

WEEK 8: GOD AT WORK USING HIS SERVANT JOSEPH
DAY 1: MAGICIANS AND WISE MEN COULD NOT HELP PHARAOH
Genesis 41:1-24

1. We greet you as you begin another week of lessons. In this week we will see how God was still at work in the world. He was using His servant Joseph.

What did Joseph learn in his 13 years as a slave and in prison? _____

2. Joseph learned to wait for God. In today's lesson we will read more about dreams. Pharaoh, the great king of Egypt, had two dreams. Pharaoh called for all the magicians and wise men to help him. The magicians and wise men were like the witchdoctors and magicians in Africa today. Today we will learn:

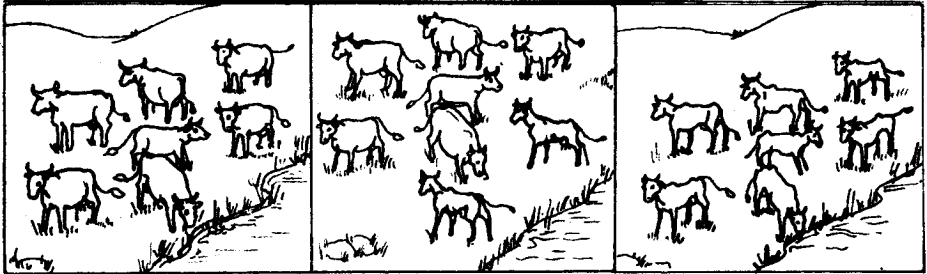
When Pharaoh dreamed, all the magicians and wise men of Egypt could not give him any help.

There are two reasons why God has told His people not to go to magicians and wise men:

- (1) That help comes from Satan.
- (2) It shows lack of faith in God.

Stop now and read about Pharaoh's dreams. Read Genesis 41:1 to 8.

3. Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, had two strange dreams.



He dreamed that seven fat cows were eaten by seven very thin cows.



He dreamed that seven fat ears of grain were eaten by seven very thin ears.

Why was Pharaoh's spirit troubled? _____

4. Pharaoh was troubled because of his dreams. He did not know what his dreams meant for his life. Pharaoh wanted help. He wanted to know the meaning of his dreams.

Read Genesis 41:8 again. Whom did Pharaoh call to help him? _____

5. He called all the magicians and wise men. There were many magicians in Egypt. These men tried to understand difficult matters by using magic. They used power given to them by Satan to know and do things.

Did the magicians and wise men get their power from God? _____

6. The power of the magicians and wise men came from Satan. We cannot work with Satan and God at the same time. Pharaoh and the people of Egypt did not love God. They did not know His ways. When they were in trouble they called for magicians. All the magicians and wise men in the country went to help Pharaoh. They went with many books about dreams and their meanings.

Were all the magicians and wise men of Egypt able to tell Pharaoh the meaning of the dream? _____

7. They could not give him any help. The Bible says that no one could give Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams. Then Pharaoh's butler remembered the slave he had met in prison. Joseph had told him the meaning of his dream. So the butler told Pharaoh about Joseph. Pharaoh sent for Joseph.

Read Genesis 41:14 to 16 in your Bible. Whom did Joseph say could give Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams? _____

8. Joseph was a faithful witness to his God. All the magicians and wise men could not give Pharaoh any help. But Joseph said that God could and would help Pharaoh.

Today, Christians sometimes have hard things in their lives. There are things they do not understand. They may want to know why certain things are happening.

Are Christians sometimes tempted to go to magicians for help? _____

9. Sometimes a Christian's family tells him to go to such men. Sometimes Christians are tempted to go to such men for help. But let us read the commands God has given His people. Mediums and wizards are like magicians and wise men.

Leviticus 19:31:

Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 20:6:

If a person turns to mediums or wizards, playing the harlot after them, I will set my face against that person, and will cut him off from among his people.

In these verses what does God tell His people not to do? _____

10. They should not turn to mediums or wizards. They should not go to magicians and wise men. This is the command which God has given us. Today we will learn two reasons why we should not go to them.

- (1) That help comes from Satan.
- (2) It shows lack of faith in God.

When Pharaoh dreamed, how much help were all the magicians and wise men of Egypt able to give him? _____

11. They were not able to give him any help. Sometimes it seems that magicians help. A sick person may get better for a while. The one asking for help may get some power for a while. But in the end there is only more trouble. God has told His people not to go to magicians and wise men for help. That help comes from Satan. In the Bible we read of the wisdom from God and the wisdom of this world. Satan is the prince of this world. People are under God's control, or they are under Satan's control.

If you are a child of God and need help, do you want to go to a person under God's control or Satan's control? _____

12. I think you want help from a person under God's control. To get help from someone under Satan's control is very dangerous.

I know a certain church leader in a village in Tanzania. Each Sunday he led the meeting in the church. A few years ago the daughter of his brother was sick. The church leader took his brother's daughter to a witchdoctor 30 kilometres away. He asked the witchdoctor why his brother's daughter was sick.

Today some Christians still go to magicians and witchdoctors for help. But where does that help come from? _____

13. Many Christians do not know where the help of magicians comes from. It comes from Satan. That church leader in Tanzania soon had trouble in his life. He did not want to preach any more. He did not like to talk to others about the Lord Jesus. He had become confused.

Why has God told His people not to go to magicians and wise men for help?

- (1) _____
(2) It shows lack of faith in God.

14. That help comes from Satan. God does not want His children to be hurt. That is why He tells us not to go magicians for help.

Today we are learning two reasons why we should not go to magicians and wise men for help:

- (1) That help comes from Satan.
(2) It shows lack of faith in God.

When we try to get help from Satan, whom are we not trusting? _____

15. When we go to magicians and wise men, we are not trusting God. God has made many promises to His people. He has promised to help and guide them. God wants us to believe His promises. He wants us to have faith in Him.

Isaiah 41:10:

Fear not, for I am with you, be not discouraged, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Do you think that the church leader in Tanzania had faith in God? _____

16. Maybe you answered Yes or No. I do not think he had faith in God's promises or power. He did not believe that God was able to help him. This is the reason why he went to the witchdoctor. He thought that the witchdoctor had more power than God.

How did the church leader show his lack of faith in God? _____

17. He showed his lack of faith by going to a witchdoctor for help. Jesus has made a wonderful promise to all who follow Him.

John 16:13:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.

Jesus has promised that the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. He will guide us into the truth about things hard to understand. Lack of faith in God is one reason why Christians do not ask for His help.

What is the second reason why God has told His people not to go to magicians and wise men for help?

- (1) That help comes from Satan.
(2) _____

18. The second reason is that it shows lack of faith in God. Think about the Christians where you live.

Do they know that it is dangerous to go to magicians and wise men for help? _____

Do they know why God has told them not to go to such men? _____

What can you do to help a Christian who has gone to such a person?

19. Be ready to share your answer in class.

When Pharaoh dreamed, how much help were all the magicians and wise men of Egypt able to give him? _____

Why has God told His people not to go to magicians and wise men for help?

(1) _____

(2) _____

WEEK 8: GOD AT WORK USING HIS SERVANT JOSEPH
DAY 2: JOSEPH HELPED PHARAOH, THE RULER OF EGYPT
Genesis 41:25-36

1. When Pharaoh dreamed, what help were all the magicians and all the wise men of Egypt able to give him? _____

Why has God told His people not to go to magicians and wise men for help?

(1) _____

(2) _____

2. The magicians and wise men could not give him any help. God has told us not to go to magicians because that help comes from Satan. And it shows lack of faith in God. But Joseph, the man of God, was able to help Pharaoh. Today we will see two ways in which the man of God was a blessing to an important ruler.

(1) He told Pharaoh what God had shown.

(2) He gave Pharaoh wise advice.

Pharaoh was troubled by his dreams. Who was called out of prison to help Pharaoh? _____

3. The prisoner, Joseph, was called to help Pharaoh. No one else in all the land of Egypt was able to help their ruler. Egypt was an important nation when Pharaoh was ruler.

Only a little rain falls in Egypt. People use water from the great river Nile. The Nile River flows from Eastern Africa. In Eastern Africa, there are usually big rains each year. But sometimes there is drought.

Most years there is much water in the river Nile. So people get a good harvest twice a year, and there is much food. For hundreds of years Egypt sold grain to other nations. Egypt was an important nation.

Was the ruler that Joseph talked to an important one, or a small one? _____

4. Joseph was a slave. But he was a man of God. He was called to help Pharaoh, the important ruler of Egypt. Joseph listened while Pharaoh told him his dreams. He heard about seven fat cows eaten by seven very thin cows. He heard of seven fat ears of grain eaten by seven very thin ears of grain. Joseph knew that this dream was from God.

Take your Bible now and read Genesis 41:25 to 36. Read verse 25 again. By giving Pharaoh these dreams, what had God done for Pharaoh? _____

5. God had shown Pharaoh what he was going to do. Joseph said that the seven fat cows and seven fat ears were years. There would be seven years of much food. The seven thin cows and seven thin ears were years of great famine. The seven good years would come first. Then there would be seven years of famine in Egypt. Pharaoh had not understood the meaning of his dreams. He did not know God has spoken to him.

Who told Pharaoh what God had shown? _____

6. Joseph told Pharaoh this. Famine is a difficult thing. There is no rain. There are no crops. Animals die. Children are thirsty. People get thin and die. It was hard for Pharaoh to hear of a famine coming for seven years.

Read Genesis 41:28 again. Did Joseph hide the truth, or did he tell what God had shown? _____

7. Joseph did not hide the truth from Pharaoh. He told Pharaoh what God had shown. This was the first way in which Joseph was a blessing to Pharaoh.

Another man in the Bible had a hard job to tell people what God had shown. God told Jonah that after 40 days he would destroy the city of Nineveh. He would destroy it because of the sin of its people. So Jonah went to Nineveh and told what God had shown. Jonah's message was not easy for the people to hear. But the whole city believed God and repented. And God saved the city.

In what way was Jonah like Joseph? _____

8. Both men told what God had shown. Did you see how many times Joseph talked about God in the verses? I counted four times. Joseph honoured God before other men. Joseph talked plainly of what God had shown. God was able to use Joseph.

Do you remember? What did God want to bring to the world through Jacob's family? _____

9. God planned to bring blessing to the world through Jacob's family. And Joseph was Jacob's son. God used Joseph to bring blessing to an important ruler.

How was Joseph, the man of God, a blessing to Pharaoh?

(1) _____

(2) He gave Pharaoh wise advice.

10. Joseph told Pharaoh what God had shown. In this way he was a blessing to this great ruler.

But Joseph did more than tell Pharaoh what God had shown. Joseph gave Pharaoh wise advice.

Read Genesis 41:33 again. What kind of man did Joseph say should be put in charge of Egypt? _____

11. Joseph told Pharaoh that he needed a wise man. Then the slave gave the ruler this advice. For the seven good years they should store up one part in every five parts of grain. This grain should be put in big storehouses. This should be done in all of Egypt. Then there would be enough food when the seven bad years of famine came. In this way the lives of the people would be saved.

What kind of advice did Joseph give Pharaoh? _____

12. I think it was wise advice. God gave many gifts to Joseph. God helped him to give the meaning of dreams. He gave Joseph wisdom. God gave him the right words to say. God helped Joseph work out a good plan to save the people of Egypt. But Joseph was still a slave and a prisoner.

Was Joseph afraid, or did he give the wise advice to Pharaoh? _____

13. Joseph, the man of God was not afraid. God helped him to be brave. He gave the wise advice to Pharaoh. This advice was a blessing to Pharaoh. God wants to use His people to bring blessing to others. When God wants to bless many people, He often blesses their rulers.

Men of God today see that the rulers in their villages need help. They need to be told what God has shown in His Word. They also need wise advice from God.

How was Joseph, the man of God, a blessing to Pharaoh, an important ruler?

(1) He told Pharaoh what God had shown.

(2) _____

14. Joseph told Pharaoh what God had shown. He also gave Pharaoh wise advice. Our rulers leading villages and nations need to know what God had said. Leaders also are sinful men. They need to know about Jesus who saves men from their sin. They need to hear how God wants men to live their lives. They need wise advice.

Why do you think men of God sometimes do not give wise advice to their leaders or rulers? _____

15. Be ready to share your answer in class. Sometimes men of God are afraid of their rulers. Sometimes they think leaders have no problems or needs. Some men of God feel they do not have enough learning to help their leaders.

I know a leader in a big town in Kenya. This man has a good farm. He is rich. He also went to church every Sunday. Then he took a second wife. This caused much sorrow in his home. But not one man of God in the church went to speak to him about his life. No one gave him wise advice. After a time God spoke to him about what he had done. Later this leader spoke to the men in that church. He asked, "Why did you not come to talk to me about my life?"

How was Joseph, the man of God, a blessing to Pharaoh, an important ruler?

(1) _____

(2) _____

WEEK 8: GOD AT WORK USING HIS SERVANT JOSEPH
DAY 3: JOSEPH CONTINUED TO TRUST GOD

Genesis 41:37-46

1. How was Joseph, the man of God, a blessing to Pharaoh, an important ruler?

(1) _____

(2) _____

2. Joseph told Pharaoh what God had shown. He gave Pharaoh wise advice. In these ways, Joseph was a blessing to Pharaoh. Today we will learn:

Because Joseph continued to trust God, God blessed him. We will memorise Genesis 50:20.

In the Bible reading today we will see what Pharaoh did with Joseph's advice. Watch to see the many ways in which God blessed Joseph. Read Genesis 41:37 to 46.

3. Pharaoh and his servants thought Joseph's plan to save Egypt was a good one. Pharaoh did not know God. But he could see that Joseph was a special kind of man. Pharaoh said he could find no one else like Joseph.

So whom did Pharaoh put in charge of all the land of Egypt?

4. Pharaoh chose Joseph, the slave, to be in charge of all of Egypt. Joseph was 30 years old when he began to do this job. It had been 13 years since he first came to Egypt. Joseph had once been Potiphar's slave.

Genesis 39:5:

The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had, in house and field.

Who blessed Joseph's work in Potiphar's house? _____

5. The Lord was with Joseph. The Lord blessed Joseph's work. Even Potiphar, who did not know God, could see that the Lord was with Joseph. Joseph learned that he could trust God. And God blessed Joseph. God blessed Joseph in his life as a slave. Joseph was given the most important job in Potiphar's house.

When Joseph was a slave, who put Joseph in charge of all that he had? _____

6. Potiphar put Joseph in charge. But it was the Lord who caused him to do it. Joseph was a faithful overseer. That is one reason why he refused to lie with Potiphar's wife. But Potiphar believed his wife's lies and put Joseph in prison. And there too the Lord was with Joseph. God blessed Joseph's life in prison. He was put in charge of all the prisoners. Whatever Joseph did, it prospered.

In prison, whom did Joseph continue to trust? _____

7. Joseph was in prison for more than two years. Even in prison Joseph did not lose his faith in God. Joseph told other prisoners that the meaning of dreams comes from God.

For 13 years Joseph had not seen his father. He had no fellowship with another man of God. None of the Egyptians knew and loved the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

For all those 13 years what did Joseph continue to do? _____

8. As a slave and in prison Joseph continued to trust God. And God continued to bless Joseph. When Joseph was 30 years old, he stood before Pharaoh. He talked to him about his God.

Was Joseph wise when he was a young man? No. He was proud. He was foolish in the way he told his brothers of his dreams. Now Pharaoh saw that Joseph was wise. God had blessed Joseph with wisdom. He had learned wisdom as a slave and a prisoner.

Why did God continue to bless Joseph? _____

9. God blessed Joseph because he continued to trust God. Let us think about the ways in which God continued to bless Joseph.

Pharaoh gave Joseph a very important job. He put him in charge of all the land. Only Pharaoh was greater than Joseph. As well as an important job, Joseph was given freedom. He was a free man now and not a slave.

Do you think that freedom is a blessing from God? _____

10. I think you agree that freedom is a great blessing. Pharaoh also gave Joseph his own special ring. Instead of writing Pharaoh's name on new laws, Joseph pressed the ring on them. This made Pharaoh's mark on the laws.

Pharaoh also gave Joseph gifts. He gave him fine clothes. He gave him a special chain for his neck. This was only for important people. Pharaoh also gave Joseph a special cart with fine horses. Wherever Joseph went, people would show him much respect.



Pharaoh's ring.

Pharaoh gave him these things, but who really was blessing Joseph? _____

11. God continued to pour blessing on Joseph. Pharaoh gave Joseph a wife. Now he had someone with whom to share his life?

Read Genesis 41:39 to 43 again. Write three ways in which God blessed Joseph.

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

12. God blessed Joseph with spiritual gifts like wisdom. God blessed him with a wife, freedom, an important job, and respect. God also blessed him with things like clothes, a chain for his neck, and a way to travel.

What did God do for Joseph because he continued to trust God? _____

13. God blessed Joseph. Years later Joseph's brothers stood before him. Joseph was then a great ruler in Egypt. He had learned to trust God. So he could say these words to his brothers.

Genesis 50:20:

As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

Take time now to memorise this verse. Do not go on with the lesson until you can say it without looking at it.

Men may plan evil, but what does God plan for His children? _____

14. Joseph knew that God plans good for His children.

Without looking at the verse, write Genesis 50:20. _____

15. Look in your Bible to see if you wrote the verse right.

Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Rome:

Romans 8:28:

We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.

God works only good for His children. Joseph believed this to be true. When life is hard, our trust in God is tested.

Joseph was tested, but what did he continue to do? _____

16. Joseph continued to trust God.

Raheli is a friend of mine. She is a good Christian. She is a widow with six children, and is poor. She also cares for her old mother. Raheli works hard to have food for her family. A few years ago she planted a field of maize. For months she worked hard. The day she went to harvest her maize, it was all gone. Thieves had stolen it all the night before. That was the food for the whole year. Raheli came to visit me. I asked, "Raheli, whatever will you do?" Quickly, and with a smile, she said, "The Lord will take care of us." And the Lord did in a wonderful way.

What did Raheli do in this very hard test of her faith? _____

17. Raheli did not grumble or worry. She trusted God. In Matthew 6:25-33, Jesus promised His followers only a few things on earth. God has promised to give us enough to eat and drink, and enough to wear. But Jesus also promised His followers many spiritual gifts. He promised wisdom, peace, joy, love, hope, patience, and many other blessings. We may expect God to bless His children, if they continue to trust Him.

Do you expect God to bless you? _____

What blessings do you see in your life today? _____

18. Be ready to share your answers in class.

What did God do for Joseph, because he continued to trust God? _____

Write Genesis 50:20. _____

WEEK 8: GOD AT WORK USING HIS SERVANT JOSEPH
DAY 4: JOSEPH PREPARED FOR THE FAMINE IN EGYPT

Genesis 41:46-57

1. What did God do for Joseph, because he continued to trust God?

Write Genesis 50:20. _____

2. Because he continued to trust God, God blessed Joseph. Look in your Bible to see that you have written the verse right. Joseph told Pharaoh what God had shown. After seven good years, a terrible famine was coming to Egypt. Joseph gave Pharaoh wise advice about preparing for the famine. Let us learn:

During the seven years of great plenty, Joseph prepared for the famine.

Whom did Pharaoh make ruler of Egypt? _____

3. Joseph began his important job as ruler over all of Egypt. He began to prepare for the coming famine. He had the whole of the land of Egypt to prepare. They had to get ready for seven years of famine. But God showed that first there would be seven good years. There would be plenty of food for seven years.

For the first seven years after Joseph became ruler, what kind of years did they have in Egypt?

4. They had years of great plenty. Let us read what Joseph did during these seven years.

Stop and read Genesis 41:46 to 52. Did Joseph store up a little grain or much grain?

5. Joseph stored up so much grain that it was like the sand of the sea. There was so much grain it could not be measured. Joseph was faithful in the way he prepared for the famine.

Do you think Joseph worked hard to prepare for the famine?

6. I think he must have worked very hard. Joseph had to travel very far. He went over all the land of Egypt. There was much work to do in building big storehouses. In every city in the land, Joseph stored up food. The people brought grain into the cities from the fields. There was much hard work for seven years.

How long did Joseph work to prepare for the famine? _____

7. During the seven years of great plenty, Joseph prepared for the famine. During this time, Joseph's wife had two sons.

Sometimes children are given names that tell about the time they were born. In 1961 Tanzania became a free country. In that year many children were called "Uhuru." "Uhuru" is the Swahili word for freedom.

Joseph's sons also had names which said something. Joseph called his first-born son Manasseh. The second son he called Ephraim. Ephraim means, "God had made me fruitful in the land of my affliction (or trouble)."

Ephraim's name reminded people that he was born during the fruitful years. What was the father doing at this time? _____

8. Joseph used these years to prepare for the famine. He did not wait until the famine came to see what he would do. He did not say that he would just trust God to provide. Sometimes these words are just an excuse for being lazy. Joseph worked hard for seven years to prepare for the famine.

Did this mean that Joseph did not trust God to give food when famine came? _____

9. We will talk about your answer in class. Joseph trusted God's Word. He believed that it would be just as God said. Because Joseph trusted God, he prepared for the famine. Joseph was a man of God. God was planning to help people. God was using Joseph in this plan. God wanted to help the Egyptians. He also wanted to help the family of Jacob. God was using Joseph so that many people could be kept alive.

During the seven good years, what did Joseph do in Egypt? _____

10. Joseph prepared for the famine. He got the whole country ready for seven years without harvests.

Stop and read Genesis 41:53 to 47. What began to come in Egypt after the seven years of great plenty? _____

11. It was just as God had shown. After the seven years of great plenty, famine began to come. The famine was not only in Egypt. It was also in all the earth.

There was famine in all the lands, but which land had bread? _____

12. All the lands around Egypt had great trouble. Only in Egypt was there food. I am sure the people of Egypt were very glad that Joseph was their ruler.

Why was there food in Egypt? _____

13. There was food in Egypt because Joseph had prepared for the famine. The famine spread over all the land. Slowly all the food in people's houses was eaten. Then Joseph was able to open the big storehouses full of grain. There was more than enough food for all the people of Egypt. There was enough grain to sell to people from other lands.

Where did people from other lands go to buy grain? _____

14. The Bible says that all the earth went to Egypt to buy grain. Many people from other lands went to buy food. Joseph, the man of God, was a blessing to the nation of Egypt. He was a blessing to all the earth. God wants His people to be a blessing to their nation.

As well as trusting God, what else did Joseph do during the seven good years?

15. Joseph prepared for the famine. In our lives we prepare to do things. We prepare before we go on a journey. We prepare when we expect visitors to our homes. Each year we prepare fields before we plant. First a farmer clears the land of trees. Then he plows the land. He may put on manure or fertilizer. After he does all this to prepare, he plants the seed.

What happens if a man plants his crop and does not first prepare this fields?

16. Maybe you said that the seed does not grow well, or that the farmer gets a very poor harvest. This is because the farmer does not first prepare.

But sometimes we do God's work and do not first prepare. Maybe God's work for you is to lead a meeting. Maybe it is to go and preach. Or it may be to teach a Bible class, or a baptism class. Sometimes leaders who preach and teach on Sunday do not prepare. They say that they are trusting God. God will give them a message when they stand before their people.

If a man of God prepares before he preaches, does this show a lack of trust in God?

Do you prepare before you do God's work? _____

Why should you prepare before you try to work for God? _____

17. Be ready to share your answers in class.

You have prepared this lesson for the class time. Now prepare by praying for the class. Ask God to make it a time of great help and blessing.

18. During the seven good years, what did Joseph do in Egypt?

WEEK 8: GOD AT WORK USING HIS SERVANT JOSEPH
DAY 5: JOSEPH'S BROTHERS BOWED DOWN TO HIM

Genesis 42:1-38

1. This week we have learned many things from Joseph's life to help us. We pray that these lessons are a blessing to your life.

God blessed Joseph because he continued to trust God. Joseph learned that he could do this in many different matters. Joseph learned that he could trust God to repay his enemies. God repaid those who did evil to Joseph. Today we will learn what God did in Joseph's life to show that God does repay those who do evil.

(1) Joseph's brothers bowed down to him.

(2) Joseph's brothers asked him for help.

During the seven good years, what did Joseph do in Egypt? _____

2. Joseph prepared for the famine. When the seven years of famine came, there was food in Egypt. Joseph's father and brothers lived in the land of Canaan near Egypt. There was famine in Canaan. Jacob's family needed help. Jacob learned that there was food in Egypt.

Genesis 42:3:

So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.

Who went to Egypt for help? _____

3. Ten of Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy food. The youngest brother, Benjamin, stayed with his father in Canaan. Jacob was afraid that something would happen to Benjamin. He did not want to lose him as he had lost Joseph.

Now read Genesis 42:6 to 17. When Joseph's brothers got to Egypt, whom did they have to ask for help?

4. They did not know that the man selling grain was their brother. They asked him for help. It was 21 years since they sold Joseph. You remember that Joseph was only a youth of 17 then. Now he was a man about 38 years old. When they last saw Joseph, they had sold him as a slave. Now he was a great ruler in Egypt.

Read Genesis 42:6 again. When Joseph's brothers came before him, what did they do?

5. Joseph's brothers bowed down to him. Joseph knew that the ten men were his brothers. It was more than 20 years since he had seen them. It had taken a long time. But God was repaying Joseph's brothers for the evil they had done. They bowed down to Joseph. And they asked Joseph for help.

Why do you think Joseph's brothers bowed down? _____

6. Maybe you said they were showing respect. Maybe they were showing that they were humbly asking for help. Joseph must have remembered the dreams he had as a young man. He remembered how his brothers' sheaves had bowed down to his sheaf. He remembered how the sun, moon and stars had bowed down to him. Joseph's brothers had hated him for these dreams. His father had been angry and asked him this question.

Genesis 37:10:

Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?

But 21 years later, what did Joseph's brothers do when they stood before him in Egypt?

7. Joseph's brothers bowed down to him. That was something they never wanted to do. They had been very jealous of Joseph and hated him. They planned to kill him. They said these words.

Genesis 37:19-20:

Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him ... and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Instead of killing Joseph, they sold him. They thought they could get rid of Joseph. They thought they could get rid of his dreams as well. But man cannot destroy God's plans.

Who was in control of Joseph's life so that his dreams came true, and his brothers bowed down to him?

8. The Lord was in control of Joseph's life. The Lord was repaying those who had done so much evil to Joseph.

Remember what we learned. Because of their hatred and jealousy, what did Joseph's brothers do to him?

What did they do to their father?

9. Joseph's brothers did great evil. They sold Joseph as a slave, and they deceived their father. They thought that their evil deeds were hidden. They thought no one knew the truth about Joseph. But 21 years later, God brought them to Egypt. They had to face the brother they had treated so badly. Later they would have to tell the truth about selling Joseph. It is not easy to face up to sin. But God was putting things right.

In Joseph's life, how did God show that He does repay those who do evil?

(1) _____

(2) Joseph's brothers asked him for help.

10. Joseph's brothers bowed down to him. They bowed down to the one they had hated. They showed great respect. They had no thought that the great ruler of Egypt was their own brother. They told Joseph they had come to buy food. Joseph heard that his father was still alive. He heard that Benjamin was at home. He heard that one brother was no more. He had died. I am sure that Joseph was smiling inside, because they were talking about him

Who asked for help from Joseph? _____

11. It was Joseph's own brothers. They had done him so much evil. Most men go to a friend when they need help. It is hard to ask help from someone you have treated badly. But that is what Joseph's brothers did.

Even though they had done evil to Joseph, what did his brothers ask Joseph for?

12. Joseph's brothers needed food in the time of famine. They asked Joseph for help. Read what Joseph did.

Genesis 42:25:

Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions (or things they needed) for the journey.

Did Joseph repay his brothers for their evil, or did he help them? _____

13. Joseph had the chance to repay his brothers for their evil. Joseph could have given them bad grain. He could have kept them all in prison for many years. He could have killed them all. But Joseph did not repay them evil. He helped his brothers. He gave them more than they asked for. He gave them the things needed for their journey home. And in the top of the bags of grain was all the money they had paid. Joseph did not need to repay his brother's evil. God was doing that.

In Joseph's life, how did God show that He does repay those who do evil?

(1) Joseph's brothers bowed down to him.

(2) _____

14. Joseph's brothers bowed down to him. They asked him for help. Joseph did not pay back those who did evil to him. God has spoken to us about this.

Romans 12:19:

Beloved, never avenge (or pay back evil) yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance (or paying back) is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

Does God want His children to repay evil for evil?

From this verse, what has God promised to do to those who do evil? _____

15. God does not want His children to do evil to those who do evil to them. God Himself has promised to repay evil doers. God did this for Joseph.

Do you find it easy to trust God to repay those who do evil to you?

16. Be ready to talk about this in class.

In Joseph's life, how did God show that He does repay those who do evil?

(1) _____

(2) _____