

# GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42



*God's promise is preserved in drought and sin.*

## The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

### Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

**No man knows the plan of God** – God gave Pharaoh two dreams which troubled him enough to seek out the wise men and magicians of Egypt, but no man could tell him what his dreams meant. God alone knows the meaning of dreams and the events of history, unless He reveals them to us.

**God revealed His plan through Joseph** – Joseph was summoned to the Pharaoh and was asked if he could give an interpretation of the dreams. Joseph, aware that only God holds the interpretation for our dreams and future, answered Pharaoh humbly saying that he could not provide the interpretation but God could. Joseph, who spoke on behalf of God, gave Pharaoh the interpretation and credited it to God's revelation. Joseph then advised Pharaoh about what to do.

**Events always unfold according to God's plan** – Pharaoh was impressed with Joseph's wisdom. He placed Joseph in charge of all Egypt. Pharaoh acknowledged that the dreams and plan were from God, Genesis 41:38-39. Joseph accepted the position, and for the next seven years Egypt experienced years of abundance just as God had declared through Joseph. These were followed directly by seven years of famine. The entire world came to buy grain from Egypt because the famine was so severe. Events unfolded just as God said they would through His servant Joseph.

## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### 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.*

Though the story of Joseph's kidnapping, slavery, and later imprisonment is tragic, God was at work behind the scenes preparing to save His people. Ultimately, Joseph led Egypt to store grain for a coming famine. It is this grain that Joseph's brothers will come to Egypt to purchase so that Abraham's descendants would not die.

Story after story points to God as a God who saves. God would ultimately save His people from a different kind of hunger and death – spiritual. Jesus offered Himself as the "Bread of Life" to all who are hungry. Behind the scenes, God was working all things together for good.

Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But God was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace. (Acts 7:9-10)

### ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

**Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.**

**Bible Passage: Psalm 110:4**

#### **Connecting the passage to Christ:**

There is only one priest who can be a priest forever, and that is Jesus. Hebrews 5:6 directly attributes this passage to Christ.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

- How can this passage only be fulfilled by Christ? (Jesus is the only priest who has lived forever.)
- Who does Hebrews 5:6 attribute this passage to? (Hebrews 5:6 directly quotes this passage and attributes it to Christ.)

## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

#### BE A DOER OF THE WORD

*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 & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### PREDICTING THE FUTURE

##### Supplies

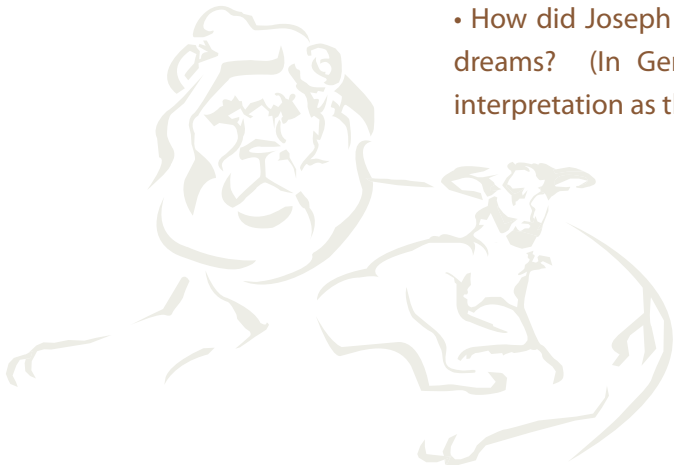
- pencil
- balloon
- pin

Tell the children that you can predict the future. Make a big deal, like you have a special gift. Once you get them convinced, pick up the pencil and hold it out. Tell them that you are going to drop the pencil and it is going to fall. Then drop the pencil. When it falls, take your bows and ham it up.

Repeat the demonstration, only this time, blow up a balloon and tell them that when you push the pin into the balloon it is going to pop. Again, take your bows. Use this illustration to talk about how your ability to predict the future and Joseph knowing the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams are different.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Did Joseph just take a lucky guess when it came to Pharaoh's dreams? (No, God gave Joseph the knowledge of what the dreams represented.)
- How did Joseph demonstrate humility in the exercise of his gift of interpreting dreams? (In Genesis 41:16 Joseph told Pharaoh that God would give the interpretation as though Joseph was not even part of the process.)



## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### OUR GIFTS SERVE GOD'S PLAN

#### Supplies

- newspaper
- trash can
- a little prize

Give a piece of newspaper to each person in the class. Explain to them that you are going to have a contest to see who the most gifted foul shooter is in the group. Take turns lining up the class and having them hit the waste can from increasingly further distances.

Declare the best thrower the champion and give them the little prize.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Ask the best foul shooter how it is that he or she did so well. (See if they give God the credit for their ability.)
- Is God the giver of all of our gifts, even shooting paper balls into trash cans? (Yes, God is the giver of all of our gifts.)
- What is the purpose of our gifts? (1 Corinthians 10:31 says that whatever we do is to bring glory to God).
- Do our gifts play a greater role in the plan of God? (Yes, Philippians 2:13 and Ephesians 1:11 teach us that all things work according to His plan.)
- What was the greater plan of God served by Joseph's gift and ability to interpret dreams? (God's plan to redeem Israel was the ultimate plan which Joseph served. God used Joseph to preserve Israel, the people out of which the Savior would one day come.)



## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### REAPING WHAT YOU SOW

#### Supplies

- paper and pencils enough for the class
- a small prize
- ten various dried seeds (Sunflower seeds, corn and other familiar seeds can be obtained from bird seed. Also fruit seeds are easy to come by.)

Lay the seeds out on a sheet of paper and number them. Have the children file by them and list on their paper by number what plant would grow from each seed, if they were planted. (Certain seeds like corn are more obvious.)

Give the class the answers one by one and see who guessed the most correct and award a prize.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- If we sow sin in our lives what will we reap? (Galatians 6:8 tells us we will reap destruction.)
- What will we reap if we sow righteousness? (Galatians 6:8 also says the one who sows to please the Spirit will reap eternal life.)
- What did Joseph's brothers sow? What did they reap? (Joseph's brothers sowed sin in their jealousy and evil toward Joseph. They reaped destruction in that now in the midst of the famine they had to ask the one they sinned against for food. Joseph was then used by God to teach his sinful brothers a lesson. In Genesis 42:21-23 they even sensed they were being disciplined by God for their sin.)
- What can we learn from this? (Galatians 6:8 tells us we will reap what we sow. If we want to be free of bad consequences we should live according to God's law. The reality is that we will all fail. Notice in this story the salvation of God comes to undeserving brothers through Joseph. Joseph gives them grain even though they did not deserve it. He could have had them all thrown in prison. Similarly, although we should all receive destruction for our sin, we instead receive grace through the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross.)

## PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.



## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of the sacks being emptied with the money bags mixed in the grain. Take time to talk about why Joseph might have wanted to trick his brothers. (Joseph was used of God to bring judgment on his brothers for what they had done to him.)

### FOR OLDER GRADES

Use the following activity for practical application and discovery of this lesson.

Have the children take turns reading through the seventh chapter of Acts. Have them answer the following question in writing.

- How was the life of Joseph used by God in His greater plan of salvation for all? (If it were not for Joseph, Israel would have been lost. It was also through Joseph that Israel came to Egypt and prospered. Later they were enslaved and needed a deliverer. Moses would come as another picture of Christ and deliver the Israelites from bondage. This picture of redemption, which is so meaningful to us today, was possible because of the way God used Joseph.)



## GOD PROVIDES FOR HIS PEOPLE IN FAMINE

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 41-42

### A LITTLE BIT MORE

**Israel** – God first gave this name to Jacob in Genesis 32:28 and later confirms this change of name in Genesis 35:10. Between these two pronouncements by God we see that Israel became the name of the land on

which the offspring of Israel (Jacob) settled, see Genesis 34:7. The practice of naming the land after the one who settled it was a common practice.

The descendants of the twelve sons of Israel were called by the names of the sons and their land was called by that name as well (ie. the land of Judah). In Exodus 4, God calls His people Israel when speaking to Moses and after this, the people of God are referred to as Israel.

In the New Testament, we learn that in the mind of God, it is not the physical descendants from Jacob which denotes who is a part of Israel. We learn that it is God's chosen people, Gentile and Jew, who are the true Israel (see Romans 9:6-8).

