

# Prisoner

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## MEMORY VERSE:

*"The Lord is near to all who call on him."*

Psalm 145:18

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It was a long, dusty walk from Caanan down into Egypt. When they finally arrived, Joseph was quickly sold to Potiphar, an officer of the King or Pharaoh of Egypt.

Joseph was a good boy and even now, far away from his family, knowing that his own brothers hated him, he tried to do the right thing in God's eyes. He worked hard and remained trustworthy and reliable. And God looked after him and made everything he did successful.

Potiphar was so pleased with Joseph and the work that he did that he made him in charge of his whole household. And God blessed Potiphar's home and he prospered.

However, things did not continue to go so smoothly. Potiphar's wife was continually trying to get Joseph to do wrong. She teased him and tried everything she could but Joseph refused to dishonour his God by doing wrong. This made her very angry and one day when Potiphar was away she tricked Joseph into a situation which made him look guilty of wrong.

When Potiphar came home, she told lies to her husband about Joseph. Potiphar was very angry and had Joseph put in prison.

But God looked after Joseph in prison too. He remained faithful and honest and the keeper of the prison came to trust him and put him in charge of all the other prisoners.

One day, two of Pharaoh's servants were put in the prison with Joseph for something they had done wrong. One was Pharaoh's baker and the other was Pharaoh's butler who brought him wine to drink. One day, Joseph noticed that they seemed very upset and went to talk to them. They told Joseph that they had both had dreams which they couldn't understand. The butler had dreamed that he had been serving wine to Pharaoh, while the baker had dreamed that the birds ate the bread he had baked. With God's help, Joseph was able to tell them what their dreams meant.

When things happened as Joseph had told them they would from their dreams, he asked the butler to please remember him and see if he could find a way to help him get out of prison. The butler did not remember Joseph, but someone did. Can you guess who that was?

## Things to Remember

- God never leaves us even if it seems that everyone else has.
- Joseph remained faithful and true to His God even in a place where no one knew his God.

## Discussion

If all the things that happened to Joseph happened to you or me, I wonder if we would think God had forgotten us. Maybe we would think that living a good life wasn't worth it because bad things still happened. But the story of Joseph shows us that God does allow bad things to happen, but He is still there caring for us. Bad things can help to perfect our characters, make us more compassionate, teach us patience and trust. As we will see with the next story, God sees the big plan.

Why did God bless Potiphar's household?

Why was Joseph put in prison?

What did Joseph do for the butler and baker?

### **Activity Suggestions**

Perhaps draw an Egyptian scene (the pyramids, the Nile River, palm trees) and then put big black bars over your picture as if you were in prison, looking out.

Tradition called for Egyptian royalty to keep their heads covered. They wore ornate crowns or cloth headdresses called "nemes". To make one you need a 24"x18" piece of fabric, ribbon (about 1 metre), some cardboard, aluminum foil and a clothespin. Cut out a 30 cm long cardboard cobra and wrap it with aluminum foil. Wrap the piece of fabric around child's head like a top hat and slide the clothespin up to hold the edges together. Let the fabric drape down over the head. Make a fold in the cobra's tail 5 inches from the tip. Tuck the folded portion under the fabric at the center of the child's forehead. Tie a ribbon around the head snugly enough to hold the cobra in place. Remove the clothespin and trim the flaps into a U-shape.