

#1 Colonel Corn marched up and down the rows of corn stalks as he did every morning at dawn. It gave him great pleasure to see them standing at attention so tall and straight and a great sense of pride when they saluted smartly as he walked by. "Yessiree," he thought to himself, "this is a fine looking crop. In a few more weeks they'll be plump and yellow and ready for harvest."

#2 No sooner had the thought left him when he heard a strange sound and stopped suddenly to listen. He had heard something all right. Something muffled and sniffly. He turned to the stalk walking beside him. "Lieutenant Barley do you hear that? Why, it sounds as if someone is crying." Lieutenant Barley strained his ear for a moment, which made his whole body lean forward, and then he heard it too. "Yes sir, sir. I hear something, sir. Sir, it sounds as if someone is crying, sir."

#3 "At ease soldiers!" the colonel cried out to the ranks of corn stalks. "Report immediately if you know the source of the crying that has made its way to my ear."

A long, slender, pale green blade waved up over the heads of the other stalks. "Colonel Corn sir, I know who is crying. There is a young mole here that has lost his mother and can't find his way out of the furrows. He seems to be quite frightened and more than a little hungry, sir."

#4 The colonel strode over to where the little mole lay quivering. "What's your name son?" he asked kindly. "I'm Felix Farmsworth, sir." The colonel bent and hovered protectively over him. "And what seems to be the problem, Felix?"

"Well," Felix stammered, "I-I-I'm lost. T-t-the stalks are s-s-o high I can't see to find my way home and I've been wandering around in circles for days and my stomach is quite empty." He began to cry. "Now look here," said the colonel, "don't you worry about a thing. There is plenty of sweet, tender corn on these stalks and the guards at the edge of the field can lead you safely to our borders so you can find your way home."

#5 "Lieutenant," the colonel shouted, "I want to see some serious shucking going on out here. Let's get young Felix some food and then lead him safely out of the field." "Yes sir, sir, no problem sir!" replied the lieutenant. "All right soldiers," Barley bellowed, "let's shuck, let's jive, let's get this mole out alive!" Within minutes the corn stalks had shucked enough kernels to fill Felix's stomach full with plenty left for him to take home to his family.

#6 The next day, after Felix had been well fed and led safely out of the field and reunited with his mother, he returned to thank the colonel for his help and bring him the latest news from the barn. "Colonel Corn, sir" he shouted breathlessly when he finally skidded to a stop in front of the colonel, "I heard some talk among the workers that there is a drought in the land and it looks to be a long one sir, and worst of all, the well is nearly dry. There is only about a day's worth of water left for the crops."

#7 This was bad news indeed. Without rain or water in the well the corn would never survive until harvest time. Instead of being plump and golden yellow the green sheaves would wither and turn brown and the kernels inside would dry up and die.

“Lieutenant Barley,” barked the colonel. “Yes sir, sir. Reporting for duty, sir!” he replied. “We mustn’t panic,” said the colonel, “we will collect what’s in the well to water the field today and think about what to do for more water tomorrow.”

“Yes sir, sir,” the lieutenant replied, but he had no idea how they would be able to find more water.

#8 When the next day dawned the colonel was very distracted as he walked among the stalks. He hardly noticed as they saluted him. All he could think about was how he was going to get enough water to keep them healthy and alive until harvest time.

Lieutenant Barley ran up to take his place beside the colonel. “Colonel Corn, sir, sorry I’m late sir, but sir, Felix Farmsworth is back and would like to have a word with you, sir.” The colonel made his way to where Felix stood waiting for him. “What can I do for you son?” asked the colonel. “Well sir,” began Felix, “It’s me who would like to do something for you to repay you for your kindness. My family and I were praying and asked God to help provide your field with water until its ready for harvest.”

#9 Well, thought the colonel, it would certainly take a miracle to protect the crops from the drought. Finally he looked at the little mole and said, “What should we do? How did God say He would take care of us?” “By digging,” Felix said. The colonel looked puzzled. “You see,” Felix continued, “after I told my family about everything you did for me and how the crops would die in the drought we wanted to help. So we started digging deeper under the well until we found more fresh water. There should be enough for today and we will dig again tomorrow and the next day and the next until the whole field is ready for harvest.”

“Lieutenant Barley!” shouted the colonel. “Yes sir, sir. What is it, sir?” “Go to the well,” said the colonel. “There will be enough in the well to water the crops today!” “Yes sir, sir!” Lieutenant Barley shouted. “Right away, sir. Plenty of water, sir!”

#10 And so there was. Everything happened just like Felix said it would. He and his family dug a little deeper every day and got to more water and provided just enough for the stalks to grow healthy and ripe. When harvest time came the corn was plump and juicy and the harvest was plentiful.

Each year Colonel Corn tells the story of Felix and God’s provision and the well that didn’t run dry to his new recruits. “Soldiers!” he bellows as he walks among their newly formed ranks, “lend me your ears!”