

Questions / Answers

1. Give 2 reasons why Joseph's brothers were jealous of him.
Jacob gave him a special coat. He dreamt that they would bow to him.
2. What two cruel things did the brothers do to Joseph?
They threw him in a pit. They sold him as a slave.
3. Who bought Joseph in Egypt? Why did he put Joseph in prison?
Potiphar a captain in the Egyptian army. His wife lied that Joseph tried to make love to her.
4. What did the Butler dream in Prison? What did his dream mean?
He squeezed 3 bunches of grapes and gave the cup to Pharaoh. In 3 days he would be freed and be Pharaoh's butler again.
5. What did the Baker dream? What did his dream mean?
Birds ate bread from 3 baskets on his head. In 3 days he would die.
6. What did Pharaoh dream? What did the dreams mean?
7 thin cows ate 7 fat cows. 7 thin ears of corn ate 7 fat ears. 7 years of good harvests followed by 7 years of famine.
7. What did Joseph do during the 7 years of good harvests?
He stored up food.
8. How did Joseph's brothers fulfil his dreams when they came to Egypt?
They bowed down to him.
9. Where did Jacob and all his family move to live during the famine?
Goshen in the land of Egypt.
10. Why did all these things happen to Joseph?
So that he could save his family by giving them food during the famine

Memory verses

Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28; Hebrews 11:22

Discussion

Discuss how God used all the bad things that happened to Joseph to save His chosen people—Jacob's family.

Writing

Write about one of the dreams in the story and explain how the dream came true.

CBM Senior Lessons

Lesson 11 Joseph saves his family



READING Genesis 37:2—28; 41:28—40; 45:25-28; 50:22-26

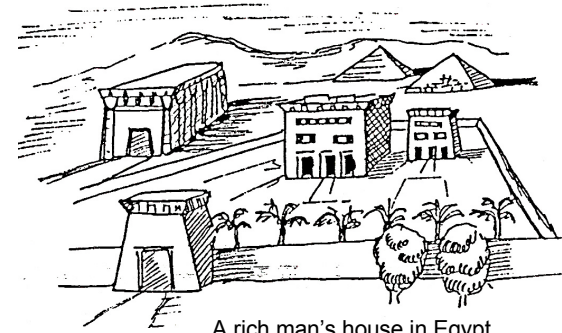
LESSON

Jacob and his family lived in the land of Canaan (later called Israel). This was the land that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their family for ever. Jacob had 12 sons but he loved Joseph more than his other sons. Jacob gave Joseph a special coat to show that he loved Joseph best. This made the other brothers very jealous.

Joseph had two dreams. The first dream was about sheaves (bundles) of wheat. The second dream was about the sun, moon and stars. Both the dreams had the same meaning. Both dreams meant that one day his 11 brothers would bow down to him. When Joseph talked about the dreams, his brothers became even more jealous

Jacob sent the 10 older brothers to look after the sheep at Shechem. Later, Jacob sent Joseph to get news of his brothers. When his brothers saw Joseph coming, they decided to kill him. But one of the brothers, Reuben, said "Do not kill Joseph. We will put him in this pit." So they put Joseph in the pit. Reuben planned to rescue Joseph later, but first he went away to look after the sheep.

While Reuben was away, some traders arrived. The other brothers sold Joseph to the traders as a slave for 20 pieces of silver. The brothers took Joseph's special coat and they put blood on it. They told Jacob that Joseph had been killed by wild animals. Jacob was very sad and upset.



A rich man's house in Egypt

Joseph was taken to Egypt and he was sold to a man called Potiphar. Potiphar was a captain in the Egyptian army. Potiphar soon saw that Joseph was good and faithful so he put Joseph in charge of

Joseph was a handsome man and Potiphar's wife tried to persuade Joseph to make love to her. Joseph refused and Potiphar's wife became angry. She told Potiphar, "Joseph tried to force me to make love with him." Potiphar was angry and he put Joseph into prison.

The prison officer soon saw that Joseph was good and faithful so he put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. Pharaoh had put two of his servants into prison: his butler (who looked after the wine) and his baker.

One night the butler and the baker had dreams. They dreamt that they were working for Pharaoh again. They were worried about their dreams so they asked Joseph what the dreams meant.

The butler dreamt that there were three bunches of grapes. He picked them, squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and then gave the cup to Pharaoh. Joseph told the butler that in three days he would be freed from prison and work for Pharaoh again. The butler promised to tell Pharaoh about Joseph.

The baker dreamt that he was carrying three baskets of bread on his head to Pharaoh. Birds came and ate the bread. Joseph told the baker that in three days he would be hanged. He would die and birds would eat his body.

Three days later the baker was hanged. The butler began to work for Pharaoh again, but he forgot to tell Pharaoh about Joseph. It was a big test for Joseph's faith. Had God forgotten him?

Two years later, Pharaoh had two dreams and he was worried about what they meant. Then the butler told Pharaoh about Joseph. He said that Joseph knew what dreams meant. Joseph was brought out of prison and taken to Pharaoh. Joseph explained that God told him what the dreams meant.

Pharaoh had dreamt that seven thin cows ate seven fat cows. He dreamt that seven thin ears of corn ate seven fat ears of corn. Joseph explained that both dreams had the same meaning. There would be seven years of good harvests. Then there would be seven years of famine.

Joseph suggested that Pharaoh should find a wise man to store food from the good harvests so that there would be food during the years of famine. Pharaoh decided to give the job to Joseph. Joseph was made a ruler in Egypt. God sent seven years of good harvests, then seven years of famine. The famine was very bad, but there was food in Egypt in the stores Joseph had collected. Joseph sold food from the stores to the Egyptians and also to foreigners who came to buy.

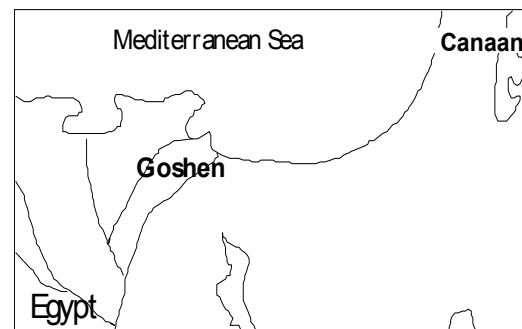
The famine was bad in Canaan, where Jacob and his family were living. Jacob sent Joseph's brothers to Egypt to buy food. But he kept Benjamin at home, because he was the youngest son.

When Joseph's brothers arrived they were taken to see Joseph. They did not recognise Joseph now he was a ruler in Egypt. They bowed down to Joseph. This fulfilled Joseph's dreams about the sheaves of wheat and the sun, moon and stars. Joseph wanted to test his brothers to find out if they were still cruel and wicked. Joseph said "You are spies." He put the brothers in prison for three days. Then he saw them again and sold them wheat. But he kept Simeon in prison. He told them they must bring their youngest brother, Benjamin next time they came to Egypt for food.

After a while all the food was eaten. Jacob did not want Benjamin to travel to Egypt, but finally the brothers persuaded him. When the brothers arrived in Egypt Joseph tested them again and threatened to keep Benjamin in prison. But Judah offered to take his place so that Jacob would not be too upset. When Joseph saw that the brothers had changed and were kinder, he told them, "I am your lost brother, Joseph." The brothers were very sorry that they had been so cruel to Joseph.

Joseph gave his brothers food and they travelled home. They told Jacob that they had found Joseph. Then the whole family moved to live in Egypt where Joseph could give them enough food. Pharaoh gave them an area of the land of Egypt to live in. That area was called, Goshen.

Joseph had many problems in his life: he was sold as a slave, he was put into prison, the butler forgot about him. But Joseph never forgot that God was with him. Joseph was able to provide food for his family and for all the Egyptians during the seven years of famine. Joseph believed that God had made all these things happen so that he could save his family.



God promised that one day Jacob's descendants (the nation of Israel) would return to Canaan. Joseph believed God. Joseph said to his sons "When you go back to Canaan, I want you to take my bones with you and bury me there." That is real faith in God's promises.