

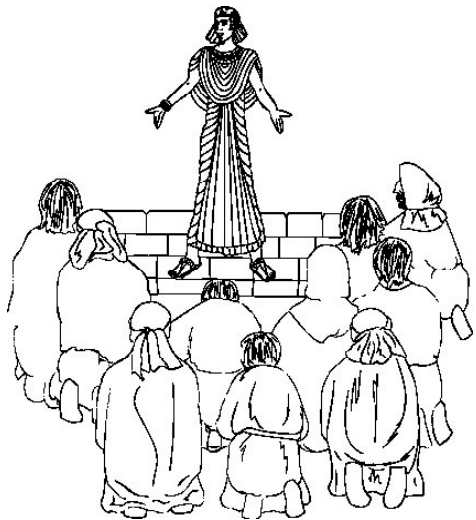
God *did* have a plan. Soon Joseph was put in charge of all the prisoners because he was such a good manager.

Also Joseph was able to interpret dreams for the royal baker and butler when they were in prison. His interpretations came true. [Read Genesis 40.]

Two years later, Pharaoh had a frightening dream. The royal butler remembered Joseph who had explained what his dream meant when he was in jail. He told Pharaoh the story.

Joseph was brought out of prison, and after God told him what Pharaoh's dream meant, he was made the prime minister of Egypt. [Read Genesis 41.]

Joseph helped prepare Egypt for a coming famine. Their country was the only place with food when the famine came. Joseph's brothers had to come to buy food. They bowed down before the prime minister, never thinking he might be the little brother they had sold as a slave!



Joseph's dreams had come true! Joseph was very happy to find out that his father was still alive and that his younger brother, Benjamin, had grown up!

Joseph forgave his brothers and they all moved to Egypt to be near him so they would have enough food for their families.



Would God's plan have worked out if Joseph had gotten mad at Him on the way to Egypt and not been His friend anymore? _____

Would God's plan have worked if Joseph had decided to be Mrs. Potiphar's boy-friend after all? _____

Would God's plan have worked if Joseph had gotten mad at Him when he had to go to prison? _____

Joseph trusted God all his life. Because he was a friend of God when he was young, and stayed a friend of God, thousands of families had food during the famine.

It is important for me, too, to stay friends with God.

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GOD'S YOUNG FRIENDS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON 2 Joseph: Friend of God

Joseph's Family History

Isaac was Joseph's grandfather. Remember that Isaac and his wife, Rebecca, had twin boys, Jacob and Esau. Even though Esau was only born a few minutes ahead of Jacob, he was still the older brother. In those days the oldest son was supposed to be a godly leader of the family, or patriarch, after the father died. Abraham was the first patriarch in their family. Isaac was the patriarch after Abraham died. Esau traded the patriarch job to Jacob, his younger brother, for a pot of lentil soup! [Read Genesis 25:29-34.]

Esau must not have cared very much about being the patriarch. He must have thought being the leader of the family and being God's friend was not very important.



Jacob loved Joseph's mother. Her name was Rachel. Jacob had been tricked into marrying Rachel's older sister first, but later he married Rachel too. Joseph had three stepmothers and eleven brothers in all. Joseph's mother, Rachel, only had two of the boys--Joseph, and his little brother, Benjamin.

Jacob considered Joseph to be his oldest son since he was the oldest son of the favorite wife. Jacob planned for Joseph to be the next patriarch.

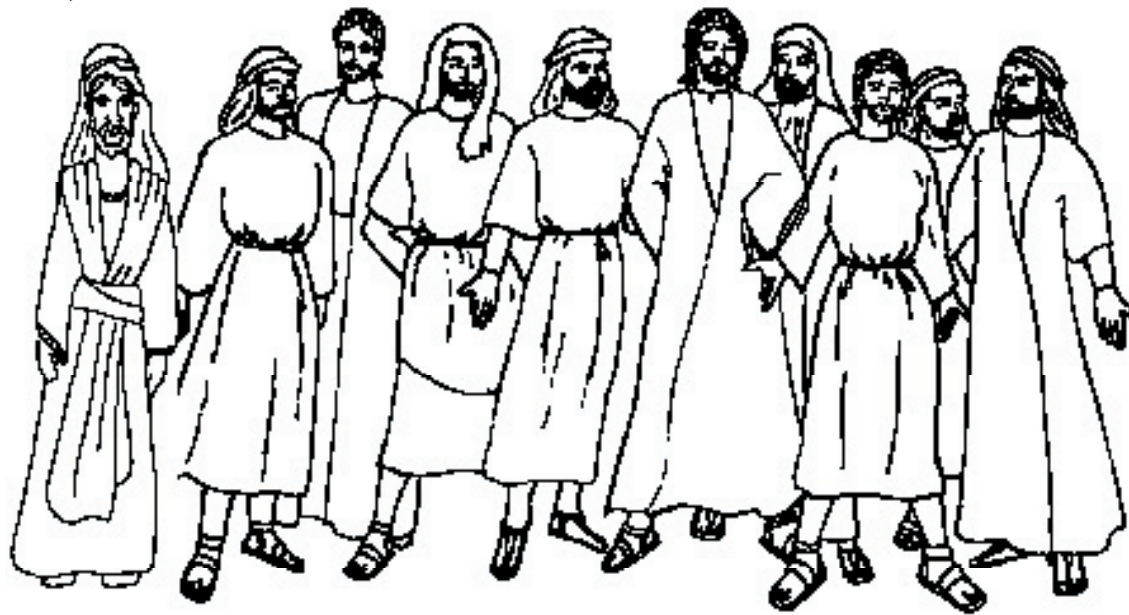
Joseph's brothers were very jealous of him. Each one of them wanted to be the favorite. And they wanted Joseph to stop telling their dad when they misbehaved.

That's not fair! We are all older than he is. One of us should be patriarch!

Reuben is the oldest brother in the family. He should be the next patriarch!

Yeah! And besides, Joseph is a tattletale. Whenever he finds out anything bad we've done, he runs and tells dad, and we get in trouble.

And that's not all. He has those weird dreams and tells them to Dad too!

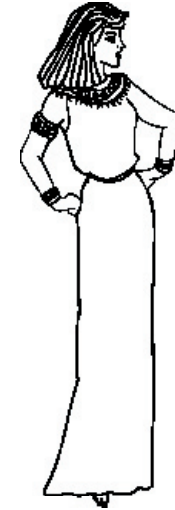


You can read about this in Genesis 37.

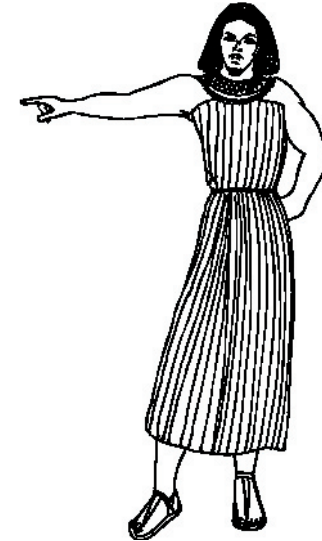


In the Egyptian slave market Joseph was bought by Potiphar, the captain of the king's guards. Joseph worked hard for Potiphar. Soon he was in charge of all Potiphar's slaves and properties.

Joseph, come be my boyfriend. Potiphar is away and he'll never know about it!



No way! How could I be a boyfriend to the wife of my boss? It would hurt Potiphar and it would hurt God!



Potiphar's wife was so angry when Joseph said "no" that she told lies about him to Potiphar. If Potiphar had really believed the lies, Joseph would have been killed right then. Instead, Joseph was thrown in jail. Potiphar knew Joseph was an honest man and a friend of God.



Dear God, this jail is awful! This is very discouraging. But I know You have a plan for me. Thank You for still being my friend.

You can read this part of the story in Genesis 39.



Joseph was already a friend of God, even though he needed to learn how to get along better with his brothers. What do you suppose he was thinking as he walked behind the camels to Egypt?



Draw a line from each correct answer to Joseph.



I don't understand why this has happened to me.

God, this is all your fault. You haven't taken very good care of me. You can forget about being friends anymore.

I know You will be with me and take care of me no matter where I go.

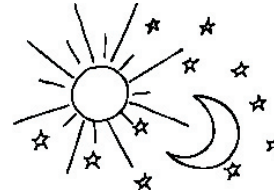
I know you still have a plan for my life. Please help me to stay close to You and do whatever You want me to do.

Oh God, You are my only friend now! I still love You and want to stay friends. Please help me. I'm so scared!



There is only one wrong answer. Do you know which one it is?

Dad, I had another dream last night. This time, there was a sun and a moon and eleven stars. They all bowed down to me! Isn't that neat!



It reminds me of that dream where I was standing in the middle of harvested sheaves of grain and all eleven of them bowed down to my sheaf.

Do you think it could mean that someday even you and mother Leah and my eleven brothers might bow down to me?

I've got to run and tell my brothers. Whether they like it or not, I think someday they will have to bow down to me. That will be great!





I don't know if I would like having a brother like Joseph. I don't like it when my little sister tattles on me and gets me in trouble.

He sounds like he thought he was pretty important too. That could be really annoying.



Joseph's father did something that made the brothers even more unhappy. . .

Joseph, here is a new coat that I made for you.



Oh Dad, it's beautiful! It's just like the coat a family prince wears. Does this mean that I am the family prince, even though my brothers are older than me? Now they will HAVE to respect me!

One day Jacob called Joseph to his tent and told him to go find his brothers. They had taken the sheep far away for better grass to eat. Jacob sent food and supplies with Joseph for his brothers to enjoy.

Oh no! Here comes the dreamer!

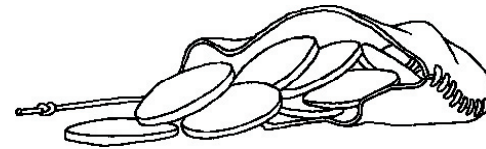
Let's kill him!

Why not throw him into this pit?

Good idea! Then later when he's missing we can say no when Dad asks us if we killed him.



The brothers did just that. Later that day some slave traders came by their camp and the brothers sold Joseph to the traders for 20 pieces of silver. Read the story in Genesis 37.



How many pieces of silver would each one get? _____

Remember that Benjamin was too little to be out there, and Joseph was gone.

Poor Joseph. Being sold as a slave must have been terrible for him. And by his own brothers too! How awful, even if he was annoying sometimes.

