

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Genesis 37:1-36

This Readers' Theatre Script is a compilation of scripture quotes from Genesis 37:1-36. The quotes are taken directly from the Bible.

The teacher assigns roles and places everyone on the scene. Nonreaders and younger students often prefer to dress up and act out each sentence as the teacher and assistant read. Older, more proficient readers may want to read the parts.

Props

- ☐ Robe: Cut openings in the top and sides of an old, colorful pillowcase for arms and neck. Cut a slit down the front to create an opening.
- ☐ Beard: Cut a paper plate in half and glue cotton balls to it. Loop yarn through holes in the sides of the plate to tie behind Jacob's head.
- ☐ Well: Place a circle of rope, or a hula hoop, on the floor as the well.
- ☐ Coins
- ☐ Optional: Use old sheets, towels, and bathrobes to create costumes.

Scene

Opens with Jacob holding Joseph's new robe and Joseph standing with him. (Center stage.) Reuben, Judah and brothers are in the field. (Stage right.)

1. NARRATORS 1 & 2: Teachers, assistants, or volunteers

2. JACOB (also known as Israel)

3. JOSEPH

4. REUBEN

5. JUDAH

6. BROTHERS: Half of the remaining children

7. ISHMAELITE TRADERS: The remaining children

[NARRATOR 1] **Jacob lived in Canaan, where his father had stayed. His son, Joseph, was seventeen. Jacob, also known as Israel, loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. He had been born to him when he was old. Israel made him a beautiful robe.**

[Jacob helps Joseph put on the robe. Joseph shows robe to his BROTHERS, who make angry faces.]

[NARRATOR 2] **Joseph's brothers saw their father loved Joseph most, so, they hated him. They couldn't even speak one kind word to Joseph.**

[Joseph lies down.]

[NARRATOR 1] **Joseph had a dream. When he told his brothers, they hated him even more.**

[JOSEPH] *[Gets up and talks to brothers.]* **Listen to the dream I had. We were tying up bundles of grain out in the field. Suddenly, my bundle rose and stood up straight. Then, your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it.**

[REUBEN, JUDAH & BROTHERS] *[Angry]* **Do you plan to be king over us? Will you really rule over us?**

[NARRATOR 2] **So they hated Joseph even more because of his dream. They didn't like what he had said.**

[Joseph lies down to sleep.]

[NARRATOR 1] **That night, Joseph had another dream. He told it to his father and his brothers.**

[JOSEPH] *[Goes to Jacob and brothers.]* **Listen, I had another dream. This time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.**

[JACOB] **What about this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers really do that? Will we really come and bow down to the ground in front of you?**

[NARRATOR 2] **His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.**

[Reuben, Judah, and the brothers go to the field.]

[JACOB] *[To Joseph]* **Your brothers are taking care of the flocks near Shechem. I'm going to send you to them to see how they are doing. Then, come back and tell me.**

[NARRATOR 1] **So, Joseph went to look for his brothers. He found them near Dothan. They saw him a long way off and before he reached them, they made plans to kill him.**

[Joseph walks towards brothers.]

[BROTHERS] **Here comes that dreamer! Let's kill him. We can throw him into one of these empty wells. We will say a wild animal ate him up, then we will see whether his dreams will come true.**

[REUBEN] **Let's not take his life. Let's not spill any blood. Throw him into this empty well in the desert. But don't harm him yourselves.** *[Walks away.]*

[NARRATOR 2] **Reuben said that to save Joseph. He hoped to take him back to his father. When Joseph came to his brothers, he was wearing his beautiful robe. They took it away from him and they threw him into the dry well.**

[Brothers take Jacob's robe, put him in the well, and then sit and eat.]

[NARRATOR 1] **The brothers sat down to eat. As they did, they saw some Ishmaelite traders coming from Gilead.** *[Ishmaelite traders ride in on camels.]*

[JUDAH] **What will we gain if we kill our brother and try to cover up what we've done? Come, let's sell him to these traders. Let's not harm him ourselves. After all, he's, our brother. He's our flesh and blood.**

[NARRATOR 2] **Judah's brothers agreed. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelite traders for eight ounces of silver. Then, the traders took him to Egypt.**

[Ishmaelite traders give coins to brothers. Joseph leaves with Ishmaelite traders. Reuben returns.]

[NARRATOR 1] **Later, Reuben came back to the well and saw Joseph wasn't there. He was so upset that he tore his clothes.**

[REUBEN] **The boy isn't there! Now what should I do?**

[NARRATOR 2] **They killed a goat, dipped Joseph's beautiful robe in the blood, and took it back to their father.**

[BROTHERS] **We found this. Take a look at it. See if it's your son's robe.** *[Give robe to Jacob.]*

[JACOB] **It's my son's robe! A wild animal has eaten him up. Joseph must have been torn to pieces.**

[NARRATOR 2] **Jacob tore his clothes. He put on black clothes and sobbed for many days. All of Jacob's other sons and daughters came to comfort him, but they couldn't. The traders from Midian sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, captain of the palace guard, and one of Pharaoh's officials.**

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