

Innocent
28 Years Old
Forgotten in Prison

Albert Friend

Friend Family Ministeries Publications

Innocent, 28 Years Old, Forgotten in prison

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About the Cover Picture

The picture is a statue of a Pharaoh I took in Cairo, Egypt. The Pharaoh of Egypt was King. Joseph was innocent and forgotten in prison. God, in His own wonderful way, caused Pharaoh to send for Joseph. The King brought him out, clothed him in royal apparel and made him second ruler in Egypt. The Pharaoh did this all in one day.

Innocent 28 years old Forgotten in prison

Table of Contents

Preface...i

- 1 Joseph is born...1**
- 2 Joseph is betrayed...7**
- 3 Lessons to be learned...11**
- 4 The journey into Egypt. . .15**
- 5 Pharaoh brings out Joseph...21**
- 6 Joseph prepares for famine...27**
- 7 Brothers go back to Egypt...37**
- 8 Jacob-Egyptian wagons...47**
- 9 A Recap of my story...55**
- 10 Land of Goshen...59**
- 11 Prophecies...63**
- 12 Finally...69**

Preface

When all hope has departed from you, where do you look for your solution?

Everyone should have an emergency preservation belief. This is your view of what you will believe and do when all hope has been ended and you stand all alone in the darkness. This is a belief practiced in advance during the good times, which includes a predetermined trigger that you pull in an instant. It is a Bible verse. Memorize it.

God is never absent. He is always present.

Example 1. “for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Heb 13:5

Example 2. “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matt 28:20

This persuasion will protect you in the darkness until hope returns. It is your back-up generator for when the lights go out. It will kick in immediately if you hook it up right.

My story is of Joseph, a man betrayed by his own brothers. It is a story that will capture your heart. His steadfastness will stir your greatness. His love will cause you to weep. You will never be the same. Read this book expecting to be transformed.

If you would desire to capture the heart of God, give

priority to what He wants. Believe Him. Speak His word with believing faith. Submit to His word. Become a performer of His word.

There are twelve men with the name Joseph listed in the Bible. The Joseph in this book was the first. You cannot write about Joseph without referring to God. Joseph and God were close friends. The source of Joseph's success was God's faithfulness.

God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into the heart of Joseph the knowledge of how to think when everything goes wrong. The first thought is: "I will trust God."

Joseph maintained a brave friendship with God. He trusted God! You can have this kind of friendship with God, because He will never forsake you.

Wisdom

Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.
Eccl 9:10 NLT

Joseph observed this wisdom in his good times and bad times. He had the wisdom of knowing what to believe in times of trouble when everything went wrong. Joseph had spiritual insight and spiritual instinct. You need to learn how to think and be like Joseph in your good times and bad times. Wisdom has been here from the beginning but man forsook God's wisdom for his own lusts. This plunged the world into darkness regarding wisdom.

Joseph was a well trained boy in a Hebrew family. The true values in life had been handed down to him by his great-Grandfather Abraham. God ordained Abraham to be the

beginning of the Hebrew race. The world had fallen into idolatry and Abraham preserved the belief in the One True God. Abraham is called “the father of the faithful.” Joseph was Abraham’s great-grandson. He was the great-grandson of “the father of the faithful.”

The principles Joseph lived by were recorded in his heart. I want you to become inspired with the principles Joseph lived by and record them in your heart. These principles are the sign posts that lead a man to success.

1 - Joseph is born

Gen. 30:22-23

Joseph grew up in Hebron Valley in the land of Canaan. He was not born there. Joseph was born in Haran about 350 miles north, as the crows fly, from Hebron Valley. He was a miracle child because his mother Rachel could not have children. Through much prayer she became pregnant and God allowed her to give birth to a son. She named him Joseph.

Early Childhood

Gen. 35:16-20

At a young age Joseph's father Jacob returned to the land of his fathers. Going south from Haran they traveled to Canaan. The journey was long and hard, especially for Joseph's mother Rachel. She had miraculously become pregnant again and gave birth on the journey. The caravan paused near Bethlehem for this emergency. It turned into a tragedy. Rachel died after naming her new born son Benjamin. In modern Israel there is a monument named Rachel's Tomb at the grave site where Jacob had placed a stone.

After this sad delay in the journey they went south to Hebron and settled in Hebron Valley. Hebron Valley is a shallow valley in the hill country of Canaan. It is about

3000 feet above sea level and 4300 feet above the Dead Sea that lies a few miles east of Hebron Valley.

Joseph's formative years were spent in Hebron Valley. The schooling that Joseph received was given to him in the home. Joseph had no Bible to study as we do. It had not been written yet. Moses started compiling the book that was destined to outlive heaven and earth around 1500 BC. Joseph lived some 400 years earlier than that.

Joseph, having no Bible got his spiritual training from his father Jacob. He learned well the principles that govern life. Abraham had taught them to Isaac, Isaac taught them to Jacob and Jacob taught them to Joseph. Abraham is the father of the faithful so the first principle is to be faithful to God.

Joseph had ten older brothers that did the chores and tended the flocks of Jacob. Taking care of the flocks meant finding grazing land to keep the herd healthy and strong. They had to roam throughout the country to find grazing land because they did not own enough land. There was open land in Canaan for this purpose.

Joseph 17 years old
Gen. 37:2-8

Time had swiftly passed and now Jacob's son Joseph was seventeen years old and old enough to be a help to his father. Joseph, being next to the youngest and having been born in Jacob's old age, became the boy Jacob loved more than his other children. This caused friction among the other children. Because of this love Jacob gave to Joseph a coat of many colors. This did not help the matter but created more resentment.

Joseph's half-brothers were put in the position of

shepherding their father's flocks. They were the sons of his father's wives Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah. Joseph, being the good boy that he was, reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing. The Bible does not record what they were doing but the brothers were angry at Joseph for telling on them. This happens in most families and we feel betrayed when a brother is a tattletale.

The younger child has an advantage. They learn what not to do through their older brothers. Also Dad takes more time with the younger child because he is older and has more time for him. A man will always try to treat all his children the same but it doesn't always work.

God marks Joseph with a dream Gen. 37:5-11

The God who declared the end from the beginning, one night spoke to Joseph in a dream. Joseph was 17 years old when he had this dream and he was 39 years old when it was fulfilled. Many things happened during those years; things that would destroy a man of lesser quality than Joseph. Joseph's faith in God changed him. Joseph's brave trust in an invisible God carried him through the twenty two years leading up to the fulfillment of his dream. I will tell you more about that later.

In his dream Joseph beheld a field of grain cut down and ready to be bound into sheaves. At harvest time in the Bible the stock of wheat was first cut and bound into a bundle called a sheaf. The sheaves are stood up in the field in small groups for a time. From here the sheaves are taken to the threshing floor where they are beaten out and the grain separated from the stock. The grain is winnowed by tossing it up in the air. The heavier grain falls straight down and the chaff is blown away by the wind thus leaving the grain clean and ready sale or use.

In his dream Joseph and his brothers were binding sheaves and standing them up. Joseph said his sheaf stood up and his brother's sheaves all gathered around it and bowed low before it. The brothers couldn't stand it. They got mad. The boy with the coat of many colors wanted to be their king. Being angry will always blind you to what God is trying to do.

Later Joseph had another dream that he told to his brothers. He said: "I saw the sun, the moon and the eleven stars bow low before me." This was like throwing gasoline on a fire. They blew up. They were outraged. They walked away in disgust. Next Joseph told this dream to his father also. His father rebuked him. "What are you saying? Will I and your mother and brothers bow low before you?" But Jacob pondered these things in his heart wondering what the meaning was.

Grazing Land

Grazing land in this area of the world is in the valleys that are high in the mountains. In this part of the world there is a rolling mountain range going north and south with pockets of valleys on it. Rain runs off the mountains quickly into these valleys creating the best grazing land in the valleys. People who live on the mountains terrace their land to catch the rain as it runs down the mountain. In the mountain valleys the water stays and lets things grow. Hebron is in one of these valleys. When your valley runs out of grazing area you must move the flock to the next patch.

Joseph goes to Shechem
Gen. 37:12-17

Jacob saw his grazing land had depleted so he told his sons to drive the flocks up north to Shechem valley where there was another area for grazing the flocks. After they had been gone for some days Jacob grew concerned about them. He sent Joseph to Shechem to ask about how they were getting along. Joseph went willingly at his father's request to find his brothers.

When he arrived at Shechem he looked all over for them but couldn't find them. There was a man who saw him wandering through the field and asked him if he was looking for someone. He said, "Yes, I'm looking for my brothers and my father's flock, have you seen them?" He said, "Yes, as a matter of fact I have seen them. They are no longer here. I heard them say they were going to Dothan."

Joseph then continued his journey until he came to Dothan, which is 13 miles north of Shechem. The name Dothan means two wells. Dothan is a valley area among the hills also.

To dig a well this high up on the mountain is risky. Water is not that plentiful at this level and it could also seep into an underground waterway in the mountain. Wells in this area could dry up quick and for a long time.

Joseph found his brothers in Dothan and eagerly approached them happy that he had found them. He had come a long way since he left home, roughly 45 miles.

2 - Joseph is betrayed

Gen. 37:18-25

Now let me tell you about the conversation that was sparked among his brothers while Joseph was still a long way from them. They recognized him and his presence did not excite them, but to the contrary, his presence made them hateful. They said some things that revealed their thoughts about him. Whatever they were thinking and doing all changed when they saw Joseph coming toward them. They could have all had different thoughts, living in their own little world, but when they saw Joseph their thinking was united on one person. They did not like Joseph.

They were so upset over his dreams. They said, “Here comes the dreamer.” And the coat of many colors he was wearing didn’t help either. In fact there was so much rage in their hearts they decided to kill him. That’s right. They decided to kill their own brother and they began planning how they were going to do it.

They decided to kill him and toss him in a well. They would tell their father a wild animal had killed and eaten him. There would be no evidence left thus no need to go looking for him. Then all his dreams could not come to pass because he would be dead. Since we know the end

results of this decision we can see it was a decisive moment in history.

Reuben, the oldest, was not in agreement with their plan and tried to devise a way to save Joseph. He wanted to keep them from shedding blood so he suggested that they just throw him in a pit and let him die on his own without touching him. Reuben's motive was to come back later and take him home to his father. They did all this planning while Joseph was approaching them from a good way off.

When Joseph walked into their presence expecting a friendly welcome, his whole world came apart in a moment of time. One of them reached out and ripped his coat off him. They then carried him to an empty well that had no water in it and threw him into it. Just like that. Just that quick. Wow! What in the world is going on here?

After they threw him into the dry well they went back to the place where they left his coat in the camp and sat down to eat. Their hearts were so hardened they could sit down and eat as though everything was all right.

Let me impress you with Joseph. He came to get a good report for his father and his whole world came to an end. Life as he knew it would never be the same. What thoughts do you allow to come into your mind at a time like this? Where do you turn when you are all alone with no one on your side?

It is at this time your spiritual instincts start to work. Immediately you trust in God. You set your mind. There is no other way. I repeat: There is no other way. Joseph had a brave trust in God. He waited to see what God was going to do. When you wait on God you renew your strength.

You must govern your thoughts in a time like this. Your

mind gets confused because you think about how strange this is. If you leave a thought unchallenged it will become an established fact. The key is to not think it is strange. Cast down that imagination with the thought: “God is here and He is on my side. If God is for me, who can be against me? Therefore I am in a controlled situation that God has allowed me to enter.”

Not knowing what was going to happen Joseph sat down and waited on God. Back at the camp, the brothers continued their duties. Reuben went on about his business, because he was not there when this next thing happened.

Joseph is sold as a slave
Gen 37:25-28

To the north appeared a camel caravan that was coming in their direction. Judah was the first to see it and called it to the attention of his brothers. It was decided that they were Ishmaelite traders taking gum, spices and herbs from Gilead to Egypt. The land of Gilead is on the east side of the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River.

After Judah saw the Ishmaelite traders he started to revise their plan. He said, “Let’s not kill Joseph but let’s sell him to these Ishmaelite traders as a slave. Then we will not be guilty of killing him and have that on our conscience. We will have him out of our lives without killing him. This seemed to be a better plan so all the brothers present agreed to it.

They pulled Joseph out of the well and held him in waiting. When the camel caravan got to their vicinity they stopped the traders. They informed the traders they had a slave they wanted to sell and then showed Joseph to them. He was a handsome, young, strong farm boy and should bring a good price in Egypt. They bargained with the traders and agreed

to sell him for twenty pieces of silver. The deal was closed and the trader's went on their way down to Egypt. As the traders left the brothers saw the anguish of Joseph's soul, but did nothing.

Ruben returns
Gen. 37:29-35

Reuben, who was away when the traders came by, returned to get Joseph out of the pit and Joseph, was not there. Reuben pulled at his clothes in anguish and frustration. "The child is gone. What shall I do?" he said weeping. "I am the oldest and responsible to our father for him." The brothers did not respond to Reuben. Instead they killed a goat and smeared the blood all over Joseph's coat causing it to appear as if a wild animal had killed and eaten Joseph. They then took the coat to their father for him to identify.

They told their father they had found it in a field and wanted to know if it was Joseph's coat. Jacob recognized it immediately. He broke into tears saying, "Yes it is. A wild animal has eaten him. Joseph has been ripped to pieces." After saying this Jacob tore off his garments and put on sackcloth and mourned for his son in very deep mourning.

This was such a cruel thing for his sons to do to him. Jacob mourned for many weeks. His family all tried to comfort him, but it was no use. "I will die in mourning for my son," he would say, and then break down and cry again. How cruel can you get? These brothers deceived their father and were unconcerned about his grieving.

3 - Lessons to be learned

Think about what happened to Joseph at this time in his life. This seventeen year old boy approached his brothers expecting all to be well, when suddenly they grabbed him like he was their enemy, not a brother.

They pulled off his brightly colored coat, which they resented. They took him a distance to where there was a well and cast him into it. This was a well with no water in it. Once Joseph was in the well everything got quiet and Joseph was left to his own thinking not knowing what to expect next. He had no idea what was going on outside the well. He did not know Reuben had tried to save him while his other brothers wanted to kill him.

After being in the well for awhile he heard noises. His brothers came back to pull him out. He didn't know why they were doing this but he soon found out. He was led toward a caravan of camels to be sold as slave to slave traders. To him it was mass confusion. One phrase that is brought out 22 years later in this story is: "Did not we see the anguish of his soul." The seventeen year old Joseph at this time was in much anguish. It was horrible! He had no experience in life to relate to this. It was a brave trust in God that held him together. He just went through the motions.

After being sold by his brothers to the slave traders there is a departing of Joseph from his brothers. Looking back at them saying: “please don’t do this to me”, is to no avail. The anguished Joseph is taken on a journey. He is taken away from a father who loved him much. He is taken away from a family that was his security, his home, his safety. Being jerked out of this is going from one extreme to the other. For a seventeen year old boy this was a drastic change in a short time.

Take notice that there was one thing Joseph had going for him. That one thing was he knew God. When you know God on a personal basis you are never alone. Never! When you have a personal relationship with God and all hope is gone there is still a brave hope. And by instinct you will turn to Him for strength. Loving God will subdue fear and quiet your mind. Perfect love will cast out fear.

There is nothing in existence that can extinguish, blow out, smother, take away, the love of God in your heart. Nothing can separate you from the love of God. This always has been and always will be. God is never absent.

Joseph had no Bible to carry with him. The Bible was not written yet. He had only his personal knowledge and faith in God. Joseph learned this from his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He learned what his brothers did not learn. When he was learning how to love God his brothers were getting into trouble. Joseph saw in his father how a man should live and abide by his admonition. This was the thing that saved Joseph. He knew how to live despite the circumstances. He knew how to make the best of it.

There is a word in the English language that will explain what I am trying to say. That word is “submit”. This means to turn loose, let go, surrender to God. Trust Him! This

allows you to be compatible with God. This qualified Joseph for his next trial that was to be a lesson in life to him.

Joseph's certificate of credentials, his resume', is a wonderful document of qualifications to be read in the Bible. He was well qualified to work for God.

Joseph understood that God had established a covenant with him that He would not break. This love covenant helped him to understand God's love. The love God had for him helped him to trust God not knowing what would happen next. God had given Joseph some exceeding great and precious promises. He was to be part of the family that would inherit the land of Canaan. I compare this with Abraham believing God for a son for many years until it happened. When a man believes God it is counted to him as righteousness. Not to believe God is a sin and is not righteousness.

Joseph was a righteous man. Joseph took on the love nature of God. He shared this attitude with whomever he met. Love is the more excellent way. Faith works by love. Love never fails. Try it. Learn how to be compatible with God. You will love it.

Joseph knew and believed the love God had for him. Joseph's love for God brought God into action every time. He knew God's love to be merciful, gracious, longsuffering and abundant. Joseph's habit was to submit to the Father of spirits and get strength to help in the time of need.

Joseph found peace

Peace came to Joseph's heart when he became compatible with God. Being compatible with God means doing things His way. God's way is for us to submit to Him. When you try to do it your way you are out of harmony with your Maker.

God's way for Joseph was for Joseph to completely trust Him. God wanted Joseph to believe that He loved him enough that he could put his entire life into His trust. Everything!

Now that is not the lazy man's way. There is more work in the "work of faith" than if you do it alone. Joseph had to work the "work of faith" from the time he was sold as a slave until he arrived in Egypt. The key is to keep your mind on God. Trust Him.

The peace of God is something we all need.

1. The peace of God is in His love for us. He cares about us. Believe that. Feel it.
2. The peace of God is a compatible trust in Him. Let God have His way. .
3. The peace of God is a shelter in the time of storm. Call on His name. It is a tower of safety.
4. Peace is a gift from God. You must accept it as a gift or do without. Don't try to work for it.
5. Peace is received by obeying His word. Stare into the word. Become what you see.
6. Peace can be held. Don't lose your peace. Hold your peace.
7. The peace of God is past understanding. Don't question it. Don't second guess it. Just believe it.
8. The peace of God is stilling the storm. It is "Peace, be still."

4 - The Journey into Egypt

The journey into Egypt was long. During this travel time Joseph learned how to govern his thoughts. He had fallen from being the favorite son of a rich man to being a slave to strangers. That's quite a drop. He understood that he had to get the strangeness out of his belief system by bravely trusting God. To think it not strange he had to cast down his own imagination that was exalting itself against his knowledge of God. He brought this strange fear into captivity and trusted in God.

He knew the strength of his believing lay in where his faith was anchored. On his journey to Egypt Joseph went through an inward transformation. If you do not challenge the Devil's lie it becomes an established fact in your mind. Joseph established in his own mind that he was not a slave but a free man ready to go when the time came.

He accepted his trials as being the will of God for his life. This attitude would give him favor with whomever he was to be assigned.

Joseph arrives in Egypt Gen. 39:1-6

By the time Joseph arrived in Egypt he was ready for his new life. He did not resist it but welcomed it as God's will for him. He was a slave and did not know who his owner

would be. Slaves were a commodity in those days and owners wanted the best for their money. The rich owners wanted excellent slaves. A seventeen year old healthy farm boy would bring a good price from a rich owner.

Joseph was put on the slave auction block. The bidding kept going up until a wealthy bidder named Potipher won the bid. He was a member of the personal staff of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He was the captain of the king's bodyguard. He was also the king's chief executioner. What Potiphar paid for Joseph is not recorded but you can be sure it was more than twenty pieces of silver.

Joseph's transformation of the renewing of his mind in his desert journey to Egypt paid off immediately. He was the son of a rich man and was familiar with those surroundings so he fit into Potipher's stride easily. The many affairs of a rich man were a part of Joseph's duties back home so it was easy to anticipate what Potipher wanted next and how he wanted it performed. Joseph quickly found favor in his master's eyes. Joseph gave him what he wanted. This is also the key to pleasing God. Give God what He wants.

Joseph's attitude and abilities were recognized by Potipher as being sincere and loyal to him. All his household affairs started to run smoothly, his crops flourished and his flocks multiplied. Potiphar noticed this and realized that the Lord was with Joseph in a special way. His trust in Joseph grew quickly. He was ready to show trust to this handsome Hebrew boy.

Soon Joseph was put in charge of the administration of Potiphar's household and all his business affairs. Potipher trusted in Joseph and did not have to worry about anything that Joseph was overseeing. All he had to decide was what he wanted to eat.

Innocent
Gen. 39:7-20

The wife of Potipher, the captain of the king's bodyguard, was not loyal to their marriage vows. One day she started to flirt with Joseph suggesting that he come and have sex with her. Joseph flatly refused. "No", he told her in an absolute way. Your husband trusts me with everything in his entire household. He has given me as much authority as he has. He has held back nothing from me except you yourself, because you are his wife. I will not do such a wicked thing as this. It would be a great sin against your husband and God."

Potipher's wife would not quit. She kept on with her suggestions day after day even though Joseph refused to listen. He kept out of her way as much as possible. Then one day as he was in the house going about his work, it happened. With no one around at the time, she came and grabbed him by the sleeve demanding, "Make love with me." Immediately he pulled himself away from her as any man should. As he jerked, his jacket slipped off and she was left holding it as he fled from the house.

When she saw that he had fled and she was left holding his jacket she started screaming. When the other men around the place came running in to see what was happening she started crying hysterically. "My husband has brought in this Hebrew slave to belittle us," she sobbed. "He tried to rape me and when I screamed he ran and left his jacket behind."

This unfaithful woman kept the jacket. When her husband came home that night she told him her fake story. "That Hebrew slave you've had around here tried to rape me and I was only saved by my screams. He fled leaving his jacket behind." When Potipher heard his wife's story he was

furious. He threw Joseph into prison where the king's prisoners were kept in chains.

In Prison
Gen. 39:21-23 & 40:1-4

Once in prison, they bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar. Until the time came to fulfill his word, the LORD tested Joseph's character. Psalms 105:18-19. NLT

Going to prison did not separate God and Joseph. God is never absent. The Lord was with Joseph in prison. Joseph and God were inseparable.

God was kind to Joseph everywhere he went and granted him favor with the chief jailer. The jailer trusted Joseph with the entire prison administration. This made all the other prisoners responsible to him. And so Joseph had a God and God had a Leader that made the best of every situation into which he was thrust. Also the chief jailer had no more worries after that for Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with Joseph so that everything ran quite smoothly.

Later there came a time when the king of Egypt became angry with his chief baker and his chief butler. Pharaoh jailed them both in the prison where Joseph was spending time. This jail was in the castle of Potiphar, the captain of the guard who was also the chief executioner. They remained under arrest for quite some time. Potiphar appointed Joseph to wait on them.

28 years old
Gen. 40:5-23

It just so happened that in prison, on the same night, the chief butler and the chief baker had a dream. The next morning Joseph noticed that they looked unhappy. Joseph questioned them, "What is your problem?" And they replied, "Each of us has had a dream last night but there is no one here to tell us what they mean." Joseph responded with this statement: "Interpreting dreams is God's business. Tell me what you saw."

The butler was eager to tell his dream first. "In my dream," he said, "I saw a vine with three branches that started to bud and blossom and soon there were clusters of ripe grapes. I was holding Pharaoh's wine cup in my hand so I took the grapes and squeezed the juice into it and gave it to him to drink."

"I know what that means" Joseph said. "The three branches mean three days. Within three days Pharaoh is going to take you out of prison and give you back your job as his chief butler. And please, have some pity on me when you are back in his favor. Mention me to Pharaoh and ask him to let me out of here. I was kidnapped from my homeland among the Hebrews and now this has happened to me. Here I am in jail and I am innocent. I did nothing to deserve this."

The chief baker got excited. When he saw that the butler's dream had such a good meaning he told his dream to Joseph. "In my dream," he said, "there were three baskets of pastries on my head. In the top basket were all kinds of bakery goods for Pharaoh but the birds came and ate them."

Joseph said: "I know what this means also." Joseph explaining chief baker's dream told him, "The three baskets

mean three days. In three days Pharaoh will take off your head and impale your body on a pole and the birds will come and pick off your flesh.” Wow. How different this dream was from the butler’s dream. Joseph didn’t ask the baker to do anything for him. The baker was not going to live to tell about it.

Pharaoh's birthday came three days later. He held a party for all his officials and household staff. He sent for his chief butler and chief baker and they were brought to him from the prison. Pharaoh then restored the chief butler to his former position, but just as Joseph had predicted, he sentenced the chief baker to be impaled on a pole.

Pharaoh's butler however, did not remember Joseph. **He forgot.** The excitement of getting out of jail was all he could think about. His promise to Joseph completely slipped from his mind. **Now, Joseph was innocent, 28 years old and forgotten in prison.**

Stop!

Think about the title of this book and how we got here. It’s a long way down. Joseph is forgotten for 2 more years.

5 - Pharaoh brings out Joseph

Gen. 41:1-8

Two years is a long time to be forgotten, however God was not absent. God stayed with Joseph throughout his entire life. Don't ever forget it. God is with you always. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Be aware of God everywhere you go.

One night, two years later, Pharaoh had a dream. In his dream Pharaoh saw himself standing on the bank of the Nile River. Suddenly seven well favored cows came up out of the river and started grazing in the grass. After this seven other cows came up from the river. They were skinny and all their ribs stood out. They walked over and stood beside the fat cows. Then the skinny cows ate the fat cows. When that happened Pharaoh woke up.

Pharaoh fell asleep again and another dream came to him. This time he saw seven heads of grain on one stalk with every kernel well formed and plump. Then suddenly seven more heads appeared on the stalk but these were shriveled and withered by the dry east wind. And these thin heads swallowed up the seven plump well formed heads. Pharaoh woke up again and realized it was all a dream.

The next morning as he contemplated on his dreams he was troubled as to what the dreams might mean.

Immediately he called for all his wise men of Egypt and told them about it, but not one of them could even suggest what his dreams meant.

Joseph is remembered
Gen. 41:9-16

Then, suddenly, the king's butler spoke up. "Today I remember my sin," he said. "Do you remember when you were angry with a couple of us and put me and the chief baker in jail? You put us in the jail that is in the castle of the captain of the guard. During the time of our imprisonment, the chief baker and I each dreamed a dream one night. We told the dreams to a young Hebrew fellow who was a slave of the captain of the guard and had been put in jail. He told us what our dreams meant. And everything happened just as he said. You restored me to my position as your chief butler. The chief baker you executed and impaled him on a pole."

Hearing this important information, Pharaoh sent for Joseph to be brought to him with haste. The ruler of the nation opened his prison door. He was taken out of the dungeon. He was allowed to shave and afterwards he was given a change of clothes. Joseph was then quickly brought into the presence of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh explained to Joseph his reason for bringing him from the prison. "I dreamed a dream last night," Pharaoh said to him, "and not one of my wise men can even suggest to me what it means. But I have heard that you can interpret dreams and that is why I have called for you." Joseph's reply to Pharaoh was, "I cannot do it by myself, but, my God will tell you what it means."

Pharaoh's dream
Gen. 41:17-24

Pharaoh then told Joseph his two dreams. He said, "I was standing on the bank of the Nile River when all of a sudden seven fat healthy cows came up out of the river and started to eat along the river bank. As I was watching them seven other cows came up from the river very skinny and bony. In fact I've never seen such poor looking cattle in all the land of Egypt. And these seven skinny cattle ate up the seven fat ones that had come up first and afterwards they were no better, but were still as skinny as before. Then I woke up."

"My second dream came to me a little later. This time there were seven heads of grain on one stalk and all seven heads were plump and full. Then out of the same stalk came seven heads withered and thin. The thin heads consumed the fat ones. I told all this to my wise men but not one of them could even suggest to me anything."

Joseph interprets His dream
Gen. 41:25-36

"I fully understand that God is showing you the same thing in both of your dreams," Joseph told Pharaoh. "God is showing you what he is going to do here in your land of Egypt."

"God is telling you through your dream that the seven fat cows and the seven fat well formed heads of grain mean there are seven years of abundant harvest ahead."

"God is also telling you what the skinny cows and the seven thin and withered heads of grain represent. They mean that there will be seven years of famine following the seven years of abundant harvest."

“Pharaoh, God has revealed to you what he is about to do. The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout all the land of Egypt with an abundant harvest. Afterwards there will be seven years of famine so great that all the abundant harvest will be forgotten and wiped out and famine will consume the land. The famine will be so long and terrible that even the memory of the good years will be erased. God has given you a second dream to witness the truth He has shown you. These two dreams are two witnesses to impress you that what God has told you is certainly going to happen. God has decreed it, and it is going to happen soon.”

“My suggestion is that you find the wisest man in Egypt and put him in charge of administering a nationwide corn storage program. Let not one ear of corn be lost for the famine will be great and devastating. Let Pharaoh divide Egypt into five administrative districts, and let the officials of these districts gather into the royal storehouses all the excess crops of the next seven years. I repeat, let not one ear of corn be lost because it will be more valuable than gold or silver, or cattle or houses. You must have enough corn so there will be sufficient to eat when the seven years of famine come. Otherwise disaster will surely strike all over Egypt.”

**Joseph is raised from a prisoner to Second Ruler in
Egypt in one day. Gen. 41:37-46**

Pharaoh and his assistants accepted Joseph's suggestions as a message from God. They then discussed who should be appointed to the job. Pharaoh was quick to say, “Who could do it better than Joseph? For he is a man who is filled with the Spirit of God and understands what his God is about to do.”

Turning to Joseph Pharaoh said to him, "Because God has revealed to you the meaning of my dreams I believe you are the wisest man in this country. I am therefore appointing you to be in charge of this entire project. What you say will be law throughout all the land of Egypt and I am the only one with more authority than you."

Pharaoh turned and placed his own signet ring on Joseph's finger as a token of his authority. He said to his assistants, "Put these garments on him because I want him to be dressed in the finest clothing. I want all Egypt to respect him." Then Pharaoh placed the royal gold chain about his neck and declared, "Let all that are here take notice. I have placed Joseph in control of all the land of Egypt."

Joseph was put in charge of the entire king's household. He became ruler over all the king's possessions. He could instruct the king's aides as he pleased and teach the king's advisers.

Pharaoh then gave Joseph the chariot of his second in command and wherever he went the shout was given, "Bow down."

Pharaoh declared to Joseph, "I, the king of Egypt, swear that you will have complete control over all the land of Egypt." Pharaoh then gave him a new name, Zaphnath-paaneah, meaning "He has the godlike power to sustain life." And he gave him a wife, a girl named Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest of Heliopolis. So Joseph became famous throughout the land of Egypt.

Now think about this. Joseph was 28 years old, innocent and forgotten in prison. Then after two years it all changed in one day's time. In the morning Joseph awakened as a thirty year old innocent and forgotten prison inmate. That night he went to bed as a thirty year old second ruler in

Egypt. Wow! Think about that. Think about what God did for Joseph. Don't be so fast. Don't turn the page and continue to read. Stop and meditate on what you just read. Think about what God will do for you if you just trust Him. Give God what He wants. Take a moment and pray. Ask God to be with you as He was with Joseph.

6 - Joseph prepares for the famine

Seven good years

Gen. 41:46-52

Joseph went out from Pharaoh's palace and started traveling throughout the land. Just as God had revealed in Pharaoh's dream, sure enough, for the next seven years there was an abundant harvest everywhere. The starting of the prophecy was coming to pass on time.

During those years Joseph requisitioned for the government a part of all the crops grown throughout Egypt storing them in nearby cities. After seven years of this the granaries were full to overflowing, and there was so much that no one kept track of the total amount. The rule was nothing was to be left behind. Keep it all. We will need it.

A wonderful thing happened to Joseph during this time before the arrival of the first of the famine years. Two sons were born to Joseph and his wife Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of the sun god Re of Heliopolis. Joseph named his oldest son Manasseh which means, "God caused me to forget." What he meant was that God, with the birth of a son of his own, had rewarded to him for all the anguish of his youth and for the loss of his living in his father's home. He now had children of his own.

When I was a young boy living in my father's home I can remember a statement of my father. We were all playing in the house and were happy with my dad looking on. He said, "You enjoy your brothers and sisters but when you get older and have children of your own you will enjoy them even more."

There is nothing like rearing a son of your own. Joseph and Asenath soon had another son. Joseph named his second boy Ephraim. The name Ephraim means fruitful. Joseph said it this way, "For God has made me fruitful in this land of my slavery."

Wealth belongs to the man who sees it.

The story of Joseph is also a story about money. Joseph was an investor. He learned it from his father Jacob who had wealth. And wealth is everyone's birthright.

The person who sees it has the power to get wealth. This is true worldwide. It all starts with an idea, a dream. Wealth is a different meaning to each of us.

Wealth is measured in numbers. To create wealth you must know your numbers. It is a mathematical dream of sowing and reaping. Sowing and reaping will work as long as the earth remaineth.

Joseph employed his power to get wealth using Potipher's assets. He caused Potipher to be a richer man. Joseph used this same power to run the prison when he was in jail. The jailer had it easier because of Joseph.

Joseph's work record, his resumé, allowed him to advise Pharaoh on how to handle the famine. Notice: God revealed to Joseph the dream. Joseph's god-given power to

get wealth helped him figured how to get ready for the famine. They did not have the luxury of squandering the seven good years. When there is plenty waste is easy.

Joseph knew his numbers. There could be no waste during the seven good years. The numbers would not allow it. Every ear of corn above what was needed had to be saved.

Egypt was large. The math of it all was enormous. Everything had to be organized and in place. The accounting books had to be filled in. The barns had to be full. Districts had to be set up with a system that would work and help starving people.

They could not afford to have grain lost in a barn and no one know it was there. It would be a sin for people to starve to death when a barn was full that could feed them. Joseph was a faithful steward. When the famine hit he was ready.

Seven years of famine Gen. 41:53-56

Then it happened. Just like God had revealed to Pharaoh in his dream. God's word was proving true on time. The last seven years of plenty came to an end. At this time the seven years of famine started and Joseph was ready for it. Joseph had preformed well. He has laid up corn in abundance.

Joseph was comfortable when the famine hit. Now he would distribute the corn according to its true value. Joseph knew the value of corn in times of famine. Corn is worth more than gold when you are hungry and about to die.

There were crop failures in all the surrounding countries but in Egypt there was plenty of grain in the storehouses. The people began to starve. They pleaded with Pharaoh for food and he sent them to Joseph. "Do whatever he tells you

to do,” he instructed them.

That part of the world was in a grave condition. There was a severe famine all over that whole area. Joseph, confident in his belief in God, opened up the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians. He also opened up the storehouses to those from other lands, to whoever came to Egypt to buy grain from him. When Joseph opened his heart and storehouses to the people of other lands he did not realize the reward God had in store for him.

Jacob heard there was corn in Egypt
Gen. 42:1-6

Now our story starts to unfold. Joseph is thirty seven years old. He was seventeen years old when his brothers sold him into slavery. Twenty years have passed. At this time Joseph is the second ruler in Egypt but his brothers do not know it. Joseph is the one Pharaoh is sending all the hungry to so that they would be able to buy corn.

When the famine hit Joseph’s brothers were caught in it but Joseph did not know it. Joseph had been twenty years away from his family. He had a wife and kids of his own and was happy doing the work of God. God had it in mind for Joseph to be reunited with his father Jacob and his brothers. Joseph would get to see his father and Benjamin, his younger real brother, again.

It was because Joseph opened his heart to those from other lands that Jacob heard there was corn available in Egypt. He was excited and said to his sons, “I have heard that corn is obtainable in Egypt. Go down and buy some for us before we all starve to death.”

Jacob gave Joseph’s ten older brothers all they needed for the journey and they went down to Egypt to buy grain. But

Jacob wouldn't let Joseph's younger brother Benjamin go with them for fear some harm would happen to him. He remembered what happened to his brother Joseph and did not want the same horrible grief.

The journey was successful and without incident. Israel's sons arrived in Egypt to buy food along with others from many lands. The famine was as severe in Canaan as it was elsewhere.

At this time in His plan God is about to bring together in one place the sons of Jacob. They didn't go just anywhere in Egypt to buy corn. Joseph was governor of all Egypt and in charge of the sale of the corn. Pharaoh set it up that everyone had to go to Joseph to be checked and cleared as a qualified buyer of corn. This forced Joseph's brothers to come directly in contact with him to purchase corn. It was to Joseph that his brothers came and *bowed low before him with their faces to the earth.*

Joseph recognized his brothers
Gen. 42:7-16

Joseph recognized his brothers instantly, but pretended he did not know them. His first thoughts were about the last time he saw them. There was anguish in his soul hard to be forgotten. Joseph held back these bad feelings while he got hold of himself. *As they remained bowed low before him* he asked, "From where have you come?" "From the land of Canaan," they replied. "We have come to buy corn."

Then something happened. As the butler remembered Joseph after two years of being out of prison, so *Joseph remembered the dreams of twenty years ago.* God softened his heart toward his brothers by showing him that what was happening was God's will for him and his brothers. He let

God lead him because in his two dreams his father was involved. He wanted to see his father again.

He said to them, "You are spies. You have come to see how destitute the famine has affected our land." "No, no," they exclaimed. "We have come to buy food. We are all brothers and honest men, sir! We are not spies."

"Yes, you are," he insisted. "You have come to see how weak we are."

"Sir," they said, "there are twelve of us brothers, and our father is in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is there with our father, and one of our brothers is no more."

"So what?" Joseph asked. "What does that mean? You are spies. Here is how I will check your story. I swear by the life of Pharaoh that you are not going to leave Egypt until this youngest brother comes here. One of you may go and get your younger brother. The rest of you I will keep here bound in prison. Then we'll find out whether your story is true or not. If it turns out that you do not have a younger brother, then I will know you are spies."

Joseph put them in prison
Gen. 42:17-20

Joseph threw them all into jail for three days. This gave him time to think *God* into the picture. After all Joseph was not dealing with revenge but with a dream God had given him when he was seventeen years old. He liked the way things were developing. He was going to be able to save his father's household and all things in it. That was exciting to him but he had to stay ahead of his brothers lest they mess up God's Plan.

The third day Joseph said to them, "I am a God fearing man

and I'm going to give you an opportunity to prove yourselves. I am going to take a chance that you are honorable. Only one of you will remain in chains in jail and the rest of you may go on home with grain for your families. But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. In this way I will know whether you are telling me the truth. And if you are, I will spare you." They quickly agreed to this.

Joseph was about to hear words he did not hear when they betrayed him Gen. 42:21-24

Joseph was in the well when his brothers did their planning and could not hear what they planned. Now he is hearing what they said twenty years ago.

Speaking among themselves they said, "This has all happened because of what we did to Joseph long ago. *We saw his terror and anguish and heard his pleadings, but we wouldn't listen.*" "Didn't I tell you not to do it?" Reuben asked. "But you wouldn't listen. And we are going to die because we murdered him."

They didn't know that Joseph understood them as he was standing there for he had been speaking to them through an interpreter. Joseph saw and heard his brothers openly repent for treating him so harshly. His love for them stirred up his emotions. He left the room and found a place where he could cry. After regaining his composure he returned and continued his plan. He selected Simeon from among them and had him bound before their eyes.

**God allowed them to feel the terror they inflicted on
Joseph. Gen. 42:25-34**

Joseph then ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain but also gave secret instructions to put each brother's payment at the top of his sack. He also gave them provisions for their journey. So they loaded up their donkeys with the grain and started for home. When they stopped for the night and one of them opened his sack to get some grain to feed the donkeys there was his money in the mouth of the sack. "Look," he exclaimed to his brothers, "my money is here in my sack." They were filled with terror. Trembling, they exclaimed to each other. "What is this that God has done to us?"

This looks to me like a God "pay back". Twenty years ago Joseph was on his journey from Canaan to Egypt in fear and anguish for *his* future and now his brothers are going to go on their journey back from Egypt to Canaan in fear and anguish for *their* future.

The journey home finally ended. The brothers came to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened. "The king's chief assistant spoke harshly to us," they told him, "and took us for spies." "No, no," we said, "we are honest men not spies. We are twelve brothers, sons of one father. One is dead and the youngest is with our father in the land of Canaan." Then the man said, "Here is how I will find out if you are who you say you are. Allow one of your brothers to stay here with me and take the grain for your families so they will have food to eat. When you have done this bring your youngest brother back to me. Then will I know whether you are spies or honest men. If you are what you say, then I will give you back your brother and you may come as often as you like to purchase grain."

More terror
Gen42:35-38

Then they emptied out the sacks. To their amazement there at the top of each bag was the money they had given for the grain. Fear gripped their heart again as it also did Jacob their father. Then Jacob exclaimed, “You have taken from me of my children. Joseph did not come back, Simeon is gone, and now you want to take Benjamin too. All things have been against me.”

Then Reuben said to his father, “Kill my two sons if I don’t bring Benjamin back to you. I’ll be responsible for him.” But Jacob replied, “NO! My son will not go down with you. His brother Joseph is dead and he alone is left of his mother’s children. If anything should happen to him, I would die.”

The Famine continues
Gen. 43:1-14

Time continued on but there was no relief from the terrible famine throughout the land. The grain the brothers had brought from Egypt was almost gone. Jacob said to them, “Go again into Egypt and buy us more food.” Judah said, “This man was serious when he said, ‘Don’t ever come back again unless your brother is with you.’ We cannot go unless you let Benjamin go with us.”

“Why did you even tell him you had another brother?” Jacob moaned. “Why did you treat me like that?”

“We had no choice. The man specifically asked us about our family. He asked whether our father was still living and then he asked us if we had another brother. So we told him. We had no way of knowing that he was going to say, “Bring me your brother.” Then Judah said to his father,

“Send the lad with me and we will be on our way. If you don’t we will all die of starvation and not only we, but you and all our little ones. I guarantee his safety. If I don't bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame forever. If you had consented earlier to let him go with us we could have been there and back by this time.”

So their father Jacob finally said to them, “If it cannot be avoided then at least do this. Load your donkeys with our best products of the land. Take them to the man as gifts; balm, honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. Take twice money so that you can pay back what was in the top of your bags. It was probably someone's mistake. Then take your brother and go. May God Almighty give you mercy before the man, so that he will release Simeon and return Benjamin. And if I must bear the anguish of their deaths, then so be it.” Jacob and his sons had no way of knowing this hard decision was a turning point in their lives. This journey into Egypt would be their hardest.

7 - Brothers go back to Egypt

Gen. 43:15-22

Obeying their father they took the gifts with double money and started the long journey back to Egypt. They had much time along the way to do a lot of thinking. Once they arrived, carrying the gifts and money, they came and stood before Joseph. When Joseph saw that Benjamin was with them, he said to the manager of his household, "These men will eat with me this noon. Take them home and prepare a big feast." So the man did as he was told and took them to Joseph's palace.

**There is a law of fear!
When you don't know you imagine things.**

They were badly frightened when they saw where they were being taken. "It's because of the money returned to us in our sacks," they said. "He wants to pretend we stole it and seize our donkeys and take us as slaves." As they arrived at the gates to the palace they went over to Joseph's household manager and said to him, "Sir, after our first trip to Egypt to buy food, as we were returning home we stopped for the night and opened one of our sacks. The money was there that we had paid for the grain. When we arrived home we found our money in the top of our other sacks. Here it is. We have brought it back again, along with added money to buy more grain. We have no idea how the money got there."

“It’s nothing to worry about,” the household manager told them. “Your God, even the God of your fathers, must have put it there, for we collected your money all right.”

Simeon is let out of prison

Gen. 43:23-25

He then went to the prison and brought Simeon out to them. This was a happy reunion but it was still marked with uncertainty. They were then led into the palace and given water to refresh their feet and their donkeys were fed. After this they prepared their presents for Joseph’s arrival at noon. They had been told that they would be eating there.

Joseph is about to see his brother Benjamin

Gen. 43:26-29

Joseph soon arrived home and they gave him their presents *bowing low before him*. Their bowing low before him reinforced his dream of long ago. He could see what the dreams were all about. He was not a king for them to worship but a God given brother with power to save their lives in a time of famine. He asked how they had been getting along. “And how is your father, the old man you spoke about? Is he still alive?”

“Yes,” they replied. “He is still alive and well.” Then again *they bowed before him*. That was another confirmation of his dreams.

Looking at his brother Benjamin he asked, “Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about? How are you, my son? God be gracious to you.”

Joseph is overcome with love

Gen. 43:30-34

Then Joseph had to make a quick exit, for he was overcome with love for his real brother Benjamin and had to go out and weep. Joseph went into his bedroom and he wept there. After that he washed his face and rejoined them. Keeping himself under control he looked at them and said, "Let's eat."

The Egyptians despise the Hebrews and never eat with them. Arrangements were made to conform to this requirement. Joseph ate by himself, his brothers were served at a separate table, and the Egyptians at still another. He told each of his brothers where to sit and seated them in the order of their ages from the oldest to the youngest. This amazed them. They wondered, "Who is this man who even knows our ages."

Their food was served to them from his own table. He gave the largest portion to Benjamin that amounted to five times more than was offered to the other brothers. They feasted and drank and the conversation flowed freely.

Joseph put his brothers through another test
Gen. 44:1-13

God was using Joseph to create a lasting impression on all his brothers. This testing was from the LORD. When his brothers were ready to leave Joseph ordered his household manager to fill each of their sacks with as much grain as they could carry and to put into the mouth of each man's sack the money he had paid.

Joseph also told his household manager to put his own silver cup at the top of Benjamin's sack, along with the grain money. So the household manager did as he was told. The brothers were up at dawn and on their way with their loaded donkeys.

But when they were barely out of the city, Joseph said to his household manager, “Chase after them and stop them and ask them why they are acting like this when their benefactor has been so kind to them? Ask them, “What do you mean by stealing my lord’s personal silver drinking cup? What a wicked thing you have done.”

Joseph’s household manager caught up with them and spoke to them along the lines he had been instructed. “What in the world are you talking about?” they demanded. “What sort of people do you think we are that you accuse us of such a terrible thing as that? Didn’t we bring back the money we found in the mouth of our sacks? Why would we steal silver or gold from your master’s house? If you find his cup with one of us, let that one die. And all the rest of us will be slaves forever to your master.”

“Fair enough,” the man replied, “except that only the one who stole it will be a slave, and the rest of you can go free.”

They quickly took down their sacks from the backs of their donkeys and opened them. He began searching the oldest brother’s sack, going on down the line to the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. They ripped their clothing in despair. They loaded the donkeys again. They returned to the city guilty as charged.

Joseph faces his brothers again
Gen. 44:14-34

Joseph was still at home when Judah and his brothers arrived. They fell to the ground before him. “What were you trying to do?” Joseph demanded. “Didn’t you know such a man as I would know who stole it?”

And Judah said, “What will we say to this man? How can we plead? How can we prove our innocence? God is

punishing us for our sins. Sir, we have all returned to be your slaves, us and the one in whose sack the cup was found.”

“No,” Joseph said. “Only the man who stole the cup, he will be my slave. The rest of you may go on home to your father.”

Then Judah stepped forward and said, “Please sir, let me say just this one word to you. Be patient with me for a moment for I know you can doom me in an instant as though you were Pharaoh himself. Sir, you asked us if there is a father or a brother, and we said, “Yes, there is a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one. His brother is dead, and he is the only child left of his mother’s children. His father’s love is wrapped up in him.

“And you said to us, ‘Bring him here so that I may see him.’ But we said to you, ‘Sir, the lad cannot leave his father, for his father would die.’ But you told us, ‘Do not come back here unless your youngest brother is with you.’ So we returned to our father and told him what you had said.

“And when he said, ‘Go back again and buy us a little food,’ we replied, ‘We cannot unless you let our youngest brother go with us. Only then might we go back.’

“Then my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife had two sons, and that one of them went away and never returned, believing him to have been torn to pieces by some wild animal. And if you take away his brother from me also and should harm befall him I will die with sorrow.’ “And sir, if I go back to my father and the lad is not with us, seeing that our father’s life is bound up in the lad’s life, when he sees that the boy is not with us, our father will die.

Then we will be responsible for bringing down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

“Sir, I pledged my father that I would take care of the lad. I told him, if I don’t bring him back to you I will bear the blame forever. Please sir, let me stay here as a slave rather than the lad, and let the lad return with his brothers. For how will I return to my father if the lad is not with me? I cannot bear to see what this would do to him.”

Joseph can see the anguish in Judah’s soul. He remembers his own anguish when Judah sold him to the Ishmaelites. His heart would not allow him to put his brother through this same awful experience.

Joseph is overcome with love for his brothers
Gen. 45:1-6

Joseph held it back as long as he could. He could stand it no longer. He couldn’t continue playing games. His emotions were at a high pitch. He was about to explode and explode he did.

With an intense loud voice he cried out to all his attendants, “Everyone leave the room.”

When they were all gone and Joseph was left alone with his brothers, his spirit broke.

Then he wept aloud. His sobs could be heard throughout the palace, and the news was quickly carried to Pharaoh’s palace. With an intense voice of love for his brothers Joseph emotionally cried out “I am Joseph your brother. Is my father still alive?”

But his brothers could not say a word. They were so stunned with surprise.

“Come over here,” he said. So they came closer. And he said again, “I am Joseph, your brother whom you sold into Egypt. But don't be angry with yourselves that you did this to me for God did it. He sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. God wants to preserve your families for future generations to come. God's covenant is with us. God wants to give us the entire land of Canaan for an inheritance.”

“These two years of famine will grow to seven, during which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.”

It was God who sent me here, not you!
Gen. 45:7-15

“God has sent me here to keep you and your families alive, so that you will become a great nation. Yes, it was God who sent me here, not you. And God placed me as a counselor to Pharaoh, and manager of this entire nation, ruler of all the land of Egypt. Hurry, return to my father and tell him I am alive. Tell him, ‘God positioned me chief of all the land of Egypt and that he should come down to me right away.’”

“I want my father and you to live in the land of Goshen so that you may be near me with all your children, your grandchildren, your flocks and herds, with all that you have.”

“I will take care of you there. You men are witnesses of my promise, and my brother Benjamin has heard me say it. There are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you will come to utter poverty along with your entire household. Tell our father about all my power here in

Egypt and how everyone obeys me. And bring him to me quickly.”

Then, weeping with joy, he embraced Benjamin and Benjamin started weeping also. Joseph did the same with each of his brothers, whom finally were able to talk again.

Pharaoh was happy
Gen. 45:16-25

The news soon reached Pharaoh that Joseph’s brothers have come. Pharaoh was happy to hear it, as were his officials. Joseph had been the best man for the famine and deserved to be rewarded.

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Tell your brothers to load their pack animals and return quickly to their homes in Canaan. Bring your father, all your families and come here to Egypt to live. Tell them, Pharaoh will assign to you the best territory in the land of Egypt. You will live off the fat of the land. And tell your brothers to take wagons from Egypt to carry in comfort their wives and little ones. Also to bring your father here. Don't worry about your property. Leave it for whoever wants it. It will not be good for five more years and five years is a long time. I have given you the best of all the land of Egypt as your property.”

So Joseph returned to his brothers and told them all that Pharaoh had said. Then he gave them wagons designed to transport women and children as Pharaoh had commanded. He also gave them an abundance of provisions for the journey. He gave each of them new clothes. Jacob’s fear was that Benjamin would not return. Joseph sent Benjamin back with five changes of clothes and three hundred pieces of silver.

He sent his father ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt and ten donkeys loaded with grain and all types of other food to eat on his journey. Joseph then sent his brothers away. "Hurry, I want to see my father." was his parting words. And leaving, they returned to the land of Canaan, to Jacob their father.

8 - Jacob and the Egyptian Wagons

Gen. 45:26-28 & 46:1-7

When the wagon train arrived at Jacob's home in Canaan everyone was excited. The first one to arrive cried out, "Joseph is alive. And he is ruler over all the land of Egypt."

Jacob's heart was like a stone. He couldn't take it all in. Then they gave him Joseph's message that he wanted them to move to Egypt so he could take care of them during the next five years of famine. Jacob began to believe their story. Confirmation came to his heart when he saw the wagons. His spirit revived. The colorful Egyptian wagons were filled with food that Joseph had sent him.

Jacob said, "It must be true. Joseph my son is alive. I will go and see him before I die."

**Seventy direct descendants went into Egypt
Gen. 46:8-27**

For Jacob to get together all his possessions took some time. But finally the day came and Jacob set out with all his possessions.

He came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices there to the God of his father, Isaac. During the night God spoke to him

in a vision. “Jacob. Jacob.” he called. “Yes.” Jacob answered. “I am God,” the voice replied, “The God of your father. Don’t be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will see to it that you grow and become a great nation there. And I will go down with you into Egypt and I will bring your descendants back again to this land, but you will die in Egypt with Joseph at your side.”

Jacob left Beer-sheba, and his sons brought him to Egypt, along with their little ones and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh had provided for them. They brought their livestock and all their belongings accumulated in the land of Canaan and came to Egypt. Jacob and all his children, sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, all his loved ones came to Egypt.

The number going to Egypt, of his descendants, not counting the wives of Jacob’s sons, was sixty-six. With Jacob, Joseph and his two sons included, Jacob’s household in Egypt **totaled seventy**.

Joseph meets his father Gen. 46:28-30

Jacob sent Judah on ahead to tell Joseph that they were on the way, and would soon arrive in Goshen. Joseph jumped into his chariot and journeyed to Goshen to meet his father. The separation of twenty two years was coming to an end. The love of a father and a son was about to explode.

The first sight of each other brought overwhelming joy to both of them. Joseph said, “My father.” Jacob said, “My son.” Then they fell into each other’s arms and wept a long, long, long time. Then Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die, for I have seen you again and know you are alive.”

That's powerful. You have to be a father, with a son of your own, and love God with all your heart, to get the full impact of this twenty two year delayed reunion.

The Land of Goshen
Gen. 46:31-34

When Joseph was finally able to think about what to do next he said to his brothers and to all their households, "I'll go and tell Pharaoh that you are here, and that you have come from the land of Canaan to join me".

And I will tell him, "These men are shepherds. They have brought with them their flocks and herds and everything they own.

"So when Pharaoh calls for you and asks you about your occupation, tell him, 'We have been shepherds from our youth, as our fathers have been for many years.' When you tell him this, he will let you live in the land of Goshen away from the Egyptians." Shepherds were despised in parts of Egypt.

Give them the best land of Egypt
Gen. 47:1-10

After taking care of their immediate needs Joseph went in to see Pharaoh. "My father and my brothers are here from Canaan," he reported, "with all their flocks and herds and possessions. They wish to settle in the land of Goshen." He took five of his brothers with him, and presented them to Pharaoh.

Pharaoh asked them, "What is your occupation?" And they replied, "We are shepherds like our ancestors. We have come to live here in Egypt, for there is no pasture for our flocks in Canaan. The famine is bitter there. We request

permission to live in the land of Goshen.” And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Choose anywhere you like for them to live. Give them the best land of Egypt. The land of Goshen will be fine. And if they are capable, put them in charge of my flocks too.”

Joseph brought his father Jacob to Pharaoh and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. “How old are you?” Pharaoh asked him. Jacob replied, “I have lived 130 long, hard years, and I am not nearly as old as many of my ancestors.” Jacob blessed Pharaoh again before he left.

The Land of Rameses Gen. 47:11-12

So Joseph assigned the best land of Egypt, the land of Rameses, to his father and brothers, just as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph furnished food to them in the amount needed for their dependents.

Joseph’s family is safe. The famine grew worse. Gen. 47:13-22

First: Joseph sold corn for money.

The famine became worse and so that all the land of Egypt and Canaan was starving. Joseph collected the money from Egypt and Canaan in exchange for grain and he brought the money to Pharaoh's treasure-house.

Second: Joseph sold corn for livestock.

When the people were out of money they came to Joseph crying again for food. “Our money is gone,” they said, “but give us bread; for why should we die?” The value of corn went up. Joseph said, “Give me your livestock. I will trade you food in exchange for your livestock.” So they brought

their cattle to Joseph in exchange for food. Soon all the horses, flocks, herds, and donkeys of Egypt were in Pharaoh's possession.

Third: Joseph sold corn for land.

The value of corn went up again. All the Egyptians sold him their fields because the famine was so severe. All their silver and gold was gone. Corn was Joseph's currency. Joseph paid them with corn. The purchase price of land was measured in bushels of corn. **All the land became Pharaoh's. It was purchased with corn.** The only land he didn't buy was that belonging to the priests, for they were assigned food from Pharaoh and didn't need to sell.

Think about this from an investment standpoint. What is there that is now cheap, but is a needed thing in life. If suddenly there would become a shortage of it then this commodity would become valuable. If you bought a great supply of it and waited you would become rich.

Fourth: Joseph sold corn to them in return for their labor as slaves to Pharaoh.

The value of corn went up again. The next year they came again and said, "Our money is gone, our cattle are gone, and our land is gone. Why should we die? We will trade ourselves for food. Buy us and we will be servants to Pharaoh. Then we will live and the land won't be abandoned." So all the people of Egypt became Pharaoh's servants.

Joseph financed a new beginning in Egypt with a twenty percent (20%) profit built into it.

Finally the famine came to an end. Joseph shifted his plans from helping the people survive to getting ready to plant

the fields again. Fourteen years ago his plan was to have enough grain after the famine to plant all the fields he had bought with corn. This first good year he would not only give them grain for food but he would give them grain to cast into the ground believing it would grow this year. During the famine grain had become precious in their sight. They guarded their grain as they would their life because their life depended on it. They would be casting precious seed into the ground in time of famine believing this precious seed would grow. As I write this I am reminded of a scripture that gives you the picture.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Ps 126:6

It was hard for the sower in this Psalm to turn loose of the precious seed he was sowing. He was weeping as he sowed. He was throwing into the ground food his family could eat if the famine continued. As he wept, he believed God that he would produce a harvest of sheaves of grain. But that would happen later. At this time he would weep and plant.

Joseph said to the people, "See, I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is grain. Go and sow the land. And when you harvest it, a fifth of everything you get belongs to Pharaoh. Keep four parts for yourselves to be used as food for yourselves and for your households and little ones. Also keep enough for next year's seed. I will not be giving you grain anymore. The famine is over."

"You have saved our lives," they said. "We will gladly be the servants of Pharaoh."

Joseph established it as a law throughout the land of Egypt, and it is still the law, that Pharaoh should have as his tax twenty percent of all the crops except, those produced on the land owned by the temples.

9 - A Recap of my story

Let me recap some things I have already said.

Joseph had good times for the first seventeen years.
Then he had bad times when he was sold into slavery.

He had good times handling Potipher's business affairs.
Then he had bad times in prison for a crime he did not commit.

He had good times in prison when he was put over the prisoners. Then he had bad times when he was forgotten by Pharaoh's cupbearer.

This all changed when Pharaoh had two dreams.
Joseph convinced Pharaoh that God had given him the dreams.

I am not sure many in Egypt believed those dreams. For instance, if I were to say on a good Monday when everything was going well, "Seven days from this day a disaster will hit us", who would believe it? And that's only seven days away. It had to be hard for the Egyptians to believe these dreams for seven years. The important thing is two men agreed that the dreams were of God, Pharaoh and Joseph.

Pharaoh agreed that for seven years he would give the finances for everything needed to complete Joseph's survival project. Joseph agreed that he would oversee construction and complete the project for fourteen years. When you have all the needed money and the right man to oversee it, your business venture will succeed.

I would guess that after so many barns were built in the good times there were some who doubted. Think about it. There was corn stored with no need for it.

And it kept stacking up. After five years, I'm sure there were many barns full and plenty of doubt. Yet Joseph insisted, "Put everything in the barns. Let not one ear be lost." And he was giving these instructions in the years of abundance. Doubt would have been even stronger at the end of the seventh year.

When there is abundance there is a tendency to waste. Joseph guarded against this. But at the end of the seventh year Joseph quit building barns.

At the beginning of the eighth year they planted seed but it didn't produce. Their first thought was about how much they had wasted. In this first year of the famine everyone used all they had left over from the previous year. When that was gone they knew they were in trouble. Some had more than others but in reality they were all affected by the famine. Their source of food had been cut off. The famine was in full force. They appealed to Pharaoh for food and Pharaoh directed them to Joseph. Only Joseph could authorize anyone to get corn in Egypt.

When Pharaoh's order was given, Joseph opened all the storehouses. Corn can be stored in a dry place and last for years. I personally have an ear of corn that has lain on a

shelf in my office for all to see for twenty five years and it is as good as the day I put it there.

Joseph was the key person for the survival of all in Egypt. He was the one with the authority to authorize the withdrawal from the barns. This left no room for the bad guys to get more than their share.

Joseph became famous. Joseph was known throughout Egypt. He was the source of their food supply.

Finally everybody believed Joseph. He did know what he was talking about. There had been seven good years. Now they were having the bad years and they wouldn't be over until the seven bad years had passed.

The bad years started with just buying corn for money. That's not too bad as long as you have it. But soon the money was gone and they were broke. That's a bad feeling. Ask anyone who is broke. It requires you to sell your possessions. It's all down hill.

A man will give all that he has just to stay alive. He knows that if he dies he has lost it all anyway.

The Egyptians reached that point toward the end of the famine. They had spent all their money, traded all their possessions and traded off all their land. When they had nothing to give for food and faced death by starvation they finally agreed to give themselves to be Pharaoh's slaves. To this Joseph agreed.

At the end of the famine Joseph gave them seed to plant on land they were still living on but had sold for corn. Joseph had stored enough corn to plant all the fields of Egypt in the spring time of the first good year.

Joseph was a master when it came to money. He had foresight. He planned ahead. Remember, there were seven good years and then seven bad years in that dream. The seven bad years would come to an end also. Then what? If all the people were broke and had nothing to start with after the seven bad years what do you do?

Joseph's plan included a start-up period. Joseph was ready to replant Egypt's fields. Not only did he store enough corn to feed Egypt during the bad times but he stored enough corn to get the good times rolling again. Joseph put into his barns the corn needed to replant Egypt fields the first year after the famine. Now that's what I call a shrewd investor. No wonder Joseph became famous.

But folks, he could not have done it without God! Remember that. Don't ever forget that.

10 - Land of Goshen

Gen. 47:27-31

Israel lived in the land of Goshen in Egypt. Soon the people of Israel began to prosper and there was a great population explosion among them. Jacob lived seventeen years after his arrival, and he was 147 years old at the time of his death.

As the time drew near for him to die Jacob called for his son Joseph and said to him, “Swear to me most solemnly that you will honor this, my last request. Do not bury me in Egypt. When I am dead, take me out of Egypt and bury me beside my ancestors.” And Joseph promised. “Swear that you will do it,” Jacob insisted. And Joseph swore to his father that he would do precisely as he had requested. Soon afterwards Jacob took to his bed.

Jacob’s health began to fail

Gen. 48:1-7

One day not long after this, word came to Joseph that his father was failing rapidly. So, taking with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, he went to visit him.

When Jacob heard that Joseph had arrived he gathered his strength and sat up in the bed to greet him and said to him, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of

Canaan and blessed me. He said to me, "I will cause you to be a great nation and I will give this land of Canaan to you and to your children's children for an everlasting possession."

"And now, as for these two sons of yours, Ephraim and Manasseh, born here in the land of Egypt before I arrived, I am adopting them as my own. They will inherit from me just as Reuben and Simeon will. But other children that may be born to you will be your own, and will inherit Ephraim's and Manasseh's share from you."

"Your mother, Rachel died after only two children when I came from Paddan-aram, as we were just a short distance from Ephrath. I buried her beside the road to Bethlehem."

Jacob blesses Manasseh and Ephraim Gen. 48:8-22

Then Jacob looked over at the two boys. "Are these the ones?" he asked. "Yes," Joseph told him, "these are my sons whom God has given me here in Egypt." And Jacob said, "Bring them over to me and I will bless them."

Jacob was nearly blind from old age, so that he could hardly see. Joseph brought the boys close to him and he kissed and embraced them. Jacob said to Joseph, "I never thought that I would see you again, but today God has let me see your children also." Joseph took the boys by the hand, bowed low to him, and led the boys to their grandfather's knees. He placed Ephraim at Jacob's left hand and Manasseh at his right.

But Jacob crossed his arms as he stretched them out to lay his hands on the boy's heads, so that his right hand was on the head of Ephraim, the younger boy, and his left hand

was on the head of Manasseh, the older. He did this on purpose.

Then he blessed Joseph with this blessing: “May God, the God of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, the God who has shepherded me all my life bless these boys wonderfully. He is the Angel who has kept me from all harm. May these boys be an honor to my name and to the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they become a mighty nation.”

But Joseph was upset and displeased when he saw that his father had laid his right hand on Ephraim’s head. He lifted it to place it on Manasseh’s head instead. “No, Father,” he said. “You’ve got your right hand on the wrong head! This one over here is the older. Put your right hand on him!”

But his father refused. “I know what I’m doing, my son,” he said. “Manasseh too will become a great nation, but his younger brother will become even greater.” So Jacob blessed the boys that day with this blessing: “May the people of Israel bless each other by saying, God make you as prosperous as Ephraim and Manasseh.” Note that he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

Then Jacob said to Joseph, “I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to Canaan, the land of your fathers. And I have given the choice land of Shechem to you rather than to your brothers, as your part of that land which I took from the Amorites with my sword and with my bow.”

11 - Prophecies

Gen. 49:1-28

Then Jacob called together all his sons and said, “Gather around me and I will tell you what is going to happen to you in the days to come. Listen to me my sons; listen to Israel your father.”

“**Reuben**, you are my oldest son, the child of my vigorous youth. You are the head of the list in rank and in honor. But you are unruly as the wild waves of the sea, you are unstable as water and you will excel no longer. I am demoting you, for you slept with one of my wives and thus dishonored me.”

“**Simeon** and **Levi** are two of a kind. They are men of violence and injustice. O my soul, stay away from them. May I never be a party to their wicked plans. For in their anger they murdered a man, and maimed oxen just for fun. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce and cruel. Because of this, I will scatter their descendants throughout Israel.”

“**Judah**, your brothers will praise you. You will destroy your enemies. Your father’s sons will bow before you. Judah is a young lion that has finished eating its prey. He has settled down as a lion. Who will dare to rouse him? The scepter will not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes, whom all people will obey. He will tether his colt to the

choicest branch; and his donkey to the choicest vine and washed his clothes in wine. His eyes are darker than wine and his teeth are whiter than milk.”

“**Zebulun** will dwell on the shores of the sea and will be a harbor for ships, with his borders extending to Sidon.”

“**Issachar** is a strong beast of burden resting among the saddlebags. When he saw how good the countryside was, how pleasant the land, he willingly bent his shoulder to the task and served his masters with vigor.”

“**Dan** will govern his people like the other tribes in Israel. He will be a serpent in the path that bites the horses' heels, so that the rider falls off. I trust in your salvation, Lord. ”

“A marauding band will stamp on **Gad**, but he will rob and pursue them!”

“**Asher** will produce rich foods, fit for kings!”

“**Naphtali** is a deer let loose, producing lovely fawns.”

“**Joseph** is a fruitful tree beside a fountain. His branches shade the wall. He has been severely injured by those who shot at him and persecuted him, but their weapons were shattered by the Mighty One of Jacob, the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel. May the God of your fathers, the Almighty, bless you with blessings of heaven above and of the earth beneath—blessings of the breasts and of the womb, blessings of the grain and flowers, blessings reaching to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. These will be the blessings on the head of Joseph who was exiled from his brothers.”

“**Benjamin** is a wolf that prowls. He devours his enemies in the morning, and in the evening divides the loot.”

These are the blessings wherewith Israel their father, blessed his twelve sons.

Jacob gives instructions for his burial
Gen. 49:30-32

Jacob told them, “Soon I will die. You must bury me with my fathers in the land of Canaan, in the cave in the field of Mach-pelah, facing Mamre, the field Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite, for a burial ground. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebecca his wife, and there I buried Leah. It is the cave which my grandfather Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth.”

Jacob is dead
Gen. 49:33 & 50:1-14

Then, when Jacob had finished his prophecies to his sons, he lay back in the bed, breathed his last, and died. Joseph threw himself on his father’s body and wept over him and kissed him.

Afterwards he commanded his morticians to embalm the body. The embalming process required forty days, with a period of national mourning of seventy days.

When at last the mourning was over Joseph approached Pharaoh's staff and requested them to speak to Pharaoh on his behalf.

“Tell His Majesty that Joseph’s father made Joseph swear to take his body back to the land of Canaan to bury him there. Ask His Majesty to permit me to go and bury my father. Assure him that I will return promptly.”

Pharaoh agreed. "Go and bury your father, as you promised," he said.

So Joseph went, and a great many of Pharaoh's counselors, assistants, all the senior officers of the land, including Joseph's people, his brothers and their families.

But they left their little children and flocks and herds in the land of Goshen.

So a great procession of chariots, cavalry, and people accompanied Joseph. When they arrived at Atad, meaning "Threshing Place of Brambles", beyond the Jordan River, they held a great and solemn funeral service, with a seven-day period of lamentation for Joseph's father.

The local residents, the Canaanites, renamed the place Abel-mizraim, meaning Egyptian Mourners, for they said, "It is a place of great mourning by these Egyptians."

Jacob's sons did as he commanded them, and carried his body into the land of Canaan and buried it there in the cave of Mach-pelah, the cave Abraham had bought in the field of Ephron the Hittite, close to Mamre.

Then Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to the funeral of his father.

Joseph's brothers are afraid
Gen. 50:15-26

Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers were frightened. "Surely Joseph will pay us back for all the evil we did to him," they said.

So they sent him this message: "Before he died, your father instructed us to tell you to forgive us for the great evil we

did to you. We servants of the God of your father beg you to forgive us.” When Joseph read the message, he broke down and cried.

Then his brothers came and fell down before him and said, “We are your slaves.” But Joseph told them, “Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, to judge and punish you? As far as I am concerned God turned into good what you meant for evil. He brought me to this high position I have today so that I could save the lives of many people.”

“No, don't be afraid. Indeed, I myself will take care of you and your families.” And he spoke kindly to them, reassuring them.

“Soon I will die,” Joseph told his brothers, “but God will surely come and get you. He will bring you out of this land of Egypt and take you back to the land he promised to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” So Joseph and his brothers and their families continued to live in Egypt.

Joseph was 110 years old when he died. He lived to see the birth of his son Ephraim's children, and the children of Machir, Manasseh's son, who played at his feet.

Then Joseph caused his brothers to promise with an oath that they would take his body back with them when they returned to Canaan.

The last verse in Genesis

So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.
Gen 50:26 KJV

12 - Finally

About Four Hundred years later the children of Israel marched out of Egypt to go to the Promised Land. On the night of the Passover as they began their journey, they went to Joseph's tomb in Egypt where his bones had laid all this time, and took his bones with them as Joseph had requested. They carried his bones for forty years through the wilderness and buried them in the Promised Land.

The Exodus

And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye must carry up my bones up from this place.

Exodus 13:19, KJV

Forty years later

And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

Joshua 24:3 KJV

David wrote about Joseph
Psalms 105:1-45

New Living Translation

Give thanks to the LORD and proclaim his greatness. Let the whole world know what He has done.

Sing to Him; yes, sing his praises. Tell everyone about His miracles.

Exult in His holy name; O worshipers of the LORD, rejoice!

Search for the LORD and for His strength, and keep on searching.

Think of the wonderful works He has done, the miracles and the judgments He handed down, O children of Abraham, God's servant, O descendants of Jacob, God's chosen one.

He is the LORD our God. His rule is seen throughout the land.

He always stands by His covenant, the commitment he made to a thousand generations.

This is the covenant he made with Abraham and the oath he swore to Isaac.

He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to the people of Israel as a never-ending treaty:

"I will give you the land of Canaan as your special possession."

He said this when they were few in number, a tiny group of strangers in Canaan.

They wandered back and forth between nations, from one kingdom to another.

Yet he did not let anyone oppress them. He warned kings on their behalf:

"Do not touch these people I have chosen, and do not hurt my prophets."

He called for a famine on the land of Canaan, cutting off its food supply.

Then He sent someone to Egypt ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

There in prison, they bruised his feet with fetters and placed his neck in an iron collar.

Until the time came to fulfill his word, the LORD tested Joseph's character.

Then Pharaoh sent for him and set him free; the ruler of the nation opened his prison door.

Joseph was put in charge of all the king's household; he became ruler over all the king's possessions.

He could instruct the king's aides as he pleased and teach the king's advisers.

Then Israel arrived in Egypt; Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham.

And the LORD multiplied the people of Israel until they

became too mighty for their enemies.

Then He turned the Egyptians against the Israelites, and they plotted against the LORD'S servants.

But the LORD sent Moses his servant, along with Aaron, whom He had chosen.

They performed miraculous signs among the Egyptians, and miracles in the land of Ham.

The LORD blanketed Egypt in darkness, for they had defied His commands to let His people go.

He turned the nation's water into blood, poisoning all the fish.

Then frogs overran the land; they were found even in the king's private rooms.

When He spoke, flies descended on the Egyptians, and gnats swarmed across Egypt.

Instead of rain, He sent murderous hail, and flashes of lightning overwhelmed the land.

He ruined their grapevines and fig trees and shattered all the trees.

He spoke, and hordes of locusts came, locusts beyond number.

They ate up everything green in the land, destroying all the crops.

Then He killed the oldest child in each Egyptian home, the pride and joy of each family.

But He brought His people safely out of Egypt, loaded with silver and gold; there were no sick or feeble people among them.

Egypt was glad when they were gone, for the dread of them was great.

The LORD spread out a cloud above them as a covering and gave them a great fire to light the darkness.

They asked for meat, and He sent them quail; He gave them manna — bread from heaven.

He opened up a rock, and water gushed out to form a river through the dry and barren land.

For He remembered His sacred promise to Abraham His servant.

So He brought His people out of Egypt with joy, His chosen ones with rejoicing.

He gave His people the lands of pagan nations, and they harvested crops that others had planted.

All this happened so they would follow His principles and obey His laws. Praise the LORD!

NLT