

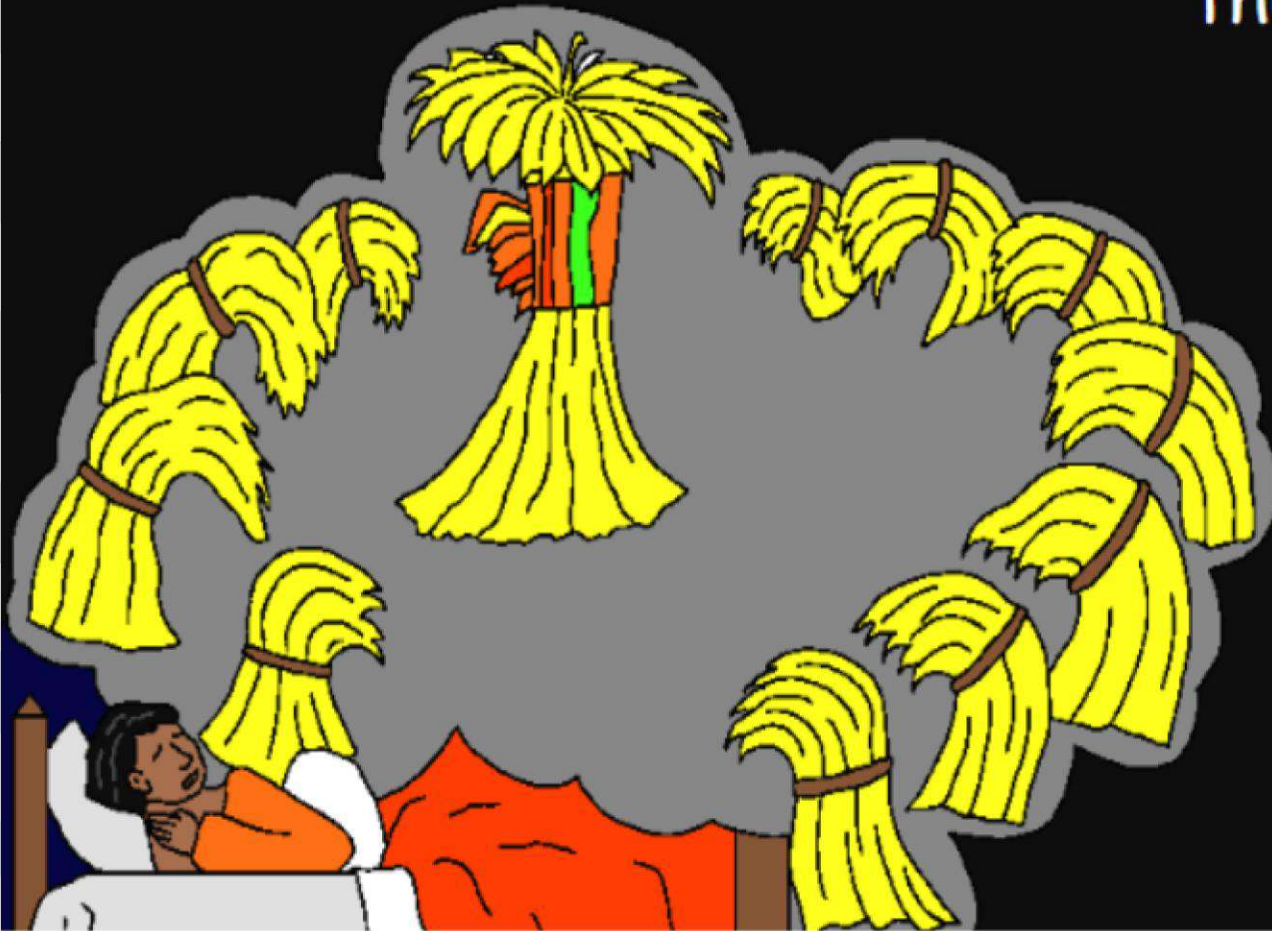
A FAVORITE SON BECOMES A SLAVE



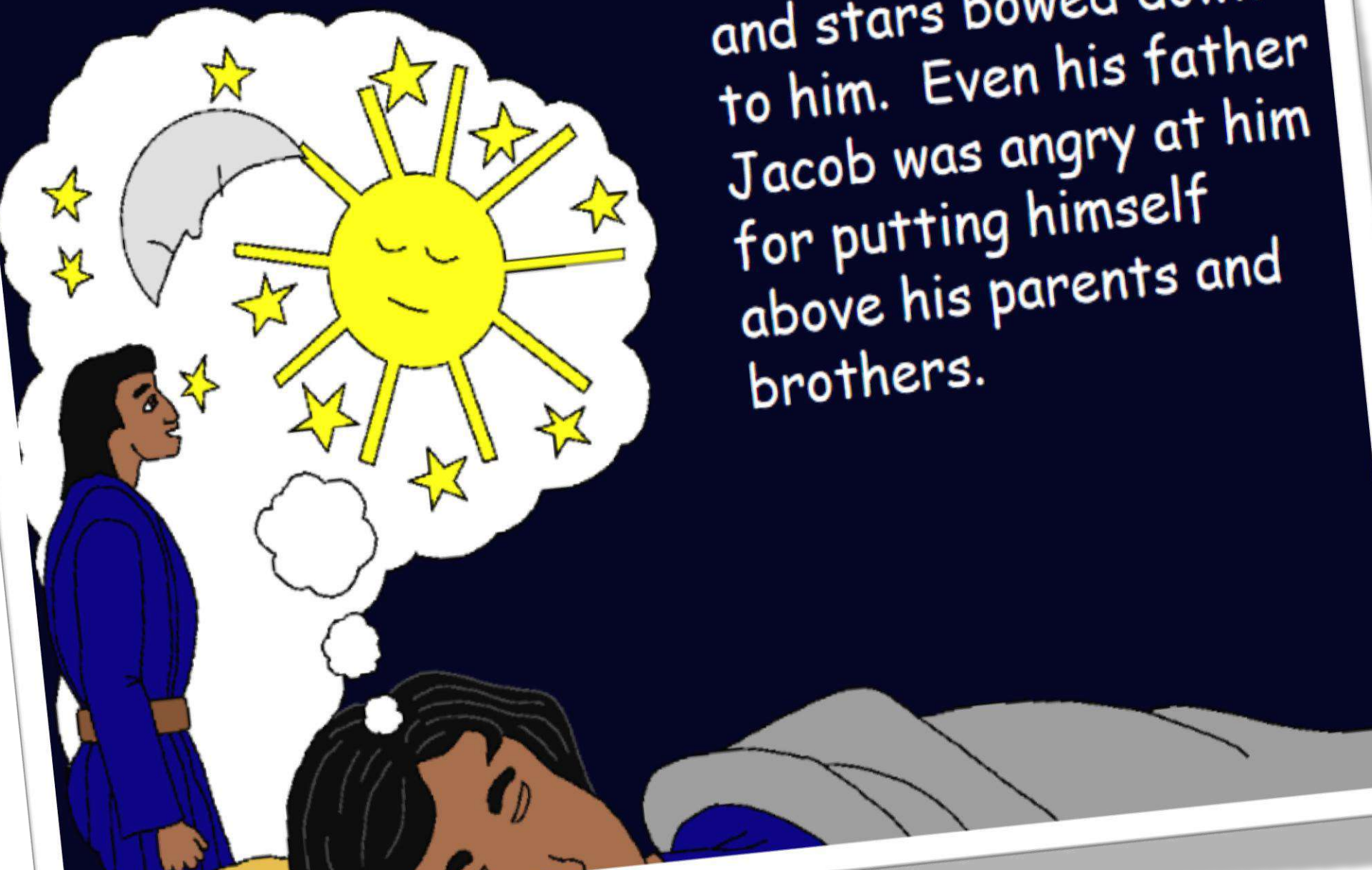
Isaac was very happy. His son Jacob was home. Even Esau welcomed the brother he once vowed to kill. But Jacob's sons were not happy because Joseph, their younger brother, was father's favorite.



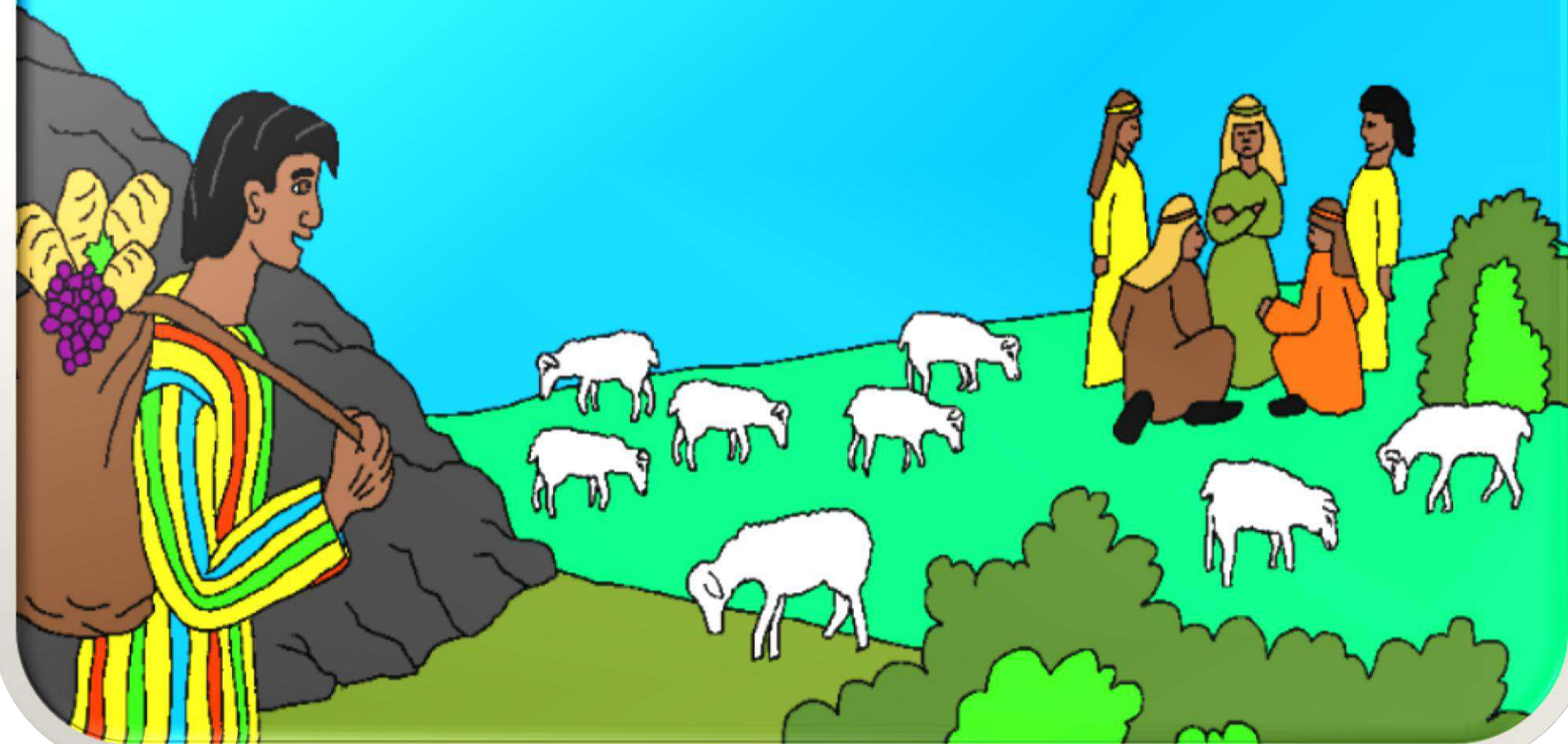
Joseph's brothers became more angry when he told them his dreams. "My sheaf of grain stood tall and my brothers' sheaves bowed in honor," Joseph said. This dream meant Joseph would be more important than his brothers.



In Joseph's second dream, the sun, moon and stars bowed down to him. Even his father Jacob was angry at him for putting himself above his parents and brothers.



One day Jacob sent Joseph to the field where his brothers tended their flocks. His brothers saw him coming. "Let's kill this dreamer," they muttered. Joseph did not know the danger before him.



Reuben, the oldest brother disagreed. "We must not shed blood," he said. "See, here's a pit. Let him die there!" Reuben planned to rescue Joseph at night-fall.



When Joseph arrived, his brothers grabbed him, and took off the colored coat Jacob had specially made for his favorite son. Then they threw him into the awful pit.



While Reuben was absent, a caravan of camels drew near on their way to distant Egypt. "Let's sell Joseph," cried Judah, his brother. The deal was made. They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver.



Tearful and afraid, Joseph watched helplessly as the lurching camel led him away from his family and homeland.





"Is this Joseph's coat? It's bloody. We found it in the desert." The cruel brothers allowed Jacob to believe a wild animal had killed his favorite son. Jacob tore his clothes and mourned. Nobody could comfort him.

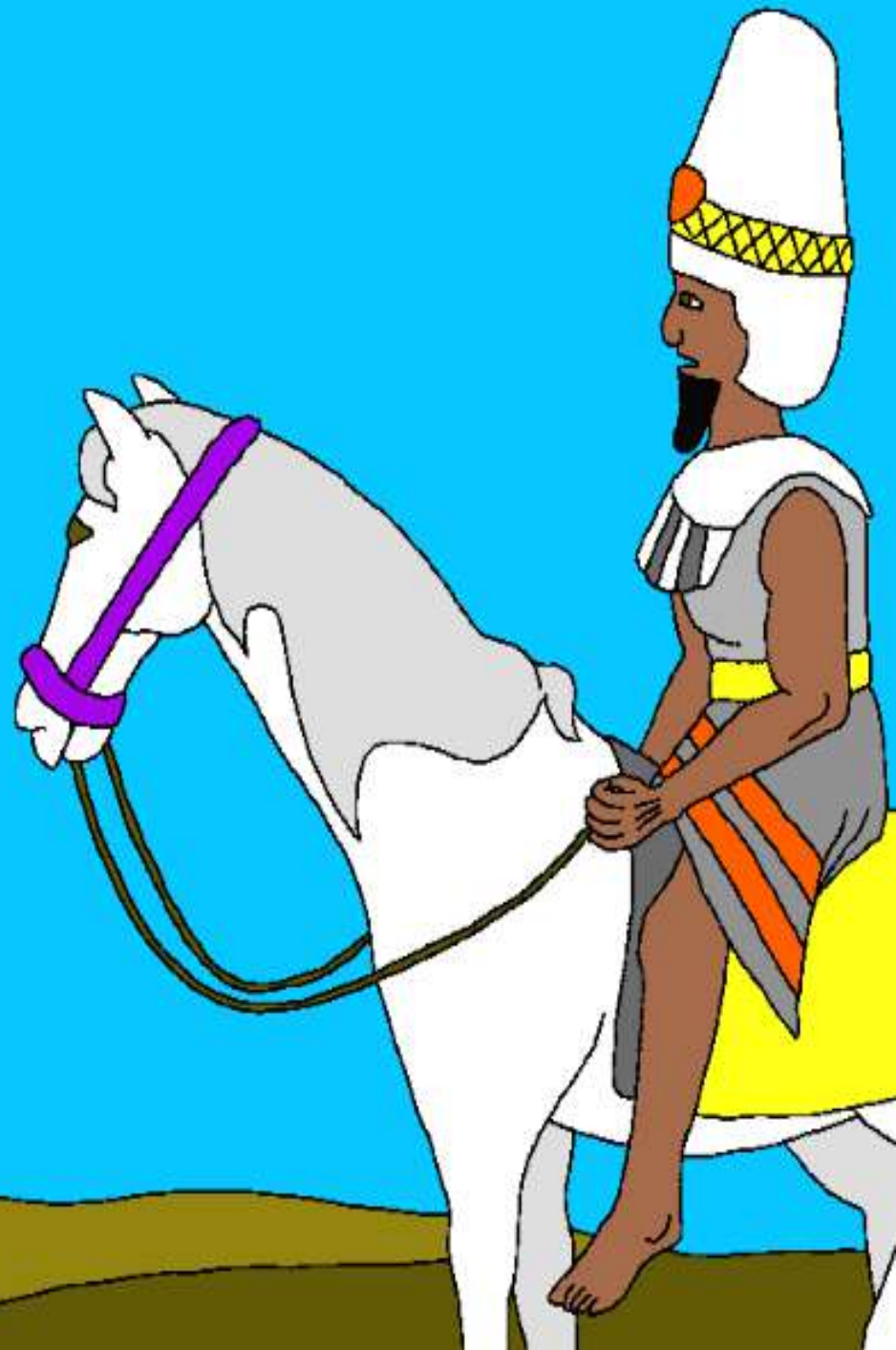


In Egypt, Joseph must have been afraid and lonely. Maybe he longed for home. But he could not escape. He was a slave in the house of Potiphar, an important Egyptian. Potiphar saw that Joseph always worked hard and could be trusted.

"All you do turns out well,"
Potiphar told Joseph one day.
"God is with you. I want you to
be my chief servant, in charge
of all my business and master of
all my other servants."



God gave Potiphar good harvests and many riches because of Joseph. Now an important man, Joseph still trusted and served God faithfully. But trouble came to Joseph.



Potiphar's wife was a wicked woman. She asked Joseph to take the place of her husband. Joseph refused. He would not sin against God by wronging Potiphar.



When the woman tried to force him, he ran.
But she caught and held his coat.



"Your slave attacked me," Potiphar's wife complained.
"See, here's his coat!" Potiphar was angry. Maybe he
knew his wife was lying. But he had to do something.
What would he do?



Potiphar put Joseph in prison. Although he was innocent, Joseph was not bitter or angry. Perhaps he was learning from his hardships that no matter where he was, if he honored God, God would honor him - even in jail.

