

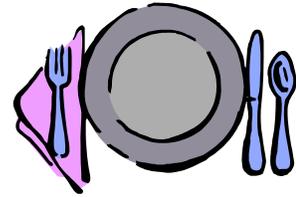
Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt Again

Genesis 43-45

What is missing from this picture?

What is it called when everyone in the land is missing food?

Is there anything more important to your life than food?



Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for allowing us to meet again today to study Your Word. Help us learn today through this most important food, Your Word, that everything that happens is for our good. We pray that our faith in Your Son, Jesus, is strengthened through this lesson. In His name we ask this. Amen.

The Story

The famine in Canaan and the surrounding area was severe. After the food that his sons had purchased from Egypt ran out, Jacob told them to go back and buy more. Judah reminded his father that they had been told to bring their youngest brother back with them, or they would not be allowed to buy any more grain. This worried Jacob very much, but after much persuading, he finally agreed to let Benjamin go along. Judah promised, "I myself will be surety (*one who is responsible for another*) for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever."

Jacob told his sons to take some gifts along to Egypt: a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. He also told them to take double the amount of money required to purchase the grain. He did this because the last time they had gone, their money had been

found inside their grain sacks, making it look like they had stolen the grain.

So the brothers returned to Egypt and stood before Joseph, the Egyptian ruler in charge of selling grain. Again they did not recognize him. When Joseph saw Benjamin, he ordered one of his servants to slaughter an animal and prepare a feast to eat at noon with his unsuspecting brothers.

As they prepared to buy more grain from Joseph's steward, the brothers were afraid. They explained what had happened when they found the money in their sacks the last time. But he said, "Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out of prison to them and took them to Joseph's house.

When Joseph appeared at noon, the brothers all bowed to him and



offered their gifts. Joseph asked about their father's health. He then said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said to Benjamin, "God be gracious to you, my son." Joseph was so moved to see his younger brother that he had to leave the room to go out and weep. When he had washed his face and composed himself, he returned and joined the feast. Joseph arranged the brothers at the table in order from youngest to oldest, which surprised them since they had not told him their ages. Benjamin received five times as much food as the others.

After the feast, Joseph commanded the steward to fill the men's sacks with food and to put each man's money in the sack again as well. Joseph also told him to put his special silver cup in the mouth of Benjamin's sack. The steward did as he asked.

When the brothers had left Egypt, Joseph ordered the steward to go after them. He accused them of stealing his master's silver cup. The brothers were astonished and afraid. They couldn't believe it was true, and were so convinced of their innocence, they promised that if the cup were found in one of the sacks, that owner of the sack would be killed. The steward told them whoever had the silver cup would become his slave instead. As planned, it was found in Benjamin's sack. The brothers tore their clothes; they were very upset. Then they went back to Egypt.

Judah pleaded with Joseph. He told him the whole story about Jacob's loss of one son and their promise to bring Benjamin back safely. Judah told Joseph he would remain instead of Benjamin as a slave, because it would surely kill Jacob if his youngest son did not return to him.

At last Joseph knew it was time to reveal the truth. He asked all his servants to leave the room, and then he wept aloud so that all heard him. He cried, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" His brothers were

shocked and couldn't answer.

Then Joseph said, "Please come near to me." Again he repeated, "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But now, do not be angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of his entire house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

Joseph went on to tell them that he wanted them to go back and get Jacob because he wanted them to live in the land of Goshen. Then he embraced Benjamin and wept. He kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and they talked together for some time. Pharaoh also heard about the situation, and assured Joseph that his father and family would be richly provided for in Egypt. He sent donkeys, carts, food, and supplies with them all so they could go back to Canaan and get Jacob.

When the eleven brothers got home, they told Jacob, "Joseph is alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them. But when they told him all the words that Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him, he started to believe them. Then Jacob said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Outer Aim - The Lord sent Jacob and his family to Egypt to make a great nation of them.

What the Story Tells Us - Fill in the CROSSWORD PUZZLE with the correct answers.

BENJAMIN	SURETY	FAMINE	JUDAH	GRACE
	JOSEPH	CHASTENING	GOSHEN	

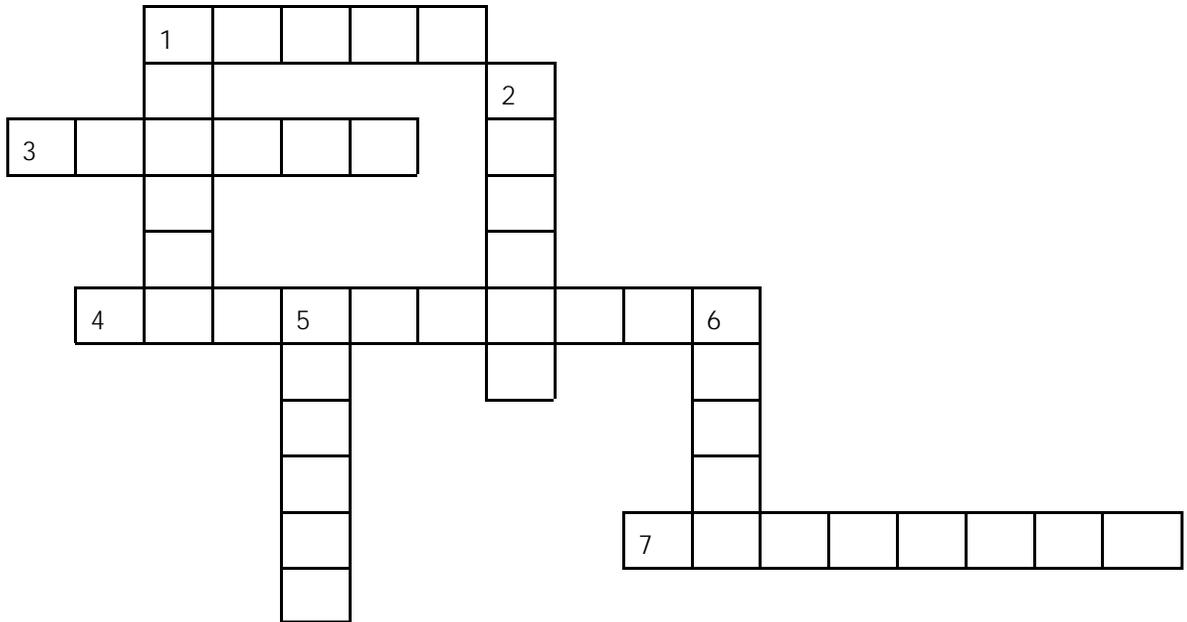
Across

1. He offered to become a slave to Joseph.

3. The land given to Jacob's family.

4. A type of discipline from the Lord.

7. He was the youngest son of Jacob.



Down

1. He was in charge of selling food in Egypt.
2. No food in the land.

5. One who will be responsible for another.
6. God's undeserved love and mercy.

Inner Aim - The Lord works all things for the good of His people.

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss these questions.

1. Why was Jacob so against the idea of sending Benjamin along with the brothers to Egypt?
2. Why didn't Joseph reveal his identity to his brothers right away?

3. It seems like Joseph set a trap for Benjamin by having the silver cup put into his sack. Explain why he might have done this.
4. Was Joseph truly forgiving of his brothers? How do you know?

Passages

Psalms 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Hymn - TLH #435

My spirit on Thy care,
Blest Savior, I recline;
Thou wilt not leave me to despair,
For Thou art Love divine.

In Thee I place my trust,
On Thee I calmly rest;
I know Thee good, I know Thee just,
And count Thy choice the best.

Whate'er events be'tide,
Thy will they all perform;
Safe in Thy breast my head I hide
Nor fear the coming storm.

Let good or ill befall,
It must be good for me;
Secure of having Thee in all,
Of having all in Thee.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to remember always that You make all things work for the good of Your children. Make me realize the love and mercy You have for me. May I be ever grateful for all You have given me, especially for the forgiveness and salvation through Your death on the cross. Lord, strengthen the faith You have given me and keep me ever faithful. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and grant me the courage to share the message of forgiveness and salvation with others. In Jesus' name. Amen.