

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 3: What's God Up To? - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. Joseph was around 17 years old when he was sold into slavery (Genesis 37:2). He was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh (Genesis 41:46), a span of 13 years of walking in the light of God.

2. Like many stories in the Bible, the story of Joseph points to Jesus. In particular, the garments in Joseph's story strikingly parallel stages in the life of Jesus.

- The multi-colored tunic represented favor bestowed upon Joseph by his father Jacob.
- Upon seeing the empty cistern, Reuben thought Joseph was dead and tore his robe in mourning.
- The multi-colored tunic was taken (arrested), shredded (beaten & scourged) and doused with blood (pierced) of a male goat to look like wild animals mauled him (Genesis 37:23, 31).
- Potiphar's wife stripped him of his outer garment as he fled her grasp (Genesis 39:12-13) falsely accusing Joseph of sin.
- When Pharaoh called him, he "changed his clothes" (Genesis 41:14), putting on clothes of royalty before the King.

3. Reuben was rightful heir of the birthright of Jacob but was disavowed by an illicit relation with his father's concubine (1 Chronicles 5:1). Simeon and Levi, next in line, were passed over because of their crime at Shechem (Genesis 34:25-30). Judah, Jacob's fourth born, was next in line. However, Jacob sought to give his birthright to Joseph, his 11th son and Rachel's 1st born. This caused friction between the two especially after Joseph revealed his dream of ascendancy to Judah and his brothers. This rivalry between Judah and Joseph was passed down to their descendants, resulting in the future splitting of David's kingdom into Israel (ten tribes led by Ephraim, Joseph's son) and Judah (two tribes, Judah and Benjamin). This chapter is inserted to show the providence of God in preserving the lineage of the Messiah (Matthew 1:3), the same providence illustrated in the story of Joseph.

4. Often in Scripture, God uses people in authority to shape circumstances so that His will is played out in the life of an obedient servant, such as Joseph. Reference Proverbs 21:1 and Ezra 6:22. Potiphar and Pharaoh served as pawns in the provident hand of God.

5. Joseph says this three times in Genesis 45 (verses 5, 7 and 8). The Hebrews used repetition to emphasize a literary point. Yes, the brothers did a wrong to Joseph but it was filtered through the hands of God to happen for good. Compare this to Romans 8:28.

6.

Similarities:	Joseph	Jesus
Beloved by his father	Genesis 37:3	Matthew 3:17
Envied and hated without cause	Genesis 37:4	Mark 15:10; John 15:25
Foretold one day he would rule	Genesis 37:7	Matthew 26:64
Sent by father to seek brother's welfare	Genesis 37:14	Luke 20:13
Rejected and condemned to die	Genesis 37:18	Luke 19:14; 23:21
Stripped of his clothing	Genesis 37:23; 39:13	Matthew 27:28
Thrown into a pit, forsaken and left alone	Genesis 37:24	Matthew 12:40

Raised from the pit to preserve his people	Genesis 37:28	1 Corinthians 15:4
Sold to Gentiles for silver	Genesis 37:28	Matthew 26:15
Resisted temptation	Genesis 39:7-12	Hebrews 4:15; 7:26

There is more information comparing Joseph and Jesus at this link:

<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/newsletter/newsletter-sep-1985/a-comparison-between-joseph-and-jesus/>

7. Jacob received the blessing instead of Esau. Isaac received the blessing instead of Ishmael. Now Joseph receives a double blessing by the blessing of his son Ephraim over Manasseh. It was a pattern that continued throughout the Torah. Ephraim played a significant role in the future of Israel. For example, Joshua was the son of Nun, an Ephraimite (Numbers 13:8).

8. The word “Shiloh” in Hebrew means “that which belongs to Him” and is a common name for the Messiah who would come from Judah: Judah → David → Jesus.

9. It is a companion to the New Testament’s Romans 8:28. Whatever happens in the world, or in your life, God has filtered it through His hands and allowed it to happen for His greater glory. This should bring all of us comfort that God is in control. We need only rest in His providence. We sinners have limited vision whereas God has a panoramic view of time.

Additional Questions:

1. Relate to them the omnipotent God who is provident over their life. Encourage them to place their trust in Him, and Him alone, in every circumstance. Often, valleys are experienced to show the goodness of God and bring people to the foot of the cross. Be sensitive, but relevant. It might be an open door to share the Gospel.

2. Answers will vary depending on individual circumstances.

Archeological Note: There is strong evidence that Joseph’s tomb in Egypt has been discovered. You may want to watch the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm9ATLhkujY&t>

Great article on the life of Joseph and the providence of God:

<https://TruthThatInspires.com/biblical-insights/a-big-picture-god/>

