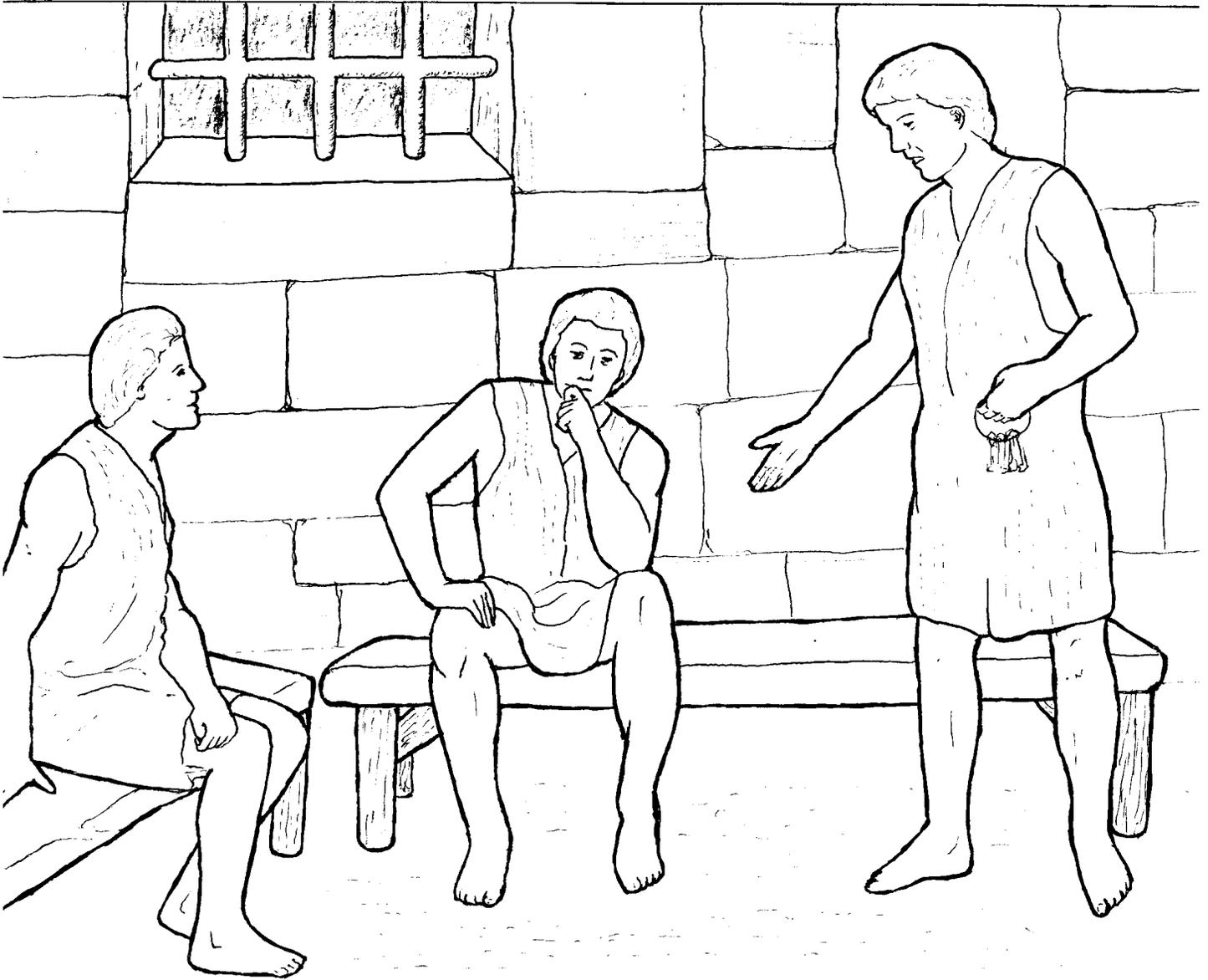


# Joseph in Egypt

Genesis 39 - 41



# The Story

*Who is Joseph? How did Joseph's brothers treat him? Where was Joseph taken by the traveling merchants? Today we will learn what happened to Joseph in Egypt and how God was preparing him to become a ruler in Egypt.*

When Joseph arrived in Egypt with the traveling merchants, he was sold to a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was a captain for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Joseph became Potiphar's slave; he had to do everything that Potiphar told him to do.

At first Joseph was just another servant in Potiphar's house. Soon Potiphar noticed that there was something special about Joseph. Potiphar saw that Joseph believed in God and that God was with Joseph in all that he did. Everything that Joseph did for Potiphar turned out well. Potiphar thought, "The one Joseph calls Lord is with him. Joseph's God makes him successful in all that he does."

Potiphar gave Joseph more jobs to do in his house. Finally, he made Joseph in charge over all of his house and all that he had. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything.

Potiphar's wife, however, was a wicked woman. She noticed that Joseph was a very handsome young man. Sinful thoughts came into her heart. One day she asked Joseph, "Come, be like a husband to me."

Joseph told her, "No," at once. He said, "My master put me in charge over his whole house. He trusts me, and you are his wife. I cannot do this thing with you. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

But Potiphar's wife kept on trying to make Joseph sin with her. Each time she asked him, Joseph would say, "No."

Finally, one day, as Joseph was doing his work and no one else was nearby, Potiphar's wife caught hold of his robe and begged him to sin with her. Joseph immediately ran out of the house and left his robe in her hand.

Potiphar's wife was very angry with Joseph because he dared to say, "No," to her! She then called the other servants together and told them a lie. She told them that Joseph had tried to make her sin with him! When Potiphar came home, she told him the lie and showed him Joseph's robe.

Potiphar was very angry when he heard his wife's story. He had Joseph thrown into prison. Joseph was sent to a special prison where officers of Pharaoh were sent when they had done some crime while they were serving him.

## **Joseph in Prison**

Joseph had to stay in the king's prison. This did not mean that God had forgotten all about Joseph. The keeper of the prison liked Joseph very much and he trusted him. He eventually made Joseph his helper. That meant that Joseph had the job of looking after the other prisoners. It was in this way that God was blessing Joseph while he was in prison.

One day, two of the Pharaoh's officers were put into that same

prison. One of these men was the chief butler and the other man was the chief baker. Joseph was also in charge of these two prisoners.

It happened that one night, both of these prisoners had dreams. Joseph noticed the next morning that they looked sad and confused. He asked them what the problem was and they said, "We have had dreams, but there isn't anyone that can tell us what these dreams mean."

Joseph told them that it was God's business to explain dreams, but he asked them to tell him about their dreams.

The chief butler told his dream first. He said, "In my dream I saw a vine sprout and it grew three branches. The branches sprouted and blossomed. Bunches of ripe grapes appeared on the branches. I was holding Pharaoh's cup in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup. I then gave the cup of juice to Pharaoh to drink."

Joseph said, "This is the meaning of your dream. The three branches stand for three days. In three days Pharaoh is going to let you out of prison and make you his chief butler again." Joseph also added, "But remember me when this happens. Please be kind and tell Pharaoh about me. I was taken out of my country and I have done nothing wrong for which I should be put in prison."

The chief baker was happy to hear the meaning of the chief butler's dream so he told his dream to Joseph. He said, "In my dream I saw myself with three baskets of baked goods on my head. But the birds came and ate the bread out of the baskets."

Joseph then told him, "The three baskets also stand for three days. In three days the Pharaoh will cut off your head

and hang your body on a tree. The birds will eat the flesh off your bones."

Three days later Pharaoh had a birthday and had a big celebration. He had his men bring the butler back to the palace and he was given his job back. But Pharaoh had the chief baker hanged on a tree just as Joseph said he would.

The chief butler, however, forgot all about Joseph and didn't tell Pharaoh all of the things that Joseph had asked him to say.

### **Joseph Made Ruler**

Two years passed and Joseph was still in prison. It was then that Pharaoh himself had a dream. He dreamed that he was near the Nile River and he saw something very strange. Out of the river came seven very fine, fat cows that began eating the rich grasses by the river. After that seven very skinny, hungry-looking cows also came out of the river and stood beside the seven fat cows. The skinny cows then ate the healthy cows. Then Pharaoh woke up. He soon fell asleep again and had another very strange dream. In a field he saw a stalk with seven plump, full heads of grain. Then seven more heads grew out of the stalk. These grains were dry and shriveled. The thin heads then swallowed up the plump heads! Pharaoh woke up and he was very troubled about these two dreams.

Pharaoh called all of his magicians and wise men and told them about his dreams but none of them could tell him what the dreams

meant. It was then that the chief butler remembered Joseph. He told Pharaoh, "When I and the chief baker were in prison, we too, had dreams that troubled us. There was a young Hebrew man there who was the helper in the prison. He explained to us the meaning of our dreams. Everything came true just as he had told us it would."

Pharaoh called for Joseph right away. After Joseph had shaved and had changed his clothes, he was brought before the king.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had dreams, but there is no one that can tell me what they mean. I heard that you can explain dreams."

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Pharaoh told his two dreams to Joseph. Joseph then told Pharaoh, "Both of your dreams have the same meaning. Through these dreams God has shown what He will do here in Egypt. The seven good cows and the seven good heads of grain stand for seven good years. More than enough food will grow during these seven good years. The seven skinny cows and the seven shriveled heads of grain stand for seven bad years. After the seven good years, there will be seven bad years. The famine will be so bad that hardly anything will grow."

"God sent these two dreams for a good reason. God wants you to know that He has decided to do this and it will happen soon. You should get ready for the seven bad years. You should choose a very wise man to be in charge of gathering food from all over Egypt. Have men from all over the country help with this. Let them store up food in the cities

during the seven good years so that there will be plenty of food on hand during the seven bad years. You and your people will not starve and die during the famine."

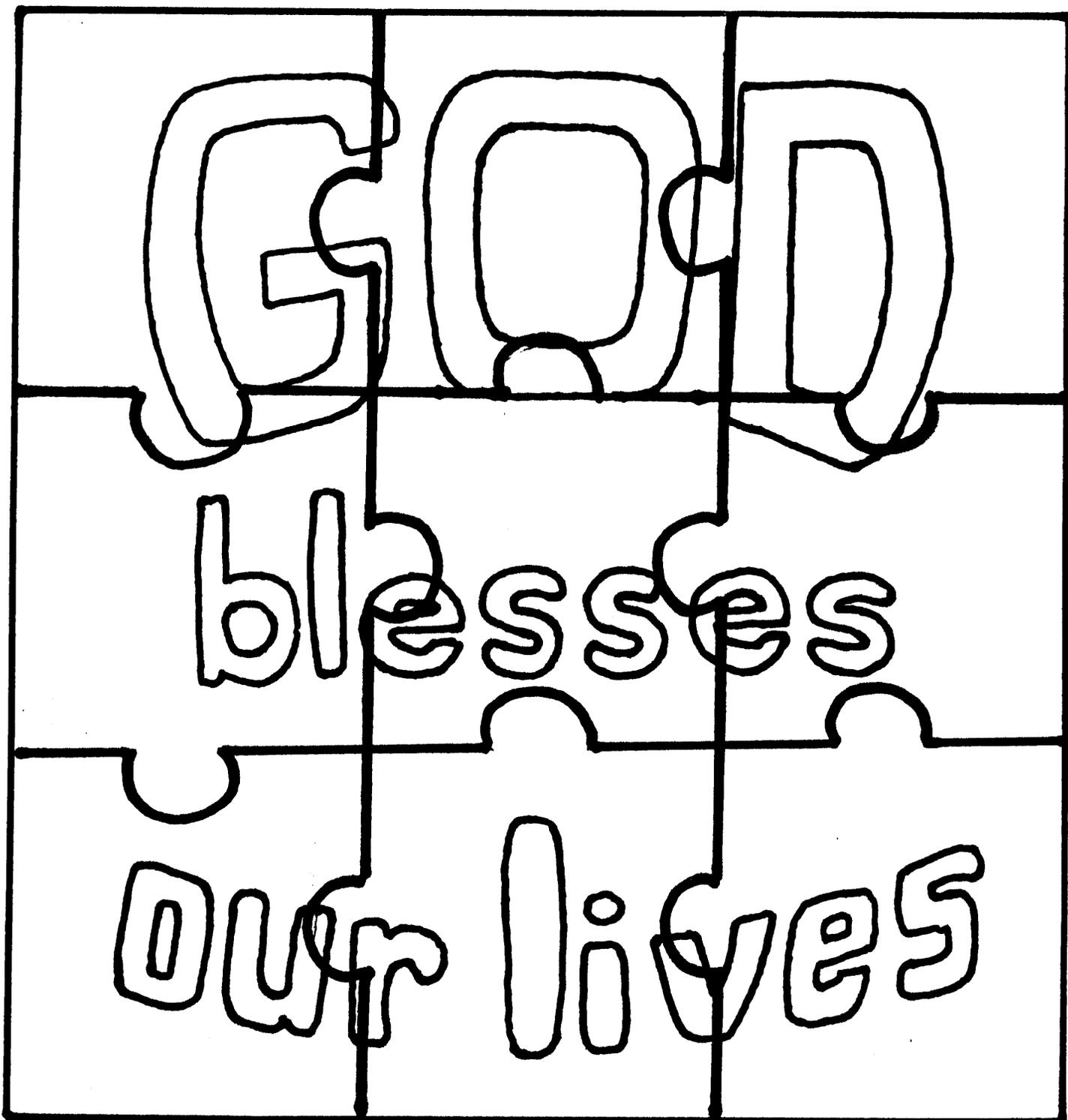
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The seven years came and plenty of food was saved in storehouses all over Egypt. Then the seven bad years came, just as God had said it would. Pharaoh had the hungry people go to Joseph. Joseph made sure that food was passed out to them. The famine was everywhere around Egypt as well. People from other countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain so that they would not starve and die.

***God watched over and blessed Joseph's life.***

***God watches over us and guides and blesses our lives for our good.***

**Activity One** - Color the puzzle and cut the pieces apart. Then put the puzzle together to remind us that God blesses us. *(You may want to glue the paper to poster board before cutting out pieces.)*



## Passages

Hebrews 13:5b - "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

## Hymn - TLH #457, v. 2

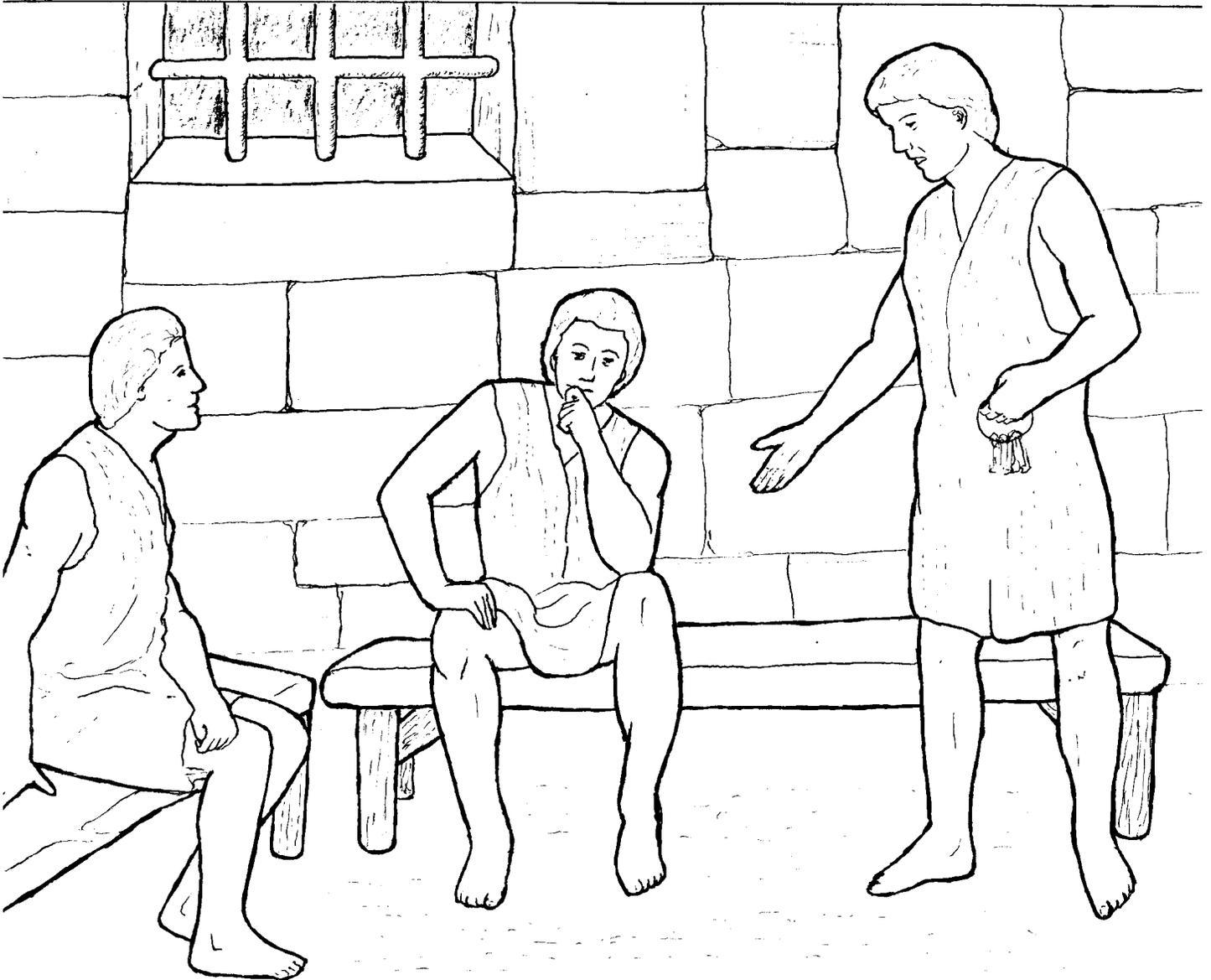
Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged,  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a Friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness –  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

## Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, we know we are tempted to sin daily. Please help us to overcome those temptations and not sin. We also know that we will have troubles and hard times in our lives. We thank You for always being with us, ready to help us in those hard times. We also thank You for dying on the cross for us to forgive all of our sins. In Your name we pray, Amen.

# Joseph in Egypt

Genesis 39 - 41



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## The Story

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Potiphar gave Joseph more jobs to do in his house. Finally, he put Joseph in charge of all of his house and all that he had. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything.

Potiphar's wife, however, was a wicked woman. She noticed that Joseph was a very handsome young man and sinful desires came into her heart. One day she asked Joseph, "Come, be like a husband to me."

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But Potiphar's wife kept on trying to make Joseph sin with her. Each time she asked him, Joseph would say, "No." Finally, one day as Joseph was doing his work and no one else was nearby, Potiphar's wife caught hold of his robe and begged him to sin with her. Joseph immediately ran out of the house and left his robe in her hand.

Potiphar's wife was very angry with Joseph because he dared to say "No" to her! She then called the other servants together and told them a lie. She told them that Joseph had tried to make her sin with him! When Potiphar came home, she told him the lie and showed him Joseph's robe.

Potiphar was very angry when he heard his wife's story. He had Joseph thrown into prison. Joseph was sent to a special prison where officers of Pharaoh were sent when they had done some crime while they were serving him.

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One day, two of the Pharaoh's officers were put into this prison because they had done something wrong against Pharaoh. One of these men was the chief butler and the other man was the chief baker. Joseph was also in charge of these two prisoners.

It happened that one night both of these prisoners had dreams. Joseph noticed the next morning that they looked sad and confused. He asked them what the problem was and they said, "We have had dreams, but there isn't anyone who can tell us what these dreams mean."

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The chief baker was happy to hear the meaning of the chief butler's dream, so he told his dream to Joseph. He said, "In my dream I saw myself with three baskets of baked goods on my head. But the birds came and ate the bread out of the baskets."

Joseph then told him, "The three baskets also stand for three days. In three days, the Pharaoh will cut off your head and hang your body on a tree. The birds will eat the flesh off your bones."

Three days later, Pharaoh had a big celebration for his birthday. He had his men bring the butler back to the palace and give him back his job. But Pharaoh had the chief baker hanged on a tree, just as Joseph said he would.

The chief butler, however, forgot all about Joseph and didn't tell Pharaoh all of the things that Joseph had asked him to say.

### **Joseph Made Ruler**

Two years passed and Joseph was still in prison. It was then that Pharaoh himself had a dream. He dreamed that he was near the Nile River and he saw something very strange. Out of the river came seven very fine, fat cows that began eating the rich grasses by the river. After that, seven very skinny, hungry-looking cows also came out of the river and stood beside the seven fat cows. The skinny cows then ate the healthy cows. Pharaoh woke up.

He soon fell asleep again and had another very strange dream. In a field, he saw a stalk with seven plump, full heads of grain. Seven more heads grew out of the stalk. These grains were dry and shriveled. The thin heads then swallowed up the plump heads! Then Pharaoh woke up and he was very troubled

about these two dreams.

Pharaoh called all of his magicians and wise men and told them about his dreams, but none of them could tell him what the dreams meant. It was then that the chief butler remembered Joseph. He told Pharaoh, "When the chief baker and I were in prison, we, too, had dreams that troubled us. There was a young Hebrew man there who was the helper in the prison. He explained to us the meaning of our dreams and everything came true just as he had told us it would."

Pharaoh called for Joseph right away. After Joseph had shaved and changed his clothes, he was brought before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had dreams, but there is no one that can tell me what they mean. I heard that you can explain dreams."

Joseph answered, "I do not have that kind of power, but God will give you the answer to these dreams."

Pharaoh told his two dreams to Joseph. Joseph then told Pharaoh, "Both of your dreams have the same meaning. Through these dreams, God has shown what He will do here in Egypt. The seven good cows and the seven good heads of grain stand for seven good years. More than enough food will grow during these seven good years. The seven skinny cows and the seven shriveled heads of grain stand for seven bad years. After the seven good years, there will be seven bad years. The famine will be so bad that hardly anything will grow."

"God sent these two dreams for a good reason. God wants you to know what He has decided to do and that it will happen soon. You should get ready for the seven bad years. You should choose a very wise man to be in charge of gathering food from all over Egypt. Have men from all over the country help with this. Let them store up food in the

cities during the seven good years so that there will be plenty of food on hand during the seven bad years. You and your people will not starve and die during the famine."

Pharaoh thought that this plan was a good one. He chose Joseph to be the man in charge of storing up food in Egypt. He said, "Since God has shown you the meaning of the dreams, there is no man as wise as you are in all of Egypt. You will be the most important ruler in Egypt. Only I, Pharaoh, will be higher than you." Pharaoh gave Joseph his special ring showing that Joseph had the power to rule. He also gave Joseph fine clothes and one of his chariots so

that the Egyptian people would know that Joseph was to be honored as a ruler in Egypt.

Seven years passed and plenty of food was saved in storehouses all over Egypt. Then the seven bad years came, just as God had said they would. Pharaoh sent the hungry people to Joseph, who made sure that food was passed out to them. The famine was everywhere around Egypt as well, and people from other countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain so that they would not starve and die.

### *God watched over and blessed Joseph's life.*

## Passages

Hebrews 13:5b - "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Acts 17:28a - For in Him we live and move and have our being.

Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Genesis 39:9b - "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

## Activity One - Number the following events in order (1 - 9) in Joseph's life.

\_\_\_\_\_ Potiphar's wife lies about Joseph.

\_\_\_\_\_ Joseph appears before Pharaoh.

\_\_\_\_\_ Joseph is sold as a slave to Potiphar in Egypt.

\_\_\_\_\_ The chief butler and the chief baker have dreams.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pharaoh makes Joseph a ruler in Egypt.

\_\_\_\_\_ Joseph is put into prison.

\_\_\_\_\_ Joseph tells the chief butler and chief baker what their dreams mean.

\_\_\_\_\_ Joseph explains the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams.

\_\_\_\_\_ Pharaoh has two dreams.

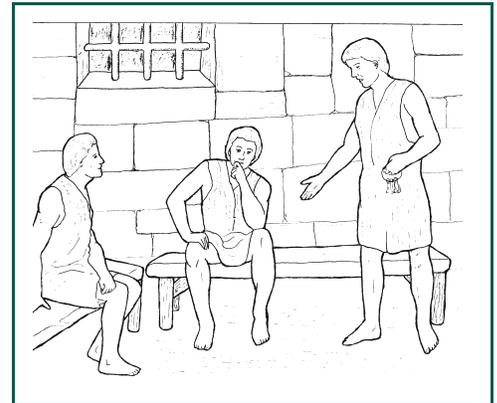
### *God watches over us and guides and blesses our lives for our good.*



# Joseph in Egypt

## Genesis 39 - 41

Have you ever had troubles in your life?  
Have you wondered why these things happen?  
Joseph suffered many hardships while he was in Egypt, but God did not forget about him. God had a plan for him. We, too, realize that God is always with us and has a plan for us as well.



### Prayer

Dear Lord,

As we study today about Joseph's experiences in Egypt, help us to understand Your reason for it by seeing how Joseph and all of Your children benefitted from his situation. Help us also remember that You are constantly our Guide. Amen.

### The Story - Genesis 39 - 41 *A Paraphrase*

When Joseph arrived in Egypt with the traveling merchants, he was sold to a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was a Captain for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. He became Potiphar's slave; he had to do everything that Potiphar told him to do.

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steward, the man in charge over all of his house and all that he had. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything.

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no one else was nearby, Potiphar's wife caught hold of his robe and begged him to sin with her. Joseph immediately ran out of the house and left his robe in her hand.

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One day two of the Pharaoh's officers were put into that same prison because they had done something wrong against Pharaoh. One of these men was the chief butler and the other man was the chief baker. Joseph was also in charge of these two prisoners.

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## Outer Aim - God watched over and blessed Joseph's life.

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**What the Story Tells Us** - Read each statement below. If the statement is true, write **True** on the line. If the statement is not true, write the word on the line that would replace the underlined word to make the statement true. Note, do not write False on any line.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ When Joseph arrived in Egypt, he became a servant in Pharaoh's household.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Potiphar made Joseph his chief baker.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Joseph told Potiphar's wife, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against Potiphar?"
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Potiphar had Joseph put into prison.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Joseph interpreted the dreams of Potiphar's chief butler and chief baker.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ The chief baker got his job back in Pharaoh's palace.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Joseph was brought before Pharaoh so that he could stand trial.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Pharaoh made Joseph second in command, and Pharaoh was the only one with higher governmental authority.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ God gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams and also the wisdom to rule all of Africa.

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**Inner Aim - As God guided and blessed Joseph's life, so our Lord does for us. Our God watches over and blesses the lives of His children. God guides our lives for our good.**

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**What the Bible Tells Us** - Look up the following passages and fill in the missing words. Then discuss with your class how these passages apply to us in our lives, as they also did in Joseph's life.

Philippians 2:13: "For it is \_\_\_\_\_ who works in you both to \_\_\_\_\_ and to do for His \_\_\_\_\_."

Romans 8:28: "and we know that \_\_\_\_\_ things work together for \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ who love God, to those who are the \_\_\_\_\_ according to His \_\_\_\_\_."

Acts 17:28a: "For in \_\_\_\_\_ we \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and have our \_\_\_\_\_."

## Passages

1 Corinthians 10:31 - Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

## Hymn - TLH #457, v. 1-3

What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
Ev'rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit,  
Oh, what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry  
Ev'rything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged,  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a Friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness -  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,  
Cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our Refuge –  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer;  
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,  
Thou wilt find a solace there.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, I know You are always with me, guiding me, protecting me, and making all things work out for my good. Please give me strength to overcome temptation, for without You I am helpless against the attacks of the devil. Please help me to give all glory to You for the gifts and abilities with which You have blessed me. Please forgive me all my sins and keep me forever as Your child and heir. In Jesus saving name. Amen.

# Joseph in Egypt

## Genesis 39 - 41

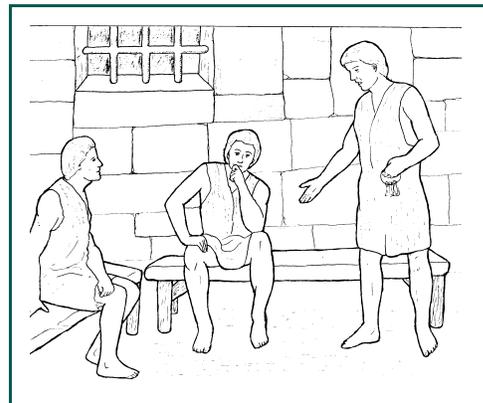
*Have you ever had troubles in your life?*

*Are there times when you feel alone, as though your friends have deserted you?*

*What do you do for help and comfort at these times?*

*Have you wondered why these things happen?*

*Joseph suffered many hardships while he was in Egypt, but God did not forget about him. God had a plan for him. We, too, realize that God is always with us and has a plan for us as well.*



### Prayer

Dear Lord, As we study today about Joseph's experiences in Egypt, help us to understand Your reason for it by seeing how Joseph and all of Your children benefited from his situation. Help us also remember that You are constantly our Guide. Amen.

### The Story - Genesis 39 - 41 A Paraphrase

When Joseph arrived in Egypt with the traveling merchants, he was sold to a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was a Captain for Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. He became Potiphar's slave; he had to do everything that Potiphar told him to do.

At first Joseph was just another servant in Potiphar's house. But it did not take long for Potiphar to notice that there was something special about Joseph. Potiphar saw that Joseph believed in God and that He was with Joseph in all that he did. Everything that Joseph did for Potiphar turned out well. Potiphar thought, "The one Joseph calls Lord is with him. His Lord makes Joseph successful in all that he does."

Potiphar gave Joseph more jobs to do in his house. Finally he made Joseph in

charge over all of his house and all that he had. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything.

Potiphar's wife, however, was a wicked woman. She noticed that Joseph was a very handsome young man and sinful desires came into her heart. One day she asked Joseph, "Come, be like a husband to me."

Joseph told her "No," at once. He said, "My master put me in charge over his whole house. He trusts me, and you are his wife. I cannot do this thing with you. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

But Potiphar's wife kept on trying to make Joseph sin with her. Each time she asked him, Joseph would say, "No." Finally one day as Joseph was doing his work and



no one else was nearby, Potiphar's wife caught hold of his robe and begged him to sin with her. Joseph immediately ran out of the house and left his robe in her hand.

Potiphar's wife was very angry with Joseph because he dared to say "No" to her! She then called the other servants together and told them a lie. She told them that Joseph had tried to make her sin with him! When Potiphar came home, she told him the lie and showed him Joseph's robe.

Potiphar was very angry when he heard his wife's story. He had Joseph thrown into prison. Joseph was sent to a special prison where officers of Pharaoh were sent when they had done some crime while they were serving him.

### **Joseph in Prison**

Joseph had to stay in the king's prison. This did not mean that God had forgotten all about Joseph. The keeper of the prison liked Joseph very much and he trusted him. He eventually made Joseph his helper. That meant that Joseph had the job of looking after the other prisoners. It was in this way that God was blessing Joseph while he was in prison.

One day two of the Pharaoh's officers were put into that same prison because they had done something wrong against Pharaoh. One of these men was the chief butler and the other man was the chief baker. Joseph was also in charge of these two prisoners.

It happened that one night both of these prisoners had dreams. Joseph noticed the next morning that they looked sad and confused. He asked them what the problem was, and they said, "We have had dreams, but there isn't anyone that can tell us what these dreams mean."

Joseph told them that it was God's business to explain dreams, but he asked them to tell him about their dreams.

The chief butler told his dream first. He said, "In my dream I saw a vine sprout, and it grew three branches. The branches then sprouted and blossomed and then bunches of ripe grapes appeared on the branches. I was holding Pharaoh's cup in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup. I then gave the cup of juice to Pharaoh to drink."

Joseph said, "This is the meaning of your dream. The three branches stand for three days. In three days Pharaoh is going to let you out of prison and make you his chief butler again." Joseph also added, "But remember me when this happens. Please be kind and tell Pharaoh about me. I was taken out of my country and I have done nothing wrong for which I should be put in prison."

The chief baker was happy to hear the meaning of the chief butler's dream so he told his dream to Joseph. He said, "In my dream I saw myself with three baskets of baked goods on my head. But the birds came and ate the bread out of the baskets."

Joseph then told him, "The three baskets also stand for three days. In three days the Pharaoh will cut off your head and hang your body on a tree. The birds will eat the flesh off your bones."

Three days later Pharaoh had a birthday and had a big celebration. He had his men bring the butler back to the palace and he was given his job back. But Pharaoh had the chief baker hanged on a tree just as Joseph said he would.

The chief butler, however, forgot all about Joseph and didn't tell Pharaoh all of the things that Joseph had asked him to say.

### **Joseph Made Ruler**

Two years passed and Joseph was still in prison. It was then that Pharaoh himself had a dream. He dreamed that he was near the Nile River, and he saw

something very strange. Out of the river came seven very fine, fat cows that began eating the rich grasses by the river. After that seven very skinny, hungry-looking cows also came out of the river and stood beside the seven fat cows. The skinny cows then ate the healthy cows. Then Pharaoh woke up. He soon fell asleep again and had another very strange dream. In a field he saw a stalk with seven plump, full heads of grain. Then seven more heads grew out of the stalk. These grains were dry and shriveled. The thin heads then swallowed up the plump heads! Then Pharaoh woke up, and he was very troubled about these two dreams.

Pharaoh called all of his magicians and wise men and told them about his dreams, but none of them could tell him what the dreams meant. It was then that the chief butler remembered Joseph. He told Pharaoh, "When I and the chief baker were in prison, we too, had dreams that troubled us. There was a young Hebrew man there who was the helper in the prison. He explained to us the meaning of our dreams, and everything came true just as he had told us it would."

Pharaoh called for Joseph right away. After Joseph had shaved and had changed his clothes, he was brought before the king.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had dreams, but there is no one that can tell me what they mean. I heard that you can explain dreams."

Joseph answered, "I do not have that kind of power, but God will give you the answer to these dreams."

Pharaoh told his two dreams to Joseph. Joseph then told Pharaoh, "Both of your dreams have the same meaning. Through these dreams God has shown what He will do here in Egypt. The seven good cows and the seven good heads of grain stand for seven good years. More

than enough food will grow during these seven good years. The seven skinny cows and the seven shriveled heads of grain stand for seven bad years. After the seven good years, there will be seven bad years. The famine will be so bad that hardly anything will grow."

"God sent these two dreams for a good reason. God wants you to know that He had decided to do this, and it will happen soon. You should get ready for the seven bad years. You should choose a very wise man to be in charge of gathering food from all over Egypt. Have men from all over the country help with this. Let them store up food in the cities during the seven good years so that there will be plenty of food on hand during the seven bad years. You and your people will not starve and die during the famine."

Pharaoh thought that this plan was a good one. He chose Joseph to be that man in charge of storing up food in Egypt. He said, "Since God has shown you the meaning of the dreams, there is no man as wise as you are in all of Egypt. You will be the most important ruler in Egypt. Only I, Pharaoh, will be higher than you." He then gave Joseph his special ring which showed that he had the power to rule. He also gave Joseph fine clothes and had him ride in one of his chariots so that the Egyptian people would know that he was to be honored as a ruler in Egypt.

The seven years came and plenty of food was saved in storehouses all over Egypt. Then the seven bad years came, just as God had said it would. Pharaoh had the hungry people go to Joseph, and he made sure that food was passed out to them. But the famine was everywhere around Egypt as well, and people from other countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain so that they would not starve and die.

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## Outer Aim - God watched over and blessed Joseph's life.

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**What the Story Tells Us** - Discuss with your class how God used these apparent hardships in Joseph's life to prepare him for life as a ruler.

1. Joseph is sold as a slave to Potiphar.
2. Joseph is wrongly accused of a sin and placed in prison.
3. The chief butler forgets about Joseph and he remains in prison for an additional two years.
  - ▶ *Joseph was able to give witness to God in these situations, and he remembered to give all glory to God.*
  - ▶ *Joseph also continued to serve his Lord, even in the face of adversity.*
  - ▶ *Joseph didn't despair and forget God.*
  - ▶ *Joseph also learns that God's timing is perfect.*

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**Inner Aim - As God guided and blessed Joseph's life, so our Lord does for us. Our God watches over and blesses the lives of His children. God guides our lives for our good.**

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**What the Bible Tells Us** - Look up the following passages. Discuss how these passages apply to Joseph and his experiences in Egypt. Then explain in a few sentences each how these passages also apply to us today in our lives. Share these applications with your class.

Romans 8:28 -

Acts 17:28a -

## Passages

1 Corinthians 10:31 - Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

## Hymn - TLH #457, v. 1-3

What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
Ev'rything to God in prayer!  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh,  
what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry  
Ev'rything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged, Take it  
to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a Friend so faithful  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness – Take it to  
the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,  
Cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Savior, still our Refuge –  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer;  
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,  
Thou wilt find a solace there.

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, I know You are always with me, guiding me, protecting me, and making all things work out for my good. Please give me strength to overcome temptation, for without You I am helpless against the attacks of the devil. Please help me to give all glory to You for the gifts and abilities with which You have blessed me. Please forgive me all my sins and keep me forever as Your child and heir. In Jesus saving name. Amen.



## STORY

Joseph Goes to Egypt - Genesis 39-41

8/18/04

## TEACHER PRAYER

Lord Jesus, please be with me and bless me as I prepare and present this Bible truth to the Lambs You have placed in my care. Help me to always remember that, like Joseph, You always watch over, protect, and guide me and all Your children. Grant to me an extra measure of Your Holy Spirit that I may present the precious treasure of Your love and concern for all to my students in this lesson. Help me to realize that even things I may see as sinful and cannot explain, You will work for good in my life. In Jesus name I ask this. Amen.

## VOCABULARY

*pharaoh*: the king of Egypt. He was also worshiped by his people as a god

*lie with me*: Potiphar's wife wanted to commit adultery with Joseph (see 6th commandment)

*gaunt*: thin and bony; angular; emaciated, haggard

*famine*: a time during which crops failed to grow

*magicians*: priests in Egypt who were able to perform "magic" by the devil's power (see the section on the plagues)

*wise men*: scholars trained in the temples and schools of Egypt

## OUTER AIM

God watched over and blessed Joseph's life

## INNER AIM

As God guided and blessed Joseph's life, so our Lord does for us. Our God watches over and blesses the lives of His children. God guides our lives for our good.

## BACKGROUND

### Joseph in Potiphar's house (Genesis 39:1-18)

We cannot help but be amazed at the grace of our God. How merciful is our Lord to consent to make use of us completely sinful human beings to carry out His gracious promises. This truth is certainly evident in connection with Jacob and his family. Most families have problems, but the self-inflicted moral problems of Jacob's family were almost beyond compare. One cannot help but wonder if Jacob's moral deficiencies were taught by example to his older children, who were then made to bear the consequences of their sins. Consider just a partial listing of their family crises, which ought to serve as a warning to all of us: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, commits incest with Bilhah, Jacob's concubine, the mother of Reuben's half-brothers Dan and Naphtali. A local prince sexually assaults Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah. In retaliation Simeon and Levi murder all the male inhabitants of the city of Shechem, and the entire family is forced to flee from their homes. God puts at least two of Jacob's grandchildren to death when Judah's two oldest sons prove too evil to live. Judah then fathers a child by his daughter-in-law Tamar, thinking she was a prostitute.

Yet through all of this we dare not sit in judgment over this family, but rather give praise and glory to God for his great mercy. In His eyes, "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" This Bible story gives evidence of how God turned another great sin on the part of Jacob's sons into a life-saving blessing for all mankind. We rejoin Joseph, who has been sold into slavery by his own brothers.

Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an Egyptian military officer, and was quickly given control of Potiphar's entire household. It was clear even to the Egyptians that the Lord was with Joseph, greatly blessing him.

Though Joseph was a handsome, attractive man, he resisted the temptations that had caused his brothers such misery and shame. When Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, he gave us a fine example by fleeing from the temptation. Joseph, a faithful servant of both the Lord and Potiphar, gave three reasons for not committing the sin of adultery with Potiphar's wife. 1) He did not want to betray the trust Potiphar had in him. 2) He had no right to take what did not belong to him (Potiphar's wife). 3) Most importantly he would not commit this sin because it was ultimately a sin against his Lord. ***"There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"*** Each one of us would do well to contemplate these words of Joseph when tempted to sin.

Though Joseph did the right thing and remained true to both His God and Potiphar, still he was made to suffer. God had plans for Joseph, and Joseph here gives us another fine Christian example by remaining humbly obedient even in the face of such hardship and unjust treatment.

### **Joseph in Prison (Genesis 39:19-23)**

The grace of God demonstrated in the fruits of Joseph's faith cannot be overemphasized here. Though one bad thing after another is visited upon Joseph, still he seeks to serve faithfully whatever his circumstances. Even in prison the Lord was with Joseph. He was shown favor by the jailer and was put in charge of the prisoners and the work they did. God gives us the strength to endure whatever He allows to come into our lives. He makes all things work for our good. Although Potiphar and the jailer are both called "captain of the guard" (literally: "chief executioner") Potiphar was very likely the head of the palace guards (Pharaoh's body guards), while the jailer was the man who both confined the prisoners and carried out the sentences upon the condemned. Those sentences could be terrible indeed, including hanging, impaling, beheading, and flaying alive.

### **Joseph the Interpreter of Dreams (Genesis 40:1 - 41:36)**

Though the Egyptian magicians claimed credit and glory for themselves, Joseph consistently gave all glory to his God for all of the many blessings he had received. This included his ability to interpret dreams.

Again Joseph is wronged when Pharaoh's chief butler is restored to his position, but forgets all about him. He languishes another two full years in prison, and yet we are given no indication that he is anything but faithful to his God. It is often a relatively easy thing to remain faithful during times of brief hardship. Joseph here gives example of patient, humble service in the face of prolonged, terrible, and unjust affliction.

Joseph had to shave his beard prior to appearing before Pharaoh. To come before Pharaoh with a beard would have been an offense. The Egyptians allowed their beards to grow only when in mourning, while the Hebrews shaved their beards only when in mourning.

It took courage for Joseph to tell Pharaoh that God will give him an answer to his dreams since Pharaohs typically regarded themselves as gods.

### **Joseph as Second in Command in Egypt (Genesis 41:37-57)**

Because of his demonstration of wisdom in interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph was given a position second only to Pharaoh himself. (We might compare his office to Britain's Prime Minister, who is subject only to the King or Queen.)

God gave Joseph not only the ability to interpret dreams, but also the wisdom to rule Egypt. Thus Joseph was finally allowed to see why God had allowed such hardship to come into his life. Countless lives were saved through his actions, most notably the life of his family, through whom the Savior would be born.

## STUDENT PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I know You are always with me, guiding me, protecting me, and making all things work out for my good. Please give me strength to overcome temptation, for without You I am helpless against the attacks of the devil. Please help me to give all glory to You for the gifts and abilities with which You have blessed me. Please forgive me all my sins and keep me forever as Your child and heir. In Jesus saving name. Amen.

## PRESENTATION

The Bible account presented today is too long to read in class. Assign the reading of this lesson to the students the week before it is presented, and then tell the complete story to your students in your own words. Emphasize how Joseph was a faithful servant (a Christian). Emphasize that it was God who gave Joseph the faith to resist Potiphar's wife, that God gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams, that God blessed Joseph even while he was in prison; that it was God's plan to make Joseph a ruler in Egypt, and that God guided and blessed Joseph's life according to His plan for the salvation of mankind. ***"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."*** (Philippians 2:13)

## APPLICATIONS

1. God's grace is at the forefront of this Bible truth. We see again how our great and mighty God always provides for all our needs just as He cared for Joseph. We see His love not only in the forgiveness and salvation He has won for us, but also in His gracious mercy upon us each day of our lives. Our God always provides for all our needs. Our God always guides our lives for good. In this section of Holy Scripture, emphasize to the students especially God's power and grace in their lives. The key phrase in this section which should be emphasized repeatedly is: ***"The LORD was with Joseph."*** That same Lord is also watching over and providing for us!
2. Note that Joseph's entire experience is a picture of the experience of all of Israel in Egypt. As Joseph arrived in Egypt alone and in need, so also did the small family of Israel. As Joseph was first made to thrive and prosper in the house of Potiphar and then unjustly imprisoned, so the nation of Israel first prospered (growing from 70 to over 2,000,000) and was then placed under unjust bondage. As Joseph enjoyed the favor of the people during the good times, so Israel at first enjoyed the favor of the Egyptians and the abundance of Goshen. As the Egyptians were made to recognize the wisdom and power of Joseph's God through God's gift of dream interpretation, so the Egyptians were made to see the power of God through Moses and the plagues.
3. Impress upon the students the constant danger we all face from temptation. Remind them of the terrible consequences of sin and the blessed forgiveness and strength we have in our Lord. Remind them that the best way to overcome temptation (especially sexual temptation) is to flee from it, as did Joseph. (1 Corinthians 6:18)
4. Doing the right thing may cost us dearly. Joseph left behind his coat rather than give in to temptation. More than that, he was sent to prison as a direct result of doing the right thing. Here we should recognize an opportunity to show our students that believers may be made to suffer wrongfully for following what our Lord tells us to do. They should expect to be ridiculed when they do not give in to peer pressure. In dealing with the section on the temptation of Potiphar's wife there is a practical problem how to explain this to the younger children. This topic should be handled in a delicate manner. Sex education should be left to the parents. Neither assume nor instruct sexual awareness. One commentator offers the phrase, "come, be like a husband to me" as a way to explain the temptation. Most follow-up questions should be directed to the student's parents.

## **PASSAGES**

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

### Lower

Philippians 4:13 - *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Hebrews 13:5b - *I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

Acts 17:28a - *For in Him we live and move and have our being.*

Genesis 39:9b - *How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

### Middle any of the above and...

1 Corinthians 10:31 - *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

Philippians 2:13 - *For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

Hebrews 12:10b - *But God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. (NIV)*

### Upper any of the above and...

1 Corinthians 10:13 - *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Romans 8:28 - *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

Acts 17:28a) - *For in Him we live and move and have our being.*

Isaiah 43:1b-3a - *Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior.*

## **HYMN CHOICES**

“In God, My Faithful God” TLH #526:1

“Jesus, Jesus, Only Jesus” TLH #348:4,5

“Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus” TLH #409:1