



**WEEK 2**

HIS PRESENCE IS PERFECT

Now enslaved in Egypt, Joseph thrives in his service to Potiphar, a leading official in Pharaoh's army. In the center of this powerful nation, the Lord brings him success as he manages Potiphar's household. At first, his prominent position might seem like a fortunate turn of events, but trouble arises when Potiphar's wife becomes infatuated with Joseph. So torn between loyalty to his master and temptation against God, Joseph faces a difficult moral dilemma. Yet even amidst these false accusations and unjust attacks, God's presence remains with him, shielding him, and while God's favor doesn't exempt Joseph from hardship, it does assure his incredible protection.

**THE SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 39:1-23<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt , and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. <sup>2</sup> The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. <sup>3</sup> His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. <sup>5</sup> From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. <sup>6</sup> So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. <sup>7</sup> And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." <sup>8</sup> But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. <sup>9</sup> He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" <sup>10</sup> And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her. <sup>11</sup> But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, <sup>12</sup> she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.

<sup>13</sup> And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, <sup>14</sup> she called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. <sup>15</sup> And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house." <sup>16</sup> Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, <sup>17</sup> and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. <sup>18</sup> But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house." <sup>19</sup> As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. <sup>20</sup> And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. <sup>21</sup> But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. <sup>22</sup> And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. <sup>23</sup> The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.

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<sup>1</sup> Interestingly enough, the Joseph narrative takes a break in Genesis 38 to focus on the sordid story of Judah and Tamar. Here again, the Lord continues to move plans forward even despite the destructiveness of Man's sin.

<sup>2</sup> "Joseph arrived in Egypt during the reign of the Twelfth Dynasty, arguably the zenith of Egypt's power. Shortly before this era, Upper and Lower Egypt had been unified under one ruler, and now Egyptian influence expanded south and east. The regular flooding of the Nile River provided a relatively stable

## LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS: WEEK 2

Your summary of this week's passage in one memorable sentence:

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### OPENING QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever lost something you greatly valued because someone else told a lie?
2. Can you recall a time in your life when God's presence was greatly felt in your life? Was there anything unique or special about that time?

### DIVING DEEPER

3. All throughout Genesis 39, we read of the Lord's abiding presence in Joseph's life. On the verses in the previous pages, highlight wherever you see that truth directly indicated.
4. Considering where Joseph was at the end of Genesis 37, how might we interpret what God is doing in Genesis 39:1-6? Even though we know this isn't the end of Joseph's story, what newfound perspective of God might Joseph have gained through this season?

5. In this first section of his story, we get an indication that Joseph is greatly disliked by his brothers, and even misunderstood by his own father, Jacob. In the text on the previous pages, circle each instance pointing to this hostility in verses 1-11. What, according to this text, is ultimately at the root of the brothers' hostility?
6. Who do you think is to blame for this family discord at this point, and why?
7. Have you seen jealousy, favoritism, and anger destroy family and friendships in your life?
8. Do you think Joseph should have kept God's revelation to himself for the sake of peace and humility, or did he do well to declare it to his family? Why do you think God choose to reveal to Joseph what he would someday become, but to do so at such an early and immature age?
9. As Joseph locates his brothers with his father's flock, his brothers conspire to kill him. Do you find this progression from jealous to murder startling? Why or why not?
10. Compare Genesis 37:18-20 to James 1:15. How could the brothers have stopped their desire before it led to sin?
11. Consider Genesis 37:21-22 and also 37:26. Which two brothers present alternatives to killing Joseph? How do both of those alternatives actually speak to selfishness and sin?

12. Describe the fallout for this family once Joseph's demise is falsely reported?
  
13. While the temptation in many Old Testament stories is to consider the chief characters as those mentioned, we understand that the real hero is always God. Viewed from this perspective, how would you describe the true hero's actions in this chapter?
  
14. Is there something specific in your life right now where you feel like God is delaying? What might be some reasons for this delay from God's perspective? What evidence do you see in your life of God's providing hand even in the midst of difficulty?