



LEVEL 2  
2•6  
LESSON 6

# Imperial Academy Bible Lessons



Joseph in Egypt

# Joseph in Egypt

**W**hile Jacob was working for his Uncle Laban, God blessed him with 11 sons and a daughter named Dinah.

Jacob's 11th son was with his wife Rachel. The son's name was Joseph. After Jacob moved his family to Canaan, Rachel had a second son. But something went wrong while she was giving birth, and Rachel died. Jacob named the baby boy Benjamin.

Because Joseph was the firstborn son of Jacob's favorite wife, Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons. This was a serious mistake. Joseph's brothers saw that their father favored Joseph more than them, and they became jealous.

As Joseph grew into a teenager, he began receiving extraordinary dreams from God about how his older brothers would someday bow down to him. Joseph foolishly told his brothers all about these dreams, which made them even more jealous. They became so angry they decided to get rid of Joseph.

When Joseph was about 17 years old, Jacob sent him to check up on

his brothers while they were herding sheep several days' journey away from home. When his brothers saw him coming, they agreed to take him and throw him into an empty well. When a caravan of slave traders passed by on their way to Egypt, the brothers sold Joseph into slavery.

The brothers knew Jacob would be furious if he found out they had sold Joseph to be a slave. So they killed a goat, dipped Joseph's coat in its blood, and went home to tell Jacob a lie: They said a wild beast had killed Joseph.

Meanwhile, the slave traders took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, a prominent officer who was the captain of the pharaoh's bodyguard. But even though things were going so badly for him, Joseph still trusted God. And because he trusted God, and worked hard, God blessed him. Potiphar saw that Joseph was an honest and successful worker, so he decided to put Joseph in charge of his household and all his property.

However, Potiphar's wife started to like Joseph more than she liked her

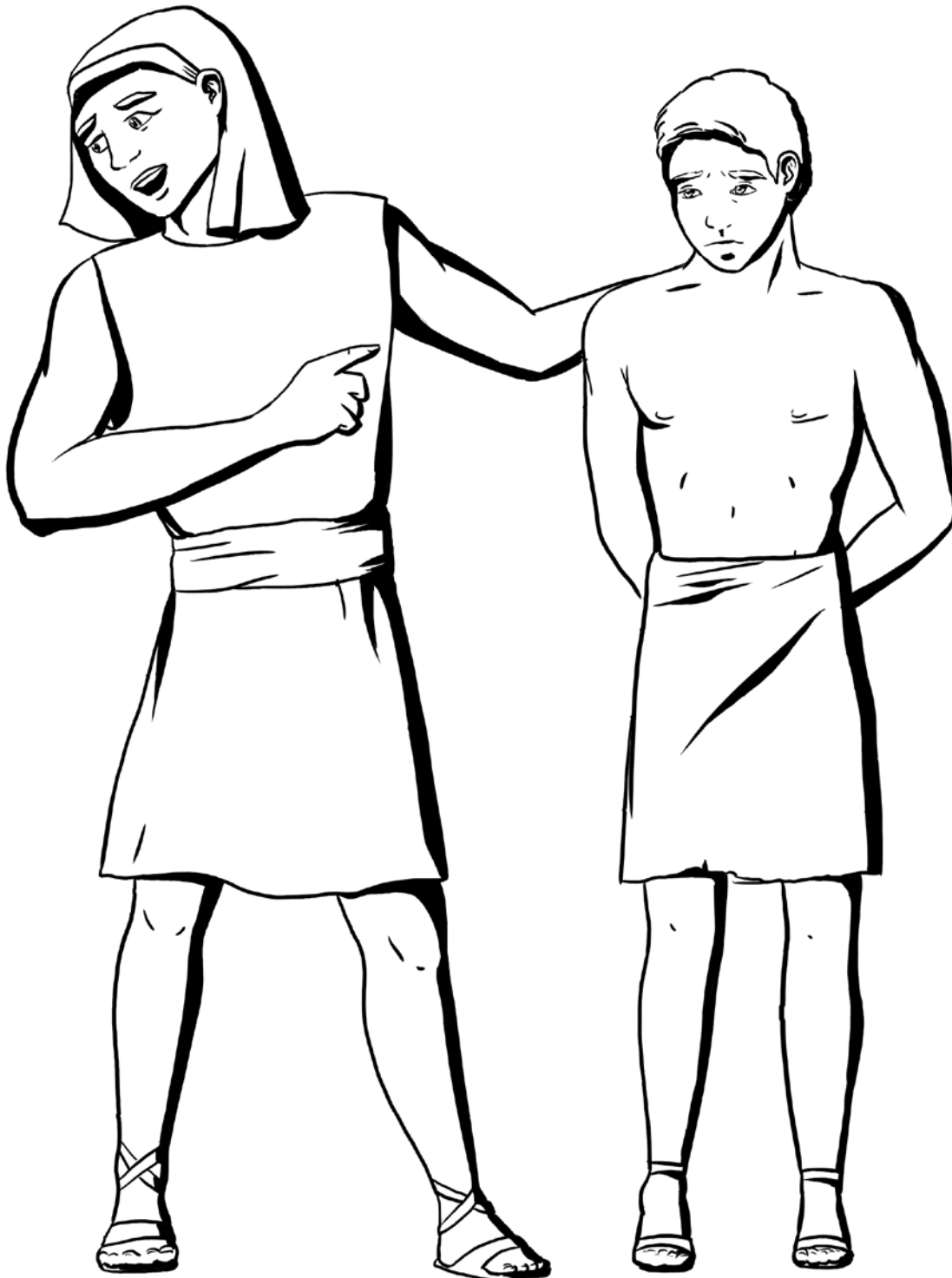


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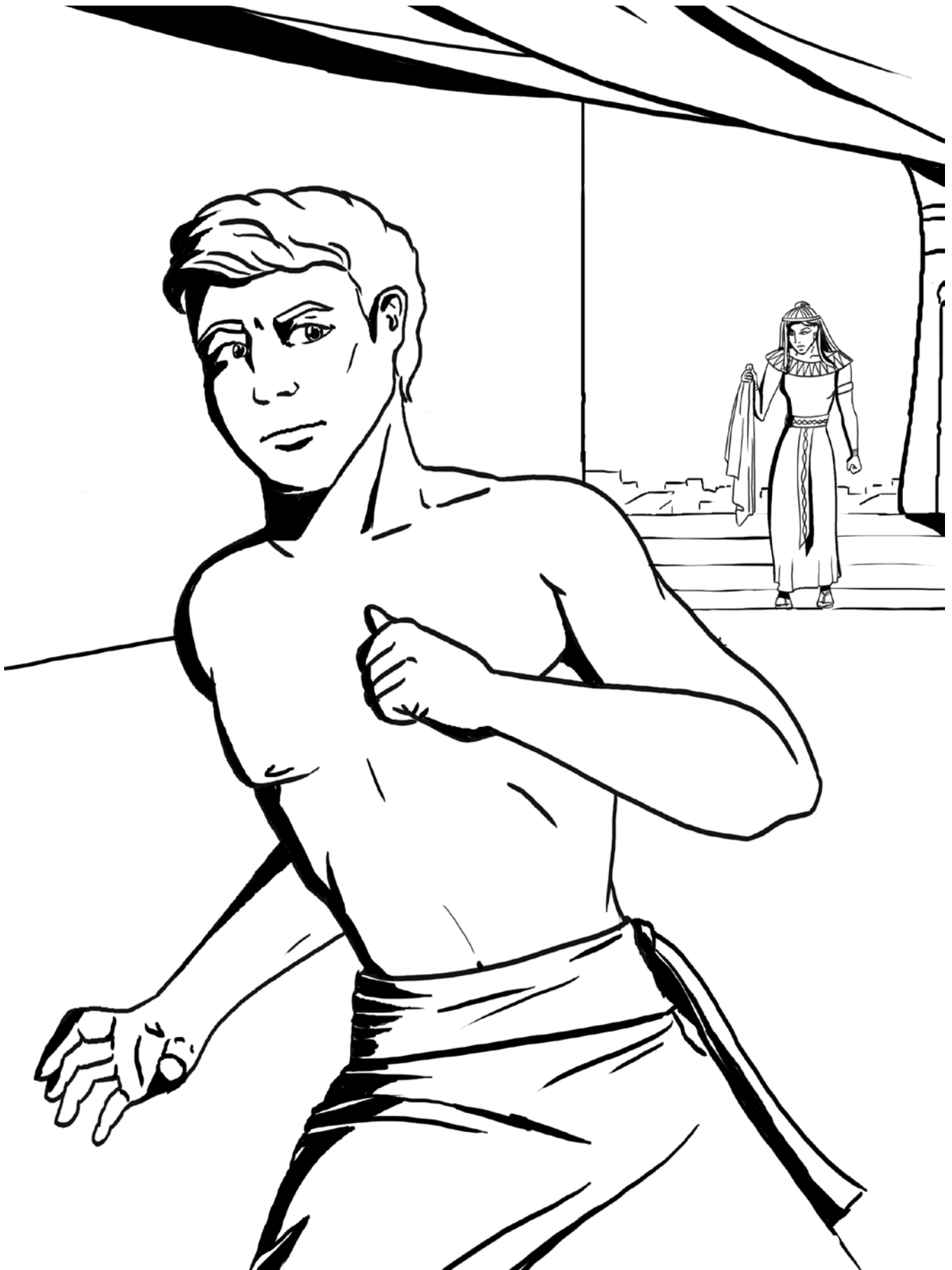
Joseph's brothers mock him after throwing him into a pit.

own husband. She repeatedly tried to get too close to Joseph, but Joseph knew that a close relationship with her would betray his master and break God's law. He always refused her advances.

Angry, Potiphar's wife told her husband that Joseph tried to hurt her. This was an evil lie, but Potiphar had Joseph thrown in jail anyway. Still, Joseph trusted God and obeyed God's laws, and God blessed him



Joseph is sold as a slave.



Potiphar's wife is angry after Joseph refuses her.



God allows Joseph to be thrown in jail for a great purpose.

for it. The keeper of the prison recognized that Joseph had success in everything he did, so he put Joseph in charge of the prison.

After a while, the butler and the chief baker of the pharaoh were thrown into the same jail. One night, each of them had a strange and troubling dream. They told Joseph about their dreams, and Joseph told them that these dreams were messages from God. God gave Joseph the ability to interpret what the dreams meant. He said the butler's dream meant he would be freed from jail, but the baker's dream meant he would be hanged.

Both of these interpretations proved to be true!

Two years later, the pharaoh himself had an unusual dream. The butler remembered his own dream from prison, and he told the pharaoh that he knew a man who could interpret dreams.

The pharaoh sent for Joseph and had him brought out of the prison. "I have had a dream and there is no one who can interpret it," he told Joseph. "But I have heard that you are able to interpret dreams."

"I cannot interpret dreams," Joseph told the pharaoh. "But there is a God in heaven who will give you an answer."

The pharaoh described his dream: First he saw seven fat cows. Then he saw seven skinny cows come out of the river and eat the fat cows. Yet

the skinny cows remained skinny. In the second part of his dream, he saw seven ears of grain growing on one stalk. Then a withered stalk of grain with seven diseased ears sprang out of the ground. The withered stalk swallowed up the healthy stalk, like the skinny cows had eaten the fat cows.

God revealed to Joseph what both parts of the dream meant. "God has revealed to the pharaoh what He is about to do," Joseph said. "The seven fat cows and the seven good ears of grain both symbolize seven years of plenty. The seven skinny cows and the seven diseased ears of grain also both symbolize the same thing: seven lean years. God is revealing that we are about to experience seven years of abundance throughout Egypt, followed by seven years of famine."

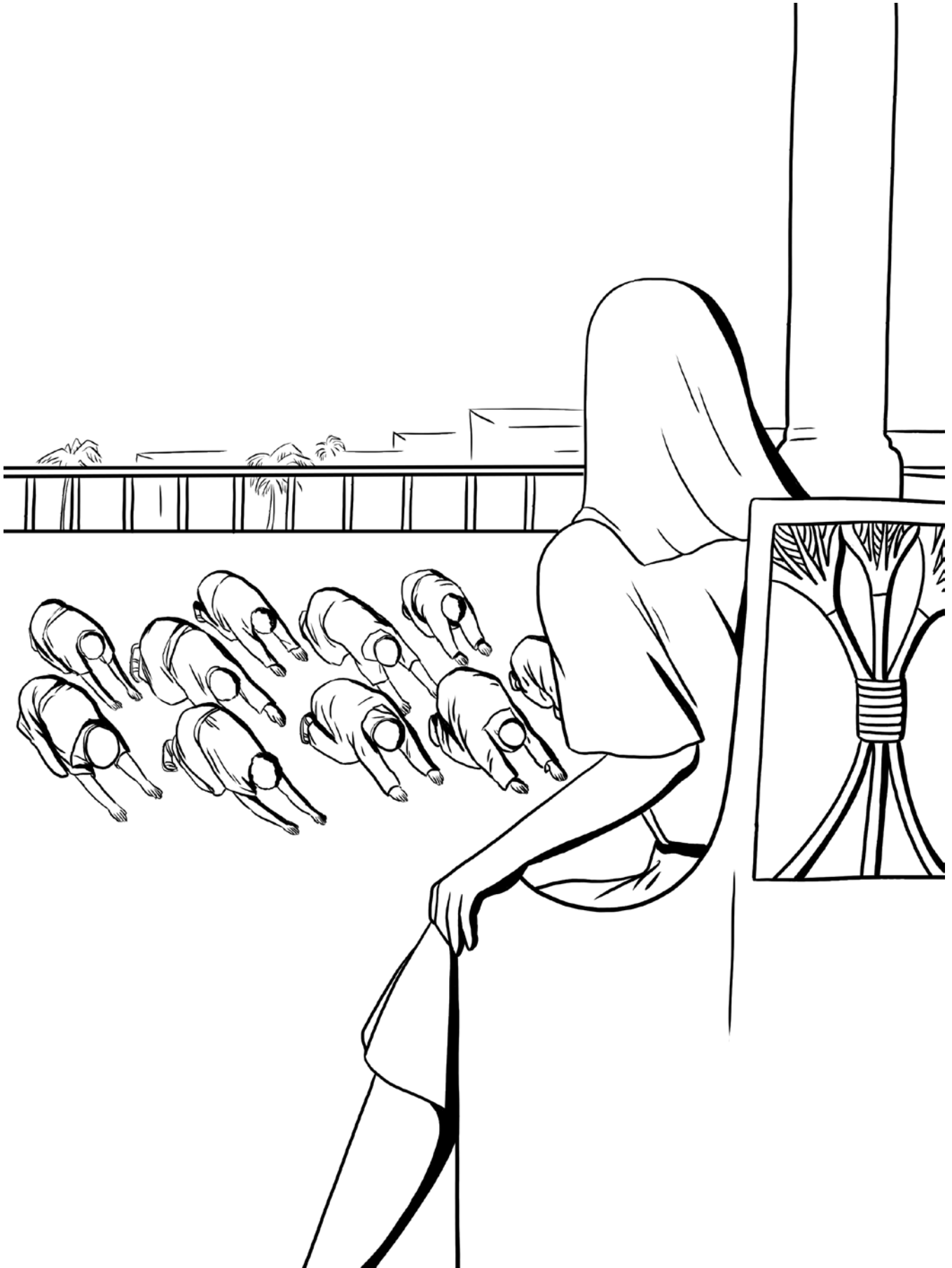
The pharaoh was happy to hear about seven years of abundant food, but he was deeply concerned about the seven years of famine. Joseph advised him to store away one fifth of all the crops that were harvested during the years of plenty. That way the Egyptians would have enough food to survive the years of famine. Impressed with Joseph's wisdom, the pharaoh appointed Joseph to be chancellor of Egypt. In one day, Joseph went from being a foreign slave prisoner hoping God would save him to being the second-highest leader in the Egyptian empire!

After the seven years of plenty passed, the famine hit hard. Joseph's



Joseph builds silos to store grain in the lean years.





His brothers bow before Joseph, but do not recognize him.

family back in Canaan began to run out of food. When Jacob, Joseph's father, heard that the Egyptians had stored away extra food, he sent his sons there to try to buy some grain. When these Hebrews arrived in Egypt, they encountered the chancellor.

They did not realize it, but this powerful Egyptian official before whom they stood was actually their long-lost brother Joseph! They did not recognize him—but Joseph immediately knew them.

Joseph had not seen his brothers since the day they ganged up on him and sold him to strangers. He decided to keep his identity concealed. In fact, he devised a plan to test them, to see if they were remorseful for what they had done to him so many years before.

Joseph accused his brothers of being spies. He said he would not give them any grain unless they brought their youngest brother, Benjamin, to Egypt. Fearful but desperate, the brothers obeyed his request and some time later returned with Benjamin.

Joseph was thrilled to see his younger brother Benjamin, but he still did not tell his older brothers who he was. Instead, he told members of his staff to hide the brothers' money in their grain sacks. He also ordered that his personal silver cup be placed inside Benjamin's sack. After the brothers left, Joseph sent Egyptian soldiers after them to arrest them for stealing. When the brothers were

brought before Joseph, they were afraid he would never let Benjamin go and that their father would die in sorrow. They bowed before Joseph and begged for mercy, just as Joseph had seen in his dream when he was a teenager.

At that moment, Joseph could not hold it in any longer!

"I am Joseph!" he said. "Does my father live?"

The brothers were shocked and greatly troubled. They could not believe it at first. But then they realized it was true: The young brother they had sold into slavery was now the second-most powerful man in the world! They feared that he wanted to exact revenge against them for what they had done to him. But Joseph was kind. He forgave his brothers because he was focused not on himself or on them, but on what God had accomplished.

Joseph then sent his brothers to bring Jacob and the rest of the family to Egypt.

Jacob almost fainted when he heard that Joseph was still alive. He agreed to travel to Egypt see his long-lost son. When he arrived, Joseph embraced him and wept with emotion. The pharaoh welcomed Joseph's family and gave them land in the most fertile area in Egypt.

Before he died, Jacob adopted Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and passed on to them the amazing birthright blessings

that his brother, Esau, had sold to him for a bowl of soup years before. These great-grandsons of Abraham would go on to father “a nation and a company of nations”!



Jacob blesses his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh.

## Math Puzzle

Solve the math problems below. Then match each number answer with the correct letter at the bottom of the page. Write the letters in the boxes. The letters will spell the name of one of Jacob's sons.

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