

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 3 – Lesson 10
Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 39, 41)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord is always present with us and watching over us.
- B. Every place mentioned in the Word has a special meaning.
- C. Obedience to the Lord enables one to receive understanding.
- D. If we trust in the Lord and obey His commandments, His power will always protect us.

II. Story Circle

A. Introduction

- 1. Last time we talked about Joseph, Jacob's 11th son, and how his 10 older brothers hated him. Do you remember what terrible thing they did to Joseph? (Sold him to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver)
- 2. Where did Joseph end up as a slave? (In Egypt, in the house of Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard)

B. Tell/Read the Story

- 1. We read this in the Word about what happened to Joseph when he worked for Potiphar:
 - a. The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man.... And his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favor in his sight and served him. Then [Potiphar] made him overseer of his house... [and] the Lord blessed [Potiphar's] house for Joseph's sake. (Gen. 39:2,3,4,5)
 - b. Because Joseph believed in the Lord and obeyed Him, the Lord made things go very well for him, and he was happy and successful, even though he was a slave.
- 2. But then something sad happened. Potiphar's wife was angry with Joseph because of her own wickedness, so she lied about Joseph to Potiphar. Potiphar believed her and put Joseph into prison! But Joseph had done nothing wrong.

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3. Then we read in the Word:
 - a. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison.... The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's hand, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper. (Gen. 39:21,22,23)
 - b. Even after having 2 terrible things happen to him— being sold by his brothers and being put into prison— Joseph was still a good man who believed in and obeyed the Lord. So the Lord was with him and took care of him.
4. After Joseph had been in prison 2 full years, Pharaoh, the ruler of all Egypt, had 2 dreams that troubled him. None of Pharaoh's magicians and wise men could interpret the dreams. But someone who had known Joseph in prison remembered that he could interpret dreams and told this to Pharaoh. Let's read about what happened. [Read Gen. 41:14-28,32]
5. After Joseph explained the dreams, he gave Pharaoh some advice. This is what he told him: [Read Gen. 41:33-41]
6. Suddenly, from being a prisoner, Joseph found himself the second most powerful man in all Egypt! He not only had the job of saving food for the famine years, but he also wore Pharaoh's signet ring (a sign of power and authority), garments of fine linen, and a gold chain around his neck; he rode in Pharaoh's second chariot; and Pharaoh gave him an Egyptian wife!
7. Let's read a little more of the Joseph story. [Read Gen. 41:46-54, 57]

C. Ideas to Discuss

1. In whose house in Egypt was Joseph a slave? (Potiphar)
2. What was Joseph's job there? (Overseer of the house)
3. Why was Joseph put into prison? (Potiphar's wife told lies about him, so Potiphar put him into prison.)
4. How did Joseph do in prison? (Very well; the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners.)
5. How long was Joseph in prison before he was asked to interpret Pharaoh's troubling dreams? (2 years)
6. Joseph didn't take the credit for being able to interpret the dreams. Why was he able to interpret dreams? (The Lord showed him the meanings of dreams.)

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7. Can you tell me about Pharaoh's 2 dreams? (Seven fat cows came out of river and fed; seven ugly & gaunt [skinny] cows came out of river and ate the fat ones, but were just as ugly as before. Seven good heads on one stalk; seven thin heads on another ate up the good ones.)
8. What was the Lord trying to tell Pharaoh with these dreams? (Seven good cows/seven good heads = 7 years of plenty. Seven ugly cows/seven thin heads = 7 years of famine)
9. What did Joseph suggest that Pharaoh do about this problem? (Set a wise man over officers to collect 1/5 of produce during the good years so there would be food saved up for famine time.)
10. Pharaoh took his advice. Whom did he choose for this very important job, and why? (Joseph; because Joseph must have been wise for the Lord to show him the meanings of the dreams.)
11. What things did Pharaoh give to Joseph? (Signet ring, fine linen garments, gold chain around his neck, the 2nd chariot, an Egyptian wife)
12. Joseph and his wife had two sons. What were their names? (Manasseh and Ephraim)

E. Further Ideas

1. Wherever Joseph went, the Lord was with him no matter how awful a situation he was in.
 - a. Joseph was only a slave, but the Lord caused him to be raised up by Potiphar to the most responsible job in the house, in charge of everyone and everything Potiphar owned.
 - b. And when he was in prison, the Lord caused Joseph to be raised up over the other prisoners by the keeper of the prison.
2. If Joseph had been an evil person or one who didn't believe in the Lord, do you think the same good things would have happened to him? Would the Lord have been able to help him as much as He did? (No)
3. The Lord could be with Joseph to help him and protect him because Joseph believed in the Lord and obeyed Him. The more we listen to the Lord and try to do as He asks, the more He can help us, just as He was able to help Joseph.

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III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "Pharaoh's Dream," LORI'S SONGS I (Side I, 6th song)
2. "Heav'nly Father, Thou art near," Hymnal #158. (Talk about how Joseph would have felt lonely and sad about being a slave and about being put into prison, and he would have prayed to the Lord, perhaps with words like in this song.)

B. Activities

1. If there's time, review the names of Jacob's 12 sons in birth order (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, Benjamin).

C. Project: A Gold Chain for Joseph's Neck (Gen. 41:42)

1. Method 1:
 - a. Materials: Several kinds of tubular pasta; string, shoelaces, yarn, dental floss, or gold cord for stringing; large-eye needles (optional); can of gold spray paint
 - b. Before class: Spray paint the pasta (outdoors).
 - c. In class: Cut a length of string for each child. Thread the golden pasta onto the string and tie to make a gold neck chain.
2. Method 2: See *Sunday School Activity Book*, lesson 27, "For the Little Ones" for another method.

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Illustrations of Joseph in Potiphar's house, in prison, before Pharaoh.
- B. Pictures of Egyptian Pharaohs to show their style of dress, jewelry, etc. (Pictures of items from King Tut's tomb could give children a good idea of the ornate style and of Egyptian art and jewelry.)

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. The Sower, Vol. I, "Plenty and Famine," (Gen. 41), pp. 160-165.
- B. Dole's Bible Study Notes, Vol. I, "Joseph in Prison," (Gen. 39:40), pp. 389-403 (especially Junior level).
- C. Dole's Bible Study Notes, Vol. I, "Joseph, Ruler of Egypt," (Gen. 41), pp. 404-416 (especially Junior level).