

JOSEPH REVEALS HIMSELF

Genesis 42–45



Contents

Message	God protected Joseph so he could be a blessing to his family.
Learning Objectives	The children will learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ What happened between Joseph and his brothers when they came to buy grain.■ Joseph forgave his brothers because he knew God permitted everything in his life to happen.■ God has a plan for us.
Bible Text	Genesis 42-45

Joseph Reveals Himself



Just as Pharaoh commanded, Joseph became governor and looked after the harvests. At the end of the seven years of plenty, Egypt's storehouses were overflowing with grain. Then came the seven years of drought and famine throughout all the land. Joseph stored enough food to share with the people from neighbouring countries.

In Canaan, the people were very hungry. Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy grain. When they arrived in Egypt, they met with Joseph. The brothers did not recognise him. They bowed down before him and asked if they could buy some grain. Joseph accused them of being spies. Joseph put his brothers in prison for three days. Then he released all of them except Simeon.

Joseph ordered them to bring Benjamin with them on their next trip to Egypt. Before his brothers left, Joseph told his servants to fill his brothers' sacks with grain and put their money back in their sacks. He also instructed the servants to give each brother enough food for his journey home.

The brothers found the money in their sacks on their way home. When they arrived home, they told Jacob how they were accused of being spies. They then explained that they were told they must return with Benjamin to prove that they were not spies and so that Simeon would be released.

Soon the grain in Jacob's house was used up. He told his sons to go back to Egypt. Although Jacob did not want Benjamin to go with his brothers, he allowed him to do so. He sent gifts with his sons to be given to the governor.

When they arrived in Egypt, the brothers asked to see Joseph. Joseph told his housekeeper to show them into his house and to bring Simeon to the house too. Joseph asked about their father. They told him their father was well and they gave Joseph the gifts. When the meal was served, the brothers were seated from the eldest to the youngest. After the meal, Joseph told his housekeeper to fill their sacks with grain and to put their money back in the bag again. Joseph also told him to hide a silver cup in Benjamin's sack.

The brothers started their journey back home. They had not travelled far when Egyptian horsemen came chasing after them and surrounded them. The housekeeper yelled, "Stop! You are thieves. You have stolen my master's silver cup." The soldiers found the cup in Benjamin's sack. Benjamin insisted he did not steal the cup.

The soldiers arrested Benjamin and took him back to the city. The brothers returned with him. Joseph asked, "Why did you do this? Only the one whose sack the cup was found in must stay behind. The others may return home."

Judah told Joseph that he promised their father that he would look after Benjamin. Judah pleaded to let Benjamin return home and let him stay.

Joseph ordered all his servants to leave the room then told his brothers who he was and that he forgave them for what they did to him. Joseph reassured them that God guided everything that had happened in his life so that we would become a ruler in Egypt and save his family from hunger. When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brothers were in Egypt, he invited them to bring Jacob and their families to live in Egypt. They lived peacefully with Joseph in Egypt for many years.

Suggestions for the Teacher

Lead-In

Show the picture to the children. Discuss with them what they see. Ask what she/he may feel....
Let some of the children play the story when the cup was discovered. Instruct them before. Provide disguise / fancy dress and additional materials like sacks with rice, a cup.

Lesson Instructions

Begin telling the story...

Discuss with the children...

- Identify moments, when Joseph is not treated very nicely.
(Brothers sell him into slavery. Potiphar's wife wrongly accuses him. He is put in prison).
- How does God protect Joseph in each situation?
(Potiphar promotes him. He is given the task to take care of the other prisoner.)
- Do Joseph's brothers recognize him when they come to Egypt and bow down? (No)
- What does Joseph put in the sacks of his brothers? (Grain, in Benjamin's sack a silver cup)
- What do you think the brothers' feelings are when they recognize Joseph?
(They are shocked. They feel guilty. They are ashamed.)
- What does Joseph say to his brothers?
("Do not be afraid. I am no longer angry with you. God has guided everything.")

Have the children repeat...

- Joseph forgave his brothers because he knew God permitted everything in his life to happen.
- God has a plan for us.

Real-Life Application (explain the following)

- What started as an evil deed turned out to be good.
- Joseph had the task to forgive and to be reconciled with his brothers.
- Has anyone (sibling or friend) ever done something to you that was mean?
- We want to show the same attitude that Joseph had.
- How can we do this?
(We want to forgive and to be reconciled with those who did something against us.)

Repeat the Message

God protected Joseph so he could be a blessing to his family.