

Jacob and his sons (Genesis 37)

This is Jacob. His dad was Isaac and his grandad was Abraham.

Jacob had 12 sons and a daughter. The boys were called Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar and Zebulun. Then there was a daughter called Dinah. The 11th son to be born was called Joseph and then came the youngest, Benjamin.

Now Jacob did a bad thing. He had a favourite son. It's not good to have favourites, is it? Well, Jacob loved Joseph more than his other children. He made him a very special coat which had lots of different colours. So Joseph's brothers hated him. How dare he think he was so special! When they were with him, they were mean to him and when he wasn't there, they said horrible things about him. That's also bad. Jacob was wrong to have a favourite but being nasty to Joseph wasn't the right thing to do either.

One morning, Joseph was lying in bed thinking about a dream he'd had. That was a really weird dream! He got up and went to tell his brothers all about it.

Joseph said: "I've just had a really weird dream."

His brothers said: "We don't care! You're always having weird dreams! Just go back to sleep and leave us alone".

But Joseph said, "We were in the field tying bundles of wheat together. My bundle stood up and your bundles bowed down to mine!"

Was Joseph saying that his brothers would bow down to him?

His brothers were angry and yelled: "You won't be ruler over us!" Now they hated him even more. He went away and left them talking about him.

Another morning he was lying in bed thinking about another dream. That was a really weird dream! He got up and went to tell his brothers all about it.

Joseph said: "I've just had a really weird dream."

His brothers said: "We don't care! You're always having weird dreams! Just go back to sleep and leave us alone".

But Joseph said, "I saw the sun, the moon and 11 stars bowing down to me!"

Jacob told Joseph off. "Joseph stop it! Your mother and your brothers and I are not going to bow down to you!"

Joseph's brothers were really fed up with him. Who did he think he was! He went away and left them talking about him.

A few days later his 10 older brothers were out in the fields looking after the sheep. Benjamin, the youngest, had to stay at home. Joseph was sent to see if they were all right. When they saw him in the distance, his brothers decided to get rid of him. They got together to talk about him and they had a terrible idea: "Let's kill him!"

But Reuben, who was the oldest, knew that was not right. "NO! Put him in that pit over there!"

His brothers agreed, so they grabbed Joseph, tore off his beautiful coat of all different colours and threw him into the pit.

Just then, some travelling merchants came past with their camels.

Judah had a great idea: "Let's sell Joseph to those men as a slave!"

"Great idea!" yelled his brothers. "Come on, quick!"

So they pulled Joseph up from the pit and sold him to the merchants.

The merchants took Joseph to Egypt, where they sold him to a very important man called Potiphar.

Joseph's brothers went back to their father Jacob and said that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.

Jacob was very, very sad.