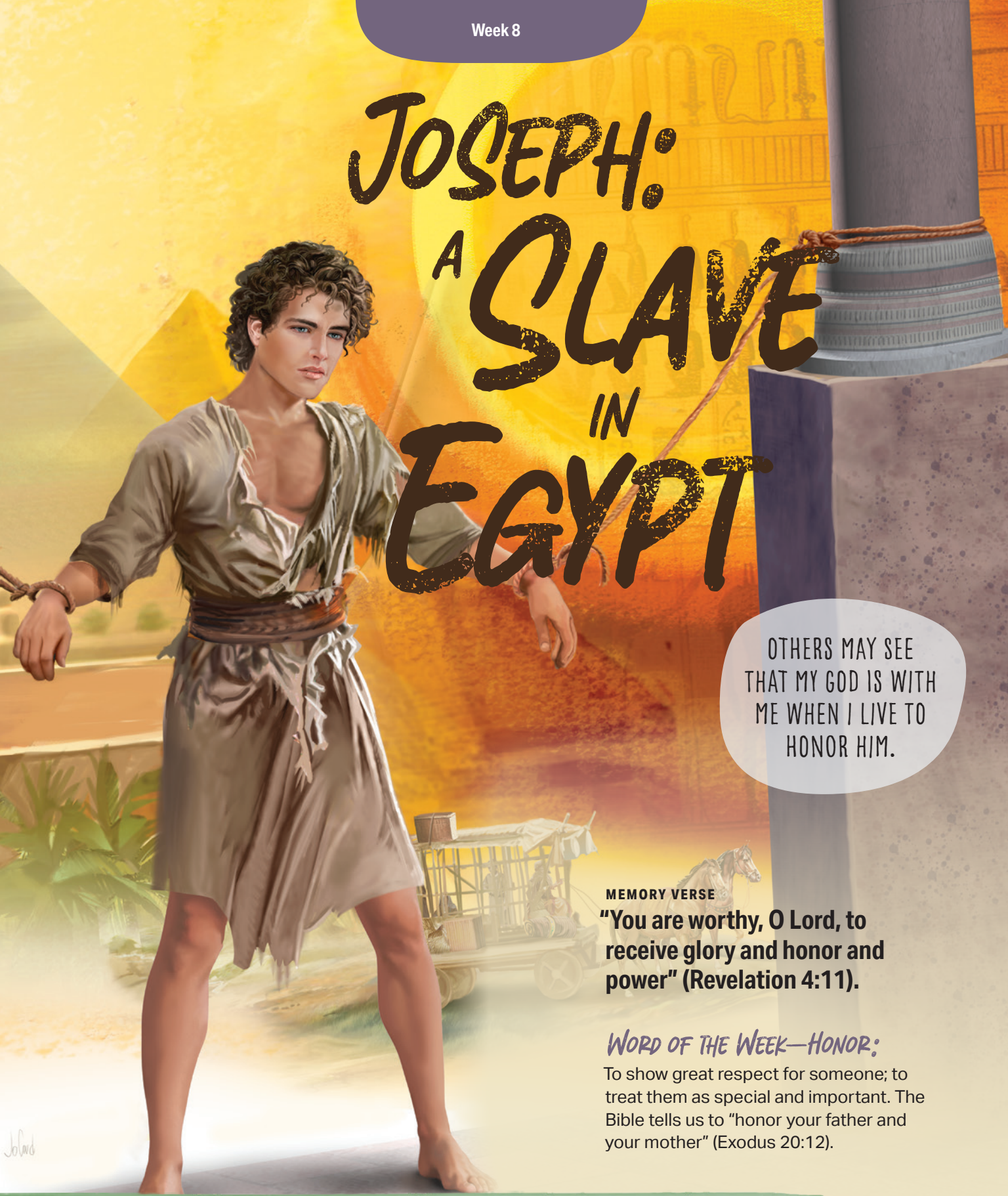
Joseph: A Slave in Egypt



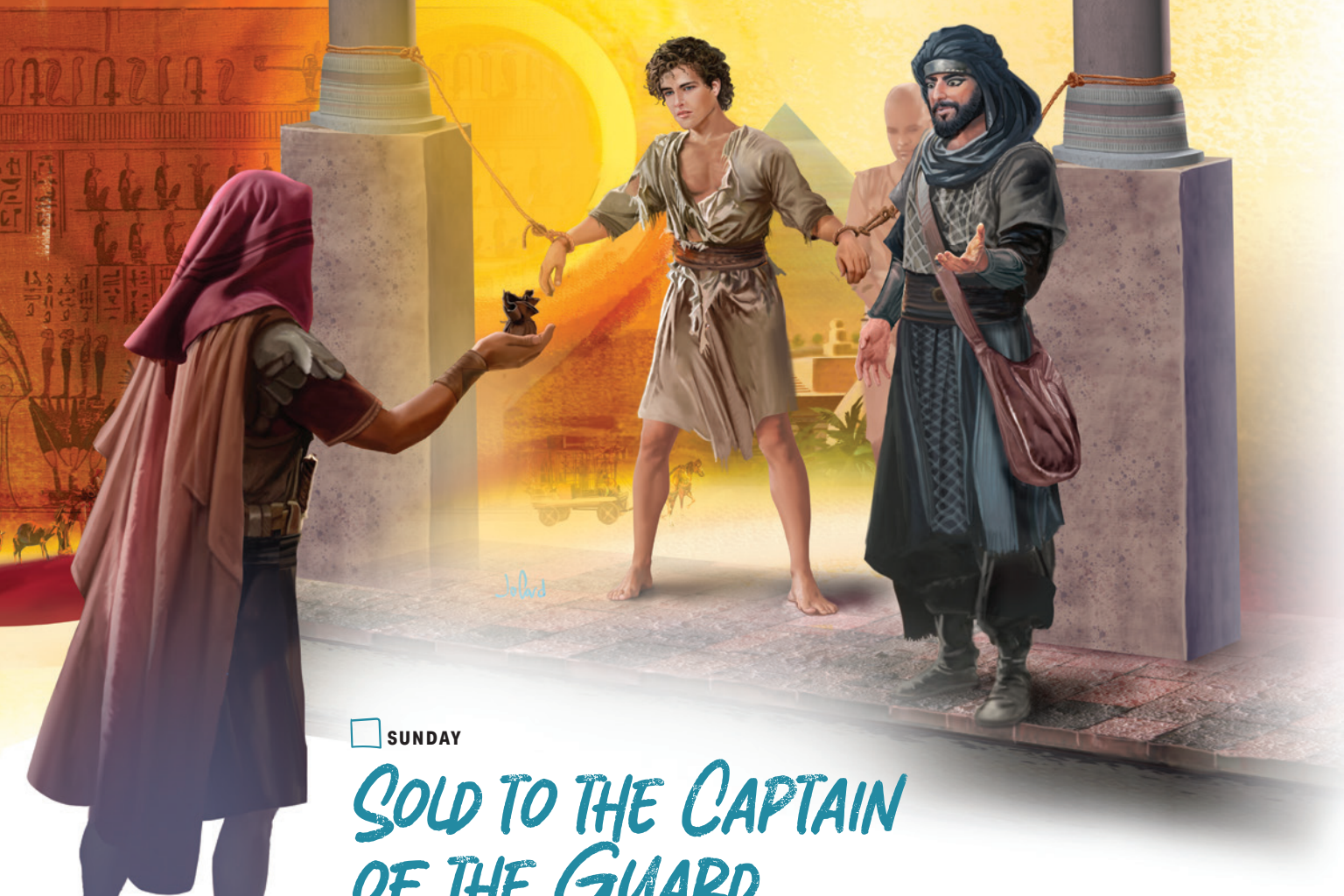
MEMORY VERSE

"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power" (Revelation 4:11).

Word of the Week—Honor:

To show great respect for someone; to treat them as special and important. The Bible tells us to "honor your father and your mother" (Exodus 20:12).

This week's lesson is based on Genesis 39:1-21; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 214-218; *The Story of Redemption*, pp. 101-103; *Education*, pp. 51, 52; *Youth's Instructor,* March 11, 1897; and *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary,* vol. 1, pp. 437-443. **Extra Reading:** *The Bible Story*, vol. 2, pp. 51-53.



SUNDAY

Sold to the Captain of the Guard

Joseph's journey to the foreign country of Egypt was terrifying and lonely. He was no longer the free, respected son of a wealthy leader—he was a slave with his arms bound in rope! Surrounded by strangers, whose language he did not know and whose culture was foreign to him, he must have wondered about all that lay before him and cried for all that he had lost.

The long journey also gave him time to think about his caring God. Joseph had peace in his heart, for he had chosen to honor God by still loving and trusting Him instead of blaming Him for all the terrible things that had happened.

As the camels plodded along, Joseph may even have claimed the promise given to his father, Jacob: "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go" (Genesis 28:15). He needed God's beautiful promises, and they gave him courage when he found himself for sale in the bustling and noisy slave market in Egypt.

A wealthy Egyptian named Potiphar bought Joseph as a slave for his household. What was Potiphar's job? **Read Genesis 39:1.**

Working in Potiphar's important household was part of God's plan. Although Joseph didn't know it, angels had been sent before him to place him there.

Sometimes things happen to us that are beyond our control. Like Joseph, we can choose to love and trust our caring God, without understanding *how* He will help us. When we do so, we are honoring Him.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *Have you honored God today by making the choice to love and trust Him?*

Mission Challenge: You can honor God by sharing your love for Him with your friends. Invite a friend to Sabbath School in two weeks (week 9)!

Pray: You may like to pray this verse as part of your prayer: "To God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen" (1 Timothy 1:17).

☐ MONDAY

Faithful in a Strange Land

Magnificent stone temples and carved columns lined the paved streets, glistening in the afternoon sun. The streets bustled with traders and their camels, army officers in fancy chariots, merchants, slaves, and wealthy women draped in fine fabrics and adorned with gold and jewels.

Their words were as strange to Joseph as the grand pyramids that zigzagged across the desert horizon beyond the great city. This was his new home. Joseph's eyes boggled at the different sights and sounds of Egypt, the strongest nation in the world.

Potiphar's beautiful mansion, the place where Joseph now lived and worked, was nothing like his childhood tent home in the wide-open spaces of Canaan. Joseph felt out of place, and he missed the simple country life he'd enjoyed with his father, who loved God.

Joseph still felt a special closeness with God in this land where everything was so different. While everyone around him worshipped false Egyptian gods and idols in their grand temples, Joseph worshipped God in his heart.

You can also choose to honor God, no matter what others around you might choose. You can pray, "The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me—a prayer to the God of my life" (Psalm 42:8).

God was working powerfully to heal Joseph's sorrow and to give him a cheerfulness that others could see. Joseph never tried to hide his love for God. What did Potiphar notice about Joseph? *Read Genesis 39:2, 3.*

Because Joseph loved and honored God, he had a real love in his heart for others. He honored them by being kind, cheerful, trustworthy, and hardworking. Even though Joseph was just a humble, foreign slave, he was respected and treated well—all because God was with him.

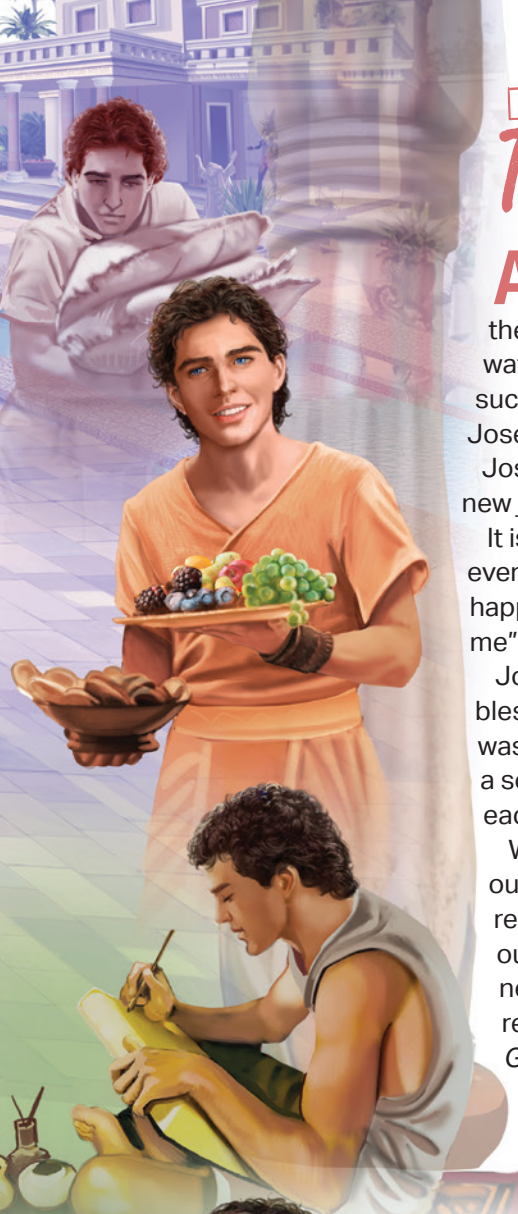
DO: Who do you know that honors God by being kind, respectful, cheerful, and hardworking, just like Joseph? Write them a short note of thanks.

PRAY: Thank God for loving you and being with you when you feel out of place because things are new and different.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *Do you sometimes feel lonely or out of place when things in your life change?*
- *What have you learned from Joseph's life that could help you?*

God is very close to us when we feel lonely or out of place. He will help us live to honor Him so that others who don't know God will see that He is with us and that He cares for us.



TUESDAY

The Top Job

At first Joseph was the least-important slave in Potiphar's house. He was likely given the hardest and messiest jobs. But whether he was sweeping the floor or scrubbing the pots, he always did his work well. Potiphar was watching the young slave closely. He noticed that "the Lord made Joseph successful in everything he did" (Genesis 39:3, ICB). It was God who blessed Joseph's careful, hard work. And Joseph wasn't afraid to tell Potiphar so!

Joseph did so well in his work that after a while he was given a very important new job. What did he do for Potiphar instead? **Read Genesis 39:4-6.**

It is amazing to think that a stranger in a foreign land—one who couldn't even speak the language at first—was given such responsibility. How did that happen? God's Word tells us, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Joseph was able to do so much in God's strength, and it made him such a blessing in Egypt. Potiphar had bought Joseph for a few silver coins, but now he was worth so much more! Potiphar had bought a slave, but now Joseph was like a son. Potiphar the master and Joseph the slave now truly honored each other.

When we realize how much God loves us, we want to honor Him by doing our best work. We want to honor others by treating them well, and by being responsible when we work for them. Little by little, as we practice and learn, our best work gets better and better. And the good news is that we don't have to grit our teeth and try really, really hard to learn and practice all by ourselves. *God* gives us the strength (Philippians 4:13).

PRAY: Thank God for giving you the strength to honor others well.

THINK . . . THEN TALK ABOUT IT:

- *How did Joseph show that he honored Potiphar?*
- *How did Potiphar show that he honored Joseph?*
- *Whom does God remind you to honor? Read* ***Exodus 20:12.***

DO: Psalm 66:2 says, "Sing out the honor of His name; make His praise glorious." Sing your memory verse song to God.

WEDNESDAY

Temptation

Joseph was not just hardworking and cheerful; he was also a good-looking guy. Potiphar's wife noticed how handsome he was, and this began to cause a big problem. When Potiphar was away from home, the "master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, 'Lie with me' " (Genesis 39:7). She wanted Joseph to be close to her in a way that only her husband should. How did Joseph respond? **Read Genesis 39:8, 9.**

Joseph couldn't bring himself to dishonor his God or his master; no matter how important his master's wife was. But like a dripping tap, Potiphar's wife kept asking, and asking, and asking . . . and Joseph refused, day after day. He could easily have given in to her constant temptations, but Joseph loved God too much to hurt Him by doing something that was clearly very wrong. God had helped Joseph refuse the nagging many times. Would Potiphar's wife ever stop?

Sometimes friends or siblings may nag us to do something we know is wrong. They may put pressure on us to take something that doesn't belong to us, or not let someone join a game at school, or sneak off to play when we should be doing our chores. Whenever you're in this position, remember these words from the Bible: "But you can trust God. He will not let you be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, God will also give you a way to escape that temptation. Then you will be able to stand it" (1 Corinthians 10:13, ICB).

When we are being pressured, our powerful God can give us the strength to choose what is right and continue to honor Him. Like Joseph, we can say, "How then can I do this . . . and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *Can you think of some examples from school or friend groups in which kids are pressured to do/say/watch/act in a way that's not right or the best choice?*
- *How might you respond if someone puts that kind of pressure on you?*

DO: Turn on a faucet so that it barely drips. Watch it for a while. This reminds us of nagging temptations. Turn the tap off tight and praise God that He can give you the strength to turn the "temptation tap" off tight by asking for His help and saying no.

PRAY: Thank God for loving you and showing you how to resist temptations when they keep coming at you.



THURSDAY

A Trap and a Lie

Potiphar's wife was getting tired of trying to persuade Joseph to do wrong. One day, when no one else was around, she did more than just ask. She grabbed his coat as he walked by, trying to force him to do what she wanted. At that very moment, Joseph knew his whole future depended on how he responded. If he gave in, he would be in big trouble. If he didn't give in, he could be in a different kind of trouble.

In a split second, he calmly turned his eyes to heaven for help, then made his choice. "He had left his garment in her hand and fled and ran outside" (Genesis 39:13).

Joseph would not be pressured or pushed into doing the wrong thing. Potiphar's wife was furious! How dare a Hebrew slave reject a powerful woman like her? What did she do? **Read Genesis 39:13-15.**

Her lies turned everything upside down: she told the men of her house that Joseph had grabbed her! Because she hadn't gotten her own way, this mean woman wanted revenge. It didn't matter that Joseph was a good man or that he honored his master.

Trouble would surely follow. But Joseph knew that whatever happened, he had done the right thing. The Bible says, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" (Psalm 118:6). What a precious Bible truth this is to know and trust—always.

Even when we faithfully honor God and those around us, others may not honor us. Instead, they may try to force us to do something wrong. Like Joseph, we can calmly look to heaven for help. The situation may not change, but God will *always* be right there with us, helping us to be strong.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

- *Why do you think Joseph's immediate response was to calmly turn his eyes to heaven for help when he was in trouble?*

DO: To make 1 Corinthians 10:13 special to you, read it below and copy into your own journal—with a change. Every time the word "you" is used, replace it with your name. You can claim this promise in the very moment you are tempted.

"But you can trust God. He will not let you be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, God will also give you a way to escape that temptation. Then you will be able to stand it"

(1 Corinthians 10:13, ICB).

PARENT FAITH TALK: Share a time you have made an "in-the-moment" choice to honor God.

PRAY: Ask God to give you the courage to do what's right.





☐ FRIDAY

Thrown Into Jail

When Potiphar arrived home, his wife was still furious with Joseph and still seeking revenge. What did she do? **Read Genesis 39:16-18.**

Potiphar felt angry! What a terrible story to come home to. But deep down he doubted his wife's story. This important man, Pharaoh's captain of the guard, had watched Joseph work as a slave at the bottom and at the top; Joseph had always been trustworthy. So instead of having him put to death, as the custom was for such crimes, Potiphar had Joseph thrown into prison.

Locked in that gloomy prison cell, Joseph may have felt discouraged by the unfairness of it all. But he didn't let discouragement sit with him for long. Once again he chose to trust God. He knew that even in prison he could say, "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power" (Revelation 4:11).

Joseph suffered for honoring God in Egypt, but the story doesn't end there. God had a very important work for Joseph to do in the future.

Sometimes bad things happen to good people. Yet when something bad happens, we can choose to honor the God who loves us and is always close to us. Our trust in Him will give us peace and show others what He is like.

Think . . . Then Talk About It:

• *What might Joseph's prayer have been that first night in prison?*

Friday Night

Share and Praise

• "Love each other like brothers and sisters. Give your brothers and sisters more honor than you want for yourselves" (Romans 12:10, ICB). Discuss ways your family could honor one another.
• Sing together "Anywhere with Jesus" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 508).

Family Journal

• What parts of Joseph's story have shown you more of God's love?
• How would you describe what it means to honor someone?
• Who will you show honor to this week and how?

Pray

As a family, join hands and pray for God's strength to always stand up for what's right.

For You, Parents

"The seed sown in infancy by the careful, God-fearing mother will become trees of righteousness, which will blossom and bear fruit; and the lessons given by a God-fearing father by precept and example will, as in the case of Joseph, yield an abundant harvest by and by" (Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance*, p. 116).

SABBATH SPECIAL

Vengeful Beasts

Who am I?

- I can be found on every continent except Antarctica.
- I am often nocturnal, hiding in the day and coming out at night to eat.
- If I eat a big meal, I can survive for six to 12 months without needing to eat again.
- I have eight legs, one tail, and two claws.
- I shed my exoskeleton up to seven times until I reach my full size.



Yes—I'm a scorpion!

You probably don't want to hear it, but the world has about 1,700 species of scorpions. Scorpions, like spiders, have eight legs and belong to the arachnid family. They feed on insects, other arachnids, small rodents, and lizards, catching prey with their two lobster-like claws and killing them with a venomous stinger attached to the end of their abdominal tail. In most species the sting is merely painful to humans; although, the sting of one species, the Arizona bark scorpion, has proved fatal to toddlers and elderly people.

Scorpions have been known to kill and devour their own species and even demonstrate vengeful behavior. One experimenter placed 100 scorpions in a large glass container. After a few days only 14 remained—the rest had been killed and eaten by the others. The experimenter then put a pregnant female in a glass jar and observed her eating her young as fast as they were born. However, one of them managed to escape, taking refuge on its mother's back and then vengefully killing her in return!

Who was vengeful in this week's story? What helped Joseph stay strong through this hard time?

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