

# Joseph Saved His Family

**Bible Passage:** Genesis 42–46; 50

**Memory Verse:** <sup>4</sup>“But I have been the LORD your God ever since you came out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me. **Hosea 13:4**

**Bottom Line:** Because nothing is too hard for God, we can know that His timing for our lives is best.

**Big Picture Question:** Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things according to His character.

**Christ Connection:** *God sent Joseph to Egypt and blessed him so that he rose to a position of great authority. God used Joseph to help Joseph's family and many others. When Jesus came to earth, He gave up His position of honor in heaven to be the Savior of the world.*

## LEADERNOTES:

### CONTEXT

The land of Egypt enjoyed seven years of plenty before a famine struck, just as Pharaoh had dreamed. During that time, Joseph gathered all the excess food and stored it in the cities. The famine was severe in every land, so Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to everyone who needed it.

Jacob and his family lived in Canaan, and Jacob sent his sons to Egypt for grain. Jacob still felt the sting of losing Joseph. He did not allow his youngest son, Benjamin, to go for fear of losing him too. But Joseph wasn't dead. He was in Egypt and had been elevated to a position of authority. As his sons headed to Egypt, Jacob had no idea that the journey would lead to a family reunion.

Although Joseph recognized his brothers immediately, they did not recognize him. When Joseph finally revealed his identity to his brothers, they must have been in awe that the brother they sold into slavery was now a powerful leader in Egypt! Would Joseph use his authority to rescue his family from the famine? Or would he avenge his brothers' evil against him?

What Joseph's brothers intended for harm, God intended for good. Joseph invited his family to come to Egypt where they could thrive. God clearly used Joseph to provide for Jacob's family and establish a remnant. As Jacob made his way to Egypt, God spoke to him in a vision and repeated the promise He first made to Abraham: “I will make you into a great nation” (Gen. 46:3).

Joseph and his father's family stayed in Egypt. Before he died, Joseph reminded his brothers of God's promise to their family. (See Gen. 50:24.) Despite Egyptian oppression, Jacob's descendants multiplied. God kept His promise, and through the nation of Israel and the tribe of Joseph's brother Judah, God worked out His plan to provide His Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem people from sin.

## TEACHING FOCUS (Genesis 42-46; 50)

*When Joseph was a boy, he had two dreams that suggested he would rule over his family. Can anyone remember what happened in those two dreams? [Allow responses.] Yeah! Joseph dreamed that he and his brothers gathered grain, and that his brother's bundles of grain all bowed down to his bundle of grain. He also dreamed that the sun, moon, and 11 stars all bowed to him. Now, many years later, Joseph was second-in-command over all of Egypt, and his brothers had come to bow before him and purchase grain!*

So let's track God's plan: God allowed Joseph to be sold as a slave. God blessed Joseph, and he became a trusted servant of Potiphar. When Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph, Joseph ended up in prison. But God continued to bless Joseph, and soon he was in charge over the prison. Then, after explaining the cupbearer's dream, Joseph had the chance to explain Pharaoh's dreams.

As a result of God's power, Joseph knew a terrible famine was coming after seven years of plenty. Pharaoh trusted Joseph and put him in power to plan for the famine. When the famine arrived, God used Joseph to keep Jacob and his family from starving! The hard things that happened to Joseph were part of God's plan. **God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.** A *remnant* is like a remainder, or what's left after something is

removed. Many people probably died during the famine, but God saved Jacob and his family through Joseph. Joseph's brothers meant to harm Joseph, but God used it for good to save many people. ***Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things according to His character.***

#### TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- ***God allowed Joseph to be sold into slavery and put into prison so that Joseph could save His family.***
- ***God can always be trusted because He is always working according to His plan.***
- **BL: Because nothing is too hard for God, we can know that His timing for our lives is best.**
- No matter what you are going through. God is with you!
- One of the best prayers that you can pray is to ask God to show you how you can follow Him, obey Him, and depend upon Him – no matter what.

#### **Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 minutes)**

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer the following activities to 3-, 4-, 5- year olds as they arrive.

#### **Duck, Duck, Goose (or More, More, Most)**

**What you Need:** no supplies needed

#### **What You Do:**

- Sit the kids in a circle on the floor.
- Ask for a volunteer to stand outside the circle.
- Guide her to walk around the outside of the circle, tapping (gently) each child on the shoulder while calling "duck...duck...duck" until finally calling "goose".
- The child she tapped last will get up and chase the volunteer around the circle, trying to tag her to determine who will be "It" next.
- You could change the words up and use "more...more...more" and then "most" as way to relate to the Bible story and Joseph with his brothers and dad.

#### **What You Say:**

"When we play games, like duck, duck, goose, it reminds us that sometimes we win and sometimes God has other plans. Our story the next few weeks should help us see that God can do anything, even when people seem to mess up or make different plans. He made a way for our Savior to be born, in the middle of some really impossible situations."

## **Worship Time**

Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some kids (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

#### **Play the DVD of All Star Kids worship (choose 1 song for today)**

**What You Say:** "Way to go! You are such amazing singers. Now let's sit down to learn from the Bible today."

## **Story Time: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways**

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

### **Bible Story**

**What You Need:** Bible

**What You Do:** Place a bookmark at Genesis 42 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it.

**What You Say:** " The Bible is God's Word, and God's Word is true! The Bible has 2 parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament tells about the things that happened before Jesus was born. Let's hear today's true story about how God used Joseph in His plan.

### **PLAY BIBLE STORY VIDEO**

#### **Talk about the Bible Story:**

"For many years, no food would grow, but Jacob heard that Egypt had plenty of food. Jacob sent his 10 older sons to Egypt to buy grain-from Joseph! The brothers did not know it was Joseph, but Joseph knew who they were! Joseph sent them to bring his youngest brother Benjamin to Egypt. When they returned to Egypt, the brothers bowed down before him, just as Joseph had dreamed years before. Joseph said, "I am Joseph. You made a wrong choice to hurt me, but God had a better plan. God sent me here to rescue many people." Joseph moved Jacob's whole family to Egypt and took care of them.

#### **Learn the Big Picture Question**

**What You Say:** Do you remember the big picture question? **Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.** God used all the hard things that happened to Joseph to get him to Egypt so he could save his family from hunger. God even made Joseph's dreams from many years before come true. God can do all things!

#### **Practice the Memory Verse**

Open your Bible to Hosea 13:4. Read the memory verse aloud several times.

**What You Say:** "But I have been the Lord you God ever since you came out of Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me." Hosea 13:4

Transition to small group.

## **Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)**

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Main Point that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

## 1. Walk a Path

**What You Need:** painter's tape

**What You Do:**

- Use painter's tape to create a path across the room.
- Designate one end of the path as Canaan and the other end as Egypt.
- Invite kids to play out Joseph's brothers travels from Canaan to Egypt and back 3 times. Once without their youngest brother, once with their youngest brother, and once again with their father.
- Add interest to the game by instructing them to walk in different ways such as on their tiptoes, hopping, and so forth.
- Give them ideas of what might happen along the way that they can role play. Did they have to carry anything heavy or stinky?

**What You Say** "Joseph's brothers sending him to Egypt was wrong, but God took what they meant to be mean and used it for good. God used Joseph to save His people. God made sure that people from the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would live because He planned to send His Son, Jesus, through this family. One day, people would hurt Jesus. God's good plan was to use Jesus' death to save His people from sin.

**Because God can do anything, we can know that His time for our lives is best.**

## 2. Practice signing the Memory Verse

**What you need:** Memory Verse Poster

**What You Do:**

- Show the poster to the kids
- As you say the words point to them on the poster
- Create simple hand motions to teach toddlers the memory verse. Sample hand motions include "**But I have been the Lord your God** (point to God), **ever since you came out of Egypt.** (act like you are riding a horse) **You shall acknowledge** (point to your head like you are thinking) **no God but me** (point to God), **no Savior except me.** (make the sign for Jesus [point to the holes in his hands, first left then right hand]) **Hosea 13:4**
- Our memory verse comes from a prophet named Hosea. This prophet gives God's messages to His people. God wanted His people to know that He is the only God and Savior.

**What You Say:** Throughout Israel's history, God's messenger to His people would point back to the time they spent in Egypt and the wonderful way God rescued them. This story is the start of how God's people ended up in Egypt! All along, God was their God. He is the one true God, and only He can save.

**Pray and Dismiss:**

**What You need:** coloring page

**What You Do:**

- Pray- " God, thank you saving people. We know we don't deserve Your love, but we praise You for loving us anyway. Help us love you and obey Your commands. Amen.

**What You Say:** Tell parents something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Send home the coloring page and talk about how God's timing is perfect.