

Bible Lesson # 19

1.

Genesis 41:41

Suddenly Joseph's life had been changed around. One morning he had been a prisoner in the dark dungeons and the next morning he was raised up to be next in command to Pharaoh, the mighty king of Egypt. With God's help, Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. Joseph told Pharaoh that there would be seven years of good harvests, when there would be an over abundance of grain and the cattle would be fat and healthy from all the grass and hay they could eat. Then there would come seven years of terrible famine when the cattle would starve and die and there wouldn't be enough food for the people to eat. Joseph had made a suggestion to Pharaoh about a way to save the people and animals in the years of famine and Pharaoh chose Joseph to carry out his ideas.

Pharaoh called all his officials together and presented his ring to Joseph. The one who had this ring could make any order they wanted, just as if they were the king himself. This was a great honor! Then Pharaoh gave Joseph a gold chain to wear around his neck and a handsome robe of fine linen to wear. Pharaoh also had Joseph ride in a beautiful chariot right behind the Pharaoh and have men run in front of the chariot shouting "Make way, make way!"



Then Pharaoh gave Joseph a beautiful bride named Asenath and fine home to live in with many servants. Joseph could hardly believe all that had happened to him in such a short time.

Now came the hard work, to make the land ready for the years of famine, Joseph needed to store food during the years of plenty. Sometimes it's easy to forget God when things are going really well for us. Joseph was very important now and very busy, but he didn't forget God. He often prayed to thank God and ask God for help in his new job and he taught his family and his servants to worship God also. We should also remember God wants to be close to us and wants us to read his words in the Bible and pray to him when we need help or want to thank him. Your memory verse for this lesson is:

"The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth" Psa.145:18

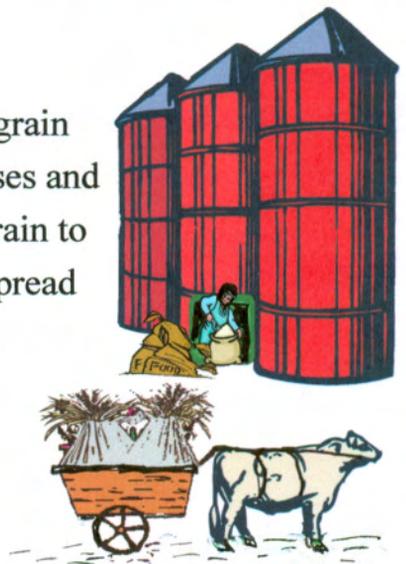
What a wonderful promise this is! When you've learned the verse put a check mark here.

Joseph traveled all over the land of Egypt, picking out places to build huge storehouses and choosing men to be in charge of them. Then Joseph ordered each farmer to bring in some of the extra grain from each of their farms and he stored the grain in the storehouses.

Soon all Egypt was busy. The crops were growing beautifully and there was more food than anyone needed. Men were building tall, strong storehouses and hiring guards to watch the storehouses. Farmers were driving oxen carts loaded with grain into the storehouses and still others were recording how much grain was being gathered. Soon so much grain was being gathered that they couldn't keep track of it. The storehouses were overflowing with food. This went on for seven years, and during this time Joseph and Asenath had two baby boys. Joseph named them Manasseh and Ephraim. When they grew old enough the boys must have enjoyed riding with Joseph in his chariot when he went to check on the storehouses in the different Egyptian cities.

On the eighth year, the farmers planted their crops in the spring and waited for the Nile River to overflow it's banks and water their plants, just as it always had. However, that year there had been no rain in the hills and the Nile river was very low and didn't overflow it's banks. There was no rain on the land and the crops began to dry up. Many of the countries around Egypt were also feeling the effects of the drought. Joseph's father Jacob lived far away and didn't even know that Joseph was alive. Jacob looked out over his land and saw his crops drying up also. The cattle were getting very thin and baby lambs were dying, for their mothers didn't have enough milk to feed them. The next year was even worse and the farm land in Egypt and the countries around Egypt were barely producing any food at all. The cattle searched along the parched ground for a green shoot of grass to eat, but they only raised clouds of dust as they walked by. The women could not bake bread, for there was no grain to grind into flour. "We are dying without food," they cried and men began to gather at Pharaoh's palace to cry out to him for help. Pharaoh said, "Go to Joseph and do what he says."

Then Joseph told the guards to open the storehouses and sell the grain to the people. There would be long lines in front of the storehouses and each person brought money and went away with a big sacks of grain to feed their families and the animals they owned. Soon the word spread to the surrounding countries that there was grain to buy in Egypt. Men would travel for miles and miles to come to Egypt in order to buy food .



Jacob, the father of Joseph, and Jacob's eleven sons were becoming very worried. They had no rain to water their plants and their animals had no food to eat. When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he quickly called all his sons together and told them the good news. "I want you to go to Egypt and buy us some grain," he told them. "All of you go, except young Benjamin, he will stay here with me."

"Why doesn't Benjamin have to go too?" they asked. Benjamin spoke up and said, "Please Father, I would like to go, I have never seen the land of Egypt." Jacob shook his head sadly, "No Benjamin, my beloved wife Rachel only had two sons, you and your older brother Joseph. Rachel is no longer alive and Joseph is no longer alive; I couldn't bear it if something were to happen to you, also." Jacob didn't know that Joseph really was alive and was one of the rulers in Egypt. Leah was the mother of Jacob's other ten sons, and they were the ones Jacob sent to Egypt. He gave them plenty of money so they could each buy a big sacks of grain to bring back to their home.

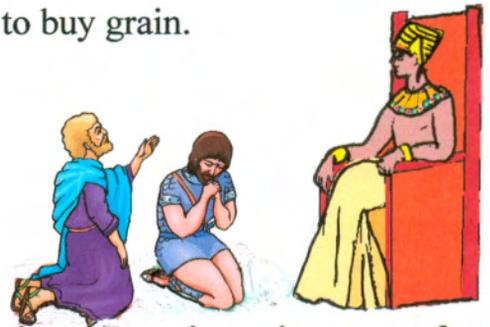
As the ten brothers traveled down the long, hot, road to Egypt, they must have thought of their brother Joseph. Many years ago these same brothers had attacked Joseph, put him in a deep pit and then later sold him as a slave to a caravan of men traveling to Egypt. As the brothers traveled along this same road they must have wondered, "How did Joseph feel as he went along this road? Were the slave buyers kind to him or did they beat him with whips? Was Joseph still alive, slaving for some master in Egypt or had he been killed by now?" These brothers must have had lots of guilty feelings as they rode into the land of Egypt.

When the brothers arrived in Egypt they were directed to the palace, they bowed before Joseph, who was making arrangements for those who came to buy grain.

Why do you think his brothers didn't recognize Joseph?

There's several reasons; for one thing they thought he was a slave, not a ruler! For another thing, Joseph was a grown man now, his voice would be deeper and his face and body changed. Joseph had been a teenager when he was sold as a slave, now he was a grown man, dressed in Egyptian clothes.

Egyptian rulers wore fancy head dresses and jewelry and they didn't wear beards and mustaches like the Jews did. The brothers didn't recognize Joseph, but Joseph knew them right away! His brothers had all been grown men when they sold him, so while they looked a little older, Joseph recognized them.



Do you remember from a past lesson when Joseph had a dream of his brothers binding sheaves of wheat? The brother's sheaves of wheat bowed down to Joseph's sheaf of wheat. Joseph looked at his brothers all bowing down to him and he remembered his dream. It was coming true right before his eyes. Joseph wondered where his little brother Benjamin was, he wondered where his father was. Were the brothers still wicked and had they killed their father or his little brother or sold them for slaves like they had sold him?

Joseph pretended he didn't know his brothers and he acted like he was cross and suspicious. He wanted to test the brothers and see what they were like now. He frowned and said, "Where do you come from? You are spies and have come to see where our land is unprotected!" The brothers were frightened, "No, no, we are all brothers, sons of one man. We've only come to buy food, we are honest men, not spies," they said. Joseph pretended he still didn't believe them. The brothers explained, "We are twelve brothers, the sons of one man who lives in Canaan, our youngest brother is at home with our father, and one of our brothers is no more," (they were thinking of Joseph when they said this).

Joseph still didn't trust them, was Benjamin really okay? He desperately wanted to see his little brother and see if the older brothers had mistreated him. "This is how I will test you to see if you're telling the truth," Joseph said, "You will not leave this place unless you bring your youngest brother here. One of you will go back to Canaan and get him and the rest will be kept in prison." Then Joseph had the guards put all the brothers in the same prison where he had been a prisoner). This gave the brothers lots of time to think about the bad things they had done in the past.

At the end of the three days Joseph had the brothers taken out of prison and brought before him. He told the brothers he had been thinking it over and he would keep just one brother in prison while all the rest could return to Canaan with grain for their starving families. They were to bring Benjamin back to Egypt though, or he would know they were spies, and they all would die.

The brothers didn't think Joseph could understand their Hebrew language and they began to blame each other. "We are being punished because of how we treated our brother, Joseph. We saw how he pleaded with us, but we ignored him. I didn't, I told you to leave him alone, but you wouldn't listen, It's your fault," the brothers argued back and forth.



To hear the brothers talking about him made Joseph quickly turn away, with tears in his eyes. Joseph had been using an interpreter to speak with the brothers. Now he turned back and told the interpreter to tell them they could go get their grain and leave Egypt, but he would keep one of the brothers in Egypt until they returned with their youngest brother. Joseph had his servants load up a large sack of grain for each of the brothers. Then Joseph did something surprising, he had his servant put the brother's money back in their sacks. As Joseph watched his brothers leave, he probably wished he could go with them to see his dear father again and his little brother. But Joseph knew he had important work to do in Egypt, for God had chosen him to save many lives in many countries. We should follow Joseph's example, shouldn't we? In school work, in helping our parents, sisters or brothers or in whatever we've been given to do, we should try and do our very best work and stick with it until the job is done.

Nine worried brothers traveled out of the land of Egypt with their donkeys loaded with grain. They had their food, but were leaving Simeon there. What would they tell their father? That night as they made a fire and unloaded one of the grain sacks to feed the donkeys they made a discovery. There in the top of the sack was the money they had brought to pay for the grain! This really frightened them, each brother got down his sack of grain and discovered that every sack had their money in the top of the sacks. Now the Egyptian ruler would really think they were wicked men!



Back in the land of Canaan Benjamin had been watching the road from Egypt. It was past time for his older brothers to return and their father was getting worried. As he peered down the road he saw clouds of dust in the distance and he ran quickly to tell his father, "My brothers are coming, quick father, come and see!" Jacob went out to meet his sons and their wives and children also came running. Everyone was hugging everyone else and talking excitedly, until suddenly Jacob looked around and asked, "Where's Simeon?" The brothers looked at each other and then told their father all that had happened in Egypt. The ruler thought they were spies and Simeon would be kept in Egypt until they brought Benjamin back. They also told him about finding their money in their grain sacks. Jacob tore his clothes and cried out, "Why did you tell the man you had a younger brother? First Joseph died, now Simeon is lost to me! No Benjamin can ever leave!"

What happens when Jacob and his sons again run out of food. Will they go back to Egypt? Will they be able to take Benjamin with them? We will find out in our next lesson.

Question Page

Circle the correct answer below each question

1. After seven years of plenty of grain and food, there were seven years of what?
(a) Rain (b) Plagues (c) Famine
2. What did Joseph do during the good years in order to have food during the bad ones?
(a) Fill storage sheds with food (b) Have the people eat extra food (c) Plant potatoes
3. How did Pharaoh show the people that Joseph was now a ruler?
(a) Made them all bow to him (b) Gave him a hat of gold (c) Had him ride in his chariot
4. What did Pharaoh give Joseph? (a) A wife (b) A ruby necklace (c) a dozen camels
5. Who did Joseph turn to for help with his new job? (a) Pharaoh (b) His wife (c) God

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Write the answers below each question

6. Why didn't his brothers recognize Joseph?
7. What was Joseph's younger brother named?
8. What was the name of Joseph's father?
9. Joseph's wife was named Asenath, how many children did they have?
10. Why did Joseph pretend that his brothers were spies and act angry with them?
11. What did Joseph want his brothers to do when they came back to Egypt for food?
12. What did Joseph do to help starving people in the countries that had a famine?
13. What did the brothers find in their sacks when they stopped for the night?
14. If our parents or teachers or friends give us a job to do, when is it okay to quit doing it?

Match the names on the left with the correct description on the right by drawing a line between them

JOSEPH

Joseph's Egyptian wife
(Gen.41:50)

PHARAOH

One of Joseph's sons (Gen.41:51)

ASENATH

Joseph's youngest brother (Gen.42:4)

MANASSEH

Joseph's father (Gen.42:1)

BENJAMIN

First ruler over Egypt (Gen.41:1)

SIMEON

Another of Joseph's sons (Gen.41:52)

JACOB

Second ruler over Egypt (Gen.41:40)

EPHRAIM

The brother who stayed in Egypt
(Gen.42:24)

Put the first letter of the object under each picture in order to discover something from this lesson. The words are mixed up, can you put them in their proper order?









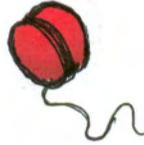
























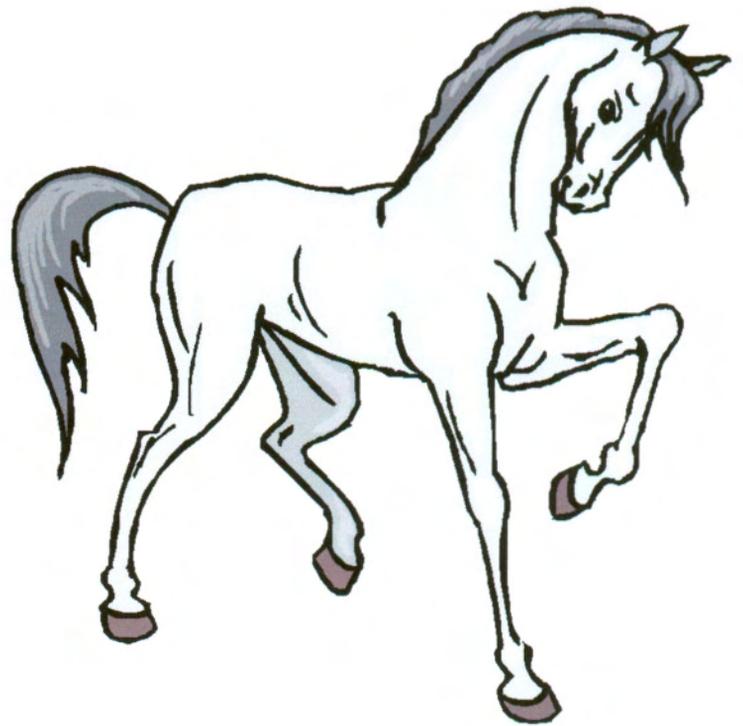






Put the sentence in the proper order on the line below

Finish the drawing - you'll need a chariot behind the horse - an Egyptian driver and Joseph riding in the chariot



Below are some ideas of what Egyptian men and chariots might have looked like

