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In Pit, Prison, or Palace

Key References: Genesis 39-41; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 20, pp. 213-223; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 2, pp. 40-46; 51-60; Our Beliefs, nos. 11, 21, 17.















powertext

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:35-37).

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 60.

powerpoint

God blesses when we serve Him in spite of Satan's obstacles.

Imagine how you would feel if someone took you away from your family. There was no time to say goodbye, no time to take anything you needed and wanted for the journey. You believed you would never see them again. How would you feel?

Today my life abruptly changed once again. Most people take transition slowly and gradually; not me! Change drops in on me like a blinding flash and without warning. I've learned that God is the only constant in my life.

Let me tell you what I mean. Let's start at the first jolting change. Miles from home and safety, my angry, jealous brothers threw me into an empty, unused cistern.

Originally planning to kill me, instead they sold me to an Ishmaelite caravan on its way to Egypt. I pleaded with them to have mercy, but their sneering faces held out no hope as they handed me over to the Ishmaelites.

In one instant I was no longer my father's favored son—I was a slave! I watched the familiar countryside fade from my view. I had to decide how I was going to react to all this. I remembered the stories my father had told me about God—his God. I decided I would claim Him as my God. I would rely completely on God and serve Him to the

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Sunday

READ Read Genesis 41:14-16 and this week's lesson, "In Pit, Prison, or Palace."

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text.

LIST List the ways Joseph served other people.

PRAY Ask God to show you ways you can serve.

Monday

READ Read Mark 9:33-35.

LIST List the ways God helped solve Joseph's problems.

THINK How did Joseph's willingness to serve provide solutions to many of his problems?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to bring solutions to your problems.

Tuesday

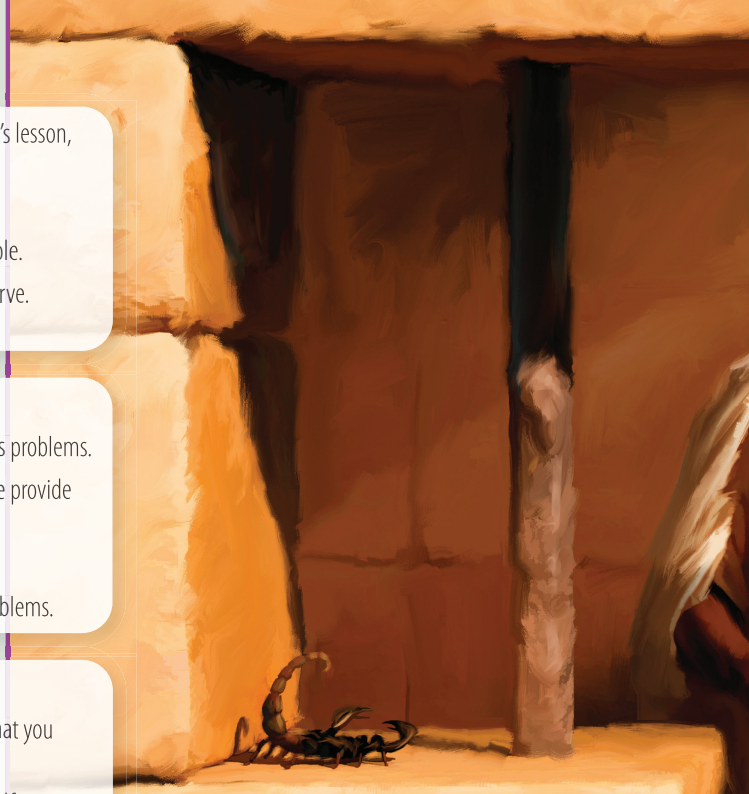
READ Read Matthew 20:25-28.

LIST List some characteristics of a servant that you think Jesus was talking about.

THINK How can I follow Jesus' example of self-sacrificial service as I seek to serve someone today?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for the patience to be kind and considerate when you serve your brothers and sisters.



best of my ability, whatever happened to me. After making that decision, I was able to get a little sleep.

In Egypt I was sold to Potiphar, captain of the guard. Even though I was only 17 then, the Lord blessed me, and for 10 years I served Potiphar well. Everything prospered, and he treated me like a son rather than a slave. I valued his trust in me.

But once again my life changed in an instant. Because Potiphar's wife raised false accusations against me, I went from favored slave to prisoner in a dungeon. At first I felt humiliated to receive the punishment due to criminals, because I was innocent. But then I remembered my father's stories and how I had promised to serve God no matter what happened. I had chosen integrity as a rule of life, and in spite of the challenges I was facing, I



knew I could trust the God of my fathers to fulfill His promises in my life.

So even in a dungeon I looked around for others to serve. I began organizing the prison and encouraging the prisoners. Eventually the guards put me in charge.

I'll always remember when Pharaoh's butler and baker were thrown into the prison. They both had dreams and asked me to interpret them. Unfortunately, the baker was going to be beheaded, but the butler was going to get his job back. I asked him to remember me when he would return to the palace.

Two years later I was still in prison. I had my thirtieth birthday and wondered how many more birthdays I would spend there. But one day I saw the sunshine again. I was whisked into the royal salon and given a bath, a shave, a haircut, and new clothes. Then I was taken before Pharaoh.

It seems Pharaoh had had a troubling dream. Once again God was giving me an opportunity to serve someone who

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Wednesday

READ Read Galatians 6:2 and Romans 15:1.

THINK What does it mean to carry one another's burdens?

LIST List ways you can help carry the burdens of someone in your family and someone you know at school.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask for strength to carry someone's burden today.

Thursday

READ Read Genesis 41:37-39.

THINK What impressed Pharaoh most in Joseph's life?

IMAGINE Imagine that you are a reporter. In your Bible study journal, write an imaginary interview with Joseph.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God not to allow anything to separate you from Him.

Friday

READ Read 1 Peter 4:12, 13.

REMEMBER Keep in mind that God blesses when we serve in spite of Satan's obstacles.

ACT Act out the story of Joseph with your family members at worship.

PLAN Discuss a way that you as a family can serve those around you, no matter how difficult the circumstances.

SING Make up a verse to "Humble Thyself in the Sight of God" or another familiar song that reflects Joseph's experience.

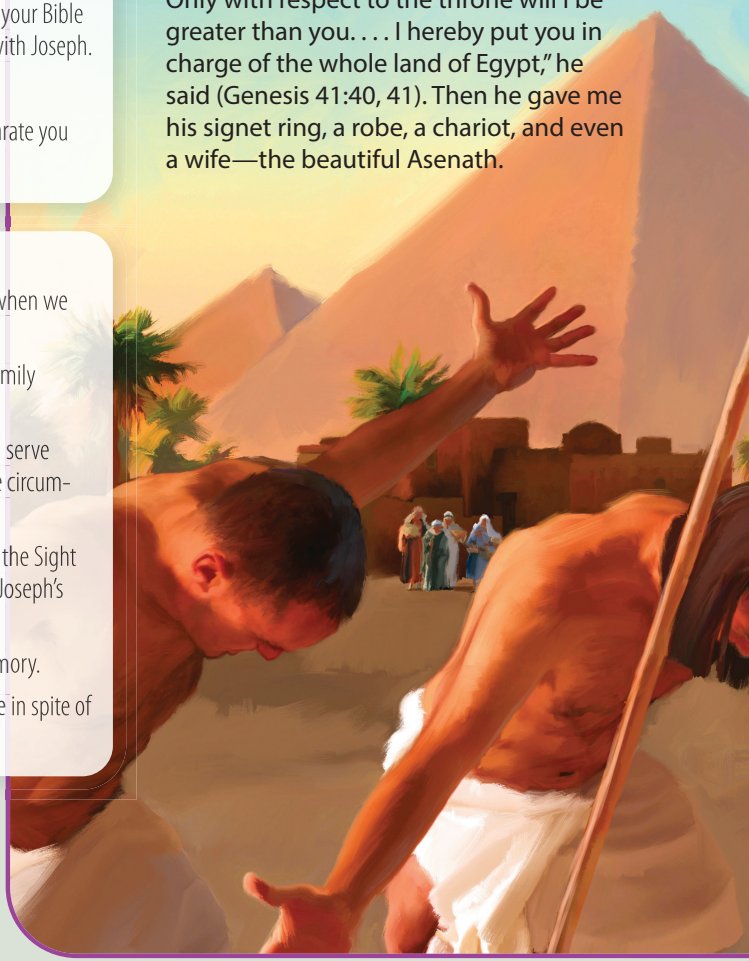
REPEAT Repeat the power text aloud by memory.

PRAY Thank God that He blesses your service in spite of Satan's obstacles.

needed help understanding what God was trying to communicate to him. I told Pharaoh about the years of plenty and the years of famine that were just ahead.

I told him that in order to survive the famine, he should choose a wise man to oversee the collection, storage, and later distribution of one fifth of the food grown during the years of plenty.

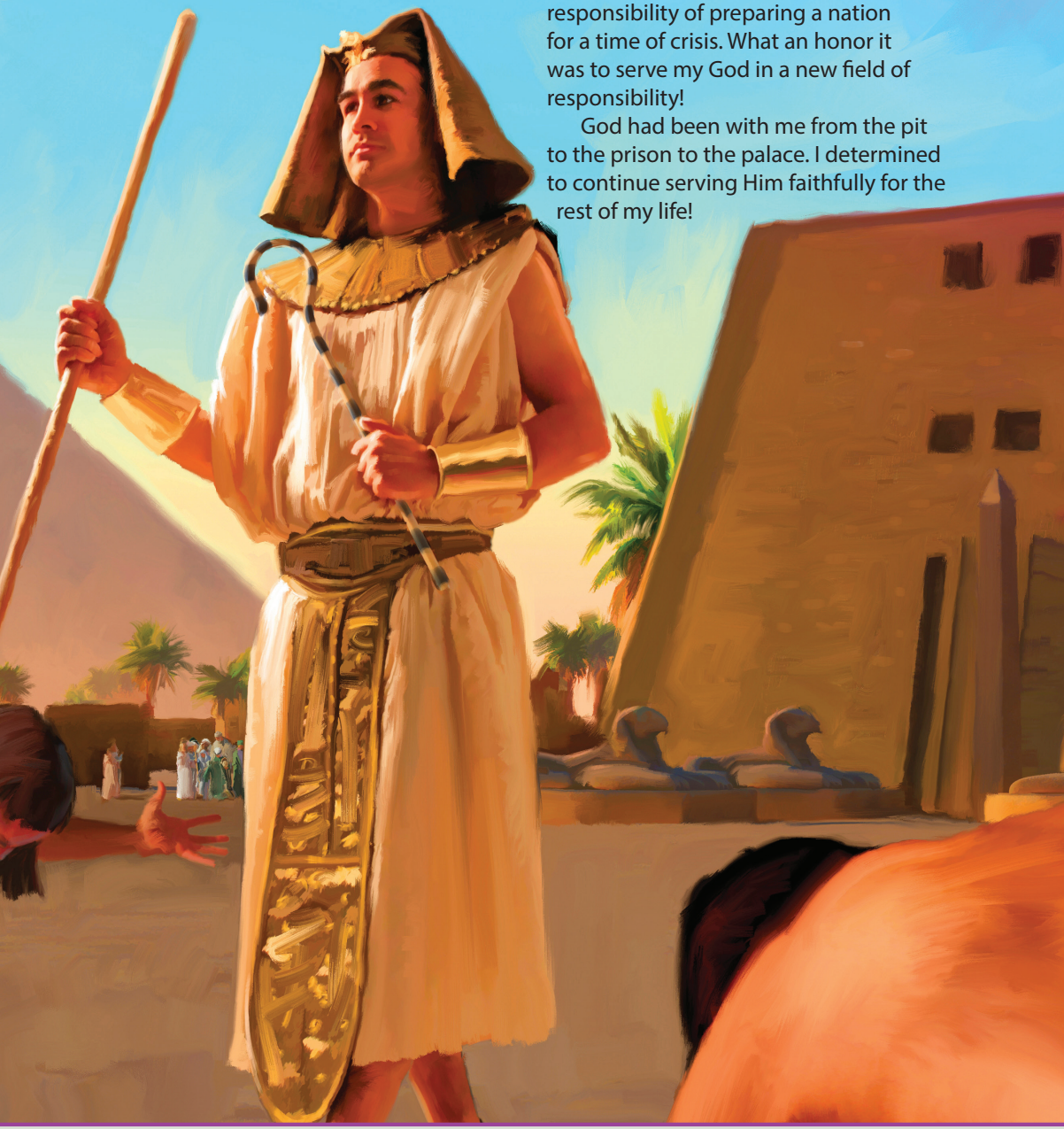
After consulting with his advisers, Pharaoh chose me to be that man. "You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you. . . . I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt," he said (Genesis 41:40, 41). Then he gave me his signet ring, a robe, a chariot, and even a wife—the beautiful Asenath.



In one day I went from favored prisoner to Zaphenath-Paneah, ruler of Egypt next to Pharaoh. I knew I did not deserve such great favor. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was once again at work in my life. This time He was calling me to serve Him at the palace.

God was entrusting me with the responsibility of preparing a nation for a time of crisis. What an honor it was to serve my God in a new field of responsibility!

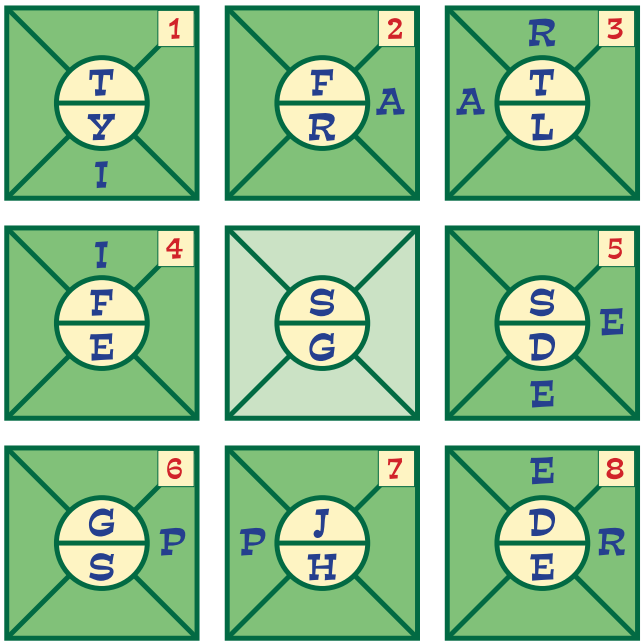
God had been with me from the pit to the prison to the palace. I determined to continue serving Him faithfully for the rest of my life!



PUZZLE
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IN HIS STRENGTH

Instructions: The box in the center will contain the answer to the puzzle when all eight surrounding boxes are completed. Each clue answer is a six-letter word, and the first and last letters have been placed on the top and bottom of the circle inside each square. You need to place the remaining four letters, clockwise or counterclockwise, around the inner circle in the spaces provided. The position of the second letter of each answer word can be any one of the four positions. Some of the letters have been filled out to help you get started.



Clues: Found in Genesis 40 and 41.

1. Joseph was _ _ _ _ _ _ years old when he entered Pharoah's service (Gen. 41:46).
2. God had made him forget his trouble in the land of his _ _ _ _ _ _ (Gen. 41:51).
3. Joseph left Pharoah and went out to _ _ _ _ _ _ thoughout the land (Gen. 41:46).
4. "Because the _ _ _ _ _ _ that follows it will be so severe" (Gen. 41:31).
5. A young Hebrew _ _ _ _ _ _ the captain of the guard (Gen. 41:12).
6. In an earlier dream Joseph saw its clusters ripened into _ _ _ _ _ _ (Gen. 40:10).
7. So Pharoah sent for _ _ _ _ _ _ to be brought from the dungeon quickly (Gen. 41:14).
8. Joseph told Pharoah, God could give him the answers he did _ _ _ _ _ _ (Gen. 41:16).

Puzzle Clues: God is _ _ _ _ _ _, and if you serve Him, together you will win, overpowering Satan.