



## Lesson 28

# Joseph's Dream

### Story Elements

- **TEXT:** Gen. 37:1-36
- **Setting:** circa 1730 B.C. in Hebron.
- **Main Characters:** God, Jacob, Joseph, and his brothers
- **Plot:** Joseph has dreams that prophesy of future exaltation; his jealous brothers conspire against him.
- **Key word(s):** " \_\_\_\_\_ " (vv 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 20)
- **Climax:** *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.

### Coat of Many Colors

- (v 1) Jacob and his family continued to dwell in Canaan – specifically in Hebron. The Bible emphasizes Jacob's status as a sojourner by describing his surroundings as the same place where "his father was a \_\_\_\_\_."
- (vv 2-3) This story takes place when Joseph was 17 years of age.
  - Joseph was the firstborn son of \_\_\_\_\_, Jacob's favorite wife; Joseph was also born when Jacob was old - naturally, he became Jacob's favorite son.
  - Jacob showered affection on Joseph by making him a coat of many colors, i.e. a brightly colored \_\_\_\_\_, and by giving him responsibilities like a chief shepherd. (Gen. 37:2)
  - (v 4) Joseph's preferential treatment caused his brothers to despise him and to continually \_\_\_\_\_ him.

### Clairvoyant Dreams

- (vv 5-11) Joseph was given two prophetic dreams:
  - The first pictured \_\_\_\_\_ (bundles of grain) representing each member of the family. Joseph's sheaf stood upright while the other sheaves bowed down to his.
  - The second pictured 11 stars (representing his brothers) and the \_\_\_\_\_ and the moon (representing his father and mother) doing obeisance to him.
- Joseph's dreams worsened his brothers' animosity – "they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his \_\_\_\_\_." (v 8)
- (v 11) While the brothers rejected Joseph's dreams, Jacob "observed the saying." What do you think this means? \_\_\_\_\_

### Conspiracy to Kill

- (vv 12-17) Jacob sent Joseph to check on the flocks his brothers were pasturing in Shechem. Joseph finally caught up with his brothers in \_\_\_\_\_ – about 65 miles north of Hebron.
- (vv 18-20) When they saw Joseph approaching from afar, one of the brothers suggested they murder Joseph and make his death look like an animal attack.

- (a) (vv 21-22) Reuben, the eldest son, pleaded for his brothers to spare the child's life; his plan was to \_\_\_\_\_ Joseph out of the pit and return him safely to his father.
- (b) (vv 23-24) When Joseph drew close, the brothers attacked him, stripped him of his coat, and threw him into a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. (vv 26-28) Later, as the brothers dined, a band of Ishmaelite traders approached.
- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ suggested selling Joseph into slavery – thereby avoiding murder and making a quick buck.
- (b) (v 29-30) Reuben was absent when Joseph was sold to the traders, and his sincere sorrow for Joseph was evidenced in the rending of his clothes. He expressed his desperation when he asked, “\_\_\_\_\_ shall I go?” But because Reuben was the eldest and therefore responsible for Joseph's wellbeing, he played along with the coverup.
9. (vv 30-32) The brothers ripped up Joseph's coat and soaked it in the blood of a \_\_\_\_\_ to make it look as if he was attacked by a wild animal. Then they took it to Jacob as evidence of Joseph's “accidental” death. Jacob, who had deceived his own father, was now deceived by his sons.
10. (vv 33-36) Jacob was devastated and vowed to mourn Joseph's death until his own. Meanwhile, Joseph ended up a slave in \_\_\_\_\_ house, a high-ranking Egyptian.

## Application

11. Joseph is one of the most vivid pictures of Christ in the Old Testament. Notice the parallels in this story:
- (a) Both Jesus and Joseph were their father's \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 3:17)
- (b) Both were sent by their fathers to their \_\_\_\_\_. (Heb. 2:12)
- (c) Both were \_\_\_\_\_ by their brethren. (John 1:11) Matthew Henry remarks, “The reign and dominion of Jesus Christ, our Joseph, have been, and are, despised and striven against by a carnal and unbelieving world, who cannot endure to think that this man should reign over them.”<sup>1</sup>
- (d) Both were \_\_\_\_\_ against by their brethren. (John 11:53)

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): “dream” • 1. stranger • 2. a) Rachel; b) tunic; c) harass • 3. a) sheaves; b) sun • 4. words • 5. Jacob began to believe that Joseph was receiving divine revelations. • 6. Dothan • 7. a) rescue; b) pit • 8. a) Judah; b) Whither • 9. goat • 10. Potiphar's • 11. a) beloved son; b) brethren; c) hated; d) conspired

**How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study:** (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.

<sup>1</sup> Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.