

Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt Again

Genesis 43-45



The Story

The brothers had gone to Egypt. Why? What happened? What now?

When the grain that they had brought back from Egypt was gone, Jacob told his sons to go back to Egypt and buy more. Judah reminded Jacob that they couldn't return to Egypt without Benjamin along. Jacob blamed them for telling the Egyptian ruler about Benjamin. He said, "Why did you tell him?"

They answered Jacob, "The man asked us directly. Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother? So we told him the truth. How would we know he'd want us to bring Benjamin?"

Then Judah said, "Send the boy with me. I'll take care of him. If I don't bring him safely back, you can blame me the rest of my life."

So Jacob gave in and let them go and take Benjamin along. He also sent great presents along to obtain favor in the ruler's sight. They all took the money and more to repay. And Jacob sent them away with the Lord's blessings.

When they had arrived before Joseph, Joseph had his servants take them to his home to dine at noon with him.

The brothers didn't understand. They were afraid and thought Joseph would make them all slaves because of the money they had found in their sacks on the way home last time they came to Egypt. They pleaded with Joseph's servant and told him what had happened with the money.

But the servant said, "Peace be with you and do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your fathers has given you treasure in your sacks. I had your money." Then he

brought Simeon from prison to join them.

They cleaned up, got the gifts, and met Joseph at noon. They bowed down before him and Joseph asked them about their father and he met Benjamin. Then Joseph left and he cried in private. His brothers were seated to eat; oldest to youngest. They were amazed. When they were served Benjamin received five times as much as the other brothers. So they drank and were merry with him.

After the meal, Joseph commanded his servant to fill the brothers' sacks with food and put each man's money into the sacks as well. Also Joseph told his servant to place his silver cup in the sack of the youngest.

The next morning the brothers left. Joseph sent his chief servant after them and told him what to say.

When the servant caught up to them he said, "Why did you steal my lord's cup after he was so good to you?"

"Why are you accusing us? We brought back the money we found. We are honest. If you find the cup let that man die and the rest of us will be your slaves.

The servant answered, "Whoever has the cup can be my slave and the rest can go free."

When Joseph's servant searched the sacks of grain, he found the cup in Benjamin's sack. Then Joseph's brothers tore their clothes and each man returned to the city with Joseph's

servant.

When they came before Joseph, they all fell before him and Judah pleaded for Benjamin. Judah begged for his father's sake to take Benjamin's place in prison.

Then Joseph couldn't hold back anymore and he commanded all but his brothers to leave the room, but everyone heard his loud cries. "I am Joseph," he said, "Is father still alive? Please come here. I am Joseph. You sold me into slavery, but God was with me and set me as ruler to save lives. There are still 5 years of famine left. Go, tell my father I am a ruler here and he should come be with me to live." He hugged, kissed, and cried with his brothers.

When Pharaoh heard of Joseph's family, he was pleased and told Joseph to send for his father's household. Pharaoh would give

them the best of the land of Egypt. He said, "You would eat the fat of the land."

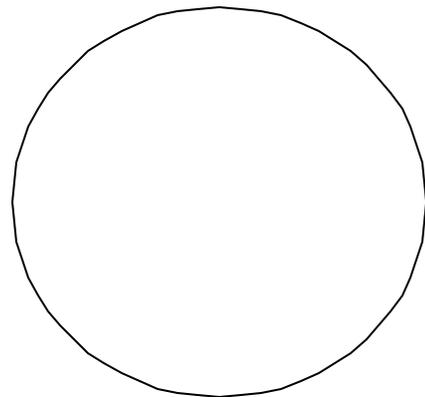
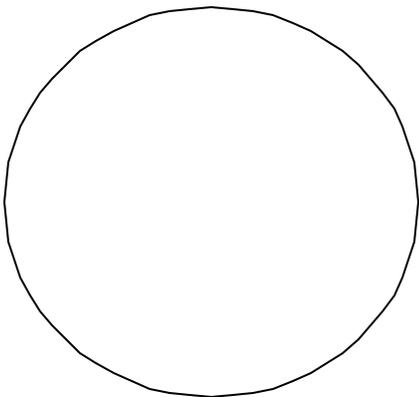
Joseph sent the brothers home to Canaan with carts to ride in, provisions for the journey, changes of garments. Benjamin was given 30 pieces of silver and 10 donkeys loaded with the goods from Egypt.

Joseph said, "Do not be troubled on your way home! Go and bring my father to me!"

They arrived home and told Jacob that Joseph was alive! They told their father everything that they had said and done.

Jacob believed them and said, "Joseph my son is still alive! I will go and see him before I die."

Activity One - The Bible tells us that Joseph cried. Why do you think he cried? Why do you cry? Make a face with tears and sadness on the left and a smiling face on the right.

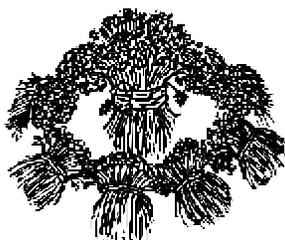
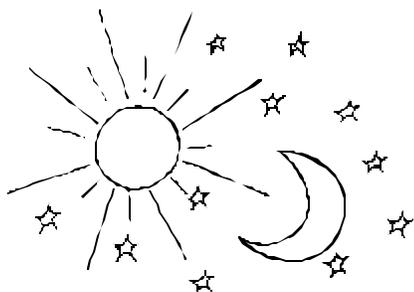


cry: sad, hurt, sorry, happy

smile: happy, joy because we are forgiven

The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.

Activity Two - Look at the three pictures below. Do you remember the dreams of Joseph? Draw a line from the dreams to the picture of the brothers bowing down to Joseph.



God keeps His promises. He loves us and forgives us.

Passages

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

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Hymn - TLH #435 v. 2

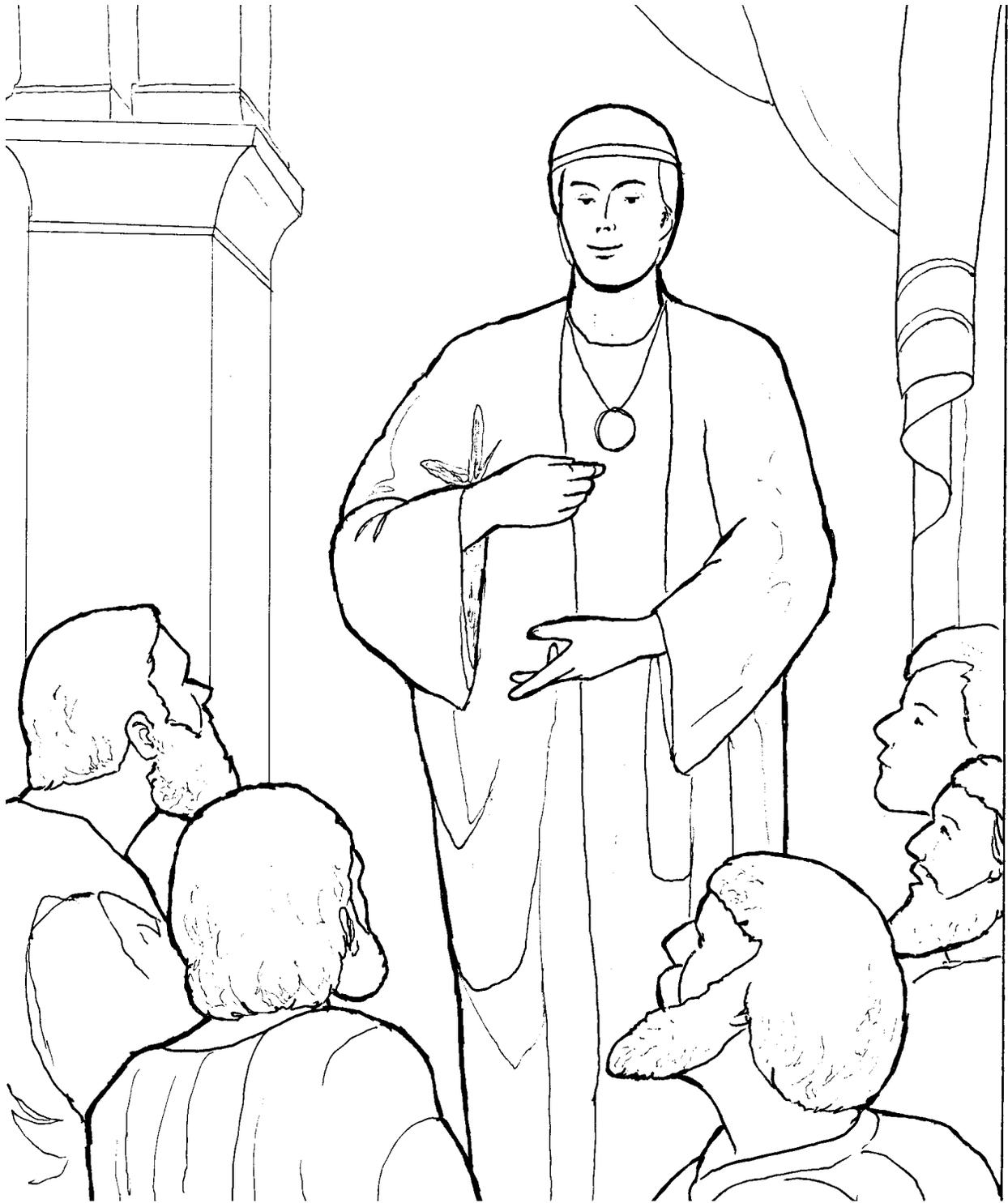
In Thee I place my trust,
On Thee I calmly rest;
I know Thee good, I know Thee just,
And count Thy choice the best.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, You have shown me how much I am loved by my Father in heaven. Help me to remember that no matter what I have done wrong, God the Father has freely forgiven me of all my sins for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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But the servant said, "Peace be with you and do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your fathers has given you treasure in your sacks. I had your money." Then he brought Simeon from prison to join them.

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about their father and he met Benjamin. Then Joseph left and he cried in private. His brothers were seated to eat; oldest to youngest. They were amazed! When they were served, Benjamin received five times as much as the other brothers. So they drank and were merry with him.

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Then Joseph couldn't hold back anymore and he commanded all but his brothers to leave the room. "I am Joseph," he said, "Is father still alive?"

Please come here. I am Joseph. You sold me into slavery, but God was with me and set me as ruler to save lives. There are still five years of famine left. Go, tell my father I am a ruler here and he should come and live with me." He hugged, kissed his brothers, and cried with them.

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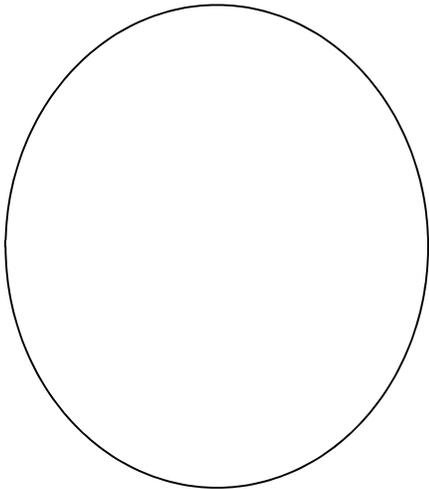
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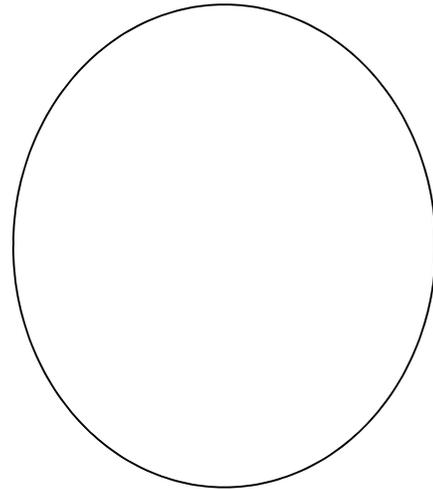
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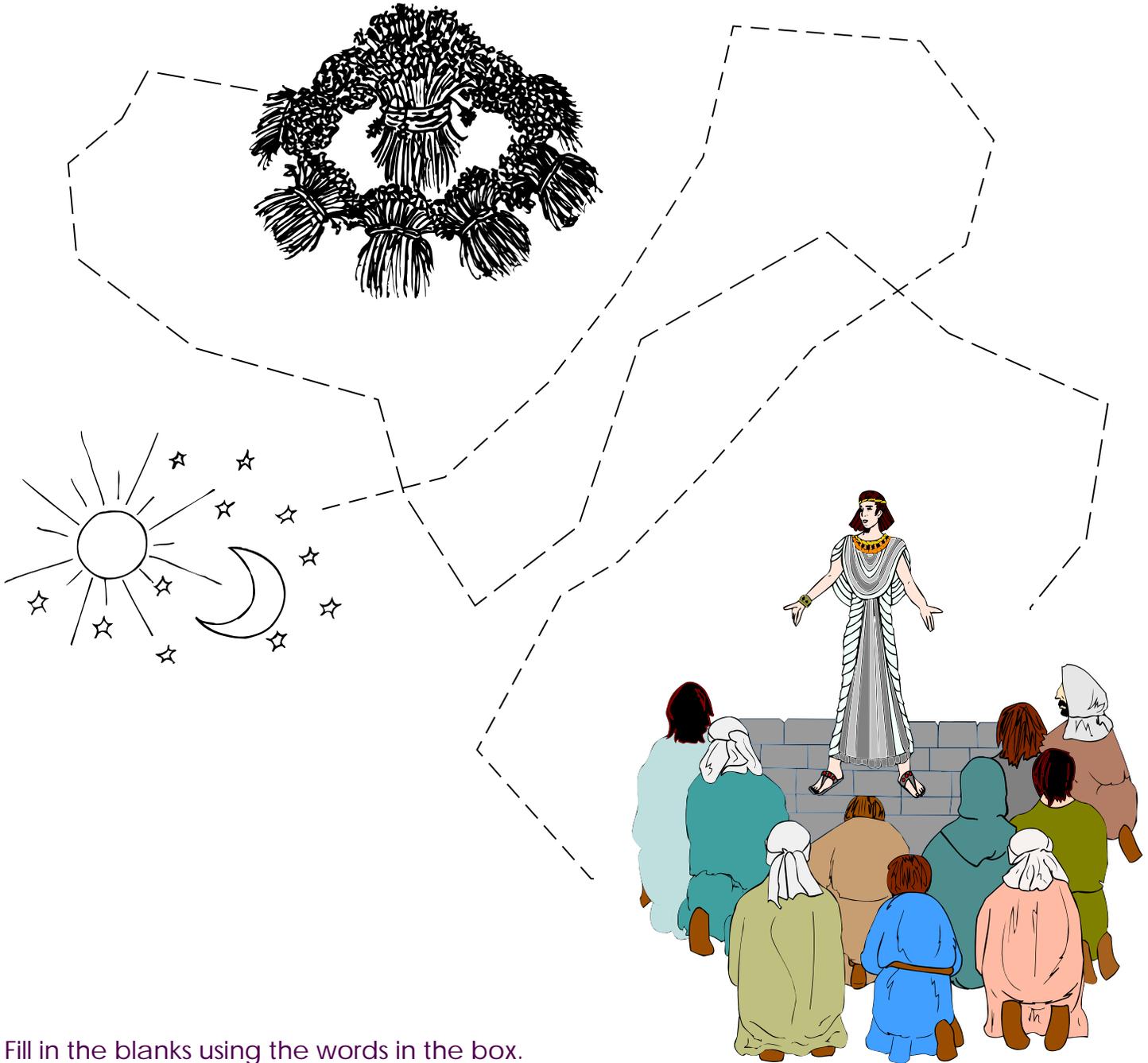
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The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.

Activity Two - Look at the three pictures below. Do you remember the dreams of Joseph? Follow the lines from the dreams to the picture of the brothers bowing down to Joseph.



Fill in the blanks using the words in the box.

God keeps his _____. He _____ us
and _____ us.

forgives promises loves

Passages

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

Matthew 6:12 And FORGIVE us our trespasses as we FORGIVE those who trespass against us.

Copy the word FORGIVE in the boxes below.

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Hymn - TLH #435 2, 4

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.

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

Prayer

Dear Jesus,

in this Bible truth You have shown me how much I am loved by my Father in heaven. Help me to remember at all times that no matter what I have done wrong, God the Father has freely forgiven me of all my sins for Jesus' sake. Grant me an extra measure of Your Holy Spirit to turn me from my sinful ways to follow You. In Jesus' name I ask this. Amen.

Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt Again

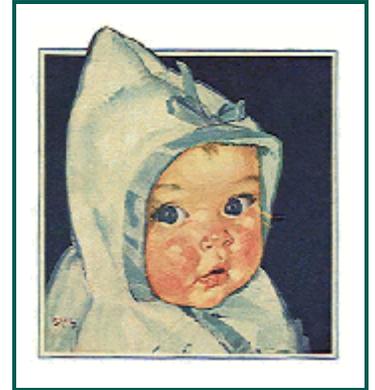
Genesis 43-45

Imagine a parent who would take a syringe containing a disease and inject the disease into his/her infant's blood stream. This certainly would be a bad thing, right!?

The truth is this injection of disease can actually help save a child's life! How you ask? Good question, but before we go on let's recognize that this is a scenario that surely looked bad, or wrong, at first. Let's find out how it is indeed good for an infant.

The act of injection referred to earlier is called an immunization. Our bodies are better at fighting disease the 'second time around.' So, in an immunization a weakened form of the disease is introduced to the child's blood stream so the child's immune system can learn to fight the disease. The idea is once the immune system learns to fight, using a weakened enemy, it will be better prepared if a stronger form of the disease attacks!

In today's lesson we will acknowledge how God is in control of our lives and try to identify how He takes things that seem bad to us and turns them into good - life saving, **soul saving** good!



Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for allowing us to meet again today to study Your Word. Help us apply this lesson to our own lives so that our faith in Your Son, Jesus, is strengthened. 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 - Answer the following from the story. *(Teacher should read through questions beforehand and guide discussion during the reading to emphasize important parts of the reading.)*

1. Can you identify the ‘bad’ event that brought Joseph’s brothers back to Egypt?
2. What great benefit did the brothers gain by returning to Egypt?
3. Jacob worried about sending Benjamin. This was evidence of his lack of trust that the Lord does indeed work all things out to our good. It is easy for us to have such a lack of trust as well. What good was the Lord working out for Jacob when he was asked to send his son Benjamin to Egypt?
4. Forgiveness of sins is one of the greatest gifts God gives us. The Lord used Joseph as a tool to bring the brothers to repentance and recognize the forgiveness they have - which leads then to a ‘change of heart.’ Quote evidence from Scripture that the brothers have indeed been led to a change in the way they act.
5. How could Judah’s actions in this section of scripture be a picture of Christ?

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss the following.

Try to come up with a time in your life when you feel the Lord was turning something bad into your good.

Your Turn

Concordance Activity:

N Search for passages that show God is in control of our lives.

Passages

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

Proverbs 3:5,6 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

Isaiah 42:16 - I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, and not forsake them.

Matthew 6:25 - "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

Philippians 4:6,7 - Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Hymn - TLH #435

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

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

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.

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

Prayer ACTivity

Write a prayer that will remind us of the main points presented in this lesson. Use the acronym ACTS as explained below.

A (Acknowledge who you are praying to along with a characteristic)

Ex - Dear just and forgiving Father in Heaven.

C (Confess)

Ex. - We admit that we sinfully resist the correction of Your Word. We ,at times. lack the wisdom to see that it is out of love for our souls that You instruct our parents to punish us.

T (Thank)

Ex. - We praise You for Your indescribable love that led You to send Your Son to save us from our sins and for those you have placed over us to help us recognize our need for repentance.

S (Supplicate - ask)

Ex. - We ask for the continued blessing of the Holy Spirit to lead us to confess and repent of our sins and that through Christ we may one day be with You in heaven. Amen.



STORY

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8/18/04

TEACHER PRAYER

Guide and bless me, dear Savior, so that I never forget that all things work together for good to those who love You. Bless me as I bring this truth to Your lambs. Grant me the faith, strength, and patience I need to be faithful in my calling to the lambs You have placed under my care. In Jesus' saving name. Amen.

VOCABULARY

famine: a time in which crops failed to grow and there was not enough food

surety: one who will be responsible for another; a guarantee

bereaved: to be deprived of something or someone, especially by death

repaid evil for good: to do something evil to someone who has done good to you; in this case stealing from a man who showed kindness

abomination: something that causes intense loathing or disgust in another.

divination: the act of foretelling future events

OUTER AIM

How God provided for Joseph's family to come to Egypt. Why God sent Jacob's family to Egypt.

INNER AIM

God sent Jacob and his family to Egypt to make a great nation of them. From this people (specifically Judah) the Savior Jesus would come. As God worked all things for the good of His people, so our Lord still does for us today. ***"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."*** (Romans 8:28)

BACKGROUND

The famine again brought the brothers to Egypt to buy grain. (Only ten brothers made the trip since Joseph and Simeon were already in Egypt). Unknown to the brothers their fate rested in the hands of Joseph, whom they had sold into slavery some twenty-odd years earlier. Joseph wanted to be certain that they had not only truly repented of their sins against him, but that they had also changed their sinful, selfish ways. He tested them by pretending to threaten Benjamin, their youngest brother. Joseph revealed himself to his brothers when they demonstrated that they would sacrifice themselves rather than see harm come to Benjamin. This was indication that a profound change had been worked in their hearts. The reunion that followed was therefore heartwarming and complete without reservation of any kind.

Certainly one will want to discuss the forgiveness the brothers received and the joy at finding out their brother was alive. What relief they must have felt in knowing that the sin that had been burning in their hearts was forgiven. Joseph certainly had the power and could have made his brothers suffer greatly for their sin. We see in Joseph a true man of God who was both loving and forgiving. The chastening of the Lord through Joseph had brought the brothers to repentance and forgiveness. The brothers could now see, by faith, that God had sent Joseph to save lives. The fact that God turned their evil plan to serve His purpose does not excuse the sin they committed. It does demonstrate to

us that our loving and gracious God is merciful and long suffering toward us all. God does not want anyone to die in unbelief.

Chapter 43

Jacob again demonstrates some of the same character flaws that marked his early years. He continues to allow one son, Simeon, to suffer in Egypt rather than risk his cherished son Benjamin in his mind the only living son of his beloved Rachel. He then blames his other sons for telling the truth to the "Egyptian ruler" (Joseph) when he asked them about other sons. Jacob then resorts to the tried and true tactic of gifting himself into the good favor of another (remember his attempt to pacify his brother Esau in Genesis 32). Finally Jacob realizes that he has no choice but to trust in the Lord and send Benjamin with his brothers. He is still wrestling with God.

Though Joseph invited his brothers to dine with him, they, the Egyptians, and Joseph himself were all actually served in different areas of Joseph's house to preserve proper protocol. It was an abomination for Egyptians to dine directly with foreigners.

The brothers were filled with wonder when they were seated according to age. They had evidently never revealed their relative ages to the Egyptians and very likely believed that "the Egyptian ruler" must have determined this by divination.

Joseph again tested his older brothers by showing favoritism to Benjamin. He was no doubt observing them closely for signs of the old jealousy he remember all too well.

Chapter 44

By implicating Benjamin for the theft of the ruler's cup, Joseph was arranging one final test for his brothers. He gave them the chance to escape with their lives if they would give up Benjamin. The brothers he had known in his youth would have gladly accepted Joseph's offer. His brothers now demonstrated the change that had been wrought in them by not only refusing to give up Benjamin but also by offering to take his place.

In Judah we see not only a changed man but also a picture of his most famous Descendant. As Judah was willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of both his brother Benjamin and his father, so Christ Jesus willingly sacrificed himself for all mankind.

Chapter 45

The moment of revelation was a private moment between Joseph and his brothers, therefore he orders all Egyptians from the room. Like Moses after him, living the life of a wealthy, powerful Egyptian had not changed Joseph's allegiance.

Joseph demonstrates no lingering animosity toward his brothers. He recognized the hand of God in what had happened and was thus able to truly forgive them.

There has been some attempt in modern times to characterize the land of Goshen as substandard land passed off to the Children of Israel as something valuable. This land was in fact very valuable and remains fertile to this day. The area was given to Joseph's family at a time when Joseph was at the height of his power in Egypt. All of Egypt, from Pharaoh on down, looked with grateful eyes upon Joseph as their national savior. It seems unlikely they would have rewarded him with poor land or that Joseph, second only to Pharaoh, would have accepted a poor region for his family. The picture of Jacob's sons revealing the news to their father that Joseph was alive is one of the

most poignant and heartwarming in all of the Bible. We should view this scene as but a small taste of the indescribable joy all Christians will one day experience in heaven.

STUDENT 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 my Savior Jesus. 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

PRESENTATION

The account is too long to read in class. It will be best if you tell this Bible truth in your own words using the written account as your guide. Emphasize that God worked all things for good for Jacob's family; and that He still does that for us today. God sent Jacob's family to Egypt to make a great nation of them. Above all, emphasize that it was from this nation, the Children of Israel (specifically the tribe of Judah) that the Savior of the world would come.

APPLICATION

1. God's grace is at the forefront of this Bible story. We see clearly the love and forgiveness He has for us and that we should have for one another. Emphasize in the first part of this lesson the repentance of the brothers (turning from sin and in faith turning to God for forgiveness). Emphasize the forgiving nature of our Lord and the excellent example provided by Joseph. To demonstrate how difficult it might be to freely forgive someone who actually does great harm to us, try to get your students to imagine how they would act and feel if they had been in Joseph's place. Because of our sinful nature we have a tendency to want to get even. Show the students how Joseph truly acted in a God-pleasing manner. Show them how in faith Joseph realized that what had happened to him God worked for the good of him and his family. Encourage them to look for God's hand in everything that happens to them, good and bad.
2. There are times when we can't understand how something can be working for our good (sickness, sadness, etc.) and when it is very difficult for us to understand why God allowed something to happen to us or to someone we love. In faith (believing what we cannot prove) we cling only to the promise of our Lord: "***And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.***" (Romans 8:28) We will probably not understand why God allows what He does allow until we arrive in heaven.
3. Impress upon the students that we are all members of a family through our faith in Jesus. Our Lord gives many wonderful blessings to us as part of His family. Have the children give examples (e.g., forgiveness, salvation, peace, comfort, fellowship, confirmation class, earthly blessings, etc.) When we are brought to faith in Jesus as our Savior, God becomes our dear Father and we His dear children. What a precious blessing it is to know that we are members of God's family through Spirit-worked faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Ask the children to think of a Christian love done who has "fallen asleep in the Lord." Remind the student that one day he or she will be united with that loved one in heaven. This is only possible because Jesus has paid for all of our sins on the cross.

Additional Teacher's Aids

What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss the following.

(Try to lead discussion of the Lord's hand in our lives turning things we thought we bad into good.)

(Examples: Woman is followed by a trucker in the middle of the night after she leaves a gas station. She can't seem to shake him even when she exits and reenters the highway. Finally she stops at another gas station and runs inside to call the police, as she does the trucker goes to the her car and pulls a man out of the back seat! She felt the trucker was bad...now she understands how he is good. Many events in our lives can be like this.

I can remember a difficult break up in high school. I felt empty, the only thing that seem to fill the void was the time I spent in devotion with my Lord. This bad break up definitely strengthened my relationship with the Lord. How about the man who was a slave, then falsely imprisoned, and ended up ruling...okay we're back to Joseph.)

Prayer ACTivity

Guide the students is writing a group prayer that reiterates main lessons of the day. This acrostic approach can help the students remember how to build a prayer.

ACTS

I've found it helpful to assign groups to work on each 'letter' of the prayer and then use an overhead projector transparency and have a leader from each group write their part of the prayer where everyone can see and pray it at the end of class. We also used a secretary to keep a log of each prayer we wrote and the reference it was based on with the intention of printing a class prayer booklet.

A (Acknowledge who you are praying to along with a characteristic)

Ex - Dear just and forgiving Father in Heaven.

C (Confess)

Ex. - We admit that we sinfully resist the correction Your Word. We at times lack the wisdom to see that it is out of love for our souls that You instruct our parents to punish us.

T (Thank)

Ex. - We praise You for Your indescribable love that led You to send Your Son to save us from our sins and for those you have placed over us to help us recognize our need for repentance.

S (Supplicate - ask)

Ex. - We ask for the continued blessing of the Holy Spirit to lead us to confess and repent of our sins and that through Christ we may one day be with You in heaven. Amen.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

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

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

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

Middle

Luke 6:27 - *But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.*

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

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

Upper

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

Jeremiah 31:34 - *No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*

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

HYMN CHOICES

“Oh, Blest the House, Whate’er Befall” TLH #625:1, 2

“Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken” TLH #423:3

“My Spirit On Thy Care” TLH #435:1 & 4

“With The Lord Begin Thy Task” TLH #540:1 & 4

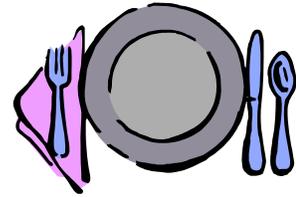
Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt Again

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	

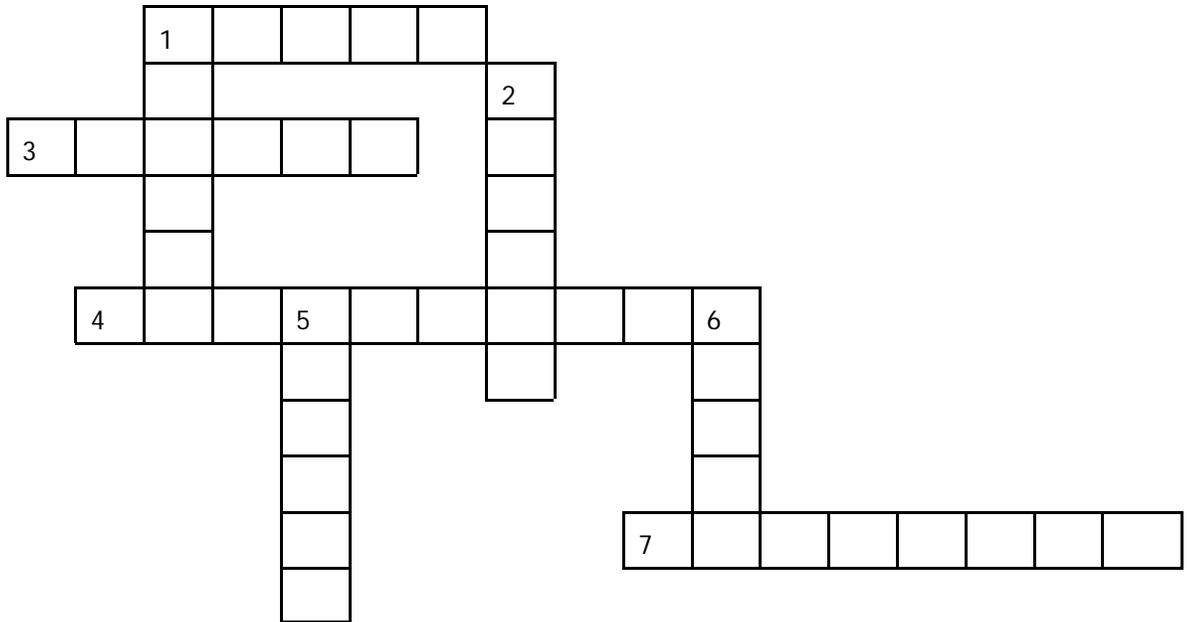
Across

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.