

Jacob's Family

Genesis 37

Jacob went to Laban and served him fourteen years for his daughters Leah and Rachel; and after that he served him six more years for cattle. Jacob grew exceedingly prosperous. Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you." Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels to go to the land of Canaan to his father, Isaac.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.¹ Now Israel² loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. He made him a robe of many colors.³ When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves⁴ in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."

His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

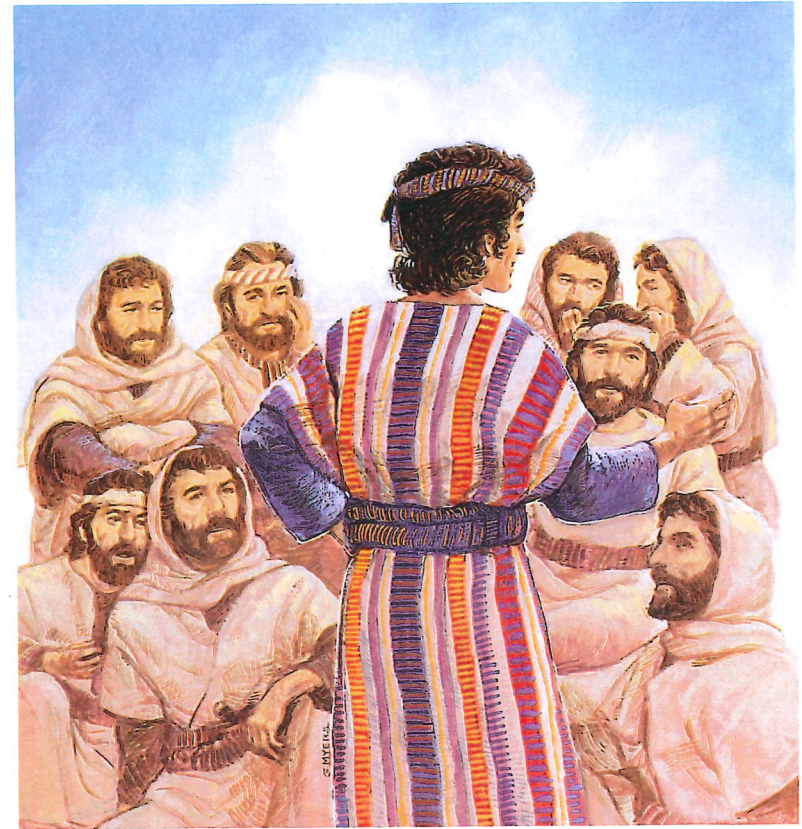
Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?"

And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.⁵

Explanatory Notes

¹Told him of their evil deeds. ²Jacob. ³Richly colored. ⁴Bundles. ⁵Remembered it.



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For Reflection

1. How was Joseph regarded by his father? by his brothers? Why did they regard him as they did?
2. What relationships in your life are difficult? What does Jesus' life, death, and resurrection mean to us as we struggle with relationships?
3. Just as Joseph was Jacob's favorite child, we are favored in God's eyes. God gives us a richly ornamented robe too. (See verse in "Words to Remember.") What does this mean?

Words to Remember

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for He has clothed me with garments of salvation; He has covered me with the robe of righteousness. *Isaiah 61:10*