

Joseph Rules Egypt



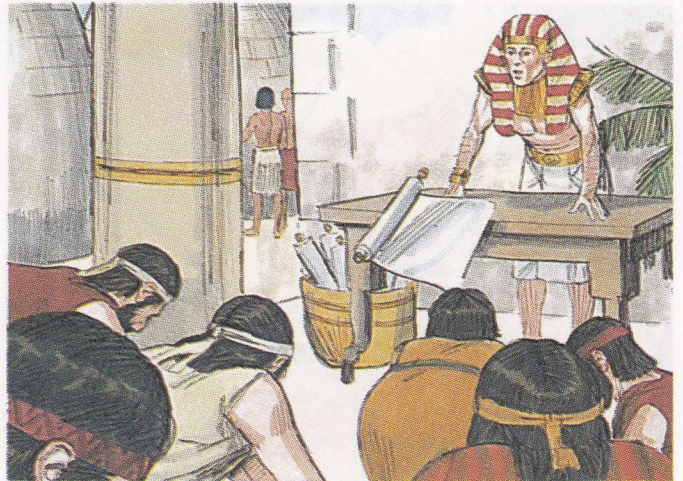
1 Just as Joseph had said, Egypt had seven years of plentiful crops. Joseph collected a portion of all the grain grown in Egypt and stored it. Then a great famine struck the land.



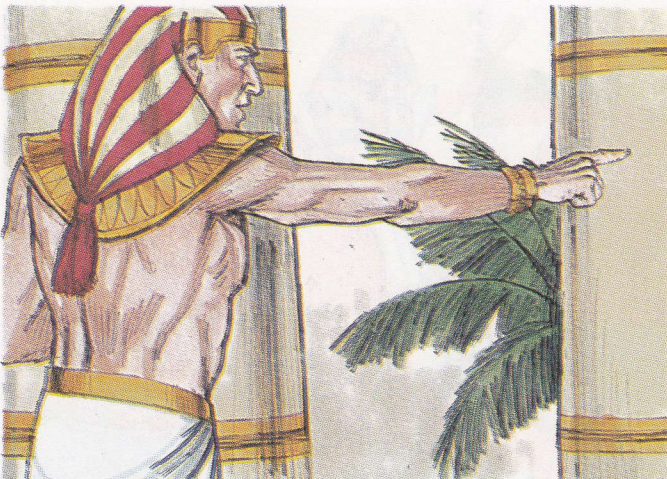
2 In Canaan, Jacob said to his sons, "I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down and buy some for us before we all starve to death!"



3 All the sons left for Egypt except Benjamin, the youngest. Jacob was afraid something might happen to him as it had to Joseph years ago.



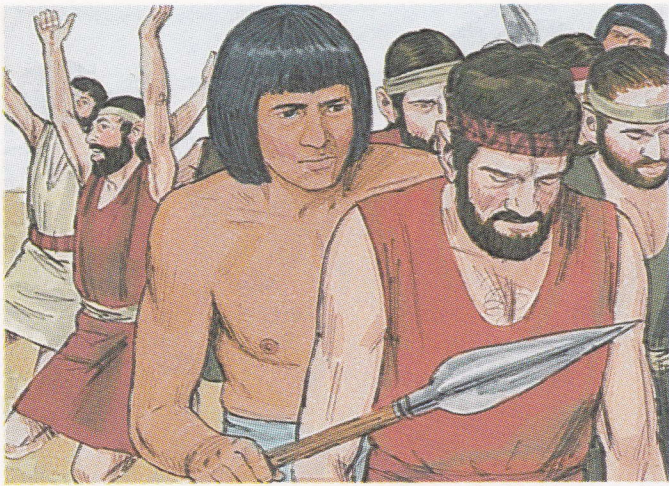
4 Since Joseph was Prime Minister of Egypt and in charge of grain sales, his brothers came before him, not knowing who he was, and bowed low. (Remember Joseph's boyhood dreams?)



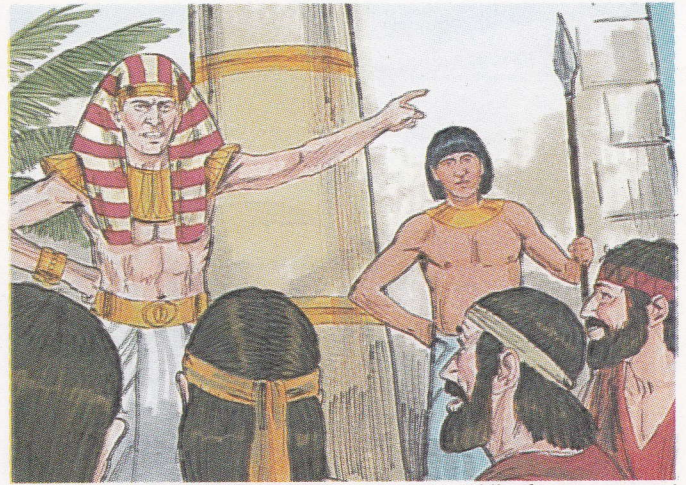
5 Joseph recognized them instantly, but they did not know him. Joseph decided to test his brothers. "You are spies!" he charged.



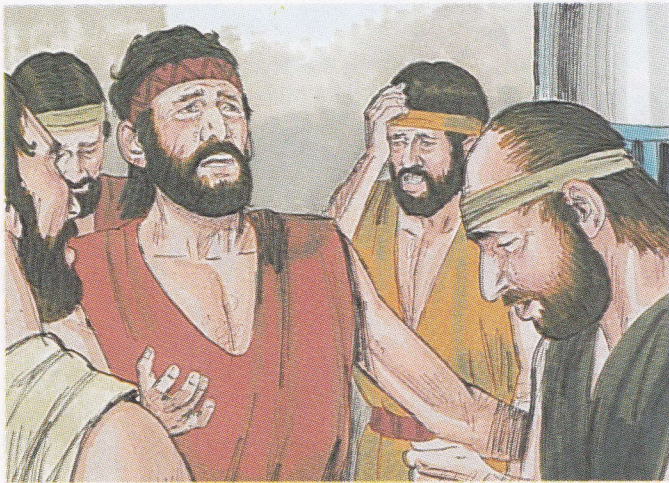
6 "Sir," they responded, "we are not spies. We are all brothers, and our father is in Canaan. Our youngest brother is there, and one of our brothers is dead."



7 Joseph knew they spoke the truth. But he wanted to test his brothers and make his authority clear to them, so he had them all thrown into jail.



8 After three days, Joseph said, "All of you, except one, may go. That one will be held here until you return with your youngest brother. Then I will know you have told the truth."



9 The brothers cried to each other in their own language, "All of this has happened to us because of the terrible thing we did to Joseph long ago. We heard his pleading but would not listen!"



10 Joseph, of course, understood their words and was so touched by the brothers' repentance that he had to slip into a nearby room where he could hide his tears.



11 Then Joseph selected Simeon as the brother who would have to stay in Egypt. He ordered his servants to fill the other brothers' sacks with grain.



12 But Joseph also gave secret instructions to put each brother's payment at the top of his sack.