



# God Delivers Joseph

Genesis 39–50



## LESSON GOAL

Students will learn that God is in control of every circumstance.

## BIBLE TRUTHS

- God was with Joseph in Egypt.
- God helped Joseph understand special dreams.
- Pharaoh made Joseph a ruler in Egypt.
- Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy food.
- Joseph forgave his brothers.

## KEY VERSE

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good,...to save many people alive" (Genesis 50:20).

## APPLICATION

- Trust God, even when people do evil things.
- Remember that God can use the evil actions of others for good later.
- Be faithful and obedient to God during difficult times.
- Forgive others when they sin against you.

## NEXT WEEK

God Prepares Israel for Deliverance  
Read Exodus 1–2.

### Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

# Teacher Planning Sheet

## PREPARE

**Objectives/Truths** to cover this week

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal Application

*As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to*

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Three ways students need to apply this passage are*

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- \_\_\_\_\_
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## Materials Needed

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## POINT

*Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.*

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- \_\_\_\_\_

## PROCLAIM

*Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.*

### Presentation Ideas

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Praise/Music Ideas

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## PRACTICE

*Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

*“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).*

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

### Bible Background

After serving as a slave in Potiphar’s house, Joseph was imprisoned. Eventually he was released and raised to a high administrative position within Pharaoh’s government. God prospered Joseph and enabled him to prepare Egypt for a severe famine that was coming. The famine would devastate agriculture throughout both Egypt and Canaan. Jacob and his sons were still living in Canaan, and when they became desperate for food, Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to find relief. There, they discovered that Joseph had attained a post roughly equivalent to prime minister, and they returned to Canaan to get their father to come to Egypt as well. Pharaoh sent wagons to help transport the family to their new home, and although he had told them to leave everything behind so that he could supply them a new in Egypt, they filled the wagons with all their possessions.

Traveling south from Hebron, Jacob and his sons reached Beersheba, where both Abraham (Gen. 21:33) and Isaac (Gen. 26:25) had worshiped the Lord. Beersheba was the southernmost outpost before the wilderness of Zin on the way to Egypt. It may have been here that Jacob realized the seriousness of his decision to move. Abraham had sinned upon going into Egypt, and God had forbidden Isaac to even enter the country. For the first time since the days of his grandfather, Jacob’s family was being removed from the land that God had promised them. Jacob must have recalled that the Lord had told Abraham that his descendants would spend 400 years as slaves in a land that was not their own. Therefore, Jacob sought the Lord’s sanction for this migration.

Whenever the patriarchs’ relationships with God were what the Lord wanted them to be, they built altars on their own initiative to worship Him. Throughout most of Jacob’s life, however, he waited until God commanded him to worship, or until he was caught in a stressful situation, such as the reunion with Esau, before he called on the Lord. As he grew older, Jacob seems to have grown closer to the Lord. At the outset of his journey to Haran 50 years earlier, he had not sought God’s direction or blessing. This time he did. The Lord may have addressed Jacob by his old name to remind him of this fact. We see here the measurable growth of Jacob’s faith in God and of his desire to conform to God’s design. Jacob offered sacrifices to the God of his father without being instructed to do so. This phrase “the God of his father” demonstrates the fact that much of what we learn about the Lord is a result of what we have been taught by our parents.

The Lord responded by reassuring Jacob in a night vision. The plural “visions” is used, probably to indicate the magnificence of this event, the last of the patriarchal visions to be recorded. The Lord identified Himself as Ha’el, “the Strong One” who protects His people, and He promised that He would go along with Jacob’s family to Egypt.

The question arises, For what purpose did the Lord send Israel into Egypt? He did it to make a great nation of them. Egypt served as a protective hothouse in which

### Additional Reference Materials

*The MacArthur Study Bible* by John MacArthur

*Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis* by John J. Davis

the tiny nation of Israel could grow rapidly. The Israelites were exposed to one of the world's most advanced cultures of that time, but they also were sufficiently isolated so that their own unique culture could emerge. The Egyptians were proud, and they disdained every foreign nation, so intermarriage would be out of the question. This alienation gave Israel a sense of national identity and self-consciousness. They were geographically isolated from the idolatry of the Canaanites and socially ostracized from participation in Egyptian religion. Without having to concern themselves with governmental functions such as national defense, they were able to devote their energies to learning the practical trades they would need later.

Ha'el promised not only to accompany them, but also to bring the family back. He promised Jacob that Joseph would close his eyes at death (considered by ancient people a very important gesture). The family of 67 people (not including Joseph and his two sons) continued southward toward Egypt, having been reassured that the Lord was pleased with their emigration. Everything they owned had been packed into Egyptian wagons (which looked very much like the covered wagons later used by American pioneers). If there had been any doubt that Jacob was the family leader, it is eradicated by the words in Genesis 46:7: "All his descendants he brought with him to Egypt." The decision to leave Canaan obviously was advantageous for Jacob in view of the famine, but unlike his forefathers, he sought the Lord's sanction before he moved his family to Egypt.

According to the chronology offered in Exodus 12:40, the famine probably began in 1880 B.C. It must have been shortly thereafter that Jacob came to live in Egypt. Joseph brought his family to the land of Goshen, the northeastern section of Egypt, which would have been the closest point of entry from the direction of Canaan. Because it lies within the delta area of the Nile, it is one of the most fertile parts of Egypt, even to this day. Goshen was an excellent area for raising the family's sheep. Until the time of the Exodus, the Israelites were able to catch an abundance of fish from the Nile's waters (Num. 11:5). Its location also provided Moses an easily accessible escape route 400 years later. It is clear that Joseph lived near his family (Gen. 48:1), but the exact location of the Pharaoh's palace and the seat of government at that time are not known today.

Joseph settled his family in Goshen and then reported their arrival to Pharaoh. This tactic probably was intended to make Pharaoh feel somewhat obliged to let them remain in that lush region. Joseph chose five of his brothers whom he judged to be presentable to the court, and he brought them before Pharaoh. When the king asked the question that Joseph had anticipated (46:33), the brothers answered very candidly that they were shepherds, even though they knew how the Egyptians despised shepherds. Then they added that they had to come to "sojourn" (to visit for a short time) in the land. Their plea for the privilege to stay in Egypt was more forthright than Joseph had intended. Joseph had spent enough time in the political environment of the court, away from the spiritual guidance of his father, that he had come to rely on some of his father's old cleverness and manipulation. His brothers, by contrast, seemed to have learned that honesty and dependence on God's sovereignty are the most effective means of dealing with people. They gave Pharaoh a complete picture of their desperate situation, even though such an admission of weakness usually is not considered good bargaining procedure. In essence, they placed themselves at the mercy of the court, knowing that even kings are the servants of God.

Because he had developed all the instincts of a successful politician, Joseph must have been caught by surprise that his brothers' candor received such a generous response from Pharaoh: "The land of Egypt is before thy face" (at your disposal). Pharaoh told Joseph to "settle" them in the best part of the land and offered those

of might or capacity a government post as “chief herdsman.” No doubt he hoped to enjoy the same spectacular prosperity in his cattle enterprises as he had experienced in grain under the direction of their eminent brother.

Then Joseph brought Jacob before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed the monarch. Hebrews 7:7 says that a lesser person always is blessed by a superior. Pharaoh may have considered himself better than Jacob, but God conferred the blessing through them with the words “And so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse” (Gen. 12:2–3).

## POINT TO THE TRUTH

*“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).*

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



### Review Questions

*Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.*

Did Jacob have a favorite son?

*Yes. He loved Joseph more than he loved his other sons.*

Why did Joseph’s brothers hate him?

*Jacob favored his son Joseph and gave him a special robe to wear. Joseph’s brothers were jealous and wanted to kill Joseph.*

What happened to Joseph when he went out to the fields to see his brothers?

*Joseph’s brothers put him in a deep well and then sold him as a slave to Midianite traders traveling to Egypt.*

Was God with Joseph?

*Yes. Even though these bad things happened, God was with him.*

Is God with you when bad things happen?

*Yes. He has a plan, even when bad things happen.*



### Stamps and Tempera Paint

Pharaoh had a very special ring that could make a stamped design on paper. His stamp would mean the same thing as if he had written his name. Let the students experiment with one or two stamps, overlapping them or using one or two colors to come up with a design to represent their names. Let them try several different ideas and choose their favorite one. Tell the students that in today’s Bible lesson, the Pharaoh gives his special ring to Joseph, and this gives Joseph power over the whole land of Egypt.



### Dreams

Bring several pillows to class and have the students lie down and stay quiet for a while to “dream.” Then have the students awaken, stretch, and take turns telling

about their “dreams.” Encourage ideas that are ridiculous or farfetched. In the lesson today, they will learn that the king of Egypt, the pharaoh, had a dream that he could not understand. God allowed Joseph to know the truth about Pharaoh’s dream.



### Dress-Up Center

Bring rings, beads, and colorful robes for the students to wear. Let them pretend to be the king, or pharaoh, of Egypt. Let the other students bow before the pharaoh. The king had a very special ring that was like his signature. When he used his ring as a stamp, people had to do what he said. Say the word “pharaoh” often so that the students will become familiar with its meaning.



### Jacob’s Family Moves

In the Bible lesson, the students will learn that Jacob moved his family to Egypt, where there was plenty of food for everyone. The people loaded all their belongings onto carts for the long journey to Egypt. Let the students pile some toys and books onto their riding toys and push them to another area of the room and unload them. They could repeat the trip several times until they have all their things in “Egypt.”



### Tape the Cereal in the Mouth

Draw a face with an open mouth on a large piece of butcher paper on the wall. Let blindfolded students tape magazine pictures of cereal onto the mouth. Talk about what a famine is like and the fact that there can’t be any cereal if the grain doesn’t grow.



### Gold Chains

Use gold paper cut into 4 x 1-inch strips to make chain necklaces. Put these aside until after the Bible lesson. See the Practice section for using the gold chains later.

## PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

*“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).*

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

### Bible Lesson

Joseph’s father, Jacob, gave him a beautiful robe to wear. Joseph’s brothers hated Joseph when they saw him wearing the robe. They sold him to men who were going with their camels to Egypt. Joseph was sad and missed his father, but God was with him in Egypt.

Joseph worked very hard and did a good job because God was with him and blessed him. One night, the pharaoh, who was the king of Egypt, had a dream.

When he woke up in the morning, he wondered what the dream meant. Pharaoh called in all his wise friends to explain the meaning of his dream.

Pharaoh said, "What does my dream mean?" None of Pharaoh's helpers could tell him about his dream because they didn't know the true God. Only God knows all the answers. One of Pharaoh's friends said, "I know a man named Joseph who knows God. Maybe he can tell you the meaning of your dream."

The pharaoh sent for Joseph and said, "Can you tell me the meaning of my dream?" Joseph said, "God will give you the answer to your dream. God knows everything and has all the answers." Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream, I saw seven fat cows walk up out of the river. Before long, seven skinny, hungry cows came up out of the river and ate the fat cows." [Gulp! Pause and have all the students rub their tummies as though full.] "Then in my dream, I saw seven big, healthy heads of grain growing on a stalk. After them, I saw seven other skinny, small heads of grain on another stalk. The seven thin heads of grain gobbled up the seven good heads of grain. [Gulp! Rub your tummy.] Then I woke up, and I don't know what the dream means."

Joseph said to pharaoh, "God knows the answer. God is telling you that for seven years [hold up seven fingers and count them—one-two-three-four-five-six-seven years] there will be plenty of grain for food. People and animals will have more than enough food to eat. After that, there will be seven years of no rain and shriveled grain. All the people and animals will be hungry."

Then Joseph said to the pharaoh, "Choose a wise man who will make big piles of grain during the seven good years so that there will be food to eat during the seven bad years."

The pharaoh said, "You are wise, Joseph, because you listen to God's words. I choose you to help the people save food for the seven bad years." [Put on a fancy robe and a gold chain. Put a ring on your finger—a very special ring—the pharaoh's ring.] The pharaoh took off his ring and put it on Joseph's finger. He dressed Joseph in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.

Joseph rode in his chariot from town to town and said, "Make big piles of grain outside your city. Save the grain for seven years." Everyone obeyed Joseph and made big piles of grain outside their cities. Every year, the piles got bigger and bigger and bigger. There was food for everyone because God had told them what was going to happen. God knows everything, and He helped Joseph be wise. During the seven years of famine, the heads of grain were skinny, and the families were hungry. The children cried, "I'm hungry! Please give me food!" [Look in a gunnysack and show that it is empty.] Joseph was glad to sell the people food. [Pour grain or rice into the empty sack.]

There was not enough food in the land of Canaan, where Joseph's family lived. [Show an empty plate.] Jacob's sons and their families were hungry, too. Jacob said to his 10 sons, "Go to Egypt and buy grain for our families." Jacob's 10 sons walked to Egypt. [Walk your fingers on your arm.] Joseph's brothers found the man in charge of grain, but they didn't know he was their brother Joseph. Joseph didn't tell them who he was. He wanted to surprise them later. Joseph said to his brothers, "Here is grain for your families. [Hand over a full sack of grain.] Next time you come to Egypt for grain, bring your youngest brother, Benjamin, back with you." Joseph's brothers took the grain back to Canaan. Their families were happy to eat the food from Egypt. Before long, the grain was gone, and Jacob said to his sons, "Go back to Egypt and buy more grain. Benjamin may go with you."

Joseph's 11 brothers walked to Egypt and bowed down before their brother. When Joseph saw his youngest brother, Benjamin, he had to tell Benjamin who he was. Joseph said, "I am your brother Joseph." Joseph and Benjamin hugged and cried. They were so glad to see each other. Joseph hugged his other brothers and forgave them for being mean to him.

Joseph said, "God gave me a good plan so that we would have food. Go and bring our father down to Egypt, where there is plenty of food." Joseph's brothers hurried back to Canaan to tell their father. They said, "We saw Joseph! He's alive in Egypt!" Jacob could not believe his ears. Joseph was alive in Egypt? How could this be? Jacob and all his family loaded their belongings onto carts and went to Egypt to live. When Joseph saw his father, he ran to him and hugged him and cried for a long time. How happy Joseph was to see his father! How happy Jacob was to see his son! God had a good plan to help His people have food during the hungry years.



## Lesson Questions

Was God with Joseph while he was in Egypt?

Yes.

Did God tell Joseph the meaning of the pharaoh's dream?

Yes. *God knows everything and has all the right answers.*

Did God make Joseph wise so that there would be enough food for all the hungry people?

Yes. *Joseph asked the cities to save big piles of grain for the years when the crops would be "skinny."*

Did Joseph's brothers go to Egypt to buy grain for food?

Yes. *There was grain in Egypt because God had given Joseph a good plan.*

Did God have a good plan to take Jacob and his family to Egypt for food?

Yes.

Who always takes care of His people?

*God.*

## Presentation Ideas



### A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



### Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



### Feast and Famine

Bring two gunnysacks, one empty and one full of grain or rice. Show the full sack when you talk about Joseph selling grain to the people. Show the empty sack when you talk about the famine.



### Dress Like Joseph

Put on a beautiful robe, a gold chain, and a ring when you come to the part of the story where Joseph is elevated to second in command of all Egypt.





## Two Dreams

Bring three baskets full of grapes, muffins, and plastic wineglasses to class. Describe the butler and baker's dreams to the students, and illustrate the dreams using the props. For fun at snack time, let the students eat the muffins and drink white grape juice from the plastic wineglasses.

## Praise and Worship

*God Is So Good*

*He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*

*In His Time*

*Rejoice in the Lord Always*

*This Is the Day*

*Trust and Obey*



## Quick to Help

Joseph's feet ran quickly to help,  
*(Run in place.)*

His hands could lift and hold,  
*(Open and raise hands.)*

His eyes saw ways that he could help,  
*(Shade eyes with hand.)*

Because he loved the Lord.  
*(Hug yourself.)*

Now my feet run to quickly help,  
*(Run in place.)*

My hands can lift and hold,  
*(Open and raise hands.)*

My eyes see ways that I can help,  
*(Shade eyes with hand.)*

Because I love the Lord.  
*(Hug yourself.)*



## Pharaoh's Dream

The pharaoh had two bad dreams—blink, blink, blink.  
*(Place hands together at side of head, close eyes and rub eyes with fists.)*

Could not figure what they meant—think, think, think.  
*(Shake head back and forth; tap temple with finger.)*

Seven fine and healthy cows—moo, moo, moo.  
*(Hold up seven fingers; place hands at sides of mouth to moo loudly.)*

Were eaten by seven skinny cows—chew, chew, chew.

*(Hold up seven fingers; make chewing motion with hand.)*

Seven plump, good ears of corn—crunch, crunch, crunch.

*(Hold up seven fingers; pretend to bite, left to right.)*

Were eaten by seven withered ears—munch, munch, munch.

*(Hold up seven fingers; make chewing motion with hand.)*

Joseph understood the dreams—yay, yay, yay.

*(Tap temple with finger; clap three times.)*

The understanding was from God—pray, pray, pray.

*(Point up; fold hands and bow head.)*

Seven years with lots of food—yum, yum, yum.

*(Hold up seven fingers; rub tummy and smile.)*

Then seven years with almost none—grumble, grumble, grum.

*(Hold up seven fingers; rub tummy and make sad face.)*

## PRACTICE THE TRUTH

*“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).*

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



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### Joseph’s Dream Necklace

Lace colored macaroni (or dry cereal) on a 28-inch length of gold yarn (the end of which you have sealed with paraffin). In the center, add a circle of poster board with a hole punched in it, and place a Bible sticker on the circle. Talk about wearing this as a reminder that God knows everything and that He knows everything that happens in our lives. He has all the answers, so listen to His words in the Bible. Ask the students what they did the past week, and talk about God knowing their answers before you did.



### Placemat Center

After each student finishes his coloring sheet, attach the sheet to a firmer piece of paper. Then cover the coloring sheet with clear contact paper, or press it between two sheets of waxed paper with a warm iron. Glue the memory verse on the back.



### “Wherever I Am” Mobile

Cut a paper plate in half. Attach a piece of yarn in a hole at the top of the curved part for a hanger. Glue the memory verse on the plate, and use pieces of yarn to attach pictures of places students might be (such as a house, car, park, or church) along the cut edge of the plate.



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5

### Joseph's Coat

Materials: pieces of brown construction paper (8 1/2 x 12 inches), colored strips of construction paper (1/4-inch wide), memory verse cut out

Directions: Place the brown construction paper in a horizontal position. Fold in each side three inches so that the two edges meet, covering the center of the construction paper. Cut out half circles on each folded side to make armholes. Cut the top of both folded flaps to slightly reveal the paper underneath, forming a neck hole. Glue or tape strips of colored construction paper to each folded side. Tape or glue this week's memory verse into the center of the paper, under the folded sides.

### Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



### MEMORY VERSE

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good,...to save many people alive" (Genesis 50:20).



### Memory-Verse Center

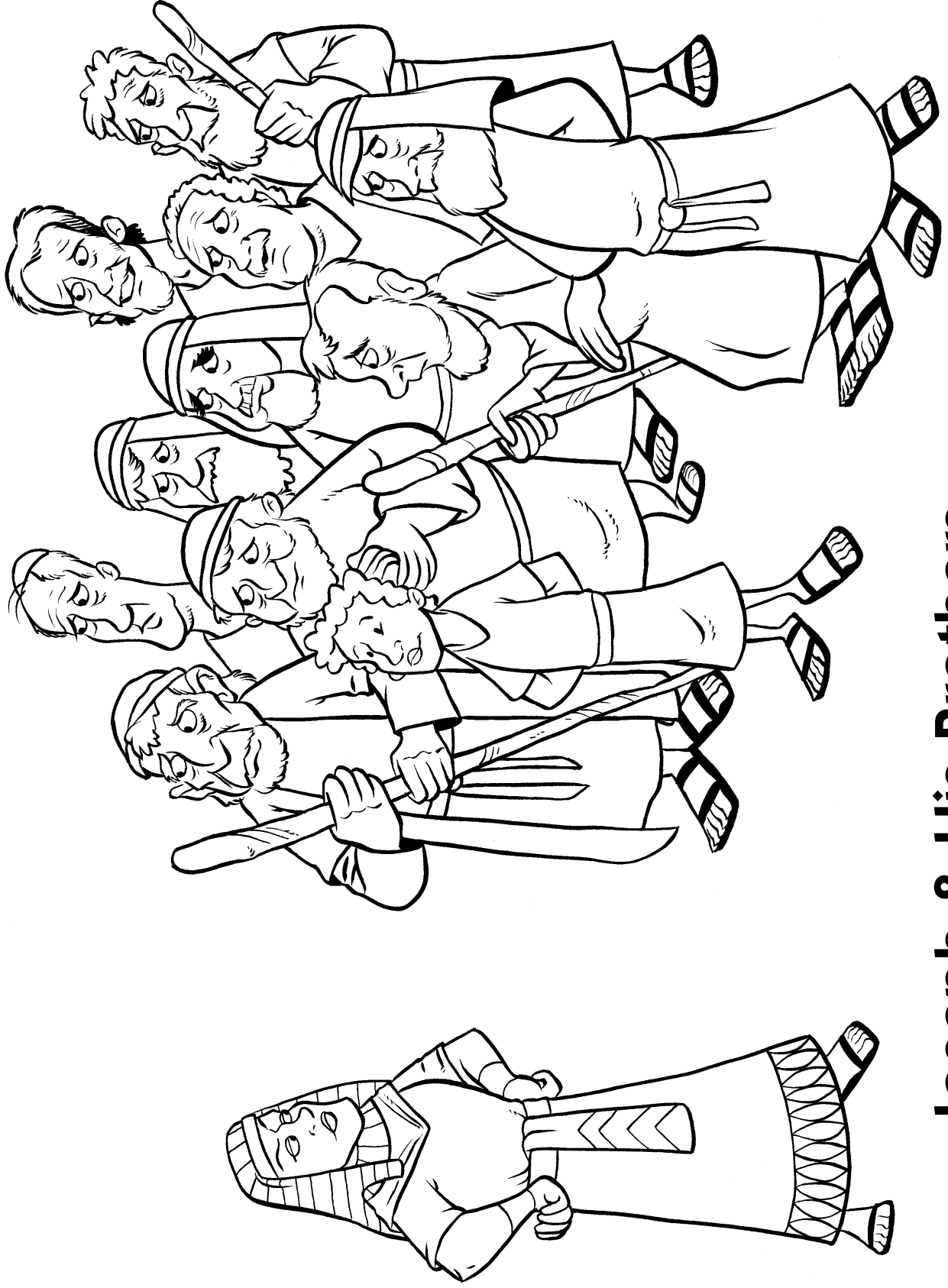
While the students are sitting, say the memory verse several times, and as you say it, move to each child and stamp the back of his hand with the "Pharaoh's Insignia Ring" (stamp).



### Gold Chains and Bible Verse

As the students recite the memory verse, put the gold chains they made during the Point time around their necks. Remind them of what Joseph did to earn his gold chain.





# Joseph & His Brothers





**Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream and warned him of the coming famine (Genesis 41:14–46).**







**“Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph; does my father still live?’ But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence”  
(Genesis 45:3).**

