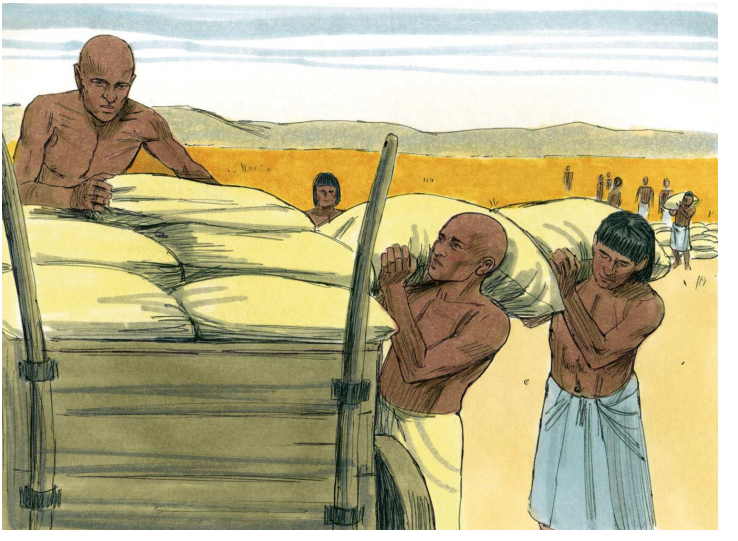
014 Joseph Reunites with His Family



Genesis 41:47-50:21

English

Spiritual

014 Joseph Reunites with His Family

English

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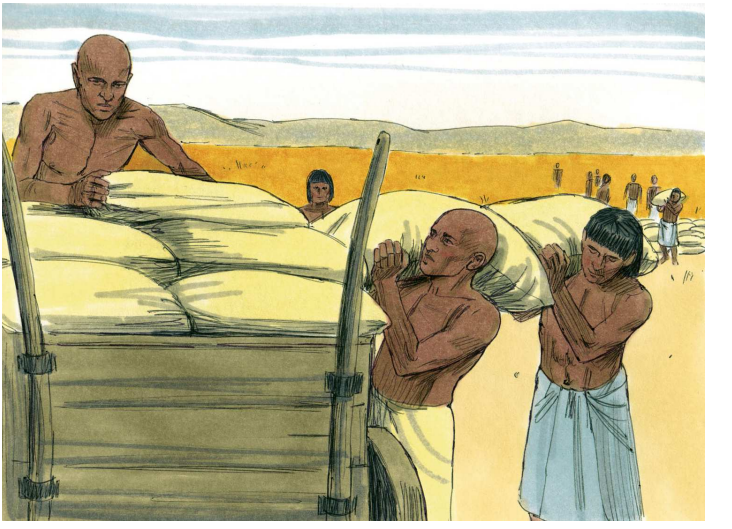
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A special thanks to the 50+ unnamed people who worked on the story scripts, templates, adapted illustrations and music.



Egypt had seven years of good harvests, just as Joseph said.



Every year during that time, Joseph directed the Egyptians to collect and store a portion of the grain harvest.



Then the seven years of poor harvests struck the land of Egypt and the surrounding countries. People from those other countries came to Egypt to buy some of the grain that was stored there.



When Jacob heard there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons there saying, “Go down to Egypt to buy grain so that we can survive and not starve to death.”



Ten of Joseph's brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain. But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother, Benjamin because he was afraid something bad may happen to him.



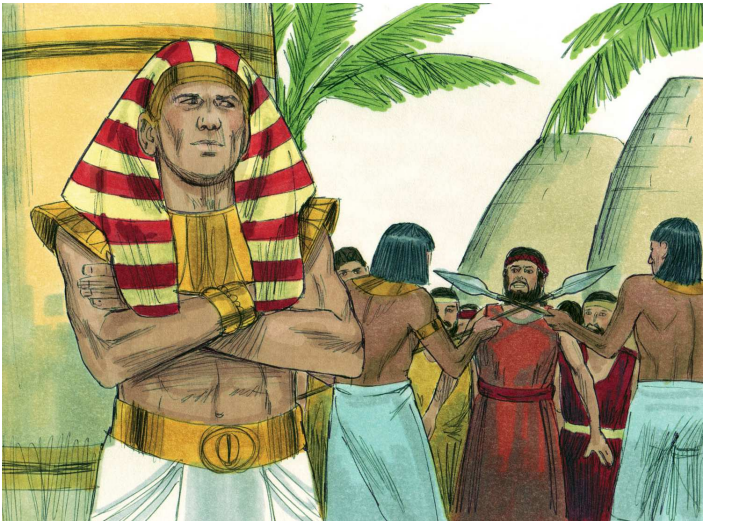
Joseph was the governor of Egypt, the one in charge of selling the grain to all its people.



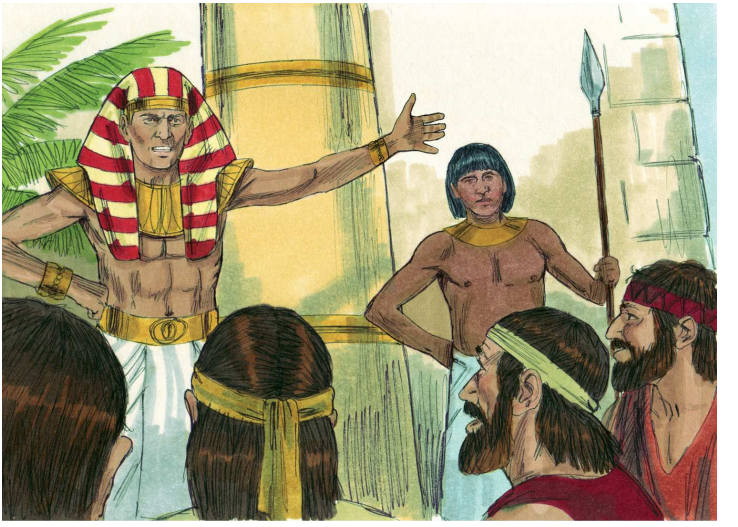
When Joseph's brothers came to buy grain, they bowed down to him. They did not recognize him.



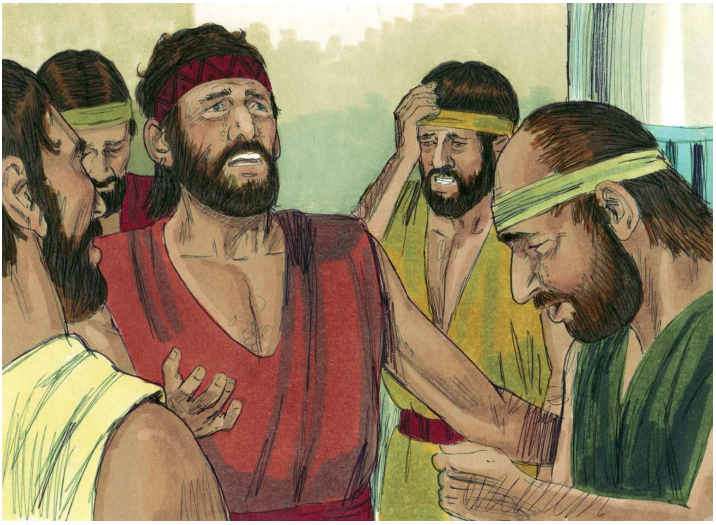
Then Joseph remembered his dream from many years ago.



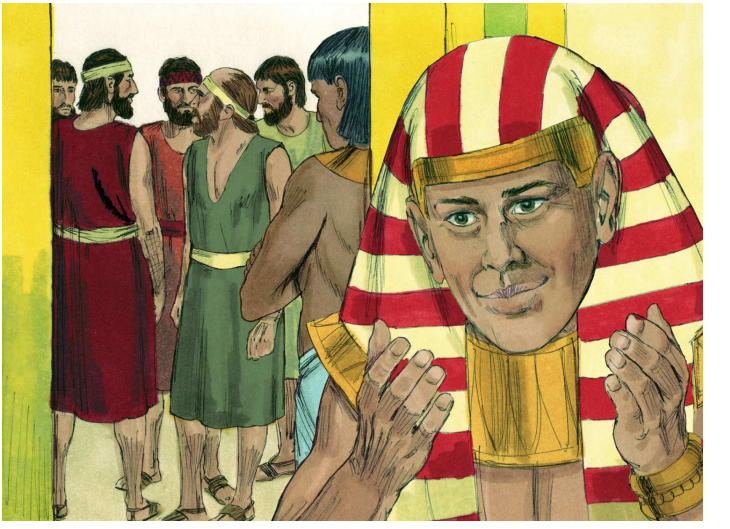
Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not know who he was, so he decided to test them.



Joseph treated them like strangers and spoke harshly to them, saying, “You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected!”



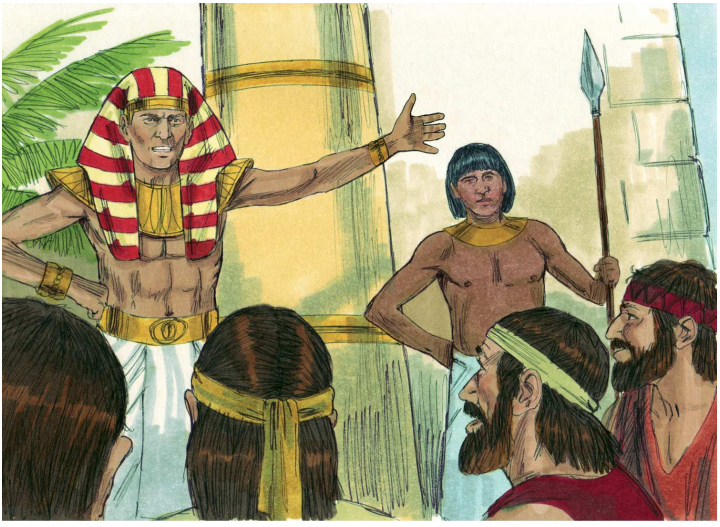
“No, master,” they responded. “We have only come to buy food. We are brothers, the sons of one man who lives in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is still there and another brother is dead. We are not spies.”



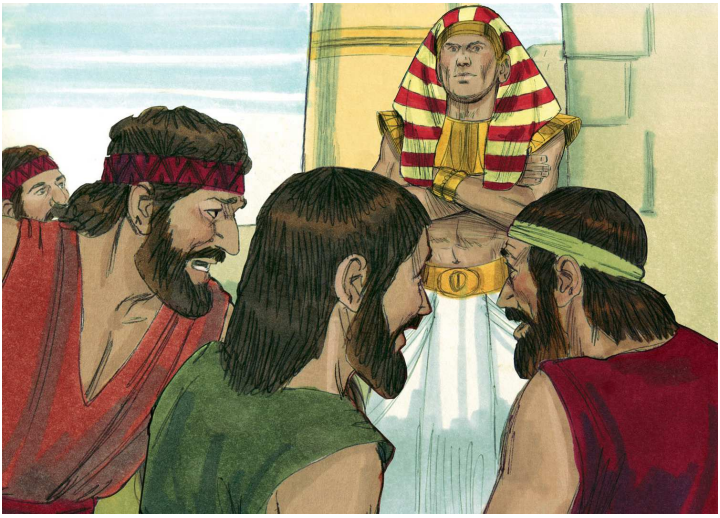
Joseph knew they were telling the truth.



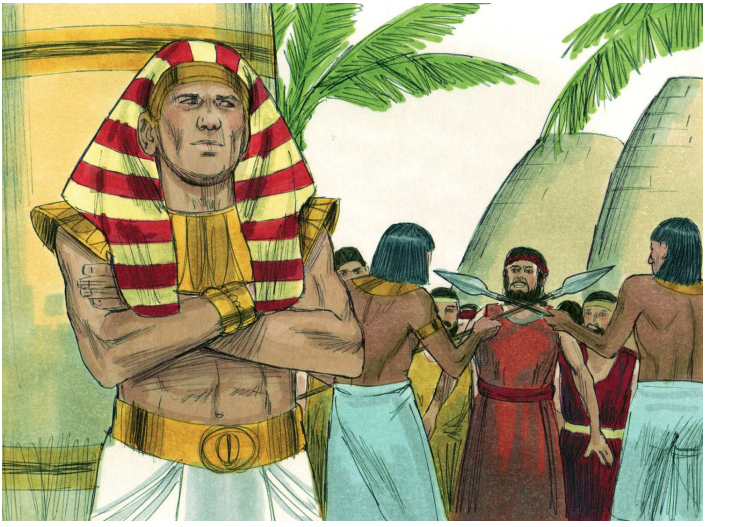
But he wanted to keep them there awhile and test them, so he put them in jail for three days.



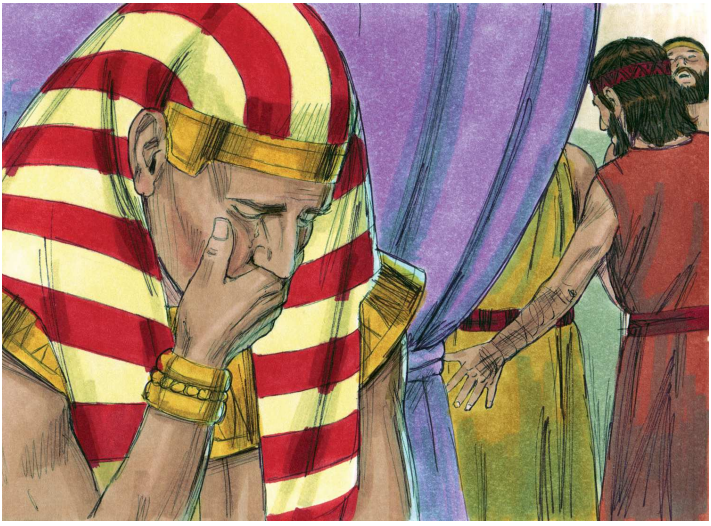
On the third day, Joseph spoke to them saying, "If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison while the rest of you go and take grain back to your households. But you must return with your youngest brother so that what you have told me may be confirmed. Then none of you must die."



The brothers spoke to one another saying, “We are being punished because of what we did to our brother Joseph many years ago. He pleaded with us to let him go but we would not listen.”



The brothers did not realize that Joseph could understand their language because he had been using an interpreter.



But Joseph did understand them and turned his face away and began to weep.



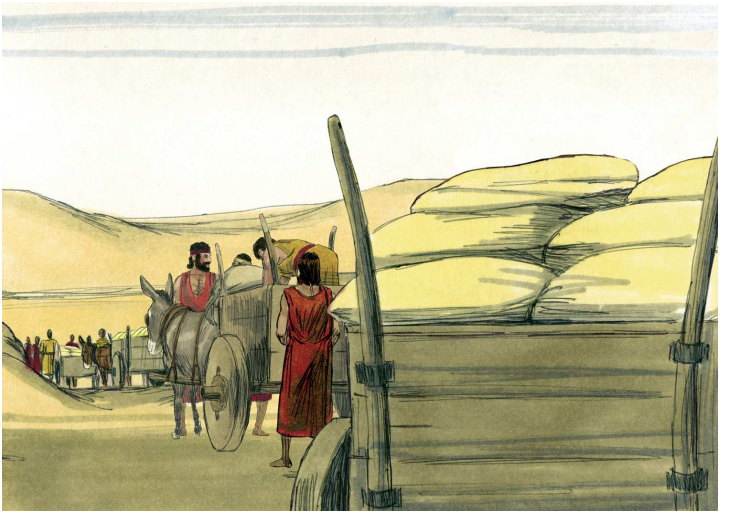
Then Joseph chose Simeon. And while the other brothers were watching, Joseph told his servants to tie up Simeon and take him to prison. Then he told the others that they could go.



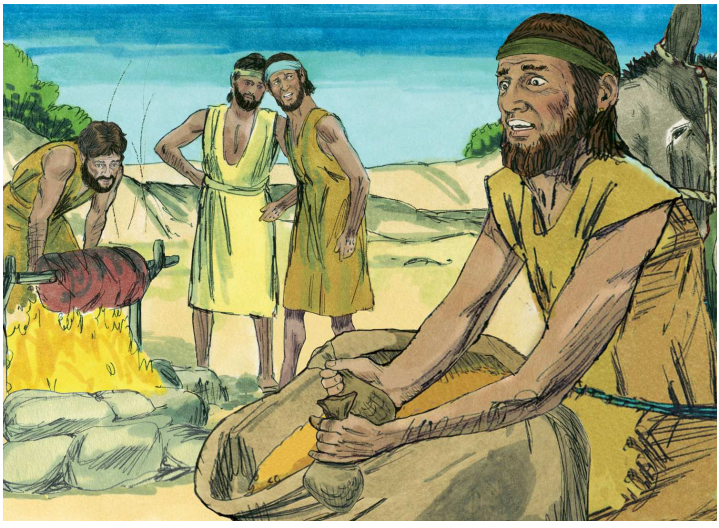
Joseph told his servants to take the money for the grain from the brothers, and then to fill their sacks with grain.



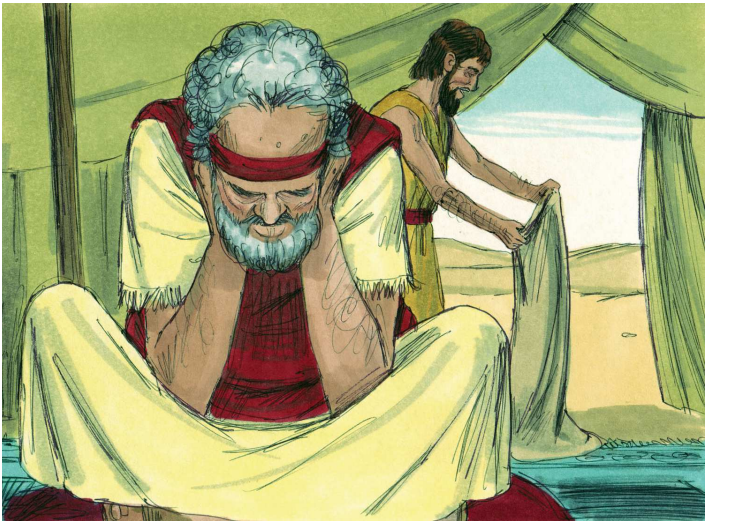
Then Joseph told the servants to put the money back into the sack belonging to each brother.



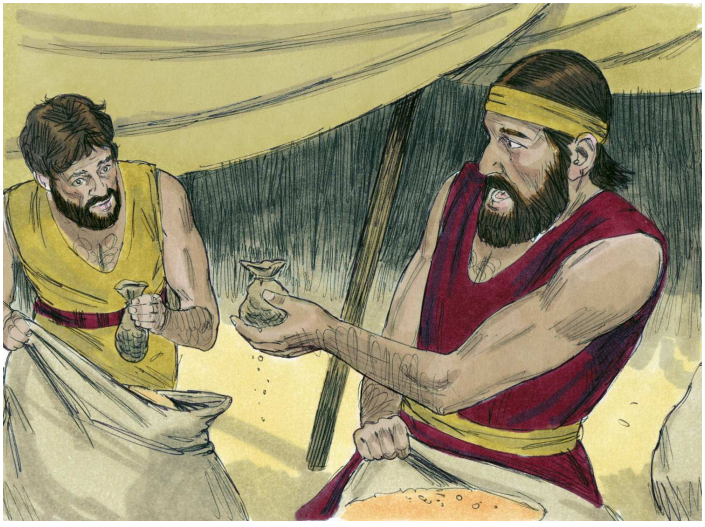
The brothers began their journey home to Canaan with their sacks of grain.



But when they stopped for the night, one of the brothers discovered the money in the top of his sack. They were all confused and frightened and asked each other, "What has God done to us?"



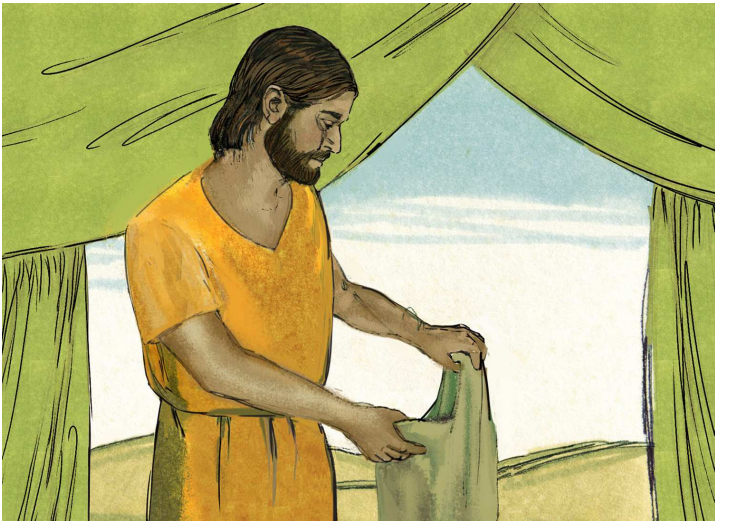
When they came to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them.



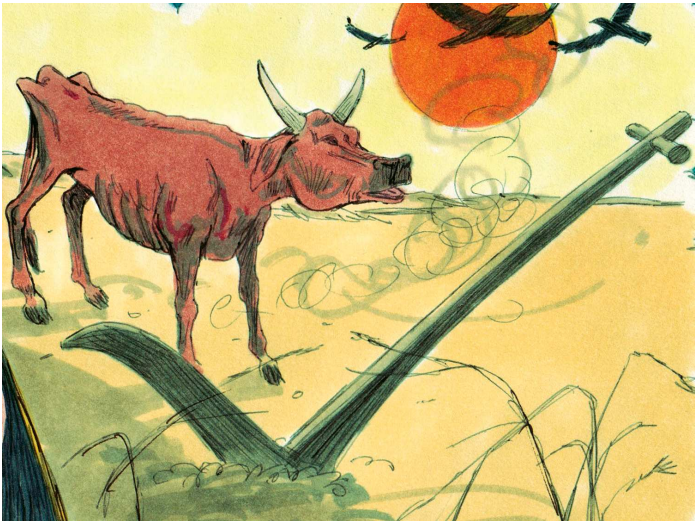
And as they began to empty their sacks of grain, each brother found the money he had paid for the grain there in his own sack. This really frightened them!



Jacob was also upset and blamed his sons. He had already lost Joseph and now Simeon.



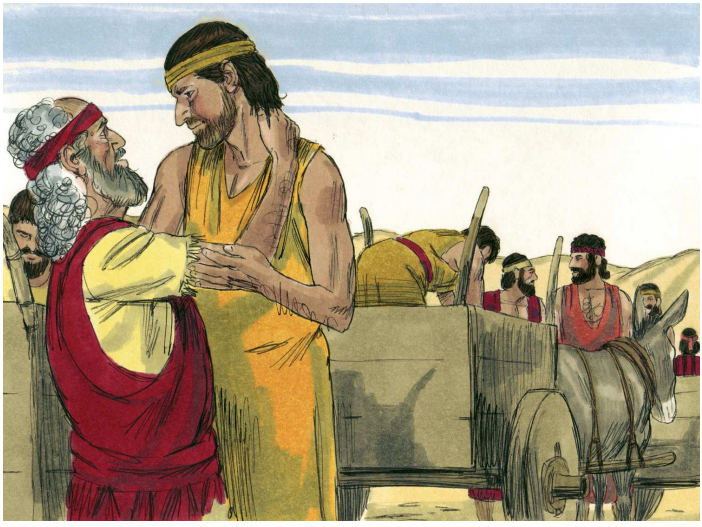
Jacob did not want anything bad to happen to his youngest son, Benjamin.



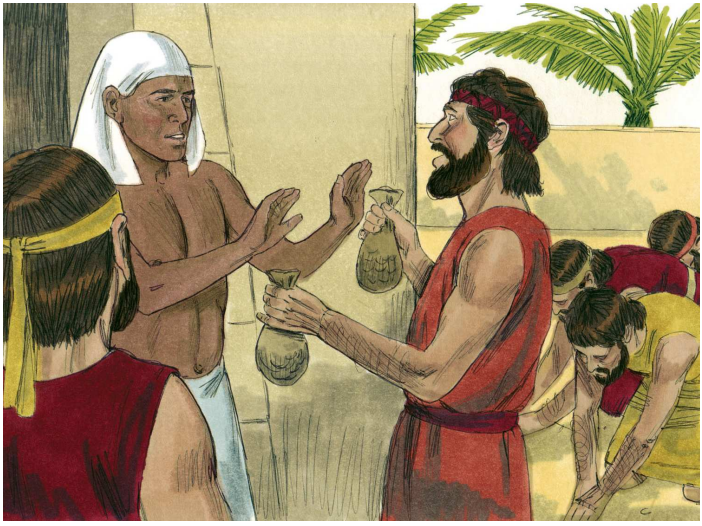
The famine got worse in the land, and now they had eaten all the food they had brought back from Egypt.



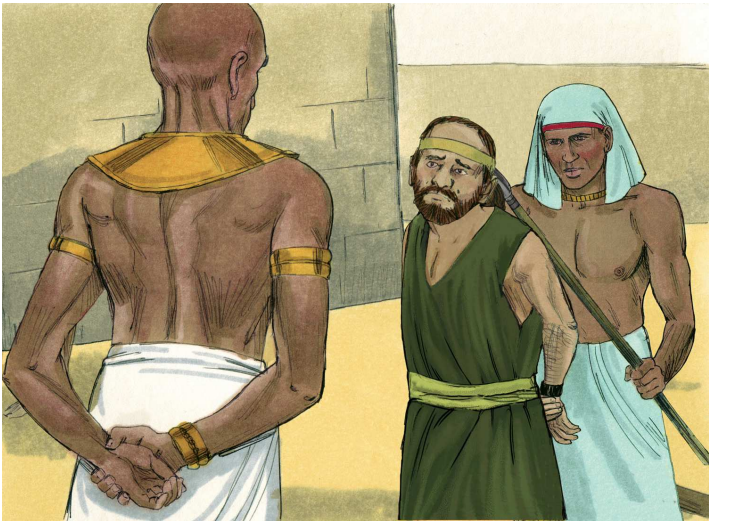
Jacob told his sons to go back to Egypt and buy more food. But Judah warned him they would need to take Benjamin with them.



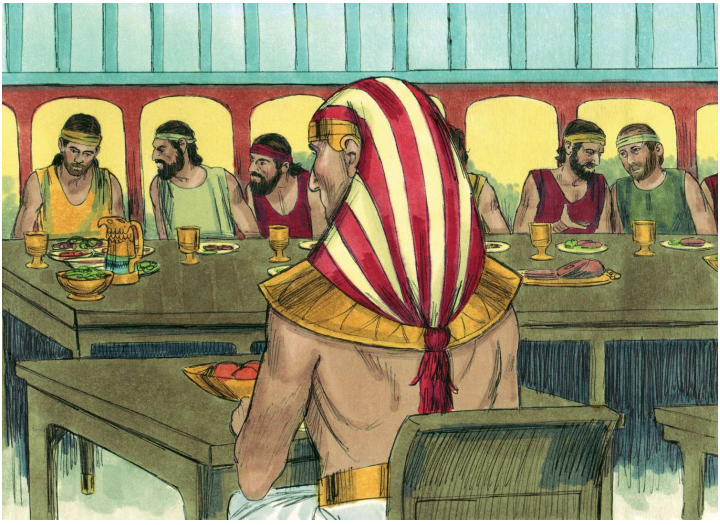
Judah promised his father that he would keep the boy safe, so Jacob agreed to let them return to Egypt with Benjamin. Jacob also made them take twice as much money as before, as well as gifts for the Governor of Egypt.



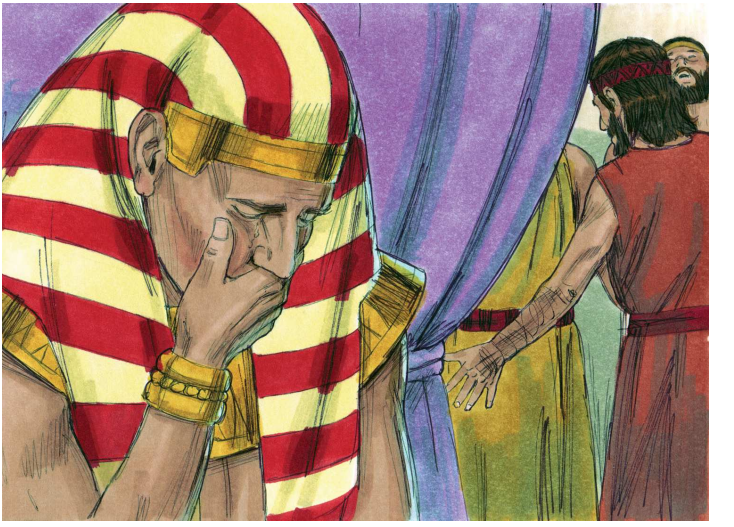
The brothers brought back the money they each found in their sacks and more money to buy more grain as well. But Joseph's servant would not take it. He said, "Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks."



Then the servant brought Simeon out to them.



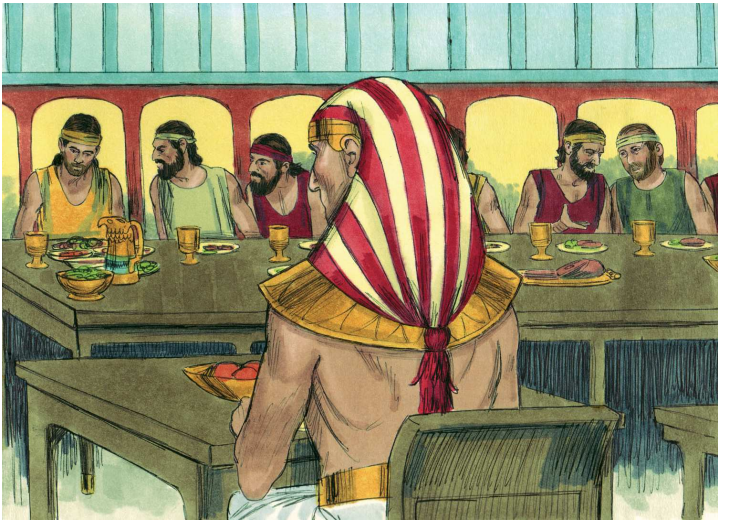
When Joseph heard his brothers had arrived, he invited them to eat dinner with him at noon. When he saw his brother Benjamin, he his emotions overcame him.



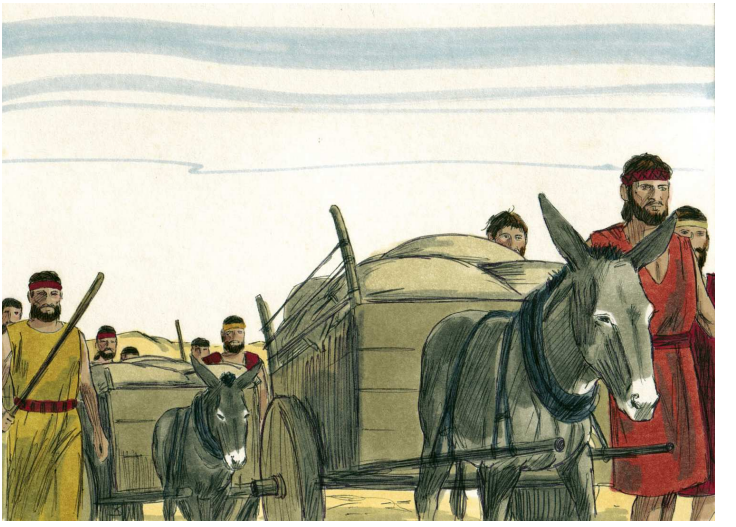
So Joseph quickly left them and went into another room to cry.



When Joseph had controlled his emotions and washed his face, he came out and said, “Serve the food.” The servants made the brothers sit at a table by themselves, by age from oldest to youngest. They were surprised at this. The servants then served Benjamin a portion of food five times as much as any of the others.



Joseph instructed his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain and put each man's money back in the sack. He also told the servant to put his own silver cup in Benjamin's sack.



Early the next morning the brothers left and started to return home.



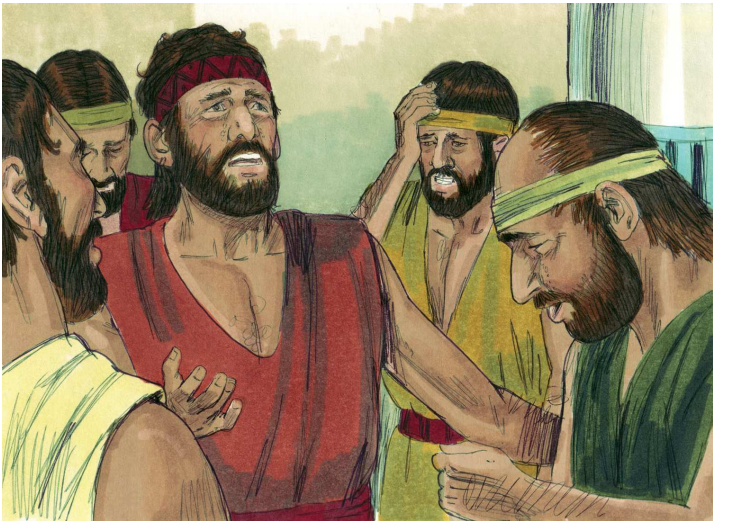
But Joseph sent his servant after them to say, “Why have you done this evil thing? Isn’t this my master’s special cup you have stolen?”



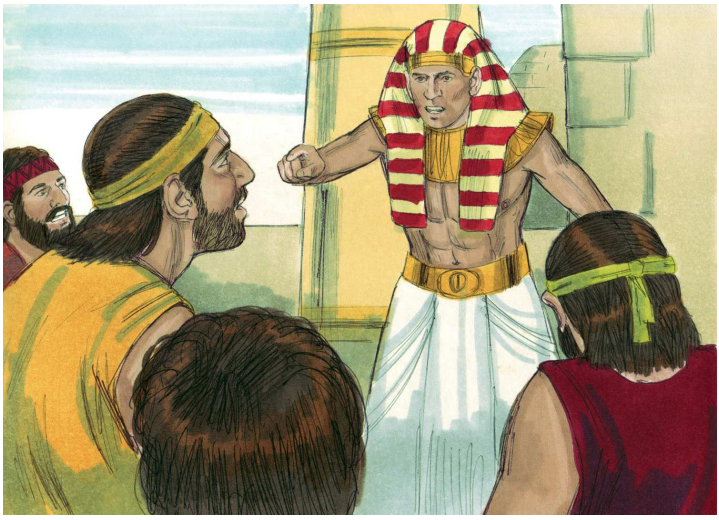
When accused, the brothers exclaimed, “We have not stolen anything!” The brothers swore that if they found the cup with any one of them, the guilty one would die. And all the others would become the Governor’s slaves.



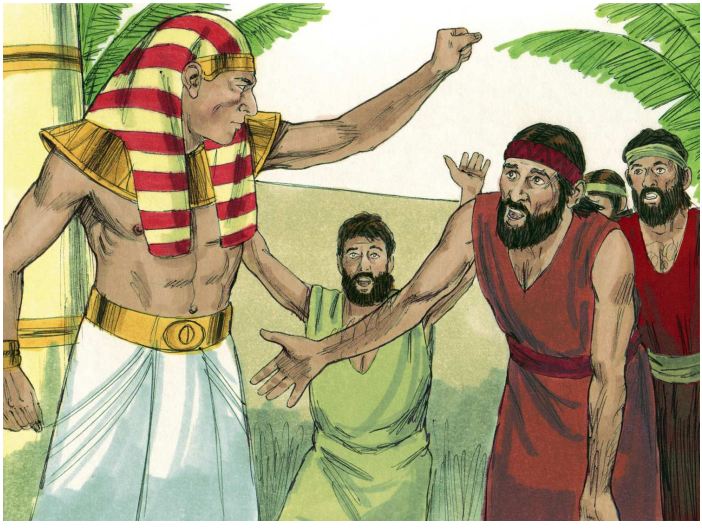
The servant searched the sacks, starting with the oldest brother and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.



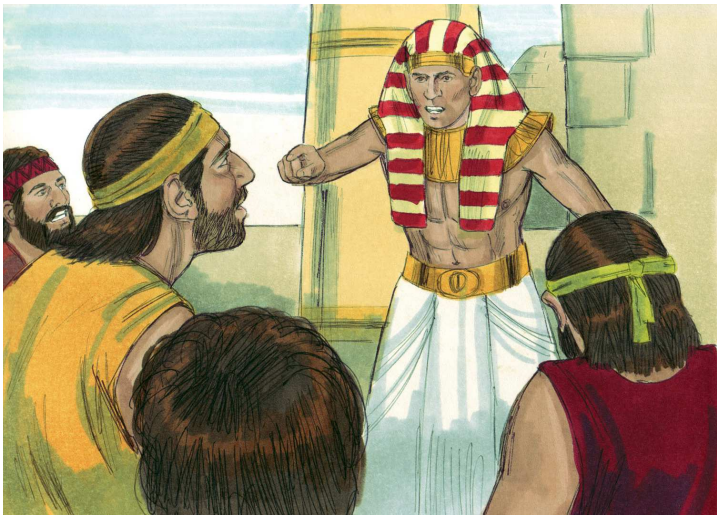
The brothers ripped their clothes in despair, loaded up their donkeys, and returned to Joseph.



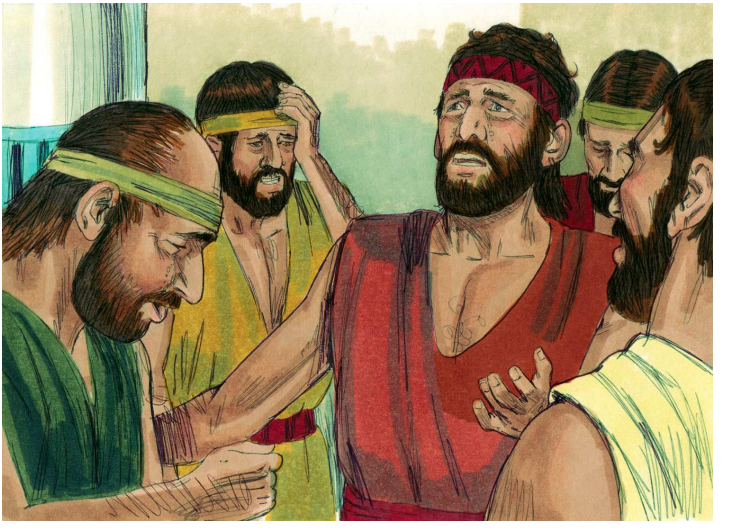
When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph in his house, they threw themselves down on the ground before him. Joseph said, “Didn’t you know I would find out?”



Judah replied, “What can we say? How can we prove we are innocent? God has uncovered our guilt. Now we are your slaves.”



But Joseph said, “Only the one who had the cup will become my slave. The others may go home to your father.”



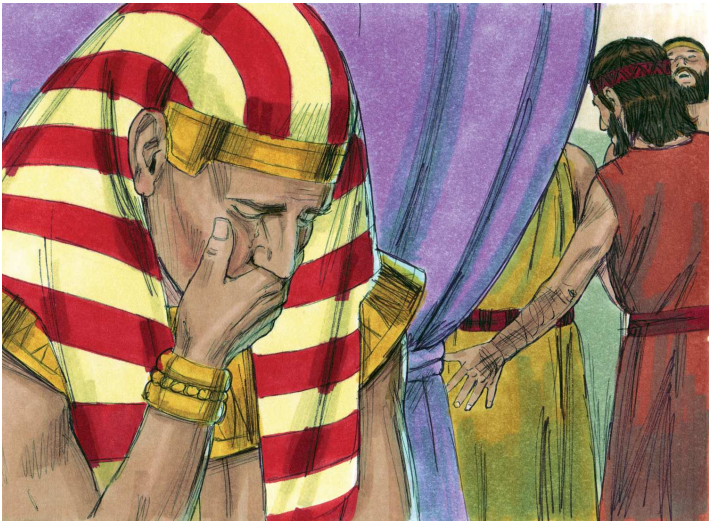
The brothers knew that misery would come upon their father if Benjamin were not with them when they returned to Canaan.



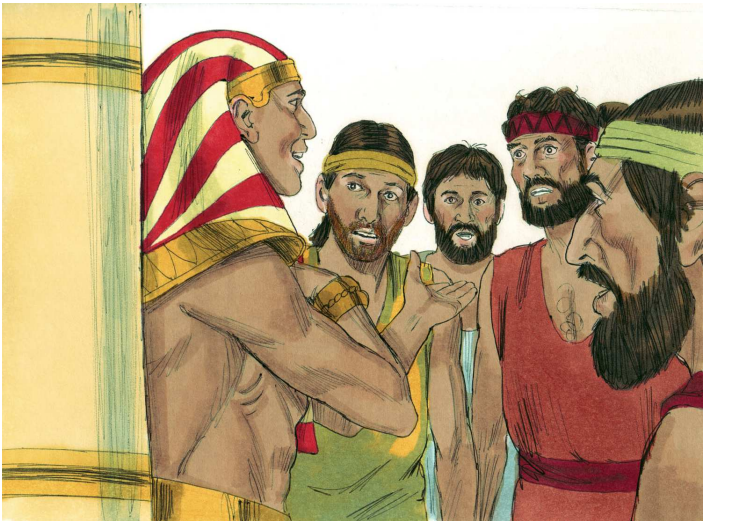
So Judah said to Joseph, “Sir, please let me speak to you. Our father is old and this young son was born to him in his old age. This son’s brother is dead. He is the only one of his mother’s sons left and his father loves him.”



“I could not bear to see the anguish this would cause my father! Let me stay here as a slave in Benjamin’s place and let the boy return with my other brothers.”



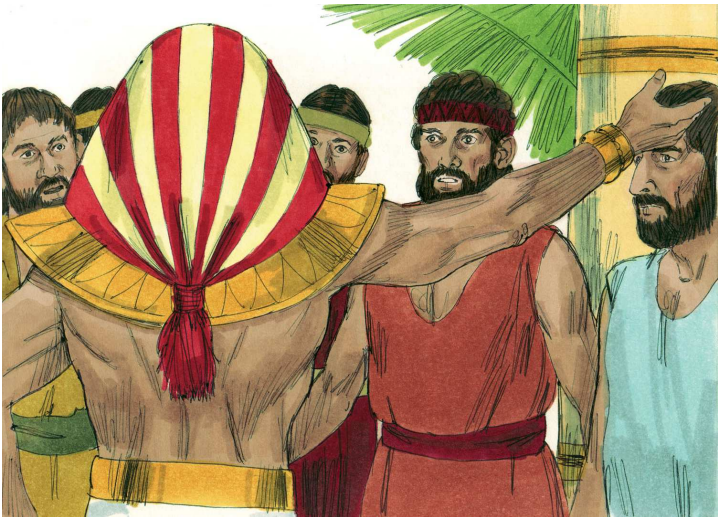
After hearing this, Joseph could no longer control his emotions. He sent everyone out of the room except for the brothers. Then he cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household found out about it.



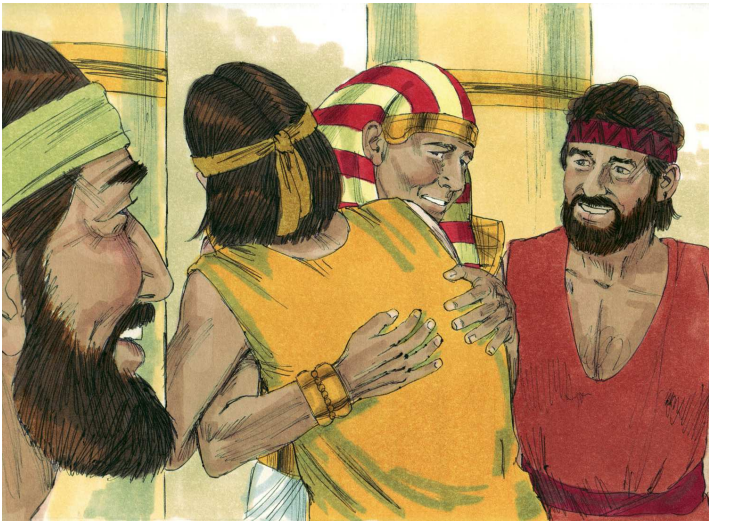
Finally, Joseph said to his brothers, "I am your brother, Joseph." When they heard this they were so terrified that they could not answer!



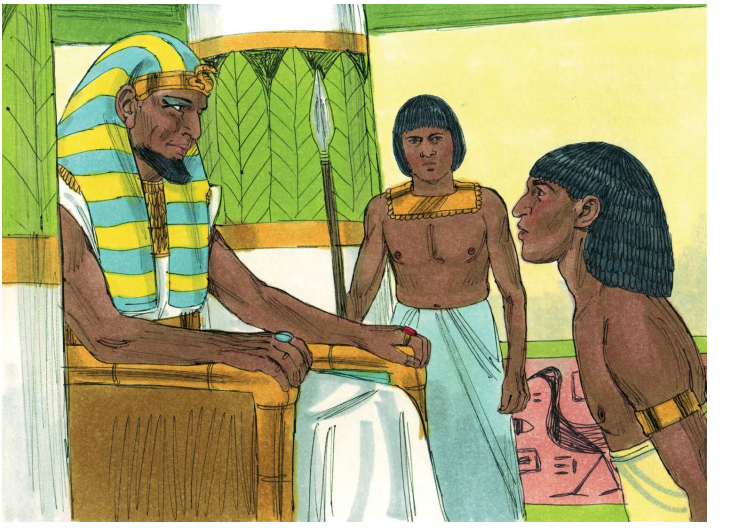
Then Joseph said, “Do not blame yourselves for selling me into slavery. God sent me here ahead of you to save lives.”



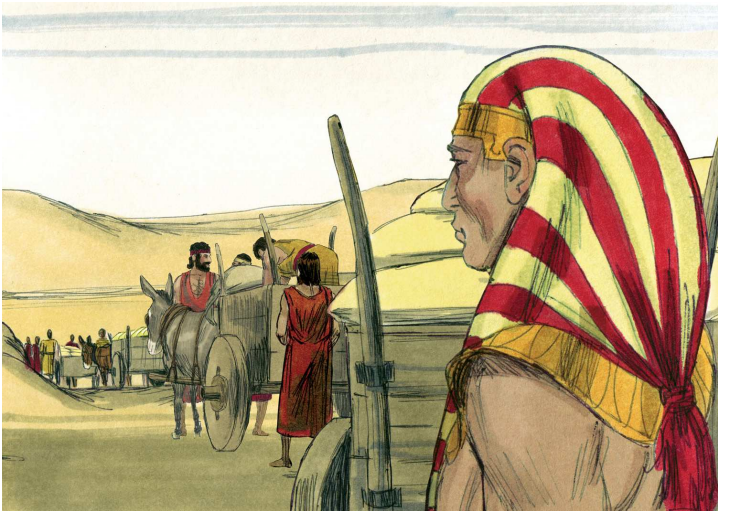
For two years, there has been a famine in the land, and it will continue for another five years. Hurry back to my father and tell him to come down to me. You will live in the region of Goshen and I will provide for you there.



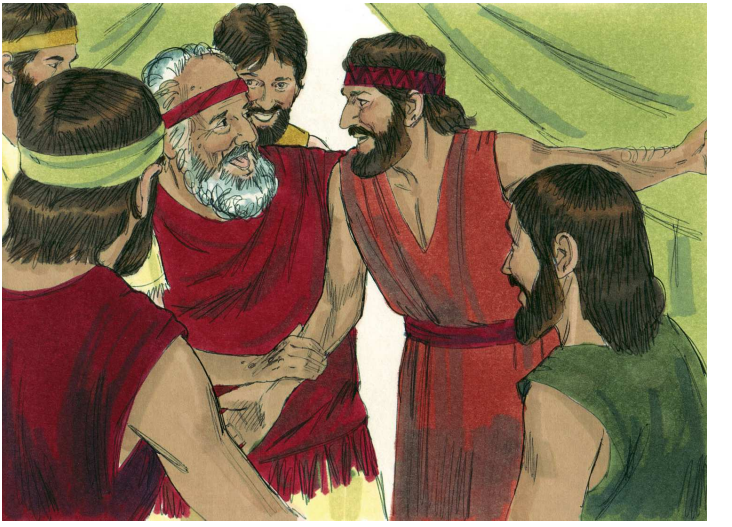
Then Joseph put his arms around Benjamin and began to cry, and Benjamin also cried as he hugged his brother. Still crying, Joseph also hugged and kissed each of his other brothers.



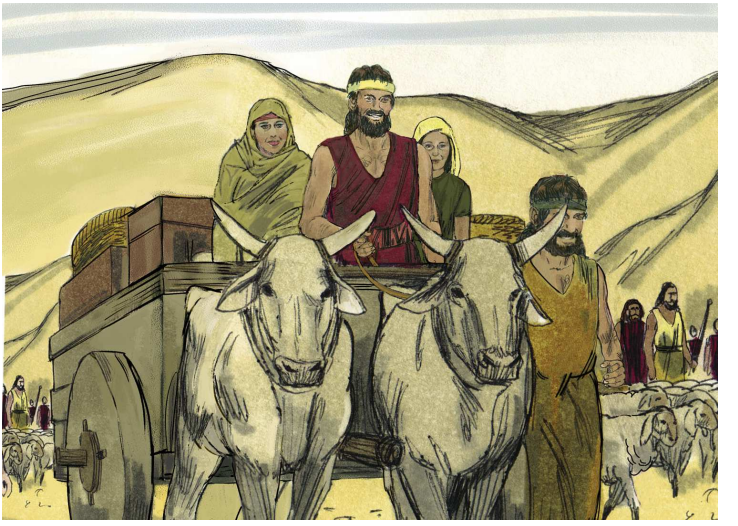
Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased to learn that Joseph's brothers had come to Egypt. He told Joseph to invite his brothers and his father and their entire household to live in the best land in Egypt.



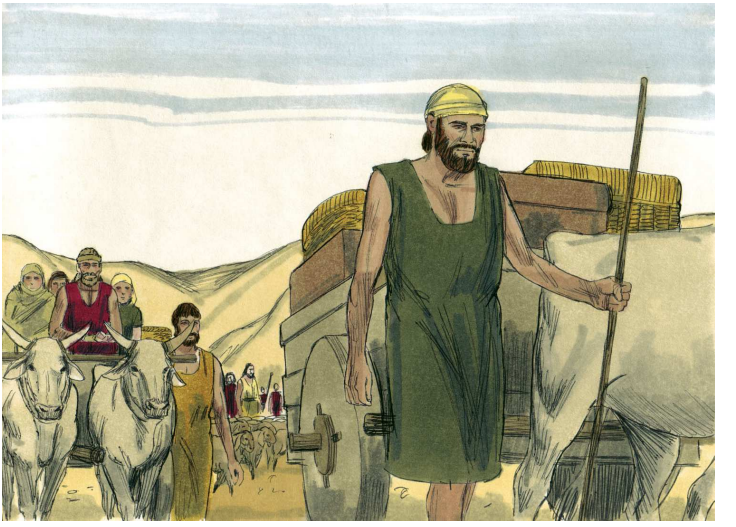
Joseph sent his brothers back with carts and provisions for their journey home to get their father Jacob and all their families.



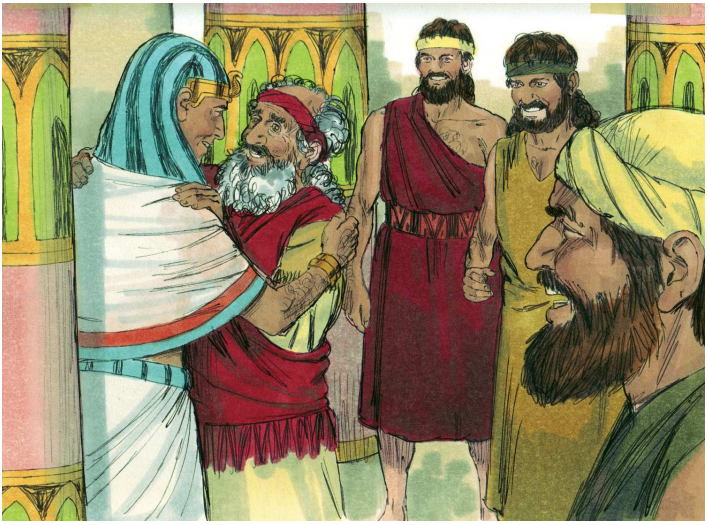
When the brothers returned home, they told their father that Joseph was alive and was the ruler of Egypt. Jacob was shocked and did not believe them at first, but when he saw the carts and provisions Joseph had sent to carry him back, he said, “I must go and see him before I die.”



So Jacob set out with all his possessions and all his household and livestock and went down to Egypt.



All those who went down to Egypt with Jacob--his direct descendants, not counting their wives--numbered 66 persons.



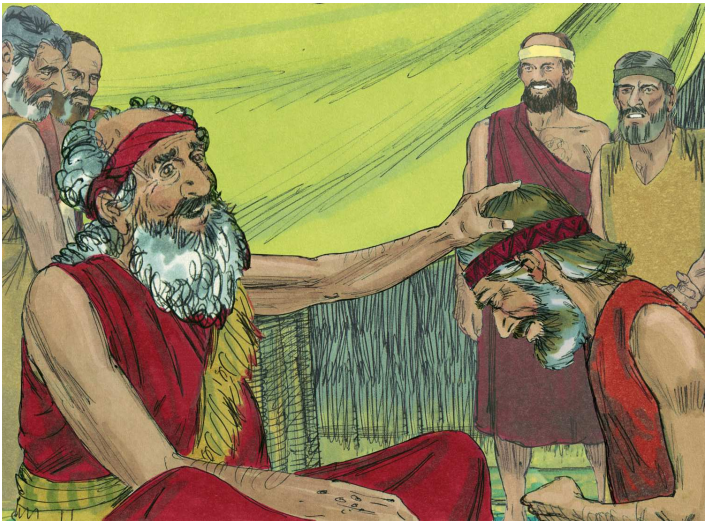
When Jacob arrived in Goshen, Joseph went to meet him. As soon as Joseph appeared before his father, Jacob, he threw his arms around him and cried for a long time.



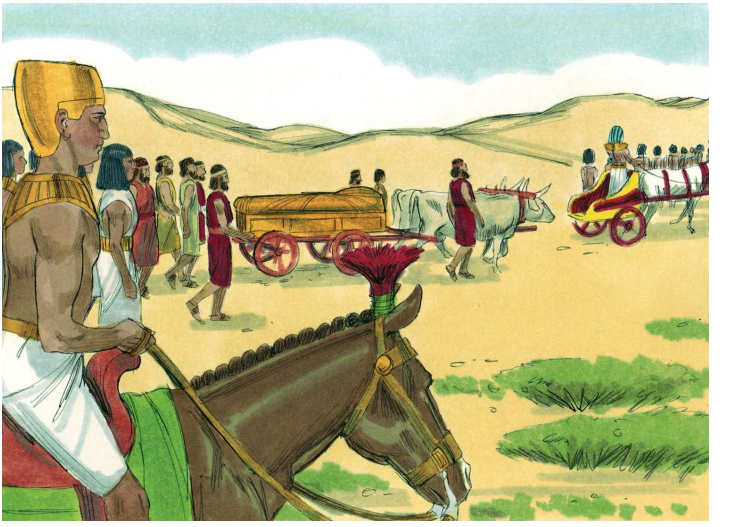
When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's father and brothers had come to Egypt, he gave Jacob's sons the work of caring for his animals because they were shepherds.



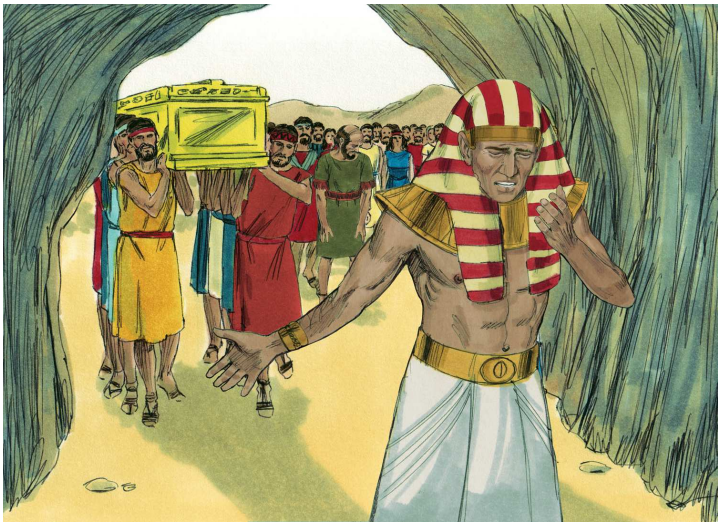
As the severe famine continued, Joseph bought all the people, land, and wealth of Egypt as payment for food. So Pharaoh became owner of all Egypt, but the people were saved from starvation.



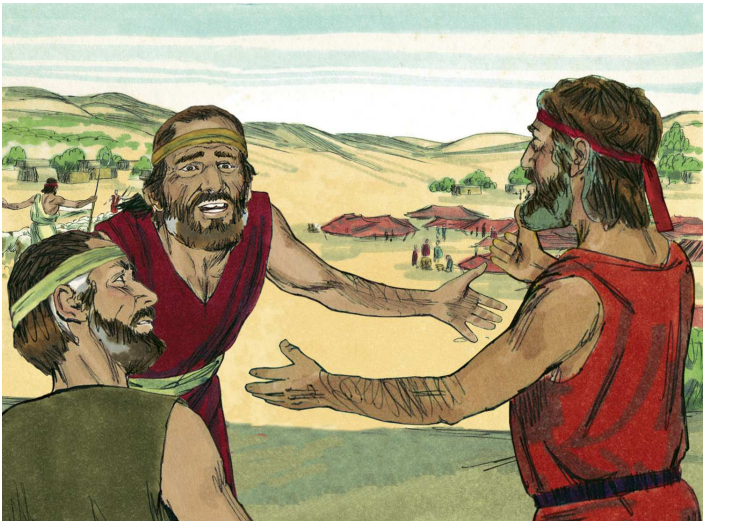
Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years. When he was 147 years old, he called all of his sons together and blessed them. Then Jacob died.



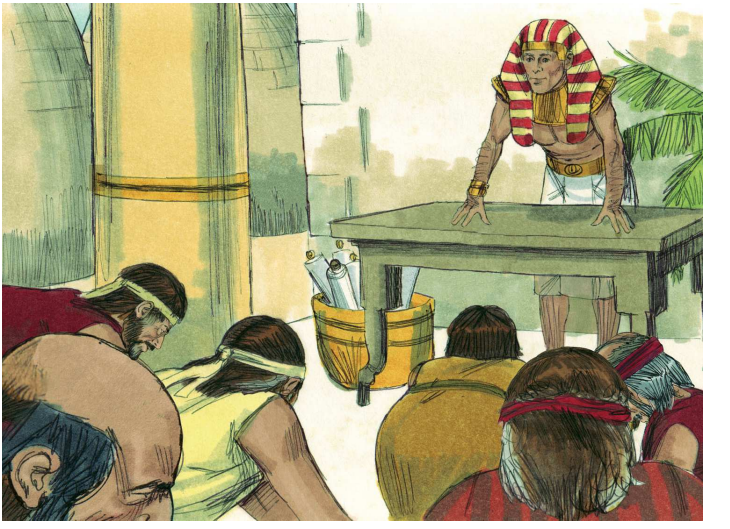
Joseph and his brothers brought Jacob's body back to the land of Canaan. There they mourned for seven days.



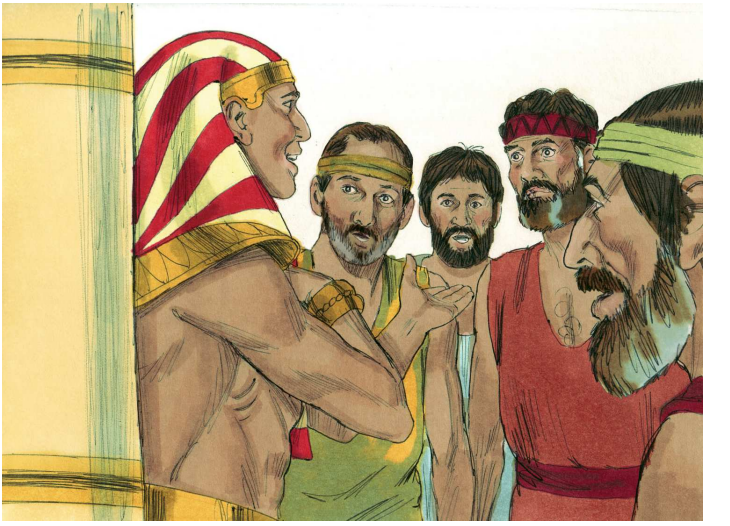
They buried Jacob in the cave beside his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham in the land God had promised to give to them.



When Jacob's family returned to Egypt, Joseph's brothers became very worried that Joseph would try to take revenge on them now that their father was dead.



The brothers begged Joseph, “Please forgive us for the bad things we did to you. We will be your slaves.” And they bowed down to Joseph.



But Joseph spoke kindly, reassuring them, “Do not be afraid. I am not God. I do not have the right to punish you. I will take care of you. You intended to harm me, but God intended all this for good, to save many people.”

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