

General Church Education



The Butler & the Baker

Genesis 39:21-23; 40:1-23

Lesson 15

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 2: The Lord Is Our Shepherd

For ages 7-8 years

The Butler & the Baker

Genesis 39:21-23; 40:1-23

Ideas for Parents & Teachers

Joseph's life illustrates how the Lord watches over us and brings us to a good end. This story is one of temptation and of staying strong in our resolve to obey the Lord in the face of trials. Spiritual temptations involve doubts about the Lord's providence and power to lead us to happiness. We are tempted to trust in ourselves instead of the Lord. It is only through spiritual temptations that we can separate the selfish tendencies in ourselves and allow the heavenly good to become a real and enduring part of us.

This story shows children how the Lord protects, guides and provides for each of us even when we cannot see it. Children can see the Lord's kindness and mercy as He helps Joseph through his misfortunes. They can also see the good qualities in Joseph that make this possible. He was hard working, honest and kind, and he never stopped trusting the Lord. He used his God-given abilities in the service of others. He was also grateful for the people who helped him. Everyone needs to be aware that others contribute to their happiness. We need to recognize the Lord's gifts and express our thanks to Him.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord leads and protects us in good times and times of trouble. He can help us when we work hard.
- We need to thank the Lord for all He gives us. And we need to thank our neighbors for the good things they do for us.

From the Writings

The operation of the Divine Providence for the salvation of a person begins at birth and continues to the end of life. The Lord sees a person's nature and what he desires to be, and thus what he will be. For a person to be human, the freedom of his will cannot be taken away. Therefore the Lord foresees one's state after death and provides for it from birth to the end of life. See *Divine Providence* 333

Temptations are conflicts between evil spirits and angels who are with a person. Evil spirits activate all the dishonorable things the person has done or even thought which have been with him since early childhood, thus both evils and falsities; and in so doing, the spirits condemn him, for nothing gives them greater delight. But the Lord protects the person by means of angels and prevents the evil spirits and devils from overwhelming him with more than he can cope with. See *Arcana Coelestia* 741

The Lord alone fights for people and protects them when they are assaulted by the hells, especially in temptations, which are spiritual combats. The Lord is called "a man of war" because when He was in the world, He alone fought against the hells from Himself, which were then for the most part open, and attacked and endeavored to subjugate all who came into the other life. *Arcana Coelestia* 8273

The Butler & the Baker

Why was Joseph in prison? (Potiphar's wife told lies about him and he was put in prison.)

Do you think the Lord will help Joseph in prison? Yes, the Lord is always with us, in good times and bad times. He helped Joseph when his older brothers sold him into slavery. In the distant country of Egypt when Joseph became a servant in the house of Potiphar, the captain of the Pharaoh's guard, the Lord watched over him. Everything Joseph did was successful because the Lord was with him. So he became the overseer in Potiphar's house. Joseph took care of this large household.

The Lord showed mercy to Joseph even when he was in prison. Joseph always obeyed the Lord and looked to Him for help when difficult things happened to him. Joseph worked hard and was successful in all he did. He was also good and kind. The keeper of the prison saw that the Lord was with Joseph. He saw how everything prospered under Joseph's care. So he put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners.



Read Genesis 39:21-23. What things show that Joseph was a responsible person? (The jailer put him in charge of all prisoners and did not even check up on him.)

Two Strange Dreams

Do you know what a baker does? (He bakes bread, pies, buns, and cakes.) Do you know what a butler does? (A butler is an important servant in the house, often helping serve food and drinks among other duties.) Pharaoh had many servants. Read and see what happened to the Pharaoh's chief butler and baker.

Read Genesis 40:1-4. Why were the chief butler and chief baker in prison? (They had done something to make Pharaoh angry.)

While they were in prison, they were under Joseph's care. One day Joseph found them both very sad and asked what had happened.

Read Genesis 40:5-8. Have you ever had a dream that made you feel upset? Both the chief butler and chief baker were upset by their dreams. These dreams were from the Lord, not like our ordinary dreams. They felt that the dreams were meant to tell them something but they did not know the meaning. They did not know anyone who could interpret or tell them their meaning. Whom did Joseph say could tell the interpretation of dreams? (“Interpretations belong to God.”)

The Lord had given Joseph the ability to interpret dreams. So Joseph listened to the dreams and told them what they meant. Read the first dream and try to picture it in your mind.

Read Genesis 40:9-15. How many branches were on the vine?

(Three.) What did the butler do with the grapes in his dream? (Pressed the juice into Pharaoh’s cup and gave it to him.) Why do you think the butler liked the interpretation that Joseph told him? (Because the dream meant he would get his job back, and he did.) What did Joseph ask the butler to do for him? (Remember him and tell Pharaoh about him.)

When the baker saw that the butler’s dream had a good interpretation, he was eager to hear what his dream meant as well. Do you think he will be happy when he hears it? Read on and find out what happens.

Read Genesis 40:16-19. How many baskets were in the baker’s dream? (Three.) What happened to the baked goods in the top basket? (The birds ate them.) How do you think the baker felt about the meaning of his dream? (Very sad.)

Let’s read on and find out if Joseph’s interpretations came true.

Read Genesis 40:20-23. What important event took place on the third day? (Pharaoh’s birthday.) What happened to the butler and the baker? (The butler got his job back, but the baker was hanged.) Did the chief butler remember Joseph after he regained his job serving Pharaoh? (No, he forgot Joseph as soon as he was free.)



Joseph remained in prison for a while longer. Two years later when the Pharaoh had troubling dreams and could not find anyone to tell him the meaning, the butler remembered Joseph and he was brought out of prison. Because the Lord had given Joseph the ability to interpret dreams, he was able to tell Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams too. The meaning held very important information for the whole land of Egypt.

You can imagine how grateful Pharaoh was to Joseph and how impressed he must have been with this honest, wise man. He put Joseph in charge of the whole land, second only to himself. At last Joseph was free. He was well treated. Everyone looked up to him. Joseph always gave credit to God because he knew that all good things come from Him.

Thankfulness

Sometimes when we want help, we make promises only to forget them when our trouble is over. Have you ever forgotten a kindness from someone? Do you say “thank you” to the Lord in your prayers? We all get busy with other things and forget to say thank you at times.

It is good to get into the habit of saying “thank you” when someone does a kindness for us. Let’s remember to say thank you to our parents, brother or sister when they help us; to a friend, neighbor or anyone who gives us a hand when we need it; and to the Lord when we are at worship or in our prayers to Him.



Discussion Questions

- How was Joseph able to tell the meaning of dreams? (The Lord gave him this ability.)
- Why do you think it is important to be thankful and to say “thank you” for the good things that come to us? (Giving thanks helps us remember that we cannot do everything alone, that we need each other and we especially need the Lord’s help in our lives.)
- When can you thank the Lord for the good things He gives you? (Before meals, when you wake in the morning, before you go to sleep at night, when you go to church, have family worship or anytime you worship the Lord.)

Activity Overview | The Butler & the Baker

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

The steps of a good person are ordered by the Lord,
And He delights in his way.
Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down,
For the Lord upholds him with His hand. Psalm 37:23, 24

Songs

Joseph's Coat

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-josephs-coat/>

Wait on the Lord

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-wait-on-the-lord-2/>

Activities

Choose one or two.

- Activity 1 | Match the Butler's and the Baker's Dreams
- Activity 2 | Joseph in Prison Spinning Disc
- Picture to color

Additional Activity Ideas

- Look at pictures of Egypt to learn more about this fascinating country.

Activity 1 | Match the Butler's and the Baker's Dreams

Match the butler and baker with their dreams.

Materials

copy of *Match the Butler's and the Baker's Dreams*

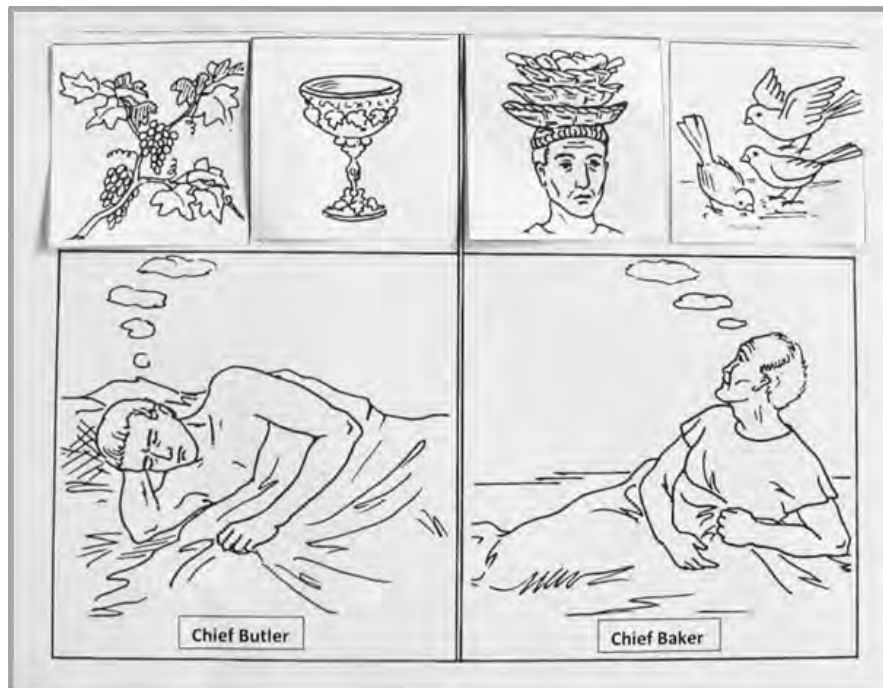
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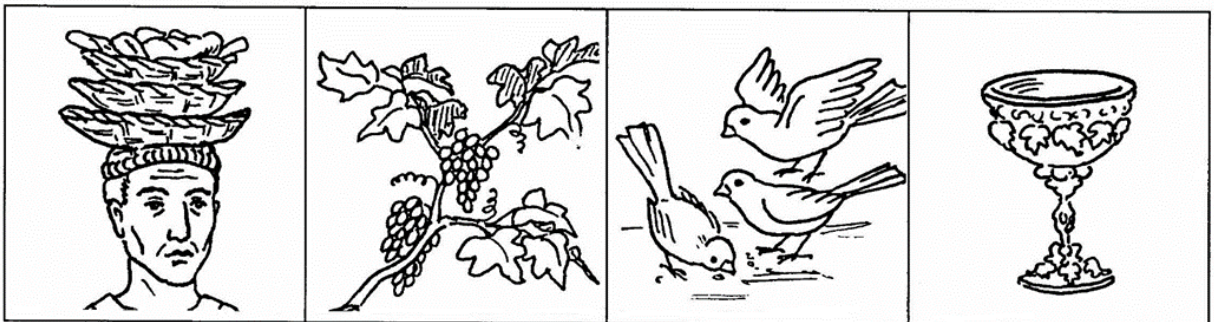
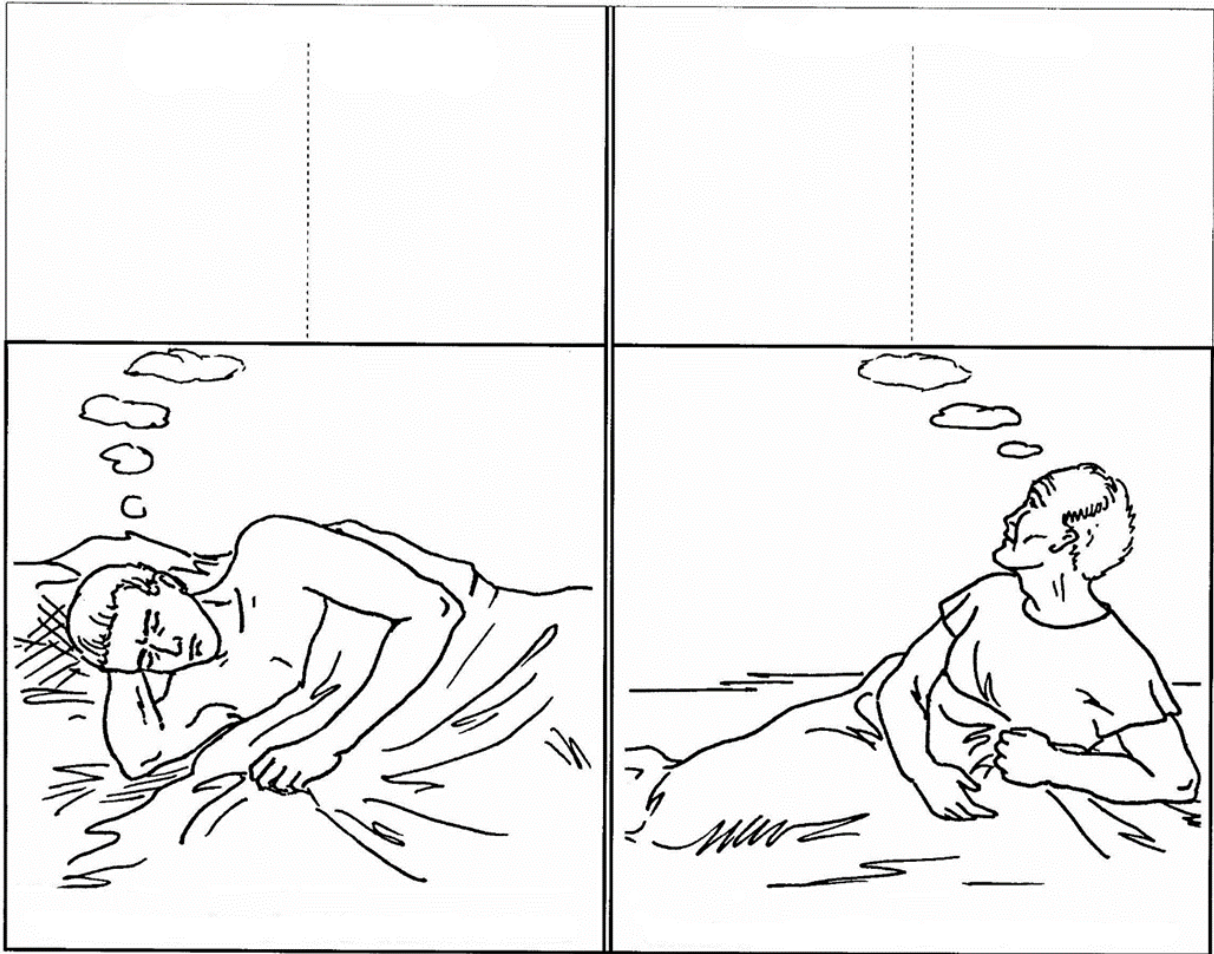
glue

crayons, markers or colored pencils

Instructions

1. Color the pictures.
2. Cut out the dream pictures at the bottom of the page.
3. Glue the picture of the butler's dream over the butler, and the baker's dream over the baker.





Activity 2 | Joseph in Prison Spinning Disc

Mount pictures of Joseph and prison bars back-to-back on a looped string. Whirl them around to pull and create the illusion of Joseph being in prison.

Materials

copy of *Joseph in Prison Spinning Disc*

a piece of cardboard from a cereal or other box the size of the spinning disc

scissors

tape

48" (120 cm) string or yarn (*note*: string is best)

Instructions

1. Color the picture of Joseph.
2. Cut out the circles of Joseph and the prison bars.
3. Cut out a cardboard circle the same size as the circular picture of Joseph. Lay the picture of Joseph over the cardboard and cut to match *or* lay the picture of Joseph over the cardboard, draw around it and cut the cardboard to match.
4. Tape the prison bars to one side of the cardboard.
5. Tie the ends of the string together to create a loop. Form the loop into a figure 8 with the knot in the center of the figure 8. Use the guidelines to position the string horizontally on the prison picture and tape it in place.
6. Tape the picture of Joseph to the other side of the cardboard disc. Tape the edges together.
7. Holding one end of the string in each hand, "wind up" the center disc by holding one hand still while turning the other like a jump rope. Once the string is wound up, pull firmly on both ends so the disc spins.
8. While the disc is spinning, look for the illusion that Joseph is "in" prison.

