

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 2 • Unit 6 • Week 3

JOSEPH DURING THE FAMINE

OBJECTIVE:

To give an example of wisdom and obedience for us to follow.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Do: Bring a picture of an owl (perhaps enlarge and color the owl that can be used in the lesson application), and ask the children to look at it.

Ask: What do you think of when you see an owl? Do people often think of an owl as wise?

Answer: Yes. A wise person is someone who knows about many things, and applies them in a good way to his or her life. A wise person is also able to share that knowledge with others in a way that they can understand and use for good.

Ask: What makes the owl look wise?

Answer: He has big eyes and sits still like he is thinking.

Say: If we want to be wise, we must look in our Bibles with open eyes and we must sit still and think about what we find. Then we must use what we learned to make our lives and the lives of others better.

BIBLE LESSON:

Today we are going to learn about someone that lived a long, long time ago and who was wise. We find his story in the Bible in book of Genesis. His name is Joseph.

Ask: Do you remember Joseph who was given a coat of many colors, and how Joseph dreamed that he would be more powerful than his brothers and they would bow down to him?

Answer: Yes, this made his brothers angry, and they sold Joseph to traders for 20 shekels of silver.

Say: The traders took him as a slave to Egypt. Joseph was sold to Potiphar, an important man in Egypt. Joseph used his knowledge and wisdom to take care of Potiphar's business. This made Potiphar richer. However, Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph, and he was put into prison.

Ask: Can one use wisdom even in prison?

Answer: Yes! While in prison, Joseph wisely used his God-given powers to tell the meaning of the dreams of a butler and a baker. Their dreams came true.

Say: Two years later when the king of Egypt had two powerful dreams, he called all the wise men he knew to tell him what these dreams meant, but they could not. They did not have the power of God, but Joseph did. So Joseph was called before the king. The frightened king told Joseph his dreams, about cows and grains of wheat eating each other.

Ask: Can you tell what dreams mean?

Answer: No! Only God can.

Say: Joseph wisely gave God credit for being able to tell the king the meaning of his dreams. The two dreams both meant that there would be seven years when plenty of good food would grow. Then there would be seven years when food would not grow, and people would die because they had no food to eat. This is called a famine.

"What should I do?" asked the king. Joseph said, "Let the king pick out a wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt." He will appoint officers to collect one fifth of the produce of the land in the seven plentiful years, and store it for the bad years."

Ask: Do you remember what "one fifth" is?

Answer: One fifth is one out of every five. It meant that if you had five bags of grain, you must give one bag to be saved.

Say: The king was glad that he had a warning from God. Joseph's plan sounded good.

Then the king said, "Because God has shown you all this, there is no one as wise as you. You shall be over my house and all my people."

Ask: Why did the king think that Joseph was wise?

Answer: The king thought Joseph was wise because, he was in touch with God, and God told him what the dreams meant.

Ask: Does what happened look like the dreams Joseph had when he was only 17?

Answer: Yes! Joseph had received great power!

Say: The king gave Joseph a special ring, called a signet ring. When he showed anyone the ring, they knew that the king had given him power to tell them what to do, and everyone would obey him. Let's see if the rest of Joseph's dreams came true.

Joseph immediately went about saving one fifth of the food while there was plenty. He told the officers of the land to collect it. Everyone in Egypt did this with all the food they grew. The food was saved in big storage places in the cities.

Ask: Was it wise for the people to obey Joseph?

Answer: Yes, because the king's dreams came true. After seven years of plenty there was no rain, and the crops would not grow. The people did not have anything to eat.

Say: This was the "famine." The famine was over all the face of the earth. So all the countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain because the famine was severe in all lands. Joseph took the food from the storage places and sold it to the people so they would not die.

While Joseph was in power in Egypt he got married and had two sons. He named the first Manasseh. That name means making to forget. He named him that because in his happiness he forgot all the troubles he had been through.

The second son he called Ephraim, which means fruitfulness. He named him that because God made it possible for him to be wise and to produce much.

Now let's see what is happening to Joseph's father and brothers. The bad years of hunger were happening in their land also. They heard that those in Egypt had food, because they had stored food in the good years. Joseph's father, Jacob, then sent his 10 oldest sons to Egypt to see if they could get some food.

Everyone had to get Joseph's permission if they wanted to buy food, so the brothers went to Joseph, but they did not know who he was. They just knew he was the governor over all the land. They bowed down to him.

Ask: Did Joseph's dream about the sheaves bowing down to him come true?

Answer: Yes. Joseph gave them food, but he tested his brothers to see if they had learned to take care of each other. He made them leave their brother Simeon in his prison until they brought back their youngest brother, Benjamin. When they brought Benjamin back, they could get more food, and Simeon would be let out of prison.

Ask: Do you think that the brothers could be trusted to take care of Benjamin and see that Simeon was let out of prison after what they did to their brother Joseph?

Answer: The brothers said to each other, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother Joseph, for we saw his anguish when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us. God has found out our bad deed." They were very sorry for what they had done.

Say: Their father, Jacob, wasn't sure if he could trust them either, and did not want to let Benjamin go to Egypt. Finally, he let Benjamin go because they did not have any food, and all would die including Benjamin.

When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin he was very happy. He invited all his brothers including Simeon to a big meal. The brothers were surprised that the great governor would ask them. Joseph wisely still did not tell them who he was.

Joseph tested them once more. When they left with the food, he had a servant put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack of grain. Then after they left, he sent soldiers out to arrest them for stealing. They took Benjamin and were going to put him in prison. His brother Judah, pleaded with Joseph to let him go to prison, instead of Benjamin. So this showed Joseph that his brothers not only would not hurt each other, but that they would give their lives for each other.

Joseph always obeyed God, and tried to be like Him. God loves us, and forgives us when we are sorry and do the right thing. Joseph loved his brothers and forgave them when they were sorry and did the right thing.

Joseph then told them who he was. The brothers were afraid of what Joseph would do, but Joseph said, "Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to save lives." Joseph knew that if they had not sold him, he would not have been able to save the people from starving. It was God's plan that Joseph do this. After that they were all happy hugging each other.

He sent his brothers back to bring their father and all his family to Egypt. When they came, he gave them food and good land to live on for the rest of their lives.

Everyone was happy again.

If we always try to follow God's wise ways, even bad things, like Joseph being sold, can come out right (Romans 8:28).

Ask: What did Joseph know?

Answer: He knew he should obey God and all in authority. He was able to tell what dreams mean.

He knew how to take care of things.

Ask: Did Joseph wisely use his knowledge to help others?

Answer: Yes, he helped Potiphar to be richer, he helped the one in charge of the prison, he helped the butcher and baker, and he saved all Egypt and his family from starving. When we wisely obey God, we can help others also.

LESSON APPLICATION:

Help the children make an owl bank so they can be wise and save their money in times of plenty. Then they will have money during times when there is not plenty.

Supplies: Owl copied onto light-colored construction paper
Ruler
Tape
Scissors
Ink pen
Colored pencils
Markers and/or crayons
Plastic lids and cans

Directions:

- Color owl.
- Wrap paper around can to determine where to cut paper so it will cover the can to the top edge. Draw a straight line with the ruler to mark where to cut.
- Cut on line to make a long, rectangular piece. Lay aside.
- Place top of can on larger plastic lid. Trace around it with ink pen or marker.
- Cut out around lines just drawn. Cut slit in middle.
- Tape lid onto top of can. (Or use a coffee can that already has a plastic lid.)
- Wrap rectangular piece tightly around the can, taping at seam and bottom edge.

While they are making the bank, mention that there are other scriptures that tell about wisely saving for the future. They are in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 10:5 "He who gathers in summer is a wise son; he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame." (Lesson: We must all do our work.)

Proverbs 6:6-8 "Go to the ant you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest." (The point: She can then survive the winter.)

Ask: Did Joseph act as the wise person in the proverbs we just read?

Music:

Sing the following words to the tune of "Pop Goes the Weasel."

A penny for a spool of thread,
A penny for an easel,
That's the way the money goes,
Pop, goes the weasel!

A dollar for a special toy,
A dollar for some pizza,
That's the way the money goes,
Out, goes the allowance!

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33 "Hear instruction and be wise."



family activity

THE POINT:

Today we reviewed the story of Joseph found in Genesis chapters 37 to 47. We learned how Joseph was wise through obedience to God and how he helped others. We also learned that Joseph was wise by saving in the good times to prepare for the bad times.

ASK ME...

To tell the story of Joseph.

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Each evening, go over one of the following scriptures and discuss how it might apply to the story of Joseph and also to your child's life.

- Proverbs 10:1 "A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother." Why?
- Proverbs 13:1 "A wise son heeds his father's instruction." What were the instructions today?
- Proverbs 15: 20 "A wise son makes a father glad." Was your father glad today?
- Proverbs 28:7 "Whoever keeps the law is a discerning [wise] son." What laws do we have to keep? We keep God's laws first, He is our heavenly father.
- Proverbs 10:5 "He who gathers in summer is a wise son; he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame." We must all do our work.
- Proverbs 6:6-8 "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseers, or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest." Did you put any money in your bank this week?

MEMORY VERSE:

Proverbs 8:33 "Hear instruction and be wise."