

JOSEPH: FROM SLAVE TO DEPUTY PHARAOH

Bible Verses: Genesis 37; 39; 41–48; 50

Important Details: The StoryReader scripts are segments of Scripture taken directly from Zondervan’s *The Story: Teen Edition* (NIV). Each script takes approximately 10 minutes to be read aloud. These segments have been formatted into a *Readers’ Theater*. A Readers’ Theater is an activity in which a few participants are asked to read directly from a script, with the intent of telling a story in a lively manner. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters’ actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

Characters:

- Narrators 1, 2, and 3
- Joseph
- Jacob
- Potiphar’s Wife
- God
- Brothers
- Pharaoh

Tweaks to the Text:

Ellipses = words omitted within a sentence for the sake of conciseness. NOTE: No need to slow your reading when you see an ellipsis.

Words in brackets = added words for context

Words in italics = summary sections from Zondervan’s *The Story: Teen Edition* Bible

(Opening is from *The Story: Teen Edition*, Chapter Two.)

NARRATOR 1: *Of Jacob’s 12 sons, Joseph was clearly Jacob’s favorite, leading the rest of Jacob’s boys to resent their younger brother. Jacob only heightened the family stress when he gave a beautiful coat to Joseph. And Joseph didn’t help matters when he twice told his older brothers that he had a dream that they would someday bow to him. Finally, the brothers had heard enough from their arrogant little brother. They hatched a conspiracy. For seventeen-year-old Joseph, it would be a very bad day indeed.*

NARRATOR 2: [Joseph’s] brothers had gone to graze their father’s flocks...[When] Joseph came to [check on] his brothers, they stripped him of the ornate robe he was wearing—and...threw him into [a] cistern.

NARRATOR 2: [Later,] when...merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him...[and he was taken] to Egypt. Then [the brothers] got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took [it] back to their father...He recognized it and said,

JACOB: “It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him...!”

NARRATOR 2: Then Jacob...mourned for his son many days.

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with [Joseph],...Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned.

NARRATOR 2: Now Joseph was...handsome, and after a while his master's wife took notice...and said,

POTIPHAR'S WIFE: "Come to bed with me!"

NARRATOR 2: But...day after day, he refused to go to bed with her. One day...She caught him by his cloak...But he left [it] in her hand and ran out of the house. She kept his cloak...until his master came home. Then she told him this story:

POTIPHAR'S WIFE: "That Hebrew slave...came to me to make sport of me. But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house."

NARRATOR 2: When [Joseph's] master heard the story his wife told him,...he burned with anger. [Potiphar] took him and put him in prison the place where the king's prisoners were confined. But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; [God]...granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison.

NARRATOR 3: *[Now] God [had] gifted [Joseph] with the unusual ability to discern the meaning of dreams. Once during his confinement, Joseph helped two of Pharaoh's civil servants interpret their dreams. When Pharaoh's [dreams] took a bizarre turn...he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt...but no one could interpret them for him. So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon.*

NARRATOR 1: *Pharaoh explained his two dreams...[and] Joseph told Pharaoh that the twin dreams foretold seven years of bumper crops to be followed by seven years of...famine....Joseph's recommendation to Pharaoh was to put a wise man in charge of storing food and preparing for the coming famine. The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and...[he] said to Joseph,*

PHARAOH: "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders..."

NARRATOR 3: *For seven wonderful years...farms yielded enough for the people to eat well and still store up for the coming bad times....Then, as Joseph had predicted...Egypt became hot and parched; the crops withered....Because the drought was so severe, neighboring nations began to approach Egypt for help just to stay alive...*

NARRATOR 1: When [Joseph's father] Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, [he sent] ten of Joseph's brothers...down to buy grain from Egypt. Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the person who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him...As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them.

JOSEPH: “Where do you come from?”

BROTHERS: “From the land of Canaan...to buy food.”

JOSEPH: “You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected.”

BROTHERS: “No, my lord...[We] are honest men, not spies.”

NARRATOR 3: [But Joseph] put them all in custody for three days. On the third day, Joseph said to them,

JOSEPH: “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.”

NARRATOR 3: This they proceeded to do. [After they brought back their youngest brother], Joseph [finally] said to his brothers,

JOSEPH: “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt....Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly.”

NARRATOR 3: Then he threw his arms around...all his brothers and wept over them.

NARRATOR 2: So they went up out of Egypt and...told [their father],

BROTHERS: “Joseph is still alive!...He is ruler of all Egypt.”

NARRATOR 2: Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them. But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

NARRATOR 3: So [when] Israel set out [for Egypt] with all that was his,...God spoke to [him] in a vision at night and said,

GOD: “Jacob! I am the God of your father...Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there.”

NARRATOR 3: When they arrived in [Egypt, Joseph] threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time.

JACOB: “Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive.”

NARRATOR 2: So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land...[After Jacob died, Joseph’s] brothers...came and threw themselves down before him.

BROTHERS: “We are your slaves...!”

JOSEPH: “Don’t be afraid...I will provide for you and your children.”

NARRATOR 3: And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them. Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father’s family...[and] he lived a hundred and ten years.