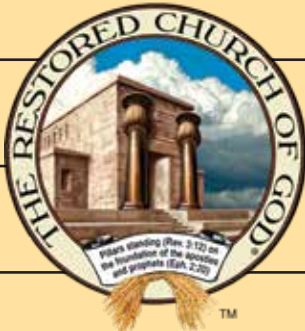


THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD®

CHILDREN'S BIBLE LESSONS



The Life of Joseph



LEVEL 2 LESSON 6

The Life of Joseph

Joseph was the firstborn son of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel. Jacob loved Joseph more than his other 11 sons because he was born in his old age. Joseph's brothers were very jealous of a special coat of many colors that Jacob made for Joseph.

Joseph's Dreams

When Joseph was a teenager, he described to his brothers two dreams that he had. In the first dream, he and his brothers were tying bundles of grain in the field. Joseph told them, "My sheaf stood straight up and your sheaves bowed down to it." His brothers hated Joseph even

more, and said, "You think you're really going to rule over us?"

Joseph told his father and brothers about another dream. In this dream, the sun, moon and 11 stars bowed down to him. Jacob said, "Will your mother, brothers and I bow down before you?" Even though Jacob scolded him, he did not forget what his son had said. Joseph's brothers, however, became even more envious.

Sold into Slavery

One day, Jacob sent Joseph on a journey to see how his flocks were doing and to check on his brothers.



When the brothers saw Joseph coming, they began thinking about what they could do to hurt him. Everyone except Reuben wanted to kill him. Reuben convinced his brothers not to kill Joseph, but instead to take off his coat of many colors and throw him into a pit.

After throwing Joseph into a pit, his brothers sat down to eat a meal. Far off in the distance, they saw Ishmaelite traders traveling with their camels. They were traveling to Egypt. The brothers decided to pull Joseph out of the pit and sell him to the traders for 20 pieces of silver.

To cover up their evil actions, they dipped Joseph's coat in goat's blood and brought it to their father. They tricked him into believing that Joseph had been eaten by a wild animal. Jacob was so upset that he tore his clothes and wept for many days.

A New Life in Egypt

When the Ishmaelite traders arrived in Egypt, they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer

of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. In time, Potiphar saw that God was blessing Joseph in all of his work. He soon put Joseph in charge of his entire household.

Potiphar's wife began to like Joseph very much because he was handsome. She soon wanted to be with Joseph more than she wanted to be with her own husband. Joseph knew this was wrong. One day, Potiphar's wife grabbed him and pulled off his jacket as he ran away. When Potiphar arrived home, his



wife lied to him. She said that Joseph tried to hurt her. Even though Potiphar put him in prison, God continued to have mercy upon him and bless him. Joseph was soon put in charge of all the other prisoners.

The Baker's and Butler's Dreams

The Pharaoh's chief baker and chief butler were also put in prison because

they had insulted him. One morning, Joseph found them looking very sad. Upon asking why they looked so upset, they explained that they both had dreams, but could not understand what they meant. After Joseph told them that God reveals the meaning of dreams, the baker and butler told him their dreams.

The butler dreamt that a vine with three branches produced ripe grapes.

He squeezed the grapes into Pharaoh's cup and gave it to him. Joseph explained that in three days, Pharaoh would give him back his job as chief butler. Joseph asked the butler a favor. He said, "When you are freed from prison, ask Pharaoh to release me too."

The baker then described his dream. Three white baskets were on his head and birds ate baked goods out of one of the baskets. Joseph explained that in three days, Pharaoh would hang the baker from a tree and birds would come and eat his body.



Sure enough, three days later, Pharaoh held a birthday party for himself. In celebration, the butler was freed from prison, and the baker was killed. However, the chief butler forgot about Joseph. Joseph stayed in prison for two more years.

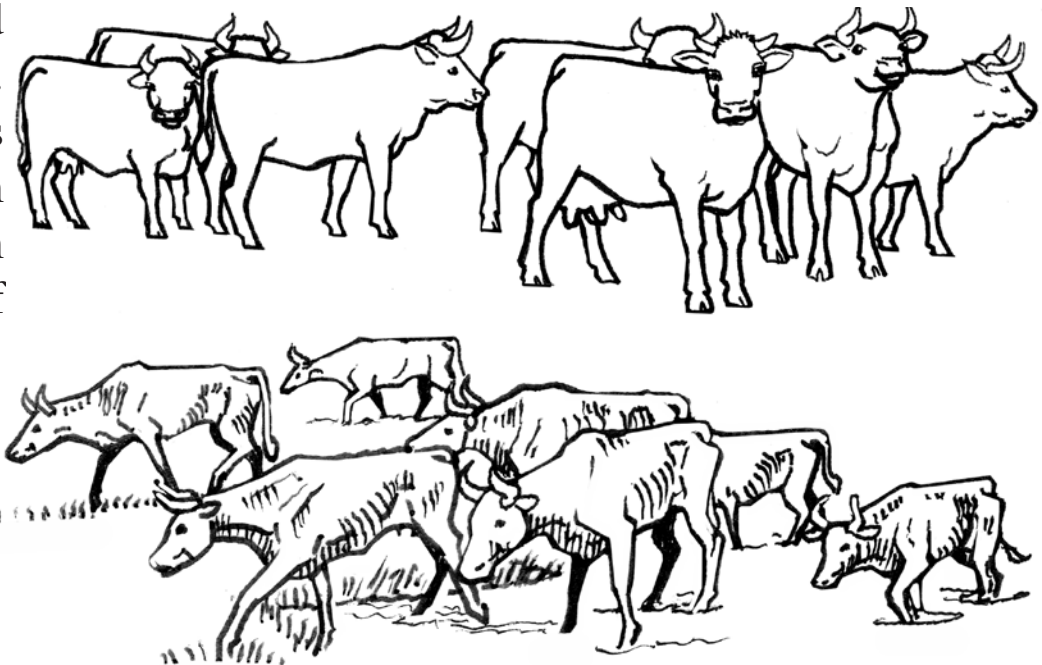
Pharaoh's Dreams

Pharaoh also had strange dreams. His magicians and wise men could not explain them. The chief butler remembered Joseph and had him brought to Pharaoh. Joseph told Pharaoh that God would help him understand the meaning of his dreams.

“In the first dream,” Pharaoh said, “I saw seven fat cows come out of the Nile River, and they grazed on grass. Then, seven thin cows came out of the river and ate the seven fat cows, but they were just as skinny as before.

“I also saw seven fat heads of grain grow up on one stalk. Seven thin heads of grain also grew up and ate the fat heads.”

Joseph explained that after seven years with plenty of food, there would be seven years of famine (a time when there is not enough food to eat).



Joseph Becomes Ruler

Pharaoh could tell that God was blessing Joseph. He made him second-in-command over all Egypt. He also gave him a wife named Asenath. She later gave birth to two boys, Manasseh and Ephraim.

There were seven years with plenty of grain, just as God had promised. Joseph stored the extra crops in big buildings.

Jacob's Ten Sons Journey to Egypt

After seven years of good crops, a famine came throughout the land. When people started running out of

ilies and animals. When they arrived in Egypt, Joseph recognized his brothers, but pretended they were strangers. He did this to help teach them a lesson.

“You are spies!” he said harshly.

“We are not spies,” they said. “Our father lives in Canaan. Our youngest brother is there with him, and we have one brother who is no longer living.”



food, they traveled to Egypt and bought grain.

Joseph's father, Jacob, heard that the Egyptians were selling grain. He sent his sons to buy it for their fam-

Joseph put his brother Simeon in prison. He sent his other brothers home with grain. He explained that Simeon would be freed when his brothers returned to Egypt with their

youngest brother Benjamin. Joseph loved his brothers very much and wept when they were not looking.

Benjamin Arrives in Egypt

As Joseph's brothers were returning home to Canaan, they discovered that the money they used to pay for the grain was in their sacks! They were afraid that the governor of Egypt (Joseph) would think that they had stolen the money.

When they arrived home, they explained to their father all that had happened. Jacob eventually agreed to let Benjamin go to Egypt with his brothers. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt with presents and twice the amount of money that they needed.

Before long, Benjamin was brought before Joseph. Joseph was very happy to see him. But he was not ready to let his brothers know who he really was. He had a special

meal prepared for them, and Benjamin was given five times as much food as his brothers!

Later, as Joseph's brothers were traveling home, Joseph's silver cup and money was found in Benjamin's sack! The brothers were so upset that they tore their clothes! They did not know that before they left Egypt, Joseph ordered his servant to put the cup and money in Benjamin's sack.





They returned to Joseph and begged for his mercy and kindness. They explained that their father Jacob would die from sadness if Benjamin did not return to Canaan with them.

Joseph could not hide that he was their brother any longer. "I am Joseph," he cried. They could hardly believe it! He wept as he kissed all of his brothers. He explained that God sent him to Egypt so that



they would not die during the famine.

Jacob Moves to Egypt

Joseph and Pharaoh sent his brothers home with an invitation for Jacob and his family to live in Goshen. This is the best of the land of Egypt. They were also given clothes, money, food, donkeys and carts for their belongings.

Jacob was surprised and happy to hear that Joseph was still alive! After Jacob offered sacrifices of thanksgiving, God told him that He would make his family very large in Egypt.

Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

Jacob lived in Egypt for 17 years before he died. Shortly before his death, he called for Joseph and his

two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob explained that he wanted to take Joseph's sons as his own so they could receive special blessings. He placed his right hand on Joseph's youngest son's head and his left hand on the oldest son's head. This was different from the custom of that time. The right hand signified the greater blessing. Joseph tried to correct his father respect-



fully, but Jacob explained that he did it on purpose. A great nation would come from Manasseh, but Ephraim would be even greater because his descendants would become many nations.

After blessing his sons, Jacob died at the age of 147.

Joseph's Death

Following Jacob's death, Joseph's brothers were afraid that he might get back at them for the hurtful things they did to him when he was a teenager. Joseph told them that he had forgiven them. He reminded them that it was part of God's Plan to keep Jacob's family alive during the famine. He told his brothers that after his death, God would bring their descendants out of Egypt, to the land that He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Joseph died at the age of 110.



In the next lesson, we will learn that God continued to keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

BIBLE MEMORY: Genesis 48:19-20

When Joseph was second-in-command, he had $\frac{1}{5}$ (one out of five) of all food saved for seven years. If Joseph saved $\frac{1}{5}$ of the bushels from each farmer for seven fertile years, how many bushels were saved each year?

Year	Bushels	Saved	Total
1	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
2	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
3	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
4	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
5	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
6	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____
7	100	$\frac{1}{5}$	= _____

Add the totals from each year. = _____

During the seven years of famine, how many bushels did the Egyptians have to eat each year from this farmer? _____

This space is for working out your math.