

LESSON 25

God Provides for the Israelites in Famine

GENESIS 42



BIBLE TRUTH

GOD'S PROMISE IS PRESERVED IN DROUGHT AND SIN

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, dry erase markers

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 25)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is Jesus?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is Jesus?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: Snack food/water

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Page 25

SUPPLIES: markers/crayons

Years of Plenty and Years of Famine

SUPPLIES: a large bag of popped popcorn; in a small baggie crush one small saltine cracker; paper play money

Storing for Need

SUPPLIES: several sheets of paper torn into small pieces

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn how God used Joseph to help people through the famine.

Draw a slice of bread on the whiteboard and tell the class what you drew. Use the following questions to discuss this topic:

- **Who makes bread?**
(They will likely answer that a baker makes bread.)

- **What does a baker make bread out of?**
(Bread is made mostly of wheat flour.)

- **Who makes the wheat seeds grow?**
(God)

- **Who really provides the bread?**
(God is the one who provides the bread for food. Tell the children to remember that God is our provider as they listen to you read today's Bible story.)

Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 25, "God Provides for the Israelites in Famine," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **How did God warn Egypt of the coming famine?**
(God gave the King of Egypt a dream to tell him there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.)

- What did the king do when he found out what his dreams meant?
(The king appointed Joseph to store grain from the years of plenty to provide for the people during the lean years.)
- Did Joseph's plan work?
(Yes, everything happened just as God planned, and Joseph's plan worked.)

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking:

- Why is a famine dangerous?
(A famine means there is no food to eat. Without food people cannot survive.)
- What does it feel like to be hungry?
(Have the children talk about the way it feels.)
- Who provides our food?
(Ultimately, it is God who provides our food.)

Help the children to see how God provided for his people through Joseph.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page 25—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Why did Joseph's brothers come to Egypt?
(They came to buy food because their land was also in a famine.)

Where Is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Passage: Acts 7:9–10

The story of Joseph's kidnapping, slavery, and imprisonment is tragic. But in it all, God was at work saving his people. Because of Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph knew Egypt needed to store grain for the coming famine. This is the grain that Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to purchase so that Abraham's descendants would not die off. That way, one day Jesus could be born as one of Abraham's far-off great-grandchildren.

Story after story points to God as a God who saves. Through Jesus, God would ultimately save his people from spiritual hunger and death. Jesus offered himself as the "bread of life" (John 6:35) to all who are spiritually hungry.

- Who did the brothers need to ask for food?
(The brothers needed to ask Joseph if they could buy food.)
- Did they know it was Joseph?
(No, they did not recognize Joseph. They thought they were speaking to an Egyptian ruler.)

Years of Plenty and Years of Famine

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ large bag of popped popcorn
- ✓ one small cracker crushed in a sandwich bag
- ✓ paper play money

Divide the class in half. Give the large bag of popcorn to one half of the class (they represent Egypt who stored their grain). Give the other half of the class the cracker (they represent Israel and Joseph's brothers in famine).

Give the famine-stricken half of the class some paper play money and have them buy popcorn from the other side of the room (Egypt).

Talk to the children about how this little exercise is like the situation in Egypt in the Bible story. Ask the children, “Who provided the food?” Ultimately it was God who provided the food for Israel.

Storing for Need

- ✓ several sheets of paper torn into small pieces

Prior to class tear a few sheets of paper into small pieces (approximately ten pieces for each child). Explain that you are going to show them how God used Joseph to help the people in the drought.

Tell the children there were seven years in which there was plenty of food. Take the paper pieces and throw seven handfuls to the children and tell them to collect the food. Throw it all around so everyone can get some. Tell them everyone should get a piece. Then ask if anyone has more than one paper. Point out to them that in a time of plenty everyone has more than they need. Joseph collected the extra food and put it into storage. (Collect all the extras and put them aside.) Then pass a trash can around to the students and tell them to throw their one piece of paper away, representing that they ate it.

Now tell the class to complain that they are hungry and want more food. This time throw up an empty hand seven times showing a great famine. Ask the class how many have any food to eat? They should all say they have none. Now pull out the “food” that was stored, and explain that when Egypt ran out of food in the famine they still had all the food God gave Joseph wisdom to save to eat. That is why Jacob’s sons came to Egypt, to buy the food that had been stored. Help them to see how God used this situation to fulfill Joseph’s dreams from Genesis 37.

PRAY 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for all you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as another way for the children to remember what today’s lesson was about.

