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Joseph advised the king to prepare Egypt for the drought by building large stockpiles of grain during the years of good harvests. Impressed by Joseph's interpretation, the pharaoh began filling granaries with surplus. He even put Joseph over the project. And as Joseph's dependability and character became evident, the pharaoh made him the prime minister of his court.

Back in Canaan, Joseph's family knew none of this. But when the predicted seven years of famine struck, they were desperate for food. Hearing that Egypt was well supplied, Jacob dispatched his sons there to buy grain. Their negotiations brought them face to face with Joseph, whom they did not recognize. Nor did he reveal his identity immediately. Only at a chosen moment did he let them know who he was.

On learning that they were dealing with Joseph, his brothers had mixed emotions. Remembering what they had done to him, they worried about him using his authority to take revenge. But Joseph responded much like Esau had done with Jacob. Forgetting the wrongs they had done him, Joseph embraced them warmly and invited them to bring his now aged father, their own wives, and their children to live in Egypt.

Thus, Jacob's descendants began what would become a 430-year stay in Egypt (Exodus 12:41). After Jacob died, Joseph carried his father's body back to Canaan and buried it there. Later, nearing his own death, Joseph made the Israelites pledge to take his bones with them when God returned them to Canaan. Four centuries later they honored his request (Exodus 13:19).

Digging Deeper...

Through Joseph's example, God calls on us to break the patterns of favoritism, dishonesty, deception, and unfair treatment that may have been in our families for generations. However, corrupt our ancestry, we can choose, like Joseph, to do what is right in every circumstance.

Joseph models the essence of forgiveness. Rather than take vengeance on his brothers, he opted to forgive them. Because he forgave, his children got to know their grandfather. Because he forgave, he got to see the tears of joy in his father's eyes as Jacob reunited with the son for whom he had grieved so long. Discuss how forgiveness changes things?

Devotional Guide

For Individuals and Families (Issue #9)

THE JOURNEY OF JOSEPH

Joseph, being the favorite son of Jacob, was given a magnificent robe that signaled the boy's singular status in his father's eyes. The other brothers began to plot revenge. They sold him to slave traders headed for Egypt. Then they took Joseph's robe, dipped it in blood, and brought it to their father. They left him with the impression that a wild beast had killed Joseph. Jacob was crushed. Having lost Rachel and now Joseph. He could not be consoled in his grief. Even though he became a household slave in Egypt, Joseph proved himself a person of great character. His first test of character occurred when his master's wife tried to seduce him. Angry at being rejected, she went to her husband and claimed that Joseph had tried to assault her. Joseph ended up in prison, but there he was again found so trustworthy that the jailer placed him in a position of supervision. Joseph became known in prison for his ability to explain the meaning of dreams. Among those he befriended was a former personal attendant to the pharaoh. This man was later restored to royal service and ultimately helped secure Joseph's release. The king, it seems, had a dream, and could find no one to interpret it. The restored attendant remembered Joseph and arranged for him to have an audience with the pharaoh.

After hearing about the dream, Joseph explained that God was using it to warn of an approaching severe drought. Prior to the drought, there would be seven abundant harvests, but seven years of famine would follow. (...continued page 4)

**Journey Through the Bible
Journey to a Better Family**

**Mile Marker
Genesis 37-39**

GENESIS 37 DISCUSSION

- What is Jacob's new name?
- What kind of garment did Israel make for his son?
- Describe Joseph. What do we know about him? *[17 years old; beautiful coat; Dad loves him more than his other brothers; tattle-tale; dreamer, braggart]*
- What angered Joseph's brothers?
- Do you know someone like Joseph?
- There are three nasty behaviors listed in the first four verses of Gen. 37. Name them. *[tattling, favoritism, and envy]*
- What's a tattle-tale?
- Have you ever been a tattle-tale?
- Do you like tattle-ales?
- Who played favorites? Why?
- Do you play favorites?
- How do you feel when others have favorites and you're not it?
- What is envy? Why were Joseph's brothers envious?
- Have you ever been envious?
- What did Joseph dream about? (Gen. 37:5-11)
- Why did his brothers get upset over Joseph telling them about the dream?
- Why do you think he told his brothers the dream?
- Do you think Joseph was taunting his brothers or was he innocently sharing his dream? Would you have told your family about the dream?
- Did Joseph need some humility? Why did the dream upset Jacob?
- What were the consequences of Joseph sharing this dream?
- Why did Joseph's brothers throw him in a pit?

- What happened to Joseph after he was thrown in the pit?
- Would you ever do anything like that to your brother or sister?
- Does it sound like Joseph's life might qualify for one of those reality television shows?
- What did Joseph's brothers do to his coat?
- What did the brothers tell their father?
- How did Jacob react to the news about Joseph?
- Why did they lie about Joseph?

MEMORY VERSES GENESIS 39:2-3

The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did [a]to prosper in his hand.

GOALS THIS WEEK

SUNDAY

- Review/Discuss notes from Bible class.

MONDAY

- Read THE BIG STORY from page #1
- Start on "Discussion" from page #2

TUESDAY

- Complete "DISCUSSION" from page #2

WEDNESDAY

- Review/Discuss notes from Bible class.

THURSDAY

- Read and work on MEMORY VERSES

FRIDAY

- Use DIGGING DEEPER from page #4 as a guide for discussion.

SATURDAY

- Complete "Genesis 41 Discussion"

Genesis 41 Discussion

- How long does Joseph have to wait to get out of prison? (Gen. 41:1)
- How does Joseph get out of prison?
- Who told the Pharaoh about Joseph's ability to interpret dreams? (Gen. 41:9-13)
- What was Pharaoh's dream? (Gen. 41:17-24) Why was it significant?
- Who did Joseph give credit for the interpretation of the dream? (Gen. 41:16)
- What was the interpretation of that dream? (Gen. 41:25-37)
- How did the interpretation of that dream alter Joseph's life? (Gen. 41:38-52)