

**“The Sighing Lover”**  
**November 10, 2013**  
**Genesis 37, 39-50**

William Shakespeare’s poem “The Seven Ages of Man” describes life in seven stages, from the infant through the “second childhood.” In this series of messages we investigate biblical teaching relevant to each of these stages. This third message cites Shakespeare’s words: “And then the lover, sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad made to his mistress’ eyebrow.” This is the teenager, facing new interests that can quickly overwhelm. This message considers the experiences of two teens in Scripture

1. Joseph (Genesis 37; 39-50)

When Joseph was seventeen years old, his father sent him on an errand to his brothers to “see whether it be well with thy brethren” (37:14). Joseph did not return from that errand until almost a half-century later, when his bones were carried back to Canaan (50:25; Ex. 13:19). But his experiences in youth exhibit the qualities that ought to characterize every person in this stage of life.

Joseph was:

- A. A dreamer (37:5-10)
- B. Trusted by his father (37:13)
- C. Sent on a mission for his brothers’ preservation (37:14)
- D. Hated by his brothers (37:4-5, 8, 11, 18-28)
- E. Cast into a pit and left as good as dead (37:24-25)
- F. Betrayed and sold unto Gentiles (37:27)
- G. Despised and used by Gentiles (37:28, 36; 38:1, 7-20)
- H. Of moral excellence, for which he also suffered (39:2-23)

Honesty, Diligence, Dependability, Merciful & Forgiving, Not Vengeful

- I. Exalted in a strange place (39:2-6; 40:14ff)
- J. The savior of brethren who hated him (42-50)

2. Jesus Christ (Luke 2:51-52)

When he was twelve years old, Jesus “went down with [Mary and Joseph] and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”