

Get Ready!

Joseph in Egypt

By: Nikki Green



Text

Genesis 39-47

Key Quest Verse

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28, NIV).

Bible Background

Stephen in his speech before his death best summed up the background for this story:

(Acts 7:9-10, NIV) “Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.”

It is interesting that Joseph never wavered in his trust in God . . . even as he interpreted the dreams he stated it was not him but only God who could do it. Joseph came from a dysfunctional family who was out to kill him, but settled on just selling him into slavery. He was now in the heart of Egypt wondering what God had in store for him and how in the world he would do it through this means. But, Joseph knew one thing for certain and that was what kept him going. The writer of Hebrews reminds us of what Joseph knew: “Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for **he who promised is faithful**” (Heb. 10:23, NIV). Joseph held tight to this promise throughout his life, and God never failed him!

Get Ready!**Lesson Quest**

What I want my students to:

Know: God will use me for His purpose, to further His work for the Kingdom.

Feel: Feel important. God has plans laid out for our lives that He feels are important.

Do: Love God. Let Him lead your choices and your life.

Leader's Devotion

I believe Joseph's life is a beautiful display of Romans 8:28. God obviously had great plans for him from an early age. His life must have seemed like a roller coaster ride. As soon as he would reach a high, some misfortune would befall him and he would plummet back to a low on this "life ride." He continued to hold on to God during this bumpy ride. Thirty long years of trusting God with not much to show, but a faint memory of a now blood stained coat. Joseph acknowledges the truth, this plan was from God. He reassures his brothers after revealing himself to them. He tells them not to be distressed or angry with themselves for selling him, "because it was God who sent me ahead of you" (Genesis 45:5, NIV). I think if Joseph had the entire Bible in front of him, he would adopt Romans 8:28 as his life verse.

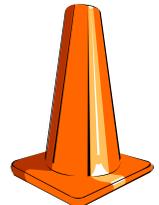
Get Set!**Option A****UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

Materials: Construction hat

Procedure: Have a construction hat on before children enter the room. As the children begin to find their seats, walk around the room and speak in a drill sergeant manner. **Okay kids: hands on laps, feet pressed together on floor, chins up, eyes straight ahead. There is a lot of work to be done on each of you!** After some strange looks you can explain that we are all under construction. **Did you notice my construction hat? God is working on me, too. We are all under construction. He is making plans for your life and mine. God does not yell at us like a drill sergeant. He gives us His word, and by following that, we begin our life journey with Him. As we follow the Bible, our lives begin to transform into what God wants. He will start to lead us down the path He picked just for each of us. Construction workers have a goal in mind when they start their job. God knows His goals for us. We just need to stick to His blue prints and He will make us into more than we ever thought possible.**

Joseph was very much an “under construction” man. He did not have any idea what God had planned for his life. He probably felt like he needed a hard hat from time to time, but he stuck with God and eventually needed a royal hat instead.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY



Get Set!



Option B

TOO MUCH FAITH TO BE BROKEN

Materials: Two foot long string, two mint Life Savers, paper towel or handkerchief, two volunteers

Preparation: Cut string to two feet. Break one Life Savers candy in half. After the break, put water on the broken ends and mend it. The mended Life Saver will now break easily and quietly during your object lesson. Your Life Saver should look whole, as if never broken. This is a dramatic object lesson. Practice a few times and you will amaze your students.

Procedure: Put your “mended” Life Saver on the string and have two students hold the ends. Have one “never broken” Life Saver hiding in your hand. Show the Life Saver before it is on the string and say, this is Joseph. **The Bible tells us he was handsome and his father loved him a lot. He looked pretty good to start out in life, didn’t he? Eventually things weren’t going so well for Joseph. Some bad things in the world got ahold of him.** Place the candy on the string. **He was stuck in a pit. He was made to be a slave in a strange land. He was even thrown in jail. He is really stuck now, isn’t he? Now volunteers, don’t let go - we aren’t able to free Joseph from this mess. God’s the only one with that kind of power. The important thing to know about Joseph was, no matter what happened to him, he always followed God.** Place the paper towel over the candy. **Now, we just need to leave him in God’s hands. We can only hope all the horrible things that happened to Joseph won’t break him.** Now put both of your hands under the paper towel while hiding your “whole” Life Saver. **Say, let’s see how Joseph will end up. Will he break or will God help him stay whole? I’ll try to get him off this string, he’s really stuck!** As your hands are under the towel, quietly break the Life Saver off the string and hide it. Then, proudly show the whole Life Saver. **Wow, God really did help Joseph stay in one piece. I thought jail would have made him fall apart and forget his faith.**

Joseph stood strong on his faith. God was with him to see him through.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Have any of you seen a roller coaster before? Do they travel a straight path or is it more of a bumpy ride? Usually roller coasters go up and down, and up and down, and some even take you through dark tunnels. They can seem a little scary, at times. We will learn today of the roller coaster life Joseph led. He started out feeling like he was on top of the world. He was on a high hill where his parents loved him and all was well. As you listen to his story, think about when he went “up” and when he went “down” on his roller coaster life.

Joseph was sold by his brothers as a slave and eventually ended up with a servant named Potiphar in Egypt. Joseph worked hard for Potiphar and the household of this Egyptian was blessed because of Joseph (Genesis 39:5). God blessed everything in Potiphar’s house and in his fields because of Joseph. After Joseph had earned his master’s trust, a terrible thing happened. Potiphar’s wife told a lie about Joseph. Potiphar took Joseph and put him in jail. The Bible tells us that “they bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons” (Psalm 105:18). He was going through all this suffering because his master’s wife told a lie. Where do you think Joseph’s roller coaster ride was taking him now? Through a dark tunnel? Joseph continued to be blessed by God. The prison warden favored him and put him in charge of everyone in the prison.

One day, two of the king’s officials were thrown in jail with Joseph. Joseph was put in charge of them. One man was the king’s baker, the other was his cupbearer (or the man who served him his drinks). These men had been under Joseph’s care for a while, and one day they were looking sad and worried. Joseph asked them what was wrong. They told him they had both had dreams the same night but no one could explain the meaning to them. Joseph said, “God is the only One who can explain the meaning of dreams. So tell me your dreams.” (Genesis 40:8b ICB) They both told Joseph their dreams and he explained the meanings to them immediately. He told the cupbearer that he would be freed and would serve the Pharaoh again in three days. Both dreams came true. He told the cupbearer, “when you are back working with the Pharaoh, tell him I don’t deserve to be in jail, I have done nothing wrong.” Well, guess what? The cupbearer forgot him . . . for two years!

Two years later, the Pharaoh had two dreams that no one could explain. He was asking all the wise men in the kingdom, but no one understood the dreams. The cupbearer spoke up and said he had forgotten all about Joseph in prison, but he said that Joseph could give the true meaning of dreams to people. The Pharaoh sent for Joseph right away. Joseph shaved, changed his clothes, and went before the Pharaoh. Pharaoh told his dreams to Joseph. Joseph said, “I am not able to explain the meaning of dreams. God will do this for the king” (Genesis 41:16, ICB).

In Pharaoh’s first dream, he was standing by the Nile River and he saw seven fat, healthy cows walk out of the water and begin to eat grass. Then, he saw seven skinny, ugly cows walk out of the water. The skinny cows ate the healthy cows, but they remained skinny and ugly. Then Pharaoh had a second dream. In this dream he saw seven full, healthy heads of grain growing on a stalk. Then seven scrawny, ugly heads of grain popped up and ate the healthy grain.

Joseph told Pharaoh these dreams both have the same meaning. He told Pharaoh that God is telling him, there will be seven years of plenty to eat and healthy crops. This will be followed by seven

Get Set!**Bible Story**

Continued . . .

hunger and famine. Joseph told Pharaoh he needed to put someone in charge of collecting food during the good years. The Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph. He put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt. The only person above Joseph was Pharaoh himself. He gave him fine clothes to wear, put a gold necklace on him, and Pharaoh's own signet ring was placed on Joseph's finger. He was also placed in a royal chariot.

Joseph was now thirty years old. He got married and had two children during these seven good years. He also did a great job of managing all the crops and food for when there would be hunger around the country. Just as Joseph had predicted, a terrible famine hit the land and people were running out of food. There was famine in all of the world. Joseph's dad sent Joseph's brothers to Egypt to get food. He did not send Benjamin, who was the only other son of Rachel (Joseph's mom). Now, can you guess whom they had to go see for food? Joseph! He was in charge of all the food. The funny thing was, Joseph now looked like an Egyptian. He even spoke a different language. As soon as his brothers arrived, they bowed down to him. This was just like the dreams he had when he was younger. He pretended to be a stranger. He spoke mean to them and accused them of being spies. They told him they were honest brothers, and not spies. They said they had two more brothers. They said one is home with dad and the other is gone. He called them spies again and had them thrown in jail for three days. After three days, he said he'd let all but one brother go home to retrieve their youngest brother. He said he would believe they were telling the truth if they brought Benjamin to him. The brothers agreed to this. They began saying, "We are being punished for what we did to our brother. We saw his trouble. He begged us to save him, but we refused to listen. That is why we are in this trouble now" (Genesis 42:21, ICB). The brothers were all saying this in front of Joseph. They didn't know he could understand them, because he was using an interpreter.

Eventually the brothers ran out of food and had to return to Egypt. Much against Jacob's will, they took Benjamin with them. The brothers promised no harm would come to Benjamin. Once they arrived in Egypt and Joseph saw all his brothers, he freed Simeon (his brother) from jail. He planned a huge feast for his brothers and let them eat at his house with him. They still didn't know who he was. Joseph had told his servant to fill all his brothers' bags with grain, to put their silver back, and to hide his silver cup in Benjamin's bag. The next morning, Joseph sent his brothers on their way. When they had barely left the city, Joseph sent a man after them. This servant accused them of stealing Joseph's silver cup. The brothers said they didn't do it, and they would become Joseph's slaves if they did. The servant started with the oldest brother's sack and went through all eleven bags of grain. Finally, he did find the silver cup in Benjamin's bag. The brothers all tore their clothes, they were so upset. Joseph had set up a trap and now the brothers had to show what they were made of. They were telling Joseph how important this youngest brother was to their father, and that they would all stay as slaves to Joseph now. They wouldn't leave Benjamin. Joseph was overwhelmed. He asked all his servants to leave. He told his brothers, "I am Joseph!" He cried so loud even the people in the Pharaoh's palace heard him. He told his brothers, "do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you" (Genesis 45:5, NIV). Eventually Joseph's father, brothers, and entire family moved to be with him in Egypt. God had a great purpose for Joseph's life. He had a bumpy ride, but he ended up on top.

Go!**Egyptian Necklace****CRAFT**

Materials: Stretch cord (string), Penne Rigate Macaroni, tri-color Rotelle Macaroni, washable markers, scissors, paper

Quest Connection

The Pharaoh gave Joseph a gold necklace to show him honor.

Advanced Preparation: Cut 30 inches of string for each student.

Procedure: Give each student one string, 6 tri-colored Rotelles, and 7 Penne Rigates, have markers available. Have students use markers on Penne Rigate to give each Macaroni a different color. They should place Rigate on paper before using markers. Students can now place Macaroni on their string to form a necklace. Help students tie the ends together, to finish their project.

Another option: You could use Fruit Loops and Cheerios instead of Macaroni if you have that available.

Close

Our Egyptian necklaces can remind us of Joseph's special day of tribute. Joseph was freed from jail, cleaned up, and given a beautiful necklace to wear.

Go!

Are We Having Fun Yet?**OBJECT LESSON**

Materials: Paper cups, water

Quest Connection

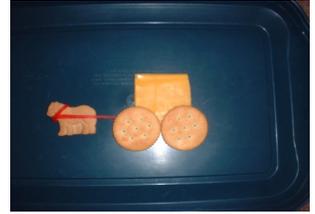
I want you to listen carefully as we talk about Joseph's life and the path he took.

Advanced Preparation: Fill cups $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water, have one cup per student

Procedure: Place one cup of water in front of each student. Ask the children if they know how to get the water out of the cup and into their bellies. Do not let them take a drink yet. Tell them, **you know, most of the time we think we know how to do things and how to live our lives. God may have a different idea for our lives that we are not aware of though. Now we are all going to take a drink, but not how we normally drink out of a cup. I want you to put your mouth on the side farthest away. You may have to turn your head almost upside-down to drink. I know you can do it though. It probably won't seem comfortable, but the water will get to your bellies just the same. Are we having fun yet?!**

Close

Joseph probably thought he was living his life just fine. He believed in God, he was obeying his father, and he was a good person. God had different plans for his life though. Joseph had to go places and do things that weren't too comfortable for him. He probably would have picked a different path for his life, but God knew just what he needed to go through to become a great leader for Egypt.

Go!**Joseph's Grain Coat**

FOOD: Please check for food allergies!

Materials: Napkin, 2 round crackers, 1 slice of cheese, licorice, and horse animal cracker (all of these items for each child)

Quest Connection

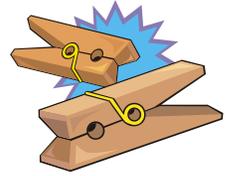
Joseph was given a great responsibility to store enough grain to get Egypt and neighboring lands through seven years of famine.

Advanced Preparation: Pick out horse shaped animal crackers before class.

Procedure: Have children lay slice of cheese on the napkin. Place the round crackers in wheel positions. Wrap the licorice around the horse's neck for a harness and place in front of grain cart.

Close

This food should remind us of the food Joseph helped store, for when people began to get hungry. Joseph impressed the Pharaoh with his ideas on storing food before the famine even began.

Go!**Let's Play Pharaoh****DRAMA**

Materials: Card stock, aluminum foil, ribbon, dishtowel or 12 x 18 fabric, clothespin

Quest Connection

How did Joseph dress when he became second in charge of Egypt? We are going to make something that would be similar to what he wore when he was in charge.

Preparation: Cut from cardstock one snake shape for each child, cut aluminum foil twice as large to cover the snake forms. Cut ribbon 24 inches long for each child.

Procedure: Let children cover their snake with aluminum foil. Place fabric on child's head and fasten in the back with a clothespin. Let the child place the snake in the middle of their forehead and tuck the tail under the fabric as sample picture shows. Place the ribbon around the fabric and snake and tie in the back. Remove clothespin. Curl the snakehead out to overlook the child's forehead as if it is ready to strike.

Close

Joseph quickly changed his looks when he became second in charge of Egypt. He started dressing like an Egyptian, he married an Egyptian, he even began to speak the language. He probably looked more like a Pharaoh than a Hebrew shepherd boy.

Go!**My Own Signet Ring****ARTS/CRAFT**

Materials: Assorted buttons, pipe cleaners, scissors, Play dough

Quest Connection

Powerful men or kings often had rings called “signet rings.” These rings had special designs on them and could be used like a signature. The Bible tells us these rings were used to make laws. They could press their signet ring in ink, then press it on paper to leave their special “mark.” Now, ink is a little messy so we will press our signet rings in Play dough and see what kind of “marks” we come up with. The Pharaoh trusted Joseph so much, he actually gave him his signet ring to wear.

Procedure: Have students push pipe cleaner through button and then twist around finger to form a ring.

Close

Close class in prayer.

Go!**Honey, Do You Love Me?****GAME****Materials:** None**Quest Connection**

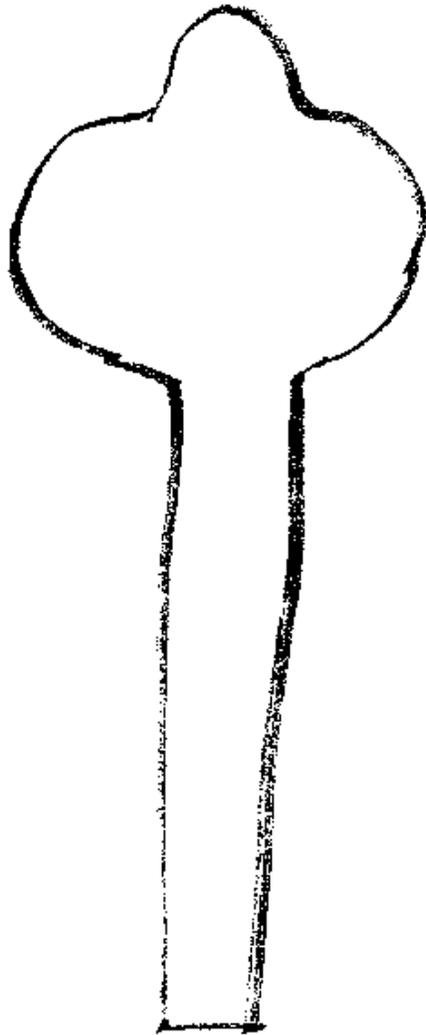
Joseph was reunited with his brothers after many years. He knew they were sorry for selling him into slavery, because he heard them talking in his presence about the whole situation. He still gave them a hard time by throwing them into jail, scaring them, and hiding his special cup in Benjamin's bag. This game allows Joseph to give all of you (his brothers) a hard time, too.

Procedure: Have children stand in a circle and choose one child to be “Joseph” in the middle. You could begin with the oldest child being in the middle. The object of the game is not to smile if you are in the circle surrounding “Joseph.” “Joseph” can't touch you, but he can do whatever he wants to make you laugh. His job is to go around the circle and say, “Honey, do you love me?” and the person in the circle has to say, “Honey, I do love you, but I just can't smile.” If they smile, they become “Joseph” in the middle.

Close

Prayer: Thank You for Your never-ending love. We love You so much. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

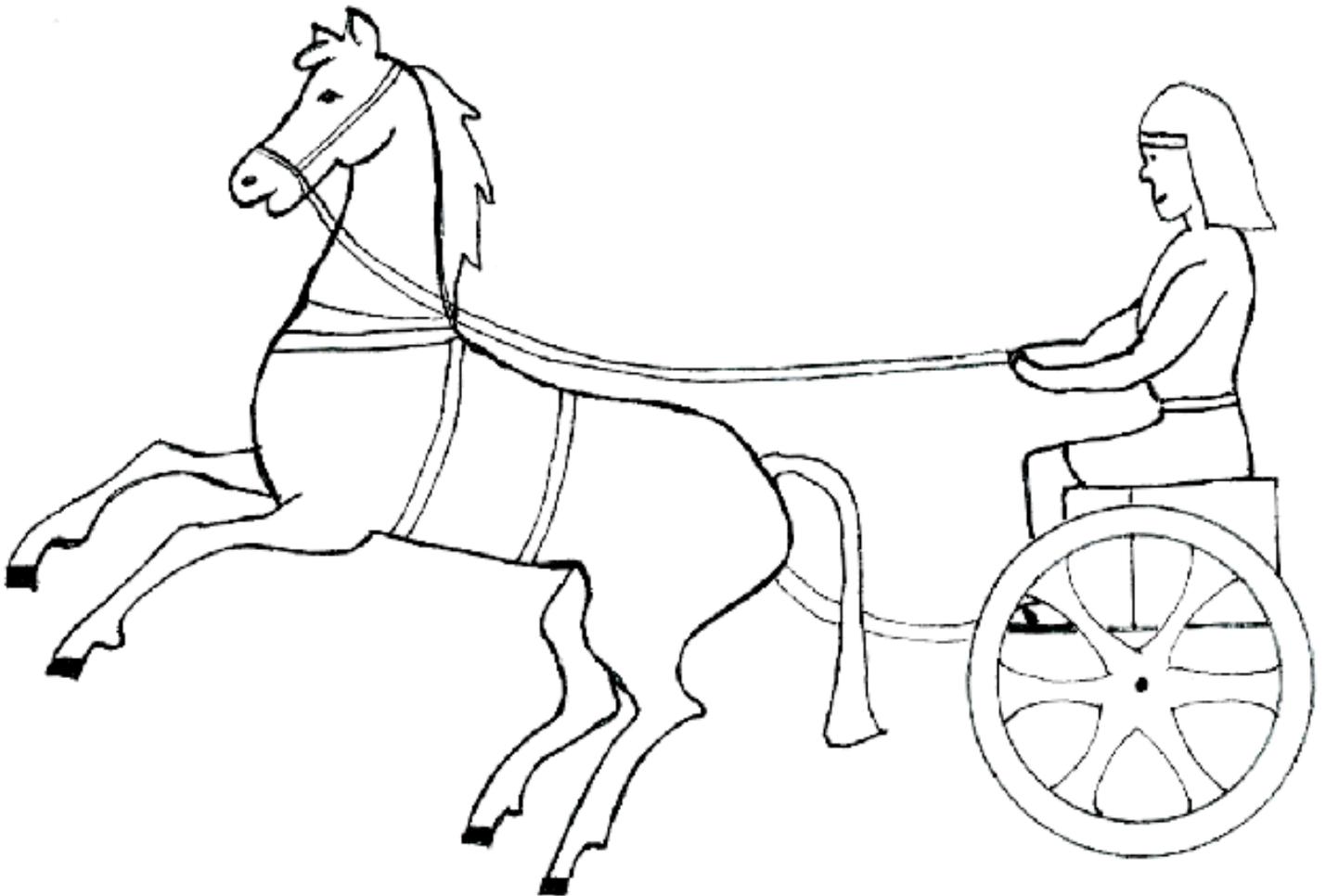
Resource Page



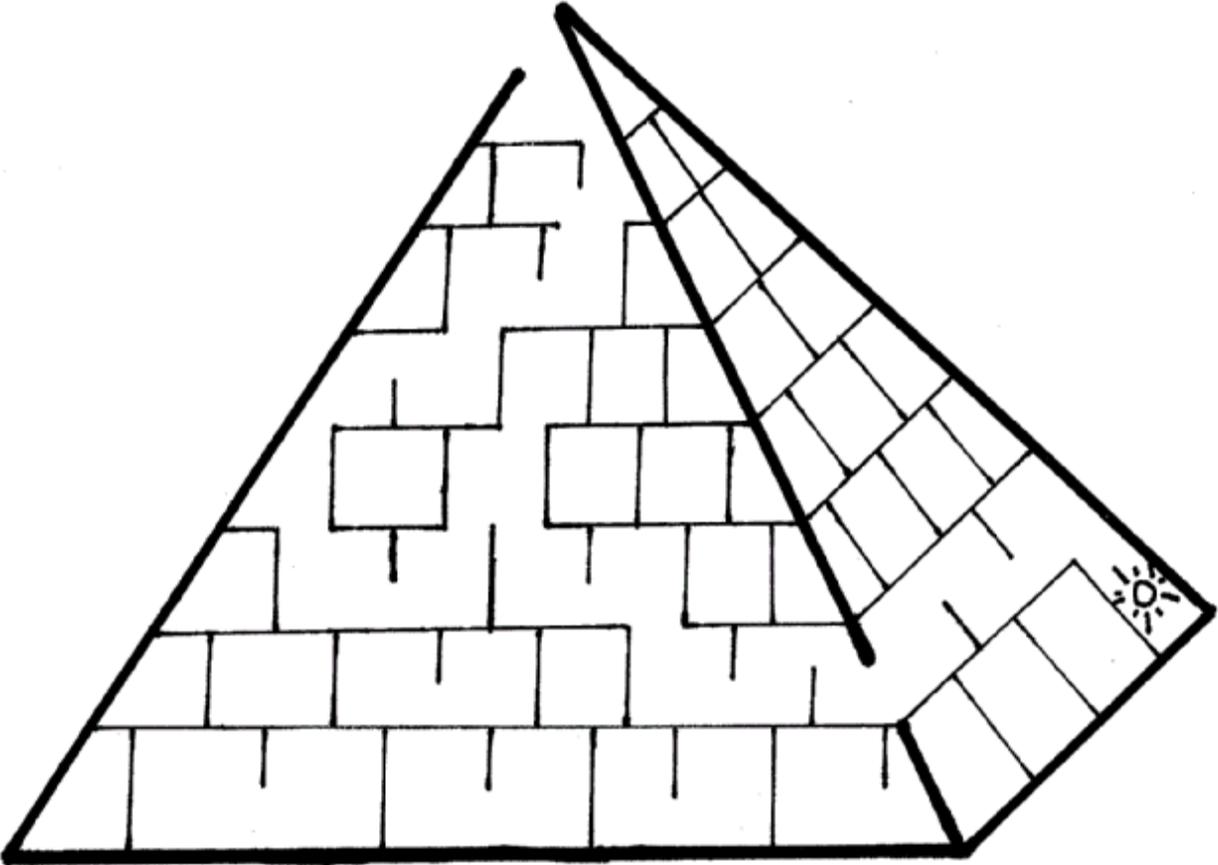
Snake shape: cut from card stock
12 inches long

Joseph was a great leader for God!

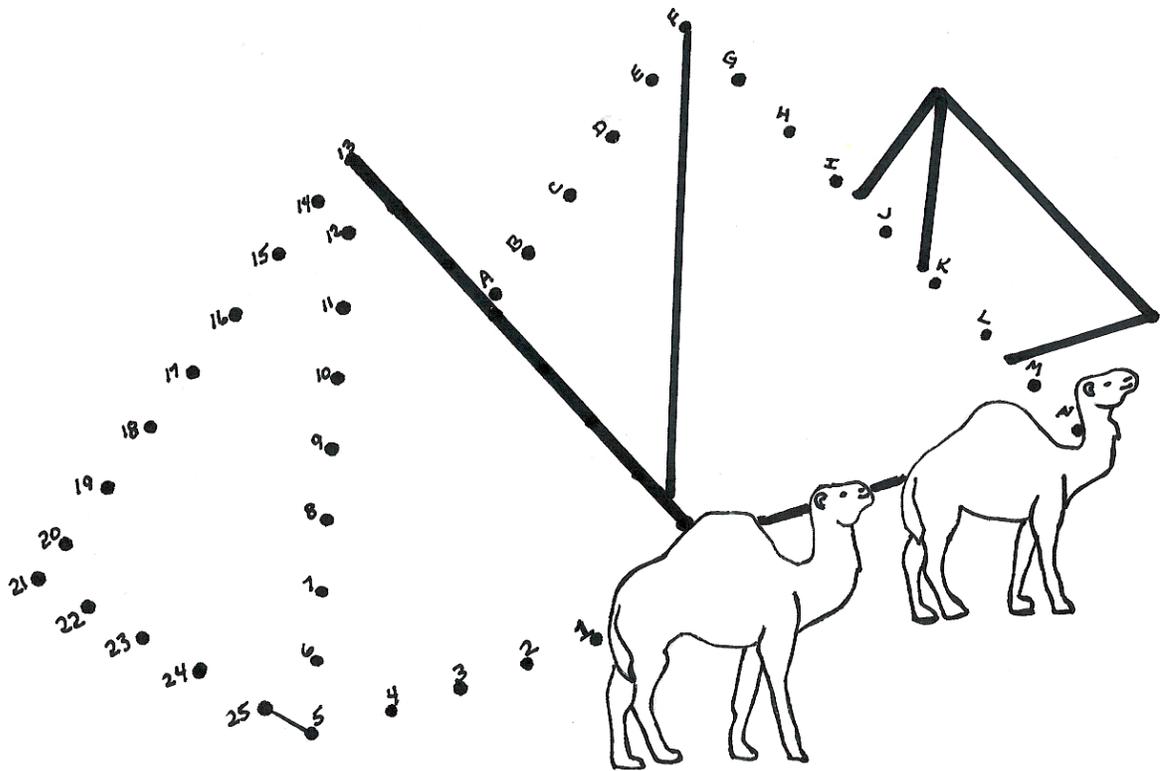
Draw a necklace on Joseph and glue yarn on the harness and reins. Draw colorful feathers coming from the horse's mane and a ribbon in its tail, to show that Joseph was a great leader. Draw a sun and clouds in the sky behind them.



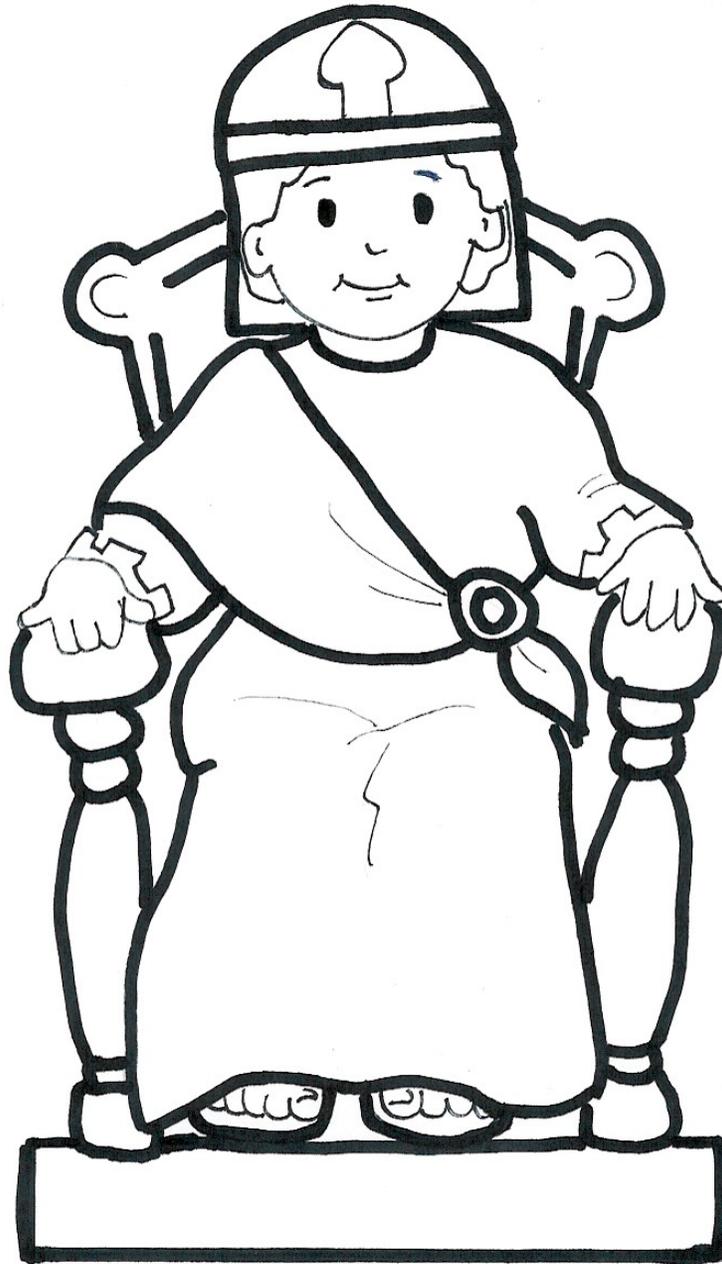
Joseph was a great leader in Egypt. He listened to God. Help the sun find its way to the top of the pyramid. Draw the sun in the sky.



Egypt - Joseph's New Home



Joseph became a great leader because he was committed to God.
The king gave him a ring and gold necklace.
Draw a ring on his finger and place a necklace on his neck.
Color his royal robe.





Journal Page



Draw a picture of yourself wearing a construction hat.



God's still working on me!

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28, NIV).