

## Joseph Helps His Family!

Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dream had come true. There was a severe famine in the land of Egypt, but thanks to Joseph's wisdom, Pharaoh had ordered that some of the food be stored away and sold during the famine so the people wouldn't starve to death. Last week we learned that Jacob sent 10 of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. The brothers came and bowed down to Joseph who was in charge of distributing the food. The brothers didn't even recognize Joseph after all their years apart, but Joseph certainly recognized them. We heard last week that he gave them grain and demanded that they return to Egypt with their youngest brother Benjamin. In the meantime, Joseph had his brother Simeon put in prison.

Jacob refused to send Benjamin to Egypt, fearing that he would lose yet another son. In due time, as the famine continued, the need for food outweighed everything else, and Jacob finally agreed to send Benjamin with his older brothers. Judah, one of Jacob's sons, promised his father that he would protect Benjamin with his life.

### *Why do you think Jacob didn't want Benjamin to go to Egypt?*

The brothers then journeyed to Egypt and were met by Joseph's servant. Joseph gave orders that the brothers were to be brought to him home to eat with him. The brothers were terrified, because the last time they encountered Joseph, he accused them of being spies!

When Joseph entered the room the brothers all bowed low before him and presented him with many gifts they had brought from the land of Canaan. When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin among them he was so overcome with emotion that he had to leave the room to weep!

### *Why do you think Joseph's response to his brothers was to cry?*

Joseph gave his brothers more grain than sent them on their way, but before they left he had his servant secretly hide a silver cup in Benjamin's bag. Shortly after the brothers set off for Canaan the next day Joseph sent his servant out to them accusing them of stealing the cup. "Of course we didn't steal the cup!" the brothers exclaimed. "If you find it among us, the one who has it will remain in Egypt as a slave!" They were so certain that the cup was not with any of their belongings, but they didn't know that Joseph had secretly hidden it! The servant found the cup in Benjamin's bag and all the brothers were shocked. They knew that if they didn't return home with Benjamin, Jacob would die of despair. But what could they do?

They all returned to Egypt and Judah went before Joseph, pleading for his brother's life. "Please," he said, "let me stay here in Egypt and be your slave in Benjamin's place. Our father wouldn't be able to bear it if he were to lose this son also!" When Judah said this Joseph knew that his brothers were truly sorry for what they had

done to him years earlier in selling him into slavery. He knew that their hearts had changed, and he was ready to forgive them. Then Joseph revealed to his brothers who he really was.

**Read:** (*Genesis 45:4-8*) "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. For two years now there had been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God."

***Who did Joseph believe really sent him to Egypt? (God)***

***Was Joseph still angry with his brothers for what they had done to him? (No, he forgave them.)***

Joseph knew that God had used the sin of his brothers to bring blessings to his family, and the whole nation of Israel. Even though he suffered greatly, Joseph's faith in God never waivered.

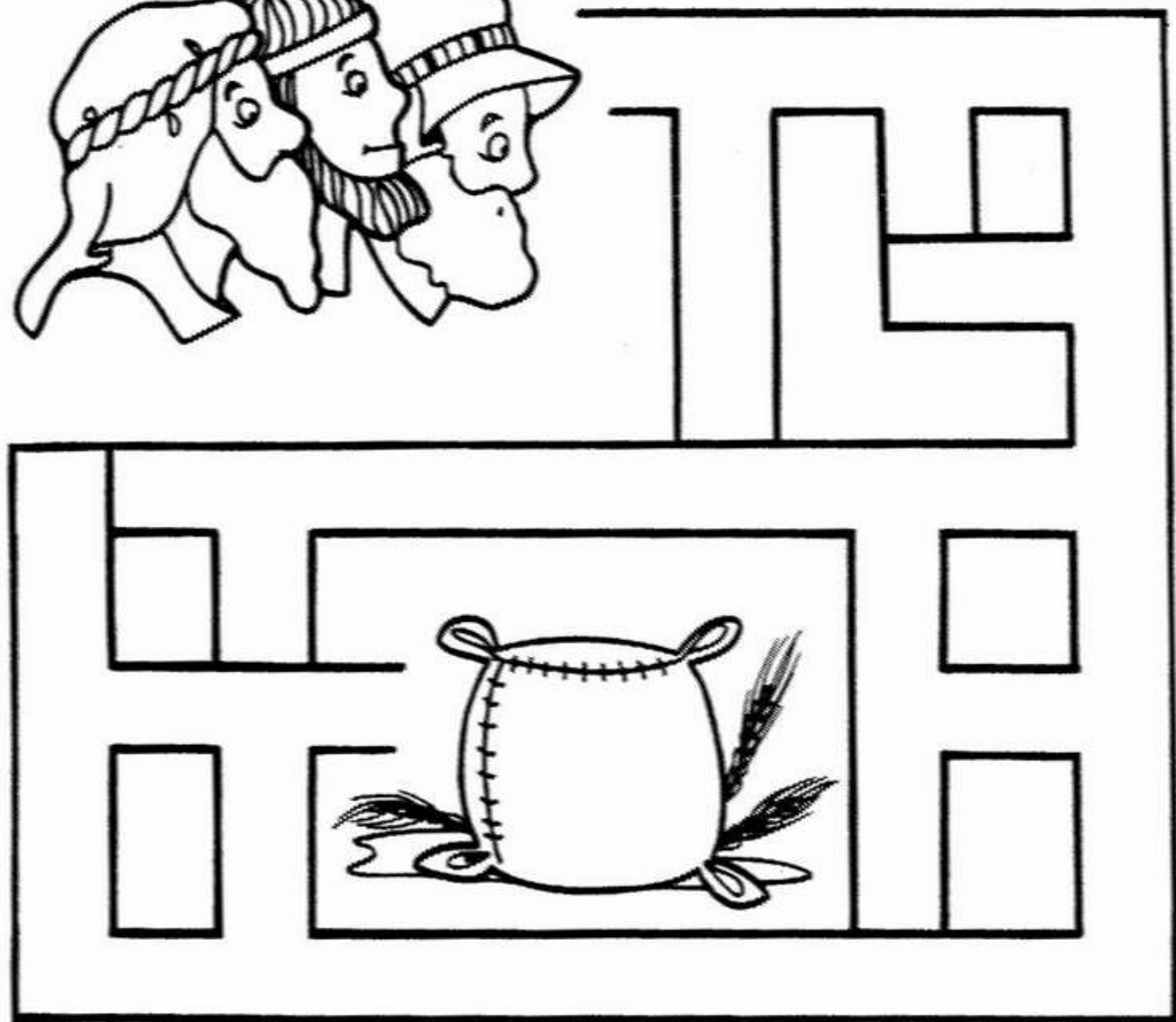
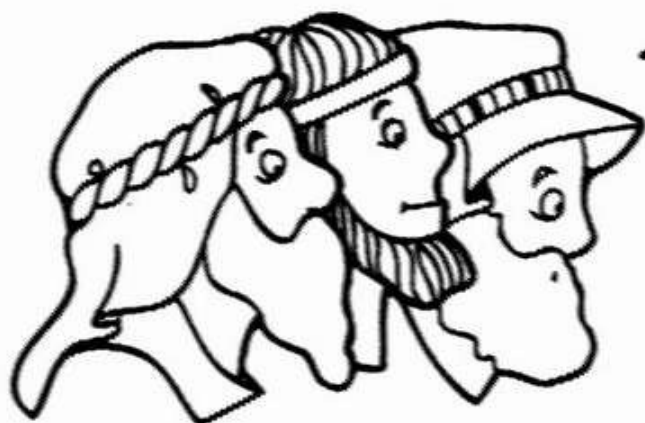
The brothers were overjoyed to see Joseph again and they were eager to hear his story. There was much hugging and celebrating at this reunion! Joseph then told his brothers to return to Canaan and bring their whole family back to Egypt to live. Pharaoh himself promised that Joseph's family would have the best land there was. When Jacob heard that his son Joseph was still alive he could barely believe it. What happy news! The whole family moved from Canaan to Egypt where they lived out the rest of their days.

### **Gospel Connection**

Joseph could have remained angry and bitter at his brothers for what they had done to him. He could have had them thrown in prison or worse, killed. But instead, he chose to forgive them because he knew that God had used their sin for good. Joseph remembered that God was in charge! In this story we see Joseph showing grace to his family. They deserved punishment for their sin, but instead Joseph showed them mercy.

Just like Joseph's brothers we deserve to be punished for our sins, but God doesn't treat us the way we deserve. He sent His Son Jesus to take the punishment for us, so we can be fully forgiven! Now, when God looks at us He doesn't see our sin and failure, but the perfect obedience of Jesus.

# Joseph Is Kind



Can the brothers have a sack of food?  
Joseph says okay  
Even though they treated him  
In such a terrible way.

# Joseph and His Brothers

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph — a beautiful robe. Genesis 37:3 (NLT)

Based on Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 (NIV)



Genesis 37

H O N B O S I L V E R D D R C  
R O P G L A O T M F K M B A W  
W H G I D C Y M L R A O X A T  
J O S E P H G B D D C T C L S  
P O P Z Z D W H N A S C H D T  
I Q E N M R A A J N M A F E U  
P B R G S G L W E M E N L F R  
C O R S Y N R R M E R A O O F  
B R N O A P D A B O C A C D D  
M J B L T L T O Z P H N K S Y  
L O H D I H R D G E A B S K R  
O B W H J F E E O S N P H I F  
V C C K T T H R N O T A D L T  
E Q S Q A U H O S T S M L L X  
D O O H Z E S B D J Y H A Z O

LAND  
HATED  
SONS  
EGYPT

MERCHANTS  
GRAZE  
JACOB  
KILL

LOVED  
OLD  
BROTHERS  
FLOCKS

JOSEPH  
BORN  
SILVER  
FATHER

CANAAN  
ROBE  
CHILDREN  
SOLD

