

## CGYG & LIFE Bible Study – Genesis 37:1 – 39:23

### **Genesis 37:1-11** – Joseph's Dreams – Setting the stage

1. Describe Joseph's family situation. How was a generational sin manifesting itself in this family? (cf. Gen. 25:28)
2. What is the significance of the coat given to Joseph by Jacob? Why did it cause his brothers to hate him more?
3. What were Joseph's dreams about, and why did he have (more or less) the same dream twice? (cf. Gen. 41:28-32) What can we learn about his character/personality by his response to the dreams?

### **Genesis 37:12-36** – Sold into slavery

1. Revisit the events that occurred when Joseph was sent to his brothers. What do we learn about his brothers? How do their lives illustrate the Bible's warnings about hatred? (cf. Matt. 5:21-22; 1 John 2:9-11, 3:15)
2. How did Joseph's life change, and did he deserve what happened to him?

### **Genesis 38:1-30** – Judah and Tamar

1. What was different about Judah's wife vs. Isaac and Jacob's wives? What does his spousal selection and his interaction with the "prostitute" tell us about his character up to this time?
2. What happened between Judah's sons and Tamar? How did Judah wrong Tamar after his first 2 sons died? (cf. Deuteronomy 25:5-10)

3. Why did Judah reckon Tamar as “more righteous” than he? What does this moment in Judah’s life indicate?
  
4. How was God at work even through Judah and Tamar’s actions? (Ruth 4:12, 18-22, Matthew 1:1-16, esp. v.3)

**Genesis 39:1-23 – Joseph in slavery**

1. What do we learn about Joseph’s character through his conduct in this chapter? How did he attain the success he experienced at Potiphar’s house and later, in jail? (see also Psalm 1:1-3; Colossians 3:22-24)
  
2. If God was with Joseph, why did Joseph get falsely accused and thrown in prison? (cf. James 1:2-4)
  
3. How did Joseph deal with sexual temptation? How does his conduct contrast with Judah’s in Genesis 38?

**Aliens and Strangers**

The story of Joseph marks a new epoch in our journey through Genesis. The competition between Leah and Rachel’s children, Jacob’s favoritism, and his dreams and insensitivity made Joseph a very unpopular person to his brothers. The tremendous hatred his brothers had for him moved them to murderous intents, and they eventually sold him as a slave. Despite becoming a slave, however, Joseph did not allow himself to be enslaved to anger or self-pity. He lived by faith, while God prospered him. By accepting God’s sovereignty in the unfortunate events in his life, he refused to compromise his integrity and regarded God as utmost in his life. In contrast Judah, living in freedom and relative prosperity, chose the wrong friends and gratified his sinful desires, thus bringing great shame to himself and God’s name.

In these very ordinary events, God’s sovereign grace was not absent. There are no accidents. As we’ll see in later studies, Joseph was sent to Egypt ultimately to prepare the nation to save countless people from a forthcoming famine. He became the first of Abraham’s descendants to enter Egypt, where they would grow into a great nation. Even in Judah’s sin, God was sovereignly preserving the Messianic line, from which would come the Lion of Judah – Jesus Christ.

In our day to day lives, let us follow the example of Joseph. Let us not forget God’s sovereignty, and His desire for holiness and righteousness in our lives. Let us also not be surprised at any suffering we will encounter, as it has been granted to us on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but to suffer for Him (Phil 1:29). Because we are aliens and strangers in the world, chosen out of the world, the world will hate us. But we can be joyful because how we endure suffering is how our faith is proven genuine (1 Peter 1:7) and how we ourselves are shaped by God and prepared for His work (James 1:2-4).