to die, or become slaves. They doubted whether any effort any one of them might make would cause their father to consent to have Benjamin go from him, after the cruel death, as he thought, Joseph had suffered.—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 140–142.

“God . . . brings us into trying positions to see if we will trust in a power out of and above ourselves. Everyone has undiscovered traits of character that must come to light through trial. God allows those who are self-sufficient to be sorely tempted that they may understand their helplessness.”—*In Heavenly Places*, p. 279.

c. Genesis 42:9-17 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. 10. And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. 11. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies. 12. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. 13. And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. 14. And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies: 15. Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. 16. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies. 17. And he put them all together into ward three days.

### 3. WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

- a. Who was Joseph truly concerned for, and why? Genesis 42:18–20; 35:16–19.

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“[Joseph] was anxious to draw from [his brothers] some information in regard to his father and Benjamin. . . . His father and Benjamin are the very ones Joseph wishes to learn in regard to.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 140, 141.

a. Genesis 42:18-20 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God: 19. If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: 20. But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.  
Genesis 35:16-19 And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. 17. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. 18. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. 19. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

### 3. WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

- b. Why did his brothers think this calamity had come upon them? Genesis 42:21, 22. What effect did this conversation have on Joseph? Verses 23, 24 (first part).

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“[Jacob’s sons] sold Joseph as a slave, and they were fearful that God designed to punish them by suffering them to become slaves”—*Ibid.*, p. 142.

“They accused themselves in regard to their treatment of Joseph: ‘We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.’ Reuben, who had formed the plan for delivering him at Dothan, added, ‘Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required’ (Genesis 42:21, 22). Joseph, listening, could not control his emotions, and he went out and wept.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 226.

- b. Genesis 42:21-24 And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. 22. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required. 23. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. 24. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

### 3. WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

- c. When things go wrong in our lives, whom are we tempted to blame? Genesis 42:24–28. Who was actually the real cause of their troubles? Galatians 6:7, 8; Numbers 32:23.

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“Oh, that a right impression might be made upon the minds of young and old in regard to the exceeding sinfulness of sin! Oh, that all might have a just realization of its offensiveness to God, and its injury to mankind! The word of truth declares, ‘Be sure your sin will find you out’ (Numbers 32:23). The real character of every act of your life will be made known. It may be even in this life that through the providence of God, some unexpected circumstance will uncover your secret deeds of evil; but should you succeed in hiding your real character from the eyes of men, there is an inevitable day of exposure reserved for every soul who does not repent of his sins and forsake all evil through the strength of Christ, who has died that we might live.”—*The Review and Herald*, March 27, 1888.

c. Genesis 42:24-28 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes. 25. Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. 26. And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence. 27. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. 28. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us? Galatians 6:7-8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Numbers 32:23 But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.

## 4. THE REVELATION OF CHARACTER

- a. Why was Simeon left in prison? Genesis 42:24. What was Jacob's reaction when he was told the news? Verses 29–36.

“On his return [Joseph] commanded that Simeon be bound before them and again committed to prison. In the cruel treatment of their brother, Simeon had been the instigator and chief actor, and it was for this reason that the choice fell upon him.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 226.

“Jacob's affections cling to Benjamin with all the strength of a mother's love. He shows how deeply he has felt the loss of Joseph. But want presses upon Jacob and his children, and their households are calling for food.”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 158, 159.

- a. Genesis 42:24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

Genesis 42:29-36 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying, 30. The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. 31. And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies: 32. We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. 33. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone: 34. And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land. 35. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. 36. And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.

#### 4. THE REVELATION OF CHARACTER

- b. Explain why the declarations of Reuben and Judah reveal how the brothers' affection for their father and for one another had deepened since their betrayal of Joseph? Genesis 42:37; 43:8, 9.
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“During the years since Joseph had been separated from his brothers, these sons of Jacob had changed in character. Envious, turbulent, deceptive, cruel, and revengeful they had been; but now, when tested by adversity, they were shown to be unselfish, true to one another, devoted to their father, and, themselves middle-aged men, subject to his authority.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 225.

b. Genesis 42:37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

Genesis 43:8-9 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. 9. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:

## 4. THE REVELATION OF CHARACTER

- c. What tendency do we often manifest in our families when things go wrong? Genesis 43:1-7. Where did this weakness originate? Genesis 3:12, 13; Revelation 12:10.

“Let every family seek the Lord in earnest prayer for help to do the work of God. Let them overcome the habits of hasty speech and the desire to blame others. Let them study to be kind and courteous in the home, to form habits of thoughtfulness and care.

“What harm is wrought in the family circle by the utterance of impatient words, for the impatient utterance of one leads another to retort in the same spirit and manner. Then come words of retaliation, words of self-justification, and it is by such words that a heavy, galling yoke is manufactured for your neck; for all these bitter words will come back in a baleful harvest to your soul.”—*The Adventist Home*, pp. 438, 439.

- c. Genesis 43:1-7 And the famine was sore in the land. 2. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food. 3. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 4. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: 5. But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. 6. And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? 7. And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down? Genesis 3:12-13 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

## 5. LEARNING TO TRUST IN GOD'S MERCY

- a. **When Jacob felt cornered, into whose hands was he compelled to surrender? Genesis 42:19, 20; 43:8–14; Psalm 33:18–22.**

“Jacob feels compelled to permit his son Benjamin to go with his brethren. He also sent a present to the ruler, hoping therewith to obtain his favor. He also directed his sons to take double money, and return the money found in their sacks; for it might have been placed there by mistake. He says to them, ‘Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man’ (Genesis 43:13).

“As his sons were about to leave him to go on their doubtful journey, their aged father arose, and, while standing in their midst, raised his hands to heaven, and entreated the Lord to go with them, and pronounced upon them a gracious benediction. ‘And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved’ (Verse 14).”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, pp. 159, 160.

a. Genesis 42:19-20 If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: 20. But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

Genesis 43:8-14 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. 9. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: 10. For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time. 11. And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: 12. And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight: 13. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: 14. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

Psalms 33:18-22 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; 19. To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. 20. Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. 21. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. 22. Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

## 5. LEARNING TO TRUST IN GOD'S MERCY

- b. When we are faced with overwhelming circumstances, upon whom can we always rely? Lamentations 3:22, 23; Psalm 103:13–17.
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“If we cling to [the Captain of our salvation] by living faith, saying with Jacob, ‘I will not let thee go’ (Genesis 32:26); if we entreat, ‘Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me’ (Psalm 51:11), the promise is to us, ‘I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee’ (Hebrews 13:5).”—*Our High Calling*, p. 22.

b. Lamentations 3:22-23 It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.

Psalms 103:13-17 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. 15. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Explain how negative circumstances can benefit us in the long run.
2. How much faith can we put in God's prophecies?
3. What should we always remember when tempted to conceal a sin?
4. How does a family crisis often reveal true character?
5. What is mercy, and why do we depend upon it so much?

# The Second Encounter

**“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:12, 13).**

“There is greater power in love than was ever found in censure. Love will melt its way through barriers, while censure will close up every avenue of the soul.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 94.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Signs of the Times*, January 29, 1880.

## 1. THE FEAR OF RETRIBUTION

- a. As Joseph prepared a banquet for his brothers, what was foremost in their minds? Genesis 43:16–22.
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“Upon being conducted to the governor’s palace, the brothers were greatly alarmed, fearing that they were to be called to account for the money found in their sacks. They thought that it might have been intentionally placed there, to furnish occasion for making them slaves. In their distress they consulted with the steward of the house, relating to him the circumstances of their visit to Egypt; and in proof of their innocence informed him that they had brought back the money found in their sacks, also other money to buy food; and they added, ‘We cannot tell who put our money in our sacks’ (Genesis 43:22).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 228.

- a. Genesis 43:16-22 And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. 17. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. 18. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. 19. And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, 20. And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: 21. And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. 22. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

## 1. THE FEAR OF RETRIBUTION

- b. How does the servant's reaction tell that Joseph was indeed a missionary in Egypt? Verse 23; Romans 10:13–15.
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“Through Joseph the attention of the king and great men of Egypt was directed to the true God; and though they adhered to their idolatry, they learned to respect the principles revealed in the life and character of the worshiper of Jehovah.”—Ibid., p. 222.

b. Genesis 43:23 And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them.

Romans 10:13-15 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15. And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

## 2. A DREAM FULFILLED

- a. How did Joseph feel when he saw his younger brother for the first time in twenty years? Genesis 43:24–30.

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“When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he could scarcely restrain his brotherly feelings of love. He gave direction to make preparation for his brethren to dine with him. . . .

“When Joseph came home, his brethren gave him the present in the name of their father, and they bowed themselves to him to the earth.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 145, 146.

“Again [Joseph’s] dreams came to his mind, and after saluting his guests he hastened to ask, ‘Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?’ ‘Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive,’ was the answer, as they again made obeisance. Then his eye rested upon Benjamin, and he said, ‘Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?’ ‘God be gracious unto thee, my son;’ but, overpowered by feelings of tenderness, he could say no more. ‘He entered into his chamber, and wept there’ (Genesis 43:27–30).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 228.

a. Genesis 43:24-30 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. 25. And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there. 26. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. 27. And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? 28. And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance. 29. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. 30. And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there.

## 2. A DREAM FULFILLED

- b. What were the brothers of Joseph marvelling among themselves, as they dined with Joseph? Verses 31–33.
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“Joseph placed his brethren at the table, as was customary when their ages were known, commencing with the eldest, according to his birthright, arranging them in order down to the youngest, as though he perfectly knew their ages. His brethren were astonished at this act of Joseph, who they thought could have no knowledge of their ages.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 146, 147.

b. Genesis 43:31-33 And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread. 32. And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. 33. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

## 2. A DREAM FULFILLED

- c. **Why did Joseph seek to pamper Benjamin in front of his brothers? Verse 34.**
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“As [Joseph] sent a portion of food to each of his brethren, he sent Benjamin five times as much as the others. He did this not only to show his particular regard for his brother Benjamin, but to prove them, and see if they regarded Benjamin with the same envious feelings they had him. They thought that Joseph did not understand their language and were free to converse with one another in his presence; therefore Joseph had a good opportunity to learn the true state of their feelings without their knowledge.”—*Ibid.*, p. 147.

- c. Genesis 43:34 And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him.

### 3. THE TEST OF LOVE

- a. **Why did Joseph make a point by placing the cup in Benjamin's sack?**  
Genesis 44:1-6.
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“Still [Joseph] desired to test [his brothers] further, and before their departure he ordered that his own drinking cup of silver should be concealed in the sack of the youngest.

“Joyfully they set out on their return. Simeon and Benjamin were with them, their animals were laden with grain, and all felt that they had safely escaped the perils that had seemed to surround them. But they had only reached the outskirts of the city when they were overtaken by the governor's steward, who uttered the scathing inquiry, ‘Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?’ (Genesis 44:4).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 229.

a. Genesis 44:1-6 And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. 2. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. 3. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. 4. And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? 5. Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing. 6. And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

### 3. THE TEST OF LOVE

- b. How did the brothers react when they saw the cup inside Benjamin's sack? Genesis 44:11–13. Why did the servant begin with the eldest brother?
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“Kings and rulers had a cup from which they drank, which was considered a sure detective if any poisonous substance was placed in their drink. . . . ‘Then [Jacob’s sons] speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And [Joseph’s steward] searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack’ (Genesis 44:11, 12).

“At this discovery all were greatly surprised; and, to express their great distress, they rent their garments, which was the custom when in great affliction. Benjamin was more amazed and confounded than his brethren. They returned into the city sorrowful and afraid. They thought that the hand of God was against them for their past wickedness.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 147, 148.

b. Genesis 44:11-13 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. 12. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

## 3. THE TEST OF LOVE

- c. Why is it important to select our words carefully, even when we feel confident? Genesis 44:7–10; Matthew 12:36, 37.
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“By their own promise, Benjamin was appointed to a life of slavery. And the fears of their father they thought would be fully realized. Mischief had befallen his much-loved Benjamin.”—*Ibid.*, p. 148.

c. Genesis 44:7-10 And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing: 8. Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? 9. With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen. 10. And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

Matthew 12:36-37 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

#### 4. THE BROTHERS' LOVE REVEALED

- a. What act of Judah shows that the brothers had fully repented of their treacherous sin committed twenty years before? Genesis 44:14–34; John 15:12, 13.

“Judah told his brethren that God had found out their iniquity for selling their brother in Egypt, and was now returning upon them their transgressions, by permitting them to become slaves also.

“Joseph refused to accept them all, according to the word of Judah, as bondmen. . . . Judah spoke with Joseph aside from the rest, and related to him the reluctance of his father to let Benjamin come with them to Egypt, and that he pledged himself to become surety for Benjamin, that if he brought him not to his father, he would bear the blame forever. He eloquently pleaded in behalf of his father, relating his great grief at the loss of Joseph, and that Benjamin was all that was left of the mother which his father loved, and that if Benjamin should be separated from his father, he would die; for his life was bound up in the lad's life. Judah then nobly offered to become a slave instead of his brother; for he could not meet his father without Benjamin.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, pp. 148, 149.

- a. Genesis 44:14-34 And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground. 15. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? 16. And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found. 17. And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father. 18. Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh. 19. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? 20. And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. 21. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. 22. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die. 23. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. 24. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. 25. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. 26. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. 27. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: 28. And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: 29. And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. 30. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; 31. It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. 32. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. 33. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. 34. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.
- John 15:12-13 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

## 4. THE BROTHERS' LOVE REVEALED

- b. After Judah's plea to spare Benjamin and to save his father from grief, what was Joseph compelled to do? Genesis 45:1, 2.
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“Joseph was satisfied. He had proved his brethren and had seen in them the fruits of true repentance for their sins; and he was so deeply affected that he could no longer conceal his feelings and requested to be left alone with his brethren. He then gave vent to his long-suppressed feelings and wept aloud.”—Ibid., p. 149.

- b. Genesis 45:1-2 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. 2. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

#### 4. THE BROTHERS' LOVE REVEALED

c. Why were his brothers troubled at Joseph's revelation? Genesis 45:3, 4.

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"[Joseph's] brothers stood motionless, dumb with fear and amazement. The ruler of Egypt their brother Joseph, whom they had envied and would have murdered, and finally sold as a slave! All their ill treatment of him passed before them. They remembered how they had despised his dreams and had labored to prevent their fulfillment. Yet they had acted their part in fulfilling these dreams; and now that they were completely in his power he would, no doubt, avenge the wrong that he had suffered."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 230.

c. Genesis 45:3-4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. 4. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

**5. FORGIVENESS: A HEALER**

- a. How did Joseph show his care for his brothers' feelings and his forgiveness towards them? Genesis 45:5.
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“As Joseph saw the confusion of his brethren, he said to them, ‘Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt’ (Genesis 45:4). He nobly sought to make this occasion as easy for his brethren as possible. He had no desire to increase their embarrassment by censuring them. He felt that they had suffered enough for their cruelty to him, and he endeavored to comfort them.”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 150.

- a. Genesis 45:5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

**5. FORGIVENESS: A HEALER**

- b. **What is the only way any relationship can be healed and restored? Matthew 18:21, 22; Colossians 3:12, 13. What is the biggest stumbling block to restoration? Proverbs 13:10.**
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“It is always humiliating to have one’s errors pointed out. None should make the experience more bitter by needless censure. No one was ever reclaimed by reproach; but many have thus been repelled and have been led to steel their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 166.

“If pride and selfishness were laid aside, five minutes would remove most difficulties. Angels have been grieved and God displeased by the hours which have been spent in justifying self.”—*Early Writings*, p. 119.

b. Matthew 18:21-22 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22. Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Proverbs 13:10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What will happen to those around us if we let our light shine as Joseph did?
2. Explain why Joseph was still wary of trusting his brothers.
3. Why did Joseph order the cup to be placed in Benjamin's sack?
4. How did Joseph know his brothers had changed?
5. What or who is the greatest stumbling block to reconciliation?

# The Family Reunion

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“All experiences and circumstances are God’s workmen whereby good is brought to us. Let us look at the light behind the cloud.”—*My Life Today*, p. 185.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Signs of the Times*, February 5, 1880.

**1. GOD'S LEADING**

- a. How did Joseph reveal to his brothers that everything which had happened before came as a result of God's providence and not by human will? Genesis 45:5-13.
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a. Genesis 45:5-13 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. 9. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: 10. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: 11. And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty. 12. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. 13. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

## 1. GOD'S LEADING

- b. As Christians, what should we always seek and acknowledge?  
James 4:13–15; Proverbs 16:9; Matthew 26:39.
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“Many are still tested. . . . They do not hear the voice of God speaking directly from the heavens, but He calls them by the teachings of His word and the events of His providence. They may be required to abandon a career that promises wealth and honor, to leave congenial and profitable associations, and separate from kindred, to enter upon what appears to be only a path of self-denial, hardship, and sacrifice. God has a work for them to do; but a life of ease and the influence of friends and kindred would hinder the development of the very traits essential for its accomplishment. He calls them away from human influences and aid, and leads them to feel the need of His help, and to depend upon Him alone, that He may reveal Himself to them. Who is ready at the call of Providence to renounce cherished plans and familiar associations? Who will accept new duties and enter untried fields, doing God’s work with firm and willing heart, for Christ’s sake counting his losses gain?”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 126, 127.

b. James 4:13-15 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

Matthew 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

## 2. THE GOOD NEWS

- a. How sweet are God's ways if we only wait for them? Genesis 45:14, 15. What did Joseph's brethren have to confess?
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"[Joseph's brethren] humbly confessed their wrongs which they had committed against Joseph, and entreated his forgiveness, and were greatly rejoiced to find that he was alive; for they had suffered remorse and great distress of mind since their cruelty toward him. And now as they knew that they were not guilty of his blood, their troubled minds were relieved.

"Joseph gladly forgave his brethren, and sent them away abundantly provided with provisions, and carriages, and everything necessary for the removal of their father's family, and their own, to Egypt."—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 151.

- a. Genesis 45:14-15 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

## 2. THE GOOD NEWS

- b. What event reveals Joseph's great love for his younger brother? Genesis 45:16–23. Why did Joseph offer a caution as his brothers departed? Verse 24.

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"[Joseph] was afraid that [his brothers] might enter into a dispute, and charge upon one another the cause of their guilt in regard to their cruel treatment of himself."—Ibid., pp. 151, 152.

b. Genesis 45:16-24 And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. 17. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; 18. And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. 19. Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours. 21. And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. 22. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. 23. And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. 24. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

## 2. THE GOOD NEWS

- c. How did Jacob react to the news that Joseph was still alive, and what grievous sin did the brothers have to confess after all those years? Genesis 45:25–28.

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“The sons of Jacob returned to their father with the joyful tidings, ‘Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.’ At first the aged man was overwhelmed; he could not believe what he heard; but when he saw the long train of wagons and loaded animals, and when Benjamin was with him once more, he was convinced, and in the fullness of his joy exclaimed, ‘It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die’ (Genesis 45:26, 28).

“Another act of humiliation remained for the ten brothers. They now confessed to their father the deceit and cruelty that for so many years had embittered his life and theirs. Jacob had not suspected them of so base a sin, but he saw that all had been overruled for good, and he forgave and blessed his erring children.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 231, 232.

c. Genesis 45:25-28 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, 26. And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. 27. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: 28. And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

### 3. JACOB REGAINS HIS SON

- a. What should we learn from the way Jacob wanted to be sure of God's blessing before leaving the promised land of Canaan? Genesis 46:1–7.

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“[Jacob] commenced his journey with gladness of heart, and when he came to Beersheba he offered grateful sacrifices, and entreated God to bless him, and make known to him if he was pleased with their moving into Egypt. Jacob wanted an evidence from God that he would go with them. [Genesis 46:2–4 quoted.]”—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 152.

“We are to come to the Lord with all our burdens, seeking wisdom from above to guide us at every step.”—*The Signs of the Times*, August 15, 1892.

- a. Genesis 46:1-7 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. 2. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. 3. And he 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: 4. 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. 5. And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: 7. His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

### 3. JACOB REGAINS HIS SON

- b. Why did God desire His people to move to Egypt? Genesis 46:3; 12:1, 2; Psalm 105:17, 20–24.
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“The promise had been given to Abraham of a posterity numberless as the stars, but as yet the chosen people had increased but slowly. And the land of Canaan now offered no field for the development of such a nation as had been foretold. It was in the possession of powerful heathen tribes, that were not to be dispossessed until ‘the fourth generation’ (Genesis 15:16). If the descendants of Israel were here to become a numerous people, they must either drive out the inhabitants of the land or disperse themselves among them. . . . Egypt, however, offered the conditions necessary to the fulfillment of the divine purpose. A section of country well-watered and fertile was open to them there, affording every advantage for their speedy increase.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 232.

- b. Genesis 46:3 And he 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:  
Genesis 12:1-2 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:  
Psalms 105:17 He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:  
Psalms 105:20-24 The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. 21. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: 22. To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom. 23. Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. 24. And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.

### 3. JACOB REGAINS HIS SON

c. How was Jacob's dying wish granted? Genesis 46:29, 30.

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"[To the land of Goshen] came Joseph in his chariot of state, attended by a princely retinue. The splendor of his surroundings and the dignity of his position were alike forgotten; one thought alone filled his mind, one longing thrilled his heart. As he beheld the travelers approaching, the love whose yearnings had for so many long years been repressed, would no longer be controlled. He sprang from his chariot and hastened forward to bid his father welcome."—*Ibid.*, p. 233.

c. Genesis 46:29-30 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. 30. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

## 4. SEEKING NO REVENGE

- a. Why did Jacob make Joseph swear to carry his body back to the land of Canaan? Genesis 47:27–31; 17:8.
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a. Genesis 47:27-31 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. 28. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. 29. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30. But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. 31. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Genesis 17:8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

#### 4. SEEKING NO REVENGE

- b. What did Joseph's brothers fear when Jacob died—and why? Genesis 50:14–18.
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“After the burial of Jacob fear again filled the hearts of Joseph's brothers. Notwithstanding his kindness toward them, conscious guilt made them distrustful and suspicious. It might be that he had but delayed his revenge, out of regard to their father, and that he would now visit upon them the long-deferred punishment for their crime. They dared not appear before him in person but sent a message: ‘Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin.’ . . . This message affected Joseph to tears, and, encouraged by this, his brothers came and fell down before him, with the words, ‘Behold, we be thy servants.’ Joseph's love for his brothers was deep and unselfish, and he was pained at the thought that they could regard him as cherishing a spirit of revenge toward them. ‘Fear not,’ he said; ‘for am I in the place of God?’ (Genesis 50:16–19).”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 239.

- b. Genesis 50:14-18 And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father. 15. And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him. 16. And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, 17. So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. 18. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

#### 4. SEEKING NO REVENGE

- c. Explain why Joseph was not resentful nor revengeful. Genesis 50:19–21; Romans 12:17–21.
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“When Joseph’s brethren acknowledged their sin before him, he freely forgave them, and showed by his acts of benevolence and love that he harbored no resentful feelings for their former cruel conduct toward him.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 5, 1880.

“One of the most common sins, and one that is attended with most pernicious results, is the indulgence of an unforgiving spirit. How many will cherish animosity or revenge and then bow before God and ask to be forgiven as they forgive. Surely they can have no true sense of the import of this prayer or they would not dare to take it upon their lips. . . . If, in all their daily intercourse, Christians would carry out the principles of this prayer, what a blessed change would be wrought in the church and in the world! This would be the most convincing testimony that could be given to the reality of Bible religion.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, pp. 170, 171.

c. Genesis 50:19-21 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? 20. But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. 21. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Romans 12:17-21 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

## 5. THE PROMISED LAND

- a. What prophetic promise did Joseph give to his loved ones just before he died, and who was called to fulfill that promise? Genesis 50:22–26; Exodus 3:1–10.
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“[Exodus 3:2–10 quoted.] The time had fully come when God would have Moses exchange the shepherd’s staff for the rod of God, which he would make powerful in accomplishing signs and wonders, in delivering His people from oppression, and in preserving them when pursued by their enemies”—*Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 3, p. 188.

- a. Genesis 50:22-26 And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. 23. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees. 24. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 25. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. 26. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Exodus 3:1-10 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 6. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. 7. And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 8. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. 10. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

## 5. THE PROMISED LAND

- b. Why was this promise so important to Joseph and his descendants? Genesis 17:7, 8; Hebrews 11:13–16.
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“God gave to Abraham a view of this immortal inheritance, and with this hope he was content. ‘By faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God’ (Hebrews 11:9, 10).

“Of the posterity of Abraham it is written, ‘These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth’ (Verse 13). We must dwell as pilgrims and strangers here if we would gain ‘a better country, that is, an heavenly’ (Verse 16). Those who are children of Abraham will be seeking the city which he looked for, ‘whose builder and maker is God.’”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 170.

b. Genesis 17:7-8 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Hebrews 11:13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. How can believing in God's providence change our attitude in life?
2. Why is it far better to confess our sins earlier rather than later?
3. List the reasons why God led His people to Egypt.
4. What sin too often destroys the love and peace between siblings?
5. Where was the faith of the patriarchs focused?

# A Type of Christ

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5).

“The life of Joseph illustrates the life of Christ.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 239.

**Suggested Reading:** *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 200–215.

**1. BETRAYED BY HIS BRETHREN**

- a. How did Jacob's sons betrayal of Joseph compare to Christ's betrayal? Genesis 37:18; John 1:11; Matthew 21:37-39.
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"The life of Joseph illustrates the life of Christ. It was envy that moved the brothers of Joseph to sell him as a slave; they hoped to prevent him from becoming greater than themselves. And when he was carried to Egypt, they flattered themselves that they were to be no more troubled with his dreams, that they had removed all possibility of their fulfillment. But their own course was overruled by God to bring about the very event that they designed to hinder. So the Jewish priests and elders were jealous of Christ, fearing that He would attract the attention of the people from them. They put Him to death, to prevent Him from becoming king, but they were thus bringing about this very result."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 239.

- a. Genesis 37:18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.  
John 1:11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.  
Matthew 21:37-39 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. 38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. 39. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

## 1. BETRAYED BY HIS BRETHREN

- b. In what way was the selling of Joseph likened to Judas selling Christ? Genesis 37:28; Matthew 26:14–16.
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“Joseph was sold to his enemies by his own brethren for a small sum of money. The Son of God was sold to His bitterest enemies by one of His own disciples. Jesus was meek and holy. His was a life of unexampled self-denial, goodness, and holiness. He was not guilty of any wrong. Yet false witnesses were hired to testify against Him. He was hated because He had been a faithful reprove of sin and corruption.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1096.

b. Genesis 37:28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Matthew 26:14-16 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15. And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. 16. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

## 2. WRONGLY ACCUSED

- a. What happened to the garments of Joseph and Christ? Genesis 37:23, 31; Matthew 27:28, 35.
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“Joseph’s brethren stripped him of his coat of many colors. The executioners of Jesus cast lots for His seamless coat.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E. G. White Comments], vol. 1, p. 1096.

a. Genesis 37:23-31 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24. And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. 25. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? 27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. 29. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? 31. And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; Matthew 27:28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. Matthew 27:35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

## 2. WRONGLY ACCUSED

- b. How did the actions of those who opposed Joseph and Christ bring about their very own salvation? Genesis 50:20, 21; Acts 2:36–38.
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“Joseph, by being sold by his brethren into Egypt, became a saviour to his father’s family. Yet this fact did not lessen the guilt of his brethren. The crucifixion of Christ by His enemies made Him the Redeemer of mankind, the Saviour of the fallen race, and ruler over the whole world. But the crime of his enemies was just as heinous as though God’s providential hand had not controlled events for His own glory and the good of man.”—*The Signs of the Times*, February 5, 1880.

- b. Genesis 50:20-21 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. 21. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.
- Acts 2:36-38 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

## 2. WRONGLY ACCUSED

- c. How did Joseph's attitude in suffering typify Christ's sufferings? Genesis 39:19, 20; Isaiah 53:6-8.
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"Joseph walked with God. And when he was imprisoned and suffered because of his innocence, he meekly bore it without murmuring. His self-control, his patience in adversity, and his unwavering fidelity are left on record for the benefit of all who should afterward live on the earth."—Ibid.

"Close to the cross are the blind, bigoted, faithless priests and elders, taunting, mocking, and jeering: 'Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself' (Matthew 27:40). . . .

"Not one word did Jesus answer to all this. While the nails were being driven through His hands, and the sweat drops of agony were forced from His pores, from the pale, quivering lips of the innocent Sufferer a prayer of pardoning love was breathed for His murderers: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.' (Luke 23:34)." — *Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 208, 209.

c. Genesis 39:19-20 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. 20. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Isaiah 53:6-8 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

## 3. EXALTED TO HONOR

- a. After being freed from prison, Joseph was made second ruler; he was given a new name; and everyone was to bow to him. How does this compare to Christ, after He was freed from the prison of death? Genesis 41:41–45; Hebrews 10:12, 13; 1:3, 4; Philippians 2:9–11.

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“When man rebelled, Christ became his surety and substitute. He undertook the combat with the powers of darkness; and when through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, the highest honors were bestowed upon Him. He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive and sat down at the right hand of God—the very Jesus who had borne the curse of sin for us. And there was given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. To Him God has delegated His power; He has the keys of death and the grave.”—*Bible Echo*, January 15, 1889.

- a. Genesis 41:41-45 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; 43. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. 44. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. 45. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt. Hebrews 10:12-13 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. Hebrews 1:3-4 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4. Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Philippians 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### 3. EXALTED TO HONOR

- b. What similarities can be found in the life mission of both Joseph and Christ? How did God use each of them to save life? Genesis 45:5-8; John 3:16, 17; 6:53, 63; 5:24.

“The story of a crucified and risen Saviour is the great central theme of the Word of God. In the psalms, in the prophecies, in the gospels, and in the epistles, God has by revelation made prominent the vital truths concerning the agreement between the Father and the Son in providing for the salvation of a lost race.

“Christ was crucified to save the world. For His enemies, for a race in rebellion against God, our Saviour suffered the most excruciating agonies that human flesh could endure. He has made ample provision for sinners, that they need not perish. In the light of His death-agony on the cross, we may know that whosoever will truly repent and receive Him as a personal Saviour will receive everlasting life.”—*The Review and Herald*, September 24, 1908.

“The gospel invitation is to be given to all the world. . . .

“The world is perishing for want of the gospel. There is a famine for the word of God. There are few who preach the word unmixed with human tradition. Though men have the Bible in their hands, they do not receive the blessing that God has placed in it for them. The Lord calls upon His servants to carry His message to the people. The word of everlasting life must be given to those who are perishing in their sins.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, pp. 228, 229.

b. Genesis 45:5-8 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 6:53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

#### 4. THE PROMISED LAND

- a. In what way does the carrying of Joseph's body to Canaan symbolize the hope of the heavenly Canaan? Genesis 50:25; Exodus 13:18, 19; Hebrews 11:22, 39, 40.

"Through the centuries of toil which followed, the coffin, a reminder of the dying words of Joseph, testified to Israel that they were only sojourners in Egypt, and bade them keep their hopes fixed upon the Land of Promise, for the time of deliverance would surely come."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 240.

"The only hope for the Jewish nation was in their acceptance of Christ, in forsaking their sins, and being reconciled to God. United to Christ, they would indeed become a great nation. He would work for them as He had worked for them in the past. If they were obedient, He would lead them to the heavenly Canaan as He had planted them in the earthly Canaan."—*The Signs of the Times*, July 21, 1898.

- a. Genesis 50:25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

Exodus 13:18-19 But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. 19. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

Hebrews 11:39-40 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

#### 4. THE PROMISED LAND

- b. What is our hope as we journey through this world? 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; John 14:1–3.

“We are indeed strangers here, and pilgrims to a better country. Our prospective home is the heavenly Canaan, where we shall drink of the ‘pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.’ (Revelation 22:1).”—*The Review and Herald*, November 17, 1885.

“I am bidden to say to you that you know not how soon the crisis will come. It is stealing gradually upon us, as a thief. The sun shines in the heavens, passing over its usual round, and the heavens still declare the glory of God; men are pursuing their usual course of eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage; merchants are still engaged in buying and selling; publications are still issuing one upon another; men are jostling one against another, seeking to get the highest place; pleasure lovers are still attending theaters, horse races, gambling hells, and the highest excitement prevails; but probation’s hour is fast closing, and every case is about to be eternally decided. There are few who believe with heart and soul that we have a heaven to win and a hell to shun; but these show their faith by their works.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, pp. 413, 414.

b. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

John 14:1-3 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

## 5. THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

- a. What is the only way we can become as faithful to God as Joseph was? Philippians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Hebrews 12:2.
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“Precious are the privileges accorded him who abides in Christ. . . . The mind of Christ dwells in His faithful followers; their desires are in accordance with His will; their petitions are indited by His Spirit. They obtain answers to their prayers; for they ask for such blessings as He delights to bestow.”—*Our High Calling*, p. 147.

a. Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

5. THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST

- b. In these last days of prevailing wickedness, what should we desire above everything else? 1 John 3:2, 3; 1 Peter 2:21–23; 5:10.

“When man is in fellowship with God, that unswerving purpose which preserved Joseph and Daniel amidst the corruption of heathen courts will make his a life of unsullied purity. His robes of character will be spotless. In his life the light of Christ will be undimmed. The bright and morning Star will appear shining steadfastly above him in changeless glory.

“Such a life will be an element of strength in the community. It will be a barrier against evil, a safeguard to the tempted, a guiding light to those who, amidst difficulties and discouragements, are seeking the right way.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 136.

“We shall pass through this world but once. Shall we not strive to leave on those with whom we associate the impress of the character of Christ?”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 193.

b. 1 John 3:2-3 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

1 Peter 2:21-23 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

**PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Who are often the worst enemies of the faithful?
2. What should our attitude be when persecuted for the truth's sake?
3. For what is the world starving today, and how can we help to bring relief?
4. Why are the faithful regarded as pilgrims and strangers in this world?
5. What stands out the most when you consider the life of Joseph?

# First Sabbath Offerings



**JANUARY 3**  
for a church in Nigeria  
(See p. 4.)

**FEBRUARY 7**  
for the General Conference  
Educational Center  
(See p. 30.)



**MARCH 7**  
for a church in  
the Andaman and Nicobar  
Islands, India  
(See p. 51.)