



# Joseph's Brothers Bow

Genesis 42:3-4, 7-9, 13-21, 24-27, 35

## Level A

Ages 3-6

**Life Focus:** The Lord helps me.

**Memory Verse:** Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. Genesis 42:6

**Story Summary:** Jacob sent his sons to buy food in Egypt, but kept Benjamin home. In Egypt the brothers bowed down to Joseph, not knowing him. He recognized them but treated them as strangers and accused them of spying. Testing their story, he imprisoned them and then, after three days, he offered to keep one brother while the others took food to the family in exchange for promising to bring Benjamin. The brothers believed this was a punishment for how they had treated Joseph. Joseph commanded that their sacks be filled with grain and that each man's money be put back in his sack. The brothers were dismayed when they found the money and told Jacob what had happened. Jacob would not let Benjamin go. He thought he would die of grief if Benjamin was harmed.

## Lesson 4

*Materials Needed*

		<i>Supplied with Lesson</i>	<i>Additional Materials</i>
<b>1. Getting Started</b> (1-2 min)	<b>Welcome Warm-up Activity</b>	<b>Welcome Warm-up Activity</b> directions p. 42	plastic or real coins, a bag to put coins in
<b>2. Focus on the Word</b> use all activities (5-7 min)	<b>Read the Word</b>  <b>Talk About It</b> story discussion	<b>Talk About It</b> discussion guide p. 42  <b>Teaching Picture</b> p. 45	Bible or copy of Genesis 42
<b>3. Learn by Doing</b> choose 1 or 2 activities (15-20 min)	<b>Act It Out</b> recreate the events of the story by acting them out	<b>Joseph's Brothers Bow Down</b> directions p. 43 script p. 46	<i>optional:</i> costumes; props such as a bag for each brother, money for each sack, rope to tie Simeon up, food for the journey, something to mark Egypt, etc.
	<b>Make</b> fill a sack with grain and show the money Joseph put in the mouth of the sack	<b>Sacks of Grain</b> directions p. 43 <i>Sack</i> p. 47 (2 copies per child) <i>Grain and Money</i> p. 48	crayons or markers, scissors and stapler for the teacher  <i>optional:</i> silver glitter, glitter tray, glue or double-sided tape
	<b>Picture to Color</b>	<b>Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt</b> p. 49	crayons, markers or colored pencils
<b>4. Wrap It Up</b> (2-3 min)	<b>Memory Verse</b> introduce <i>Memory Verse</i> for the week	<b>Memory Verse</b> <i>Parent Note</i> p. 50	

# 1. Getting Started

## Welcome Warm-up Activity

### Hide and Seek

*Materials needed:* real or plastic coins, bag

Before class, hide enough real or plastic coins around the room for each child to find several. Show the children a bag and tell them that they are going to look for hidden coins and put them into the bag when they find them. Once many coins have been found, seat the children in a circle. Pass the bag of coins around and encourage the children to jingle the bag. Ask: What do we use money for? (To buy things we need.) Once we have bought something do we still have the money? (No, the store does.)

Today we will learn about some brothers who had a big surprise when they went to buy something!

# 2. Focus on the Word

**Read** Genesis 42:3-4, 7-9, 13-21, 24-27, 35

Show the **teaching picture** on p. 45 as you discuss the story.

## Talk About It

**Joseph became an important ruler in Egypt. He stored up lots of grain. But after seven years a famine began. What is a famine?** No food grows and so the food runs out. People become hungry.

**Joseph's family began to get hungry. Their food ran out. They heard that there was food in Egypt, and so Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy food. Did they recognize Joseph when they saw him?** No, he must have looked very different. He was wearing Egyptian clothes, and he spoke a different language and used an interpreter.

**Did Joseph recognize them?** Yes!

**Was Joseph nice to his brothers?** He spoke roughly and accused them of being spies. He put them in prison, telling them he wanted to see Benjamin.

**What did Joseph's brothers remember?** They had treated Joseph badly.

**What did Joseph do with the money they brought to buy food?** Hid it in the sacks of grain they were getting.

**What big surprise did the brothers have when they opened their sacks?** Their money was there!

**How did the brothers feel about this?** They were afraid that they would be in trouble for not paying for their grain.

**Have you ever felt afraid?** Sometimes people feel afraid if they have done something wrong. We may also be afraid of hurting something precious—like a favorite toy, or a person we love.

**Why was Jacob, their father, afraid of letting Benjamin go to Egypt with his brothers?** He loved Benjamin and was afraid he might lose him as he had lost Joseph.

**Joseph's family went to Egypt to buy food when they were hungry. They knew they would get help because there was lots of food there. Where can we go when we need help?** To the Lord in His Word.

**Going to the Word and asking the Lord for help makes it easier for Him to help us.**

# 3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

## Choice Joseph's Brothers Bow Down

Children will re-enact the brothers' first journey to Egypt to buy grain during the famine. We encourage you to adjust parts that will be acted out by the children in your group according to your group size and the ages of the children. For a young group, the teacher could be "Joseph", "Simeon" (children tie him/her up), and "the men" filling the sacks.

1. Today we will act out the journey Joseph's brothers took from Canaan to Egypt to buy food for their hungry family.
2. What do you and your parents do when you are getting ready for a long trip? *Pack bags, get food, put everything in the car, etc.*
3. Joseph and his family lived long ago. There were no cars. People walked or took animals like donkeys to ride on or carry their bags—even on long trips! They would take food and everything they would need for many weeks.
4. *Optional:* help the children dress in costumes.
5. *Optional:* assign key roles.
6. Act It Out using the script provided on p. 46.

## Choice Sacks of Grain

Joseph's brothers brought their sacks to Egypt to buy grain. Joseph commanded his servants to fill the sacks and to place each man's money in the mouth of his sack. The brothers discovered they all had their money when they got home and they were afraid.



1. We will be making a paper grain sack that looks like the sacks Joseph's brothers took with them when they went to buy grain in Egypt. Show your completed project sample to the children. *See how I can open the sack and take a look at what is inside?* What surprise did the brothers find inside their sacks?
2. Give each child 2 copies of the grain sack on p. 47 and crayons. Invite the children to color the sack if they wish.
3. Hand out scissors. As they finish coloring invite children to cut out their sacks.
4. Turn one of the sacks over showing the blank inside page. Children will cut out and glue grain and money (p. 48) to this sack. Be sure to place the money near the opening! *Optional:* glue grain such as wheat, rice or lentils to the sack in place of the picture provided. Glue plastic coins or coins cut from aluminum foil near the mouth of the sack.
5. Staple the sacks back-to-back (white sides in) along the bottom so the sacks can be opened to show the grain and coins hidden inside.
6. If you have time, pretend to be Joseph's brothers leaving Egypt. Carry your sacks and then stop to open the bags and look inside. Surprise! The money is still there!

### Materials

*Joseph's Brothers Bow Down* script p. 46

*optional:* costumes (larger T-shirts with waist ties) and props such as a rope to tie Simeon up, bags for grain, things to fill the bags with (such as scarves) and "money" (aluminum foil discs or spray painted rocks would do)

### Do in Advance

Set up spaces for Canaan, Egypt and prison. Use chairs or blocks to mark prison walls.

### Materials for Each Child

2 copies of *Sack* p. 47; 1 copy of *Grain and Money* p. 48; scissors, stapler, crayons or markers

*optional:* silver glitter, glitter tray, glue

*optional:* glue grain such as wheat, rice or lentils inside the sack in place of the grain pictures provided; glue coins made from aluminum foil to the mouth of the sack

### Do in Advance

Cut projects apart so that each child has the pieces he or she needs. Assemble a sample to show the children how the finished project works.



Choice

**Picture to Color: Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt**

Hand out copies of the picture and invite the children to color it.

**Materials for each child**

picture p. 49, crayons, markers, or colored pencils

## 4. Wrap It Up

**Memory Verse**

Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him  
with their faces to the earth.

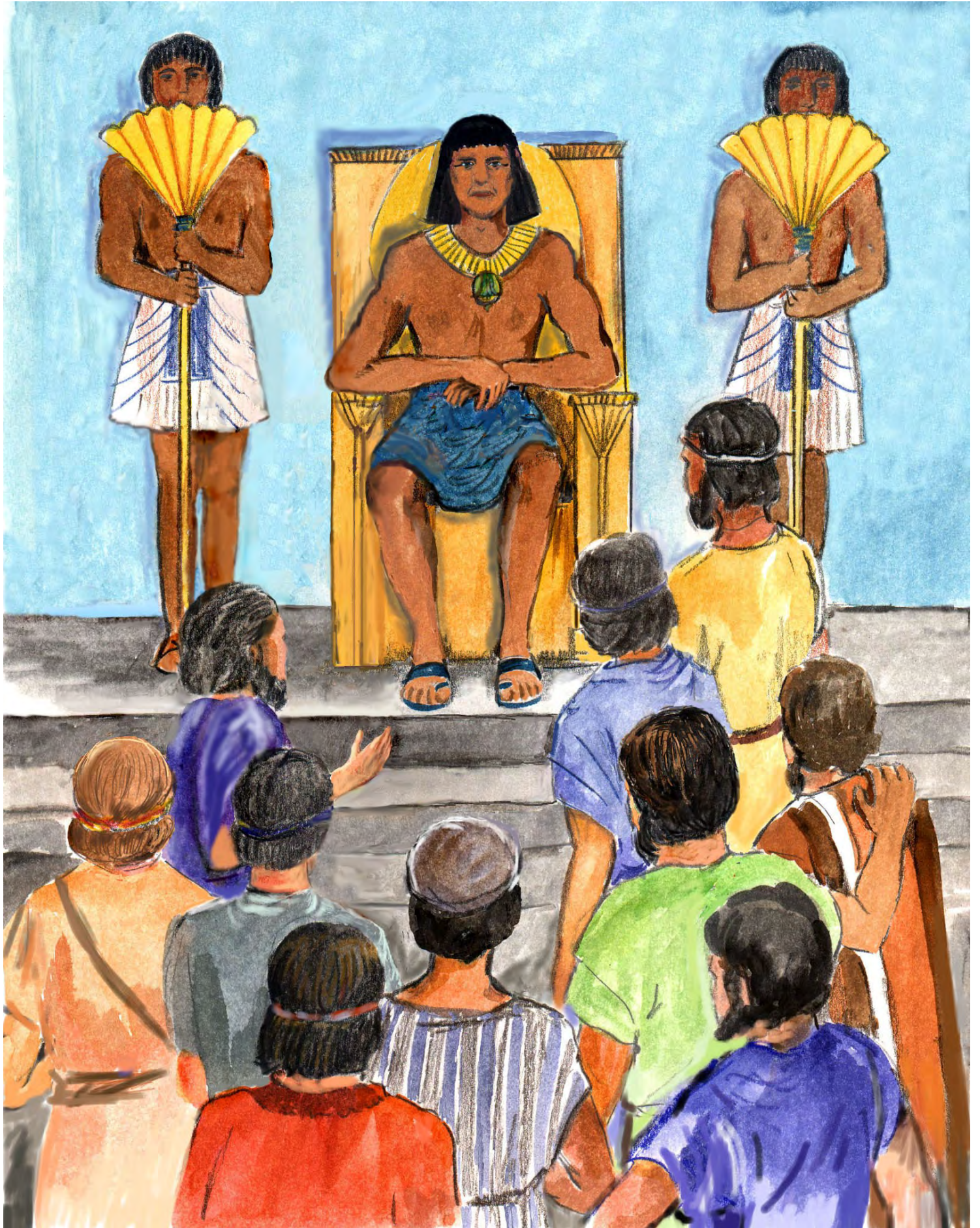
Genesis 42:6

Read the Memory Verse aloud. Repeat it slowly several times. Invite the children to say it with you. Say "Joseph's brothers came." Ask the children to repeat it with you. Say "and bowed down before him." Ask the children to repeat it with you. Say "with their faces to the earth." Say the whole sentence and have children repeat it several times with you.

**Closing**

At the beginning of today's story Jacob and his sons knew they were in trouble. They had almost no food left. Imagine if you opened your cupboards and refrigerator and saw they were empty! How did they get help? (*They went to buy grain in Egypt.*) We may face many challenges in life—but there is one Person who is always there to help us! Who could that be? The Lord! He always cares for us! And He not only cares about the things we need each day, like food and people to help care us and teach us. He also cares about helping us get to heaven because He knows that is how we can be truly happy. When we are in trouble and need help, no matter what problem we are having, we can always pray to the Lord to ask for help. He is always there for us!

Hand each child his or her projects and a *Parent Note* (p. 50) to take home.



## Act It Out: Joseph's Brothers Bow Down Script

Adapted from Genesis 42

Teacher reads the script aloud and models actions for the children to copy. *Optional:* Choose children to be Joseph, Simeon, Benjamin and Jacob. Put Joseph in Egypt before starting. (Benjamin and Jacob could double as men filling sacks). *Props:* bags, for grain, *optional* costumes.

### Joseph's Brothers Bow Down

Jacob said to his sons, "There is grain in Egypt. Go and buy some for us." (*Jacob points to Egypt. All take bags and start walking. Lengthen the walk by taking a long route.*)

Joseph's brothers went to Egypt, but Benjamin stayed at home because Jacob, his father, was worried that something bad might happen to him. (*Benjamin and Jacob sit down at home.*)

Joseph's brothers came to Egypt and bowed down before Joseph with their faces to the earth. (*Joseph sits while brothers bow down to the ground.*)

Joseph recognized them but they did not recognize him. He acted as a stranger and spoke roughly. (*Joseph stands with arms folded and a serious face.*) He asked, "Where do you come from?"

They said, "From Canaan to buy food." (*Brothers point towards Canaan.*)

Then Joseph remembered his dreams and said, (*Joseph points towards them.*) "You are spies!"

They said, "No, we have come to buy food. (*Shake heads.*) We are twelve brothers (*arms around each other*) with one father (*hold up one finger*) in the land of Canaan. We are honest, we are not spies. One brother is at home with our father, and one is no more." (*Shake heads.*)

But Joseph said "You are spies!" (*Joseph shakes his head*) "I will test you." And he put them in prison for three days (*takes brothers to prison*).

On the third day Joseph said, "If you are honest, let one of your brothers stay in prison while the rest of you take grain to your hungry family. And then bring your youngest brother back to me."

And he tied Simeon up (*tie Simeon up*) and put him in prison (*put him in prison*).

Then Joseph told his men to fill their sacks with grain, to put every man's money back in his sack, and to give them food for their journey (*pretend to fill bags and give them to the brothers*).

The brothers loaded their donkeys and returned towards Canaan.

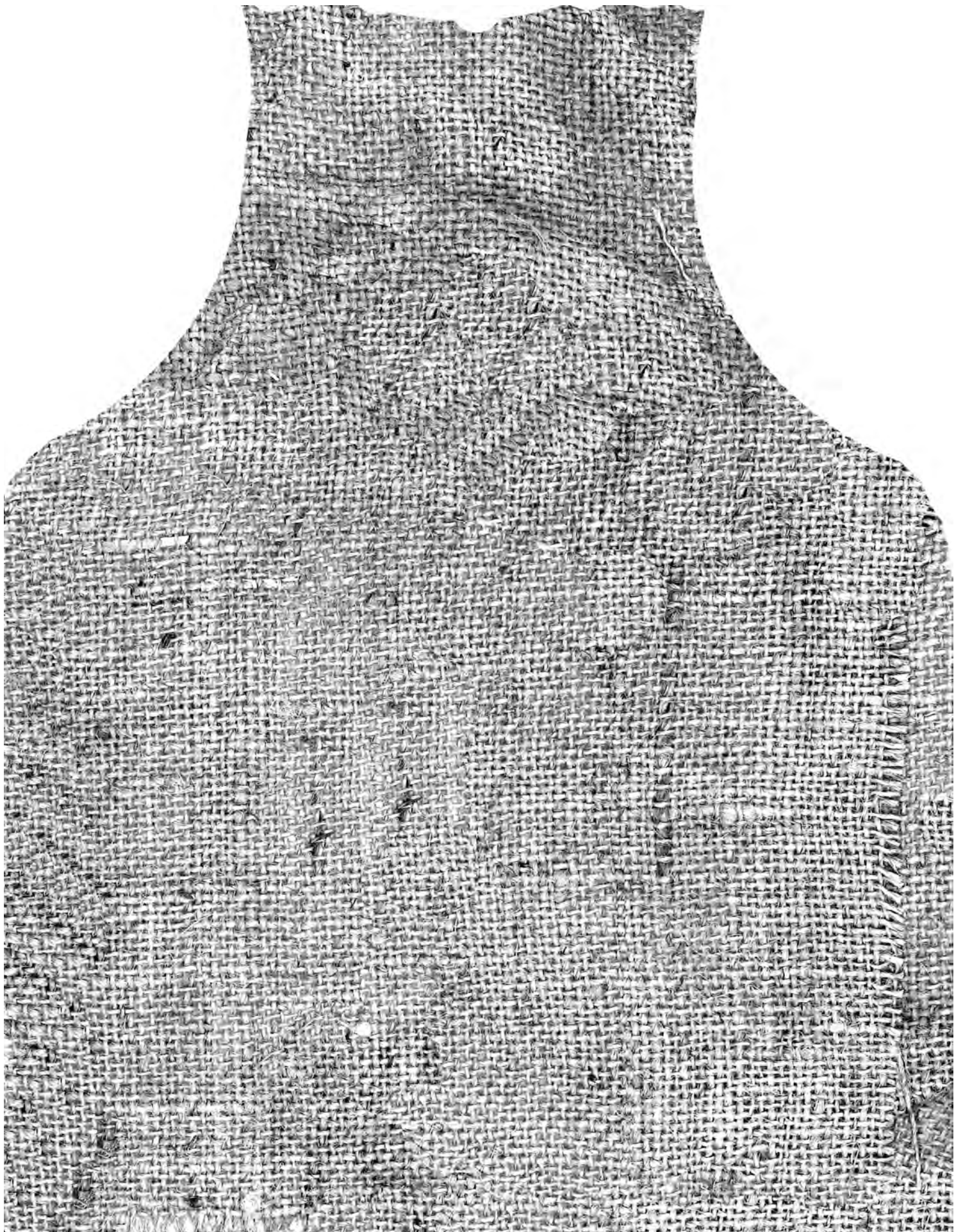
On the journey one brother opened his sack to feed his donkey (*choose a brother to open his sack*) and he saw his money! He said, "My money is here in my sack!" (*show brothers*) And they were afraid (*all show fear*).

Then they returned to their father Jacob in Canaan and told him what had happened (*go to Jacob in Canaan and gesture about what happened*).

"The ruler of the land said we were spies. But we told him, 'We are honest, we are not spies (*shake heads*). We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father in Canaan.'

Then the ruler said, 'This is how I will know you are honest: Leave one of your brothers here, take food for your families and go. Bring your youngest brother to and I will give your brother back to you, and you may trade.'"

Then as they emptied their sacks, each brother was surprised to find his money in his sack! (*all empty sacks and find money*) And they were afraid.



Sack  
47







**Parent Notes**

Make a copy for each child. Hand out as children leave.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PARENT NOTE</b></p> <p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>Today’s lesson focused on Joseph’s brothers coming to Egypt to buy grain (Genesis 42). We encourage you to help your child keep the Lord’s Word in his or her heart by learning this week’s Memory Verse. Try saying it once or twice in the morning, at mealtime or before bed!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Memory Verse</b></p> <p>Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. Genesis 42:6</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PARENT NOTE</b></p> <p>Dear Parents,</p> <p>Today’s lesson focused on Joseph’s brothers coming to Egypt to buy grain (Genesis 42). We encourage you to help your child keep the Lord’s Word in his or her heart by learning this week’s Memory Verse. Try saying it once or twice in the morning, at mealtime or before bed!</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Memory Verse</b></p> <p>Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. Genesis 42:6</p>
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