

Lesson 034

Jacob Moves To Egypt

Genesis 45:17→50:26

MEMORY VERSE

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."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- Two small wagons (or large flat-bottomed baskets with a short rope tied on so that it may be pulled like a wagon), enough "stuff" so that each wagon can be filled to overflowing, masking tape for a starting line, and two coffee cans to represent "Egypt."
- Oyster crackers, and a set of cut-outs (money, livestock, land, myself) for each child.
- As many copies of the "all things" puzzle as the number of children in your class, scissors, glue and cardboard.

ATTENTION GRABBER! Going to Egypt

You will need two small wagons (or large flat-bottomed baskets with a short rope tied on so that it may be pulled like a wagon), enough "stuff" so that each wagon can be filled to overflowing, masking tape for a starting line, and two coffee cans to represent "Egypt".

Just think of all the work it was for Jacob and all his family to move! Put a masking tape starting line on the floor of your class and pile half of the stuff beside each wagon. Divide your class into teams for a relay. When you say "Travel to Egypt!" each team can fill the wagon or basket but only one person at a time may pull the wagon to Egypt each time. If any of the "stuff" falls off, the person pulling the wagon is the only one who may pick it up and replace it, and then he must return to the starting line with all of his "stuff." Let each child have a turn to "Go to Egypt."

LESSON TIME!

Over the past few weeks, we have been studying about the life of Joseph. In today's lesson, we see God's plan coming together with Joseph's father and all his family coming to live in Egypt with him. At this time, Joseph was second in charge to Pharaoh, the Egyptian King. It was during a

time of great famine. A famine is a time when there is not enough food for everyone, so Joseph sent for his father and his family so that he might provide for them. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

We have seen Joseph go through an awful lot of problems and trials in his life. But through it all, we have seen how God has been faithful. God used Joseph even when it seemed like everything was going wrong. Let's find out more about how God has everything under His control and how He desires to help His children.

GENESIS 45:17-20

17 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. 18 Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. 19 Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. 20 Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

Joseph's brothers returned to Canaan to tell their father about everything that has happened. They may have been a little frightened to tell their father about what had happened, especially since they had lied to him. At the same time, they may have been excited to let their father know that Joseph was still alive--what a blessing that would be to their father!

Israel (Jacob) sets out to go to Egypt. This is the beginning of the time that Israel dwells in the land of Egypt. The sons and families of Jacob prospered in Egypt for many years; however, we read in Exodus, that they eventually became slaves to the Egyptians. God will hear the cries of His people and, again, deliver them gloriously. God takes care of His people. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

GENESIS 46:1-6

So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am." So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there.

"I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes." Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts which Pharaoh had sent

to carry him. So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him.

Jacob, who is also called Israel, headed to Egypt with his family. He made a sacrifice to God, and God spoke to Jacob in a vision. God gave Jacob the promise that he would make a great nation of Jacob in Egypt. God also promised he would bring the nation back again. (This promise, the exodus, would be fulfilled 400 years later.) Sometimes, God asks us to do new and difficult things, but He promises to be with us, to guide us, and to provide for us. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

GENESIS 46:31-34

Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

'And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.' "So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' "that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

Joseph and his father's family were all shepherds. The Egyptians did not respect shepherds, but Joseph made sure that the Egyptians knew his family tended sheep. This allowed Joseph's family to live apart from the Egyptians and establish themselves as a separate nation, just as God had promised to make of them. They maintained a separate identity and did not become like the Egyptians.

Just like Joseph's family, we live around non-Christians. We are called to share God's love with them, but not to live and act as they do. Joseph's family lived in Egypt, but they were not Egyptians. We should be identified with Christ and not with those who live as non-Christians around us.

GENESIS 47:13-16

Now there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

So, when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed." Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you bread for your livestock, if the money is gone."

When all of the food was gone, the people came to Joseph to ask for food. He sold them food for their possessions until Joseph had gained all the material wealth for Pharaoh. But Jacob and his family prospered and multiplied in number. We continue to see God working in these circumstances to help His people. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

Help! I'm Hungry

You will need oyster crackers and a set of cut-outs (money, livestock, land, myself) for each child.

Seat children in a circle and pass out a set of cut outs to each child. You may want to choose a child to play Joseph, or you could do it yourself.

Ask your class what they think the Egyptians said to Joseph when all their food was gone. They probably said, "We're hungry; please let us buy food with our money." Have Joseph take up all the money and pass out one oyster cracker to each child. Then repeat with the livestock, the land, and finally the "myself" cutouts. This should reinforce the desperation of the famine.

GENESIS 48:11-20

And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!" So, Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him.

Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn.

And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has fed me all my life long to this day, "The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head." But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!' "And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

Jacob took Joseph's sons to bless them and to make them his. He claimed them as his own sons and gave them his blessing. He blessed the younger first and said He would be great and a father of many nations. The older brother, Manasseh, was not to be as great as Ephraim, the younger, but he would be great and multiply also.

GENESIS 49:1

And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days ...

Jacob called his twelve sons together, and he told them what was to become of them and their descendants. Jacob spoke prophecy concerning each of his sons. Each of his twelve sons became a tribe of the nation Israel and that which Jacob prophesied happened to the tribes. Jacob requested that he be buried in Canaan with his fathers, and he died.

GENESIS 50:4-6

Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying,

My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.' "And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

Joseph honored his father and buried him in Canaan as he had requested.

GENESIS 50:15-21

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying,

"Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father. "And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. "Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

After the death of their father, Joseph's brothers feared that, perhaps now, Joseph would take revenge on them for selling him into slavery. But Joseph knew that all of the things that happened to him were part of God's plan to bless His people. Joseph reassured his brothers and promised to help provide for them and their children. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

It is amazing how that God can turn the things that were meant for evil into things that are good. If we go through a difficult time, we can be confident, God will turn things meant for evil to things that are good for us too! Romans 8:31 declares, "If God is for us, who can be against us? We can give Him all our cares and trust Him. If we have Joseph's attitude and realize that God is working for good in our lives, we will not be bitter about our circumstances. God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

All Things Puzzle

You need copies of the "all things" puzzle. You may want to make just a few of these for your class to work on together or give each child one and let him cut it out and put it together.

Point out that God works all things together for good to those who love Him.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy and wonderful work in our lives.

