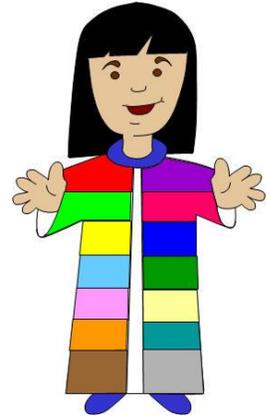


The Story of Joseph

by Leanne Guenther



This is the story about a young man named Joseph. His father's name is Jacob, and they lived in Canaan, the land where his grandfather Isaac came from.

Joseph was seventeen (old enough to drive a car these days), and he had ten older brothers and one younger brother. Can you imagine having eleven brothers to play with, or fight with?

Because Joseph was one of the youngest sons, he became very special to his father Jacob. Jacob had a special robe made for Joseph. It was very beautiful and had every color you could imagine in it.

All of Joseph's older brothers saw this and they got very jealous and disliked him. They thought Jacob liked Joseph more because he got the special coat. They were so jealous they couldn't even say a kind word to him.

One day Joseph had a dream, and he went to go tell his brothers. He said, "Guess what? Last night I had a strange dream. We were tying up bunches of wheat out in the field when suddenly my bunch stood up, while all of yours gathered around and bowed to me." The brothers looked at each other in disgust, but Joseph continued. "Then I had another dream that the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down to me."

"Who do you think you are?" The brothers said. "Do you think that you are better than all of us? Do you think that we would ever bow down to you?" This made the brothers dislike Joseph even more.

When he told his father about his dreams he said, "Those are strange dreams." but he thought carefully about what Joseph had told him.

A few days later Joseph's father asked him to check on his brothers. They were in the fields far away and Joseph went to find them. When some of the brothers saw Joseph in the distance, they made a plan to get back at him. When Reuben, Joseph's oldest brother heard this he said, "Don't hurt him. Let's throw him in a well out here in the field." He said this because he was secretly planning to come back and rescue Joseph when the other brothers had left.

When Joseph came to them, they took off his beautiful robe and threw him in an empty well. A little while later a group of merchants came by who were going to sell some things in Egypt. One of the brothers spoke up, "Why don't we sell Joseph to these people, this way we never have to see him again."

The other brothers liked this idea, so they sold him to the merchants.

Unfortunately, Reuben had been working and hadn't seen what happened. When he returned to the well, he saw that Joseph was gone!

Joseph had been sold to an important man named Potiphar, an assistant to the Pharaoh of Egypt.

The rest of the brothers took Joseph's beautiful robe and brought it back to their father, Jacob, telling him that a wild animal killed Joseph. Jacob cried for many days and nobody could comfort him.

Joseph had started out as a slave, but God helped Joseph do everything right. Potiphar made Joseph his helper and put him in charge of everything that he owned. The problem came when Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph to her husband, so Potiphar had Joseph put in jail.

God helped Joseph in jail too, and the warden put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners.

After Joseph had been in jail for some time he met the Pharaoh's baker and cup bearer, who were also sent to jail. One night each of them had a dream. They told their dreams to Joseph and he told the cupbearer that he would soon be let out of jail and said "Please tell Pharaoh about me, and ask him to get me out of here."

When the cupbearer was freed he forgot about what Joseph did. So Joseph stayed in jail for two more years. Until one day the Pharaoh had a dream, and nobody could explain it to him. The cupbearer then remembered what Joseph had done for him, and Joseph was brought to Pharaoh.

"Can you understand dreams?" Pharaoh asked. "I can't, but God helps me." Joseph replied. After Pharaoh had told him his dream Joseph explained, "God is warning you. There will be seven years when nothing will grow and there won't be any food for anyone."

"What can I do?" Pharaoh asked. "God has shown you what to do. There will be seven years before the bad years that will be very good. So good that there will be extra food for everyone. You should save a little bit of each year's harvest, that way you will have enough to get you through the bad years." Joseph said.

Pharaoh believed all that Joseph told him, and put him in charge of all the land of Egypt.

People came from all countries to buy grain from Joseph, because the whole world was in need of food. Some of those people were Joseph's brothers. When his brothers came, Joseph recognized them, but they did not know who he was. (It had been over 10 years since they had seen him).

The brothers all bowed to him because he was an important person. Just as he dreamed they would at the beginning. After a few meetings with his brothers he could not keep it in any longer and Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father alive?" But his brothers couldn't answer him because they were afraid. Then Joseph said, "Come here. I am your brother, the one you sold! Do not worry, and do not be angry at yourselves for selling me, because God has put me here to save people from starving."

So his father, his brothers, and their families came to live in Egypt with Joseph, and they had all the food they needed.