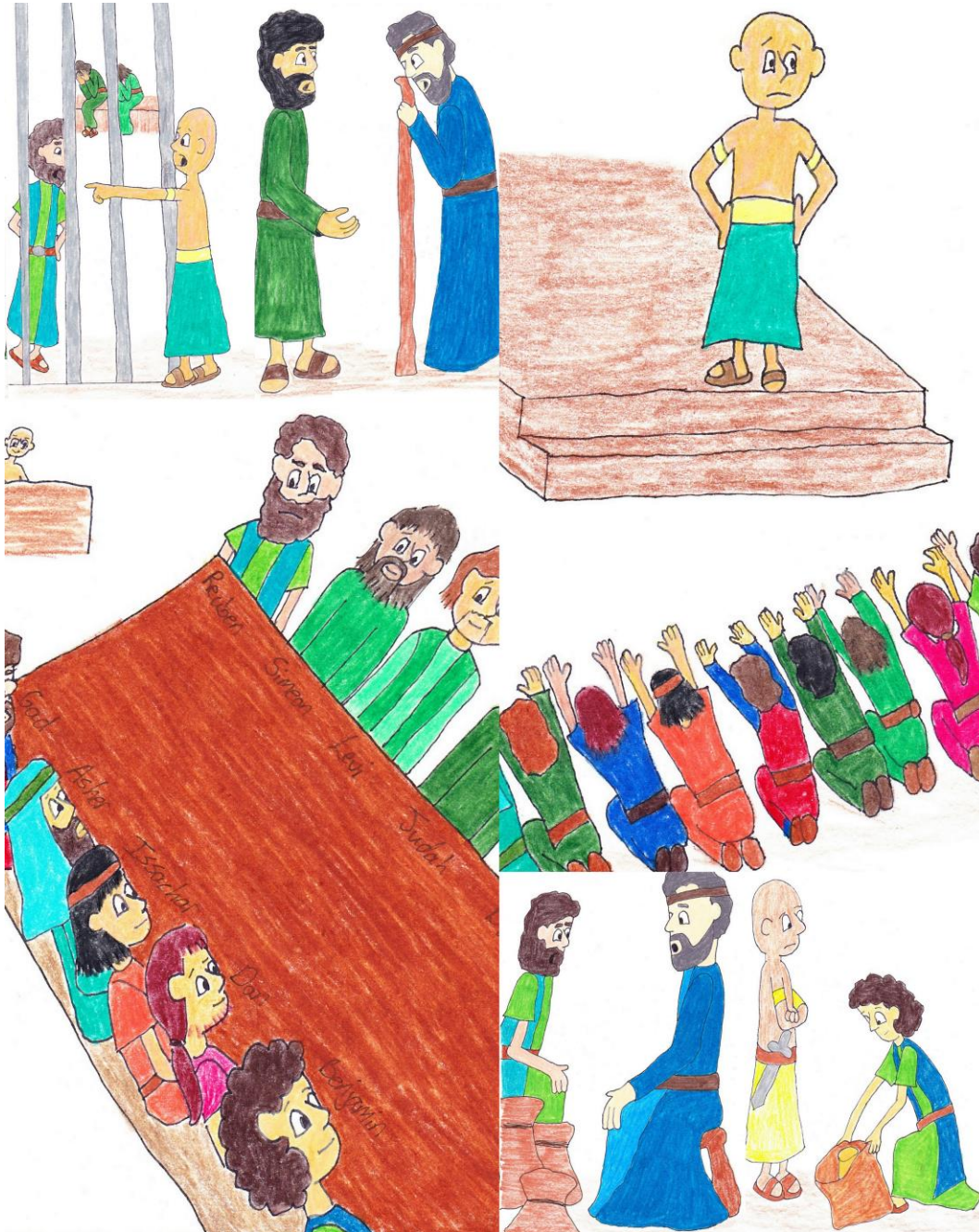
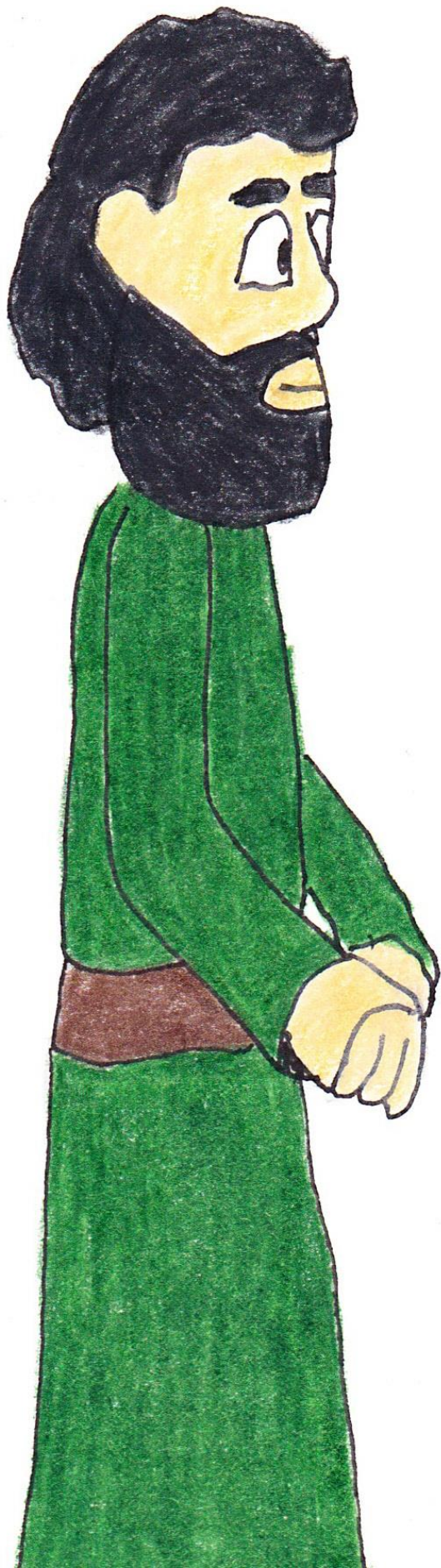


Joseph's Dreams Come True

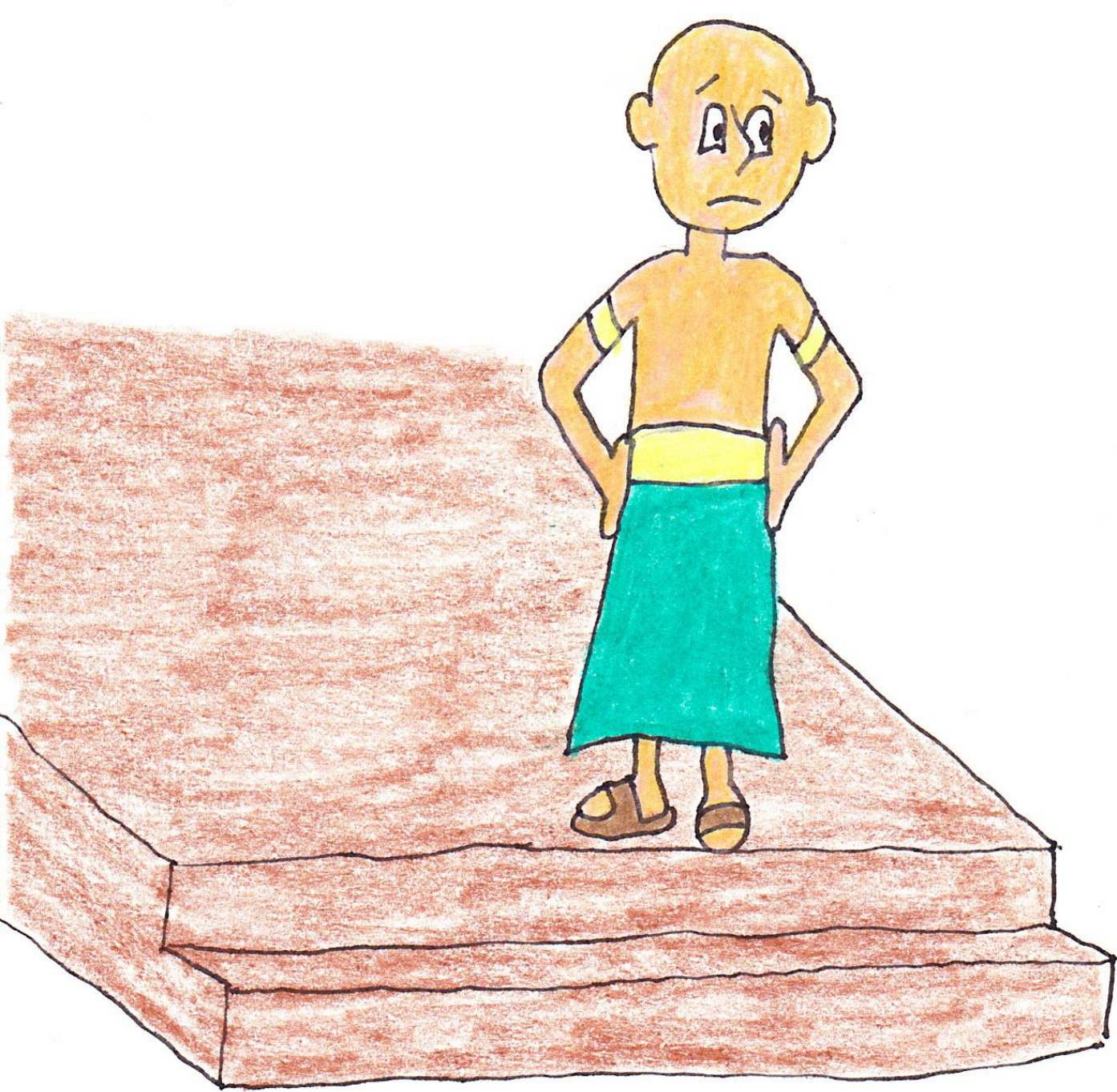
Genesis 41:1-47:31





Jacob and his sons were hungry. The famine that hit Egypt was in Canaan as well, and they had no food. Jacob tried everywhere but did not find any. Finally he heard there was food in Egypt.

“I want the ten of you to go down to Egypt and get food for all of us,” said Jacob. So the ten brothers traveled down to Egypt.



After getting to Egypt, they needed permission to buy grain, but the Egyptian overseer in charge had some questions first.

“Who are you?” Joseph, the Egyptian overseer, demanded. “Where did you come from?”

“We traveled all the way from Canaan for food,” they answered and bowed again.

As they did Joseph realized his dream had come true. A thought struck him and he decided to test his brothers because they obviously didn’t recognize him. “You’re spies! You came down to find out where to attack us!”

“No, we’re brothers, honest. We were twelve brothers, but one is dead and the youngest is with our father.”

“LIARS!” Joseph yelled back at them. “You are spies and I will put you all in jail until your youngest brother comes here.”



They sat in jail for three days, and finally Joseph came to visit them. “I fear God and if you do what I say you will live. One brother will stay and the rest can go home. If you want to buy more grain then bring your youngest brother. Otherwise you will never see me again.”

The brothers started frantically whispering to each other, “This is because we sold Joseph. God is punishing us.”

“I told you it was a bad idea,” said Reuben, “but no one listened to me.”

Joseph chained up Simeon and sent the brothers to get their grain. Joseph ordered his servants to fill their sacks all the way and put their money back, and give them supplies for the trip.



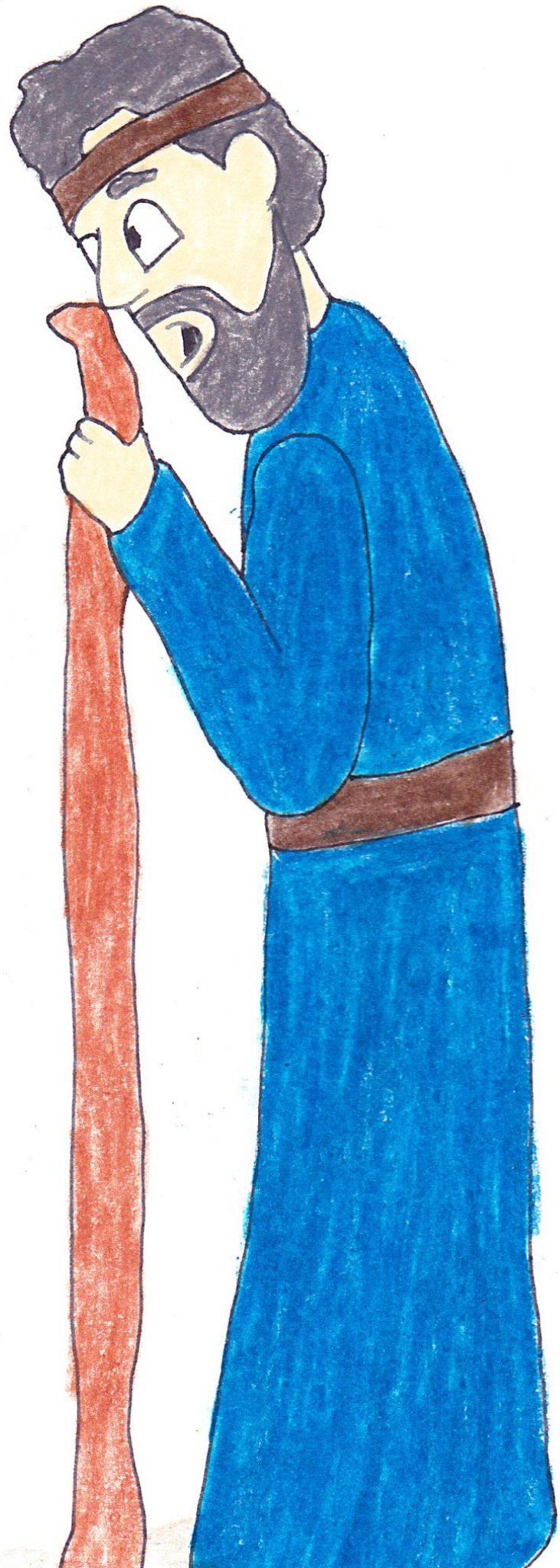
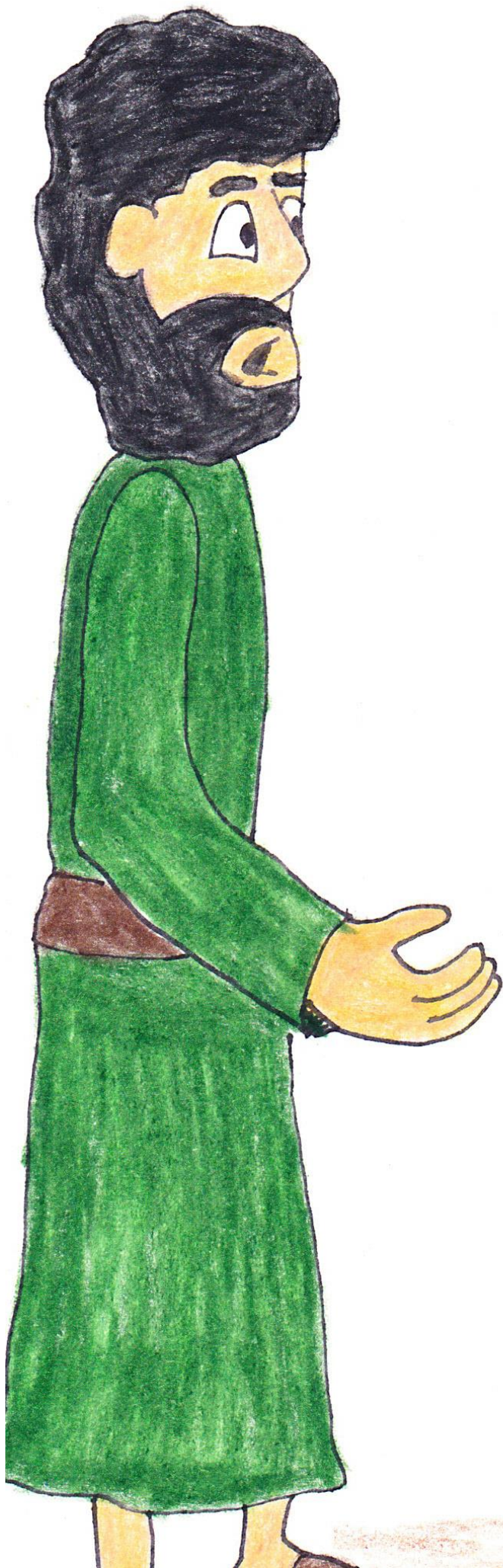
As they traveled back, Levi opened his sack and discovered his money still in it, “Look! My money is right here!” He shouted in fear. “What has God done?”

When they got back they told Jacob everything. How the Egyptian overseer had accused them of being spies, and then thrown in jail, how he took away Simeon, and finally how they found all of their money in their bags again. Finally Reuben said, “Father, we can’t go back unless we take Benjamin with us.”

Jacob fell back crying, “First Joseph, then Simeon is stolen, and now you would take Benjamin too. No!”

“Look, Father, if Benjamin doesn’t come back you can kill both my sons. I promise I’ll take good care of him.”

“No,” said Jacob shaking his head. “No, Benjamin will never go.”



Months passed and finally Jacob went to Judah and said, “You need to go down to Egypt to get more food.”

“Father, remember that the man said we couldn’t buy food again unless Benjamin came. He thinks we’re spies,” Judah answered, then he took Jacob’s hand, “But if you let me be responsible for him I will keep him safe, and if I can’t you can hold me responsible for it.”

Finally Jacob relented, but reminded them to bring money for the first trip, and bring gifts for the man in charge.



They arrived in Egypt safely and met with Joseph's servants. "We brought money to pay for the last time we came. Somehow our money was in our bags when we got home."

The servant had already been warned how to answer, "We were paid for your grain. Your God must have blessed you and given you your money back. Now my master would like to see you and your brothers."



Reuben

Simeon

Levi

Judah

Benjamin

Dan

Issachar

Asher

Gad



When they came in Joseph greeted them sternly until he saw Benjamin. Then he welcomed them and invited all of the brothers to eat with him.

They were amazed to discover they were seated in order of birth, and Benjamin who was seated at the bottom was given five times as much food.

“What is going on?” they whispered to each other. “Why does Benjamin get more food?”

After eating they loaded up their donkeys with all of the new grain and headed on their way.



They had not traveled very far when Issachar saw two Egyptians hurrying after them.

“Stop! Stop! You’ve stolen our master’s divining cup, we need it back.”

Confused the brothers stopped and started unloading the sacks. “If you find the cup in any of our bags then we will all be your slaves.”

“No,” said the servant, “Only the one whose bag holds the cup will be our slave.” One by one each brother opened his bag and showed nothing but grain.

Finally Benjamin opened his bag, and there was the cup!

“No!” Judah cried, “It can’t be! God is punishing us for our sins.”



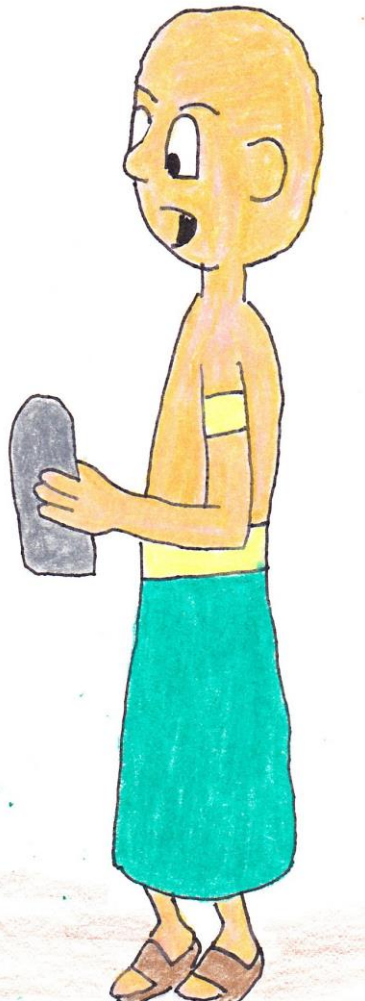
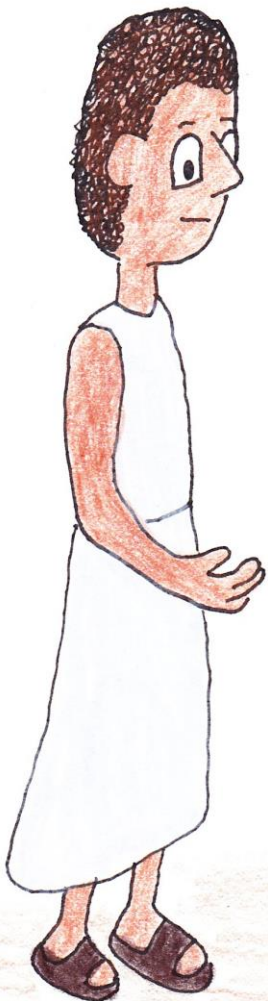
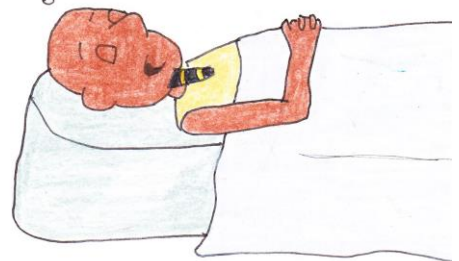
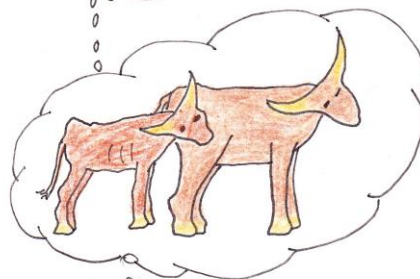
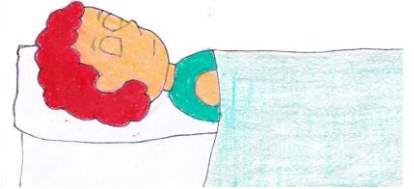
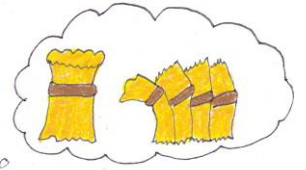
Judah went with Benjamin to appear before Joseph. All of the other brothers followed along in support.

“You repay my kindness with this? You stole my cup,” Joseph shouted at the brothers.

“Please sir, let me take his place. I promised my father nothing would happen to him,” said Judah. “We were twelve brothers but one is already dead, and it would kill my father if anything happened to Benjamin. I will not be responsible for more deaths.”

Joseph said with a great sob, “Everyone leave us!” With a great scurry all of the servants left the room. “I am your brother Joseph. How is my father? Is he still alive?” He sat down on the stairs sobbing so loudly the servants heard in the next room.

The brothers looked at each other in amazement. Joseph was alive? How could this be?



Joseph saw the looks of fear on his brother's faces.

“Do not worry. I forgave you long ago. This was all part of God's plan to save many lives,” said Joseph.

“God gave me my dreams and set me apart from you. God knew when you sold me that I would be bought by Potiphar. He foresaw Potiphar's wife lying about me and my being thrown in jail. God gave Pharaoh dreams telling him what was planned and preparing him for the hard times to come. Those dreams let me come to power and be able to set aside all that would be needed for this famine.”

Judah and all of the brothers stood aghast as Joseph explained God's hand in all of this.



Joseph ended his story with a question, “So tell me, how is my father?”

“Father is fine, he still cries over your death,” answered Judah.

“You must come down here and live. Pharaoh can give you the land of Goshen, and you can raise your sheep there,” said Joseph excitedly. “This famine will last for several more years, so come here and join me.”

So Jacob and his entire family came down to Egypt, he brought his sons, his wives, his grandchildren. Including Joseph and his family there was 70 people in the family of Jacob.

Questions

Younger Kids

1. Why did Jacob send his sons to Egypt? Who stayed with him?
2. Did Joseph's brothers recognize him when they first came to Egypt?
3. Why did the brothers think God was punishing them?
4. Who did Joseph want to see?
5. How many people from Jacob's family were living in Egypt at the end of the story?

Middle Kids

1. Read Genesis 42:3-4. Who goes down to Egypt? Who stays?
2. Are the brothers really honest men? Read Genesis 42:10-11.
3. What is Reuben doing in Genesis 42:22? Has your brother or sister (or a friend) ever done that?

4. Why do Judah and his brothers need to take Benjamin? Why did Joseph want to see Benjamin? Read Genesis 43:8.
5. How were Joseph's brothers brave when they were talking to the servants? Read Genesis 17-19.
6. How does Joseph test his brothers in this story? How many tests can you find? Why did Joseph put the cup in Benjamin's sack instead of someone else's cup?

Older Guys

1. Read Genesis 42:1-2. What do you notice about Jacob there? Is he waiting for someone to solve the problems?
2. Read Genesis 42:18. What other examples of "on the third day" can you think of in the Bible?
3. Read Genesis 42:25. Why do you think Joseph put his brother's money back into their bags? Why did he give them provisions?
4. Were the brothers planning ahead when they answered Joseph? Did they suspect anything?

Read Genesis 43:7. How does Jacob feel about all of this?

5. Compare Reuben and Judah's offers to Jacob. How are they different? How are they similar? Genesis 42:37-38 and 43:8-11
6. Read Genesis 43:14. How has Jacob grown as a parent in these chapters?

Activities

1. Take a pipe cleaner and some model magic and make a signet ring to show the power Joseph has.
2. Look at the picture on page 14. There is 1 mistake and 2 people missing. Read Genesis 35:23-26 to figure it out.
3. Try to remember someone you have wronged like Joseph's brothers wronged him. Then write a letter to that person asking for their forgiveness.
4. Go to this site (http://www.parents-choice.org/article.cfm?art_id=254) and print off the buildings. Then talk about each

different part and pray for the people there to have wisdom like Joseph did in their decisions.

Online

1. Joseph forgives his brothers (scroll down)-
<http://sunday-school-fun-zone.com/freelessons/josephseries.html>
2. Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Benjamin isn't guilty)-
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfLEjfVPuPQ&feature=fvwrel>