**Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat – Fact or Fiction?**

**Is this Joseph guy the same man who was the earthly father of Jesus according to Christians?** No, different Joseph.

**In what religions was this Joseph person important?** The same story of Joseph is written in the Hebrew Torah, the Christian Bible, and the Muslim Qur’an, where he is called in their language “Yusuf al Karim” (Joseph the Wise).

**Was Joseph a real historical person**? Quite possibly – he is discussed in all three holy books, and the story written about his rise to power in Egypt does follow the established customs of Egypt. However, even though the Egyptians kept very close written records, a Hebrew named Joseph is not mentioned in their writings.

**What is an Ishmaelite?** A descendant of Ishmael, the son of Abraham. Ishmael’s descendants went on to found the religion of Islam.

**Were there really Ishmaelite traders?** Yes, and they would have been common in this region, as there was an often-used trade path between the land they called Canaan (Israel region) and Egypt.

**Was Potiphar a real historical person?** Possibly – the name is an authentic Egyptian name – but in Egypt it would be pronounced Pa-di-pa-re.

**Did Hebrews ever truly rule Egypt?** Very possible – in the Egyptian writings during the Middle Kingdom they talk about being over run by “Asiatics” – foreigners from western Asia. One of these Asiatic groups that took power for a short time were the Hyksos, and another group present was the Habiru – very possibly the Hebrew people.

**Who wrote this musical?** Andrew Lloyd Weber, a very famous writer, wrote the music. He also wrote *Jesus Christ Superstar, The Phantom of the Opera,* and *Cats.* Tim Rice wrote the lyrics for this show, as well as for *The Lion King* and the song “A Whole New World” for *Aladdin.*

CAST OF CHARACTERS – JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT

• Narrator: A woman, not of the time or place of the action, the Narrator tells the story through word and song, guiding the audience gently through the story of Joseph and his brothers.

• Joseph: Obviously his father’s favorite, Joseph early on shows a talent for interpreting dreams and telling the future. This gets him into trouble with his brothers when he predicts his future will include ruling over the other eleven. However, it saves his life when in Egypt he correctly interprets Pharaoh’s dreams. In the end he has risen to a great position of power, but he still forgives his brothers and brings his family to Egypt to partake of the bounty he has accumulated there.

• Jacob: The father of the twelve sons, Jacob definitely favors Joseph. At times he may appear unfair and shallow, but he is, more importantly, the prophet who recognizes the future and the calling of Joseph, thus saving the House of Israel.

• The Brothers: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Naphtali, Issachar, Asher, Dan, Zebulun, Gad, Benjamin, Judah. Although acting usually as a group, they have their own different personalities, talents, and flaw. As a group they sell Joseph into slavery, but as individuals they deal with the following years and how they can make amends.

• Potiphar: A powerful and rich Egyptian, Potiphar purchases Joseph and puts him to work in his household, where he soon realizes that Joseph is honest, hard-working, and a great addition to his pool of help. When he grows suspicious of his wife and Joseph, however, he grows angry and has Joseph thrown into prison.

• Mrs. Potiphar: Beautiful and scheming, Mrs. Potiphar tries to seduce Joseph (unsuccessfully). However, she does manage to rip off much of his clothing just as her husband comes into the room, thus condemning him to prison.

• Baker: One of Pharaoh’s servants, the Baker is in prison with Joseph who correctly interprets his dreams and predicts that he will be put to death.

• Butler: Another of Pharaoh’s servants, the Butler is also in prison with Joseph who also correctly interprets his dreams, this time that he will be released and taken back into Pharaoh’s household. It is the Butler who tells Pharaoh about Joseph and his uncanny ability with dreams.

• Pharaoh: The most powerful man in Egypt, Pharaoh is considered a god on earth. When Joseph interprets his dreams, he promotes him to one of the highest positions in his government.