



JOSEPH

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT

GENESIS 37 & 39-45

GOAL

- ▶ To help children understand that even if they feel lonely, rejected, hated, misunderstood, or neglected, God has a plan for their lives.

CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Joseph:** Jacob's favorite son was sold into slavery, imprisoned, and eventually ruled as Egypt's second in command.

Joseph's brothers: Joseph had eleven in all, who were very jealous of him, but who were eventually humbled by his graciousness.

Jacob: He loved Joseph more than his other 11 sons. He could hardly bear the news of Joseph's supposed death.

Potiphar: He was an Egyptian official who purchased Joseph as a household slave.

Potiphar's wife: She became angry with Joseph when he refused her advances. She told a lie that cost Joseph his job and landed him in prison.

Pharaoh: He was the king of Egypt. He had a dream that he couldn't understand, but Joseph interpreted it for him. He promoted Joseph to his second in command.

MEMORY VERSE

- ▶ **Romans 8:28:** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.



OVERVIEW

▶ **Read Genesis 37-45:** Joseph was a favored son, but his brothers' jealousy drove them to sell him into slavery. He was given up for dead by his family. He encountered God's unique blessing and challenges in Egypt, where he went from slave, to prisoner, to Pharaoh's second in command. He eventually became responsible for saving his own family from the famine in a story of amazing providence and overpowering graciousness.

SUGGESTIONS

▶ **Joseph's story shows how God turns tragedy into triumph. The end result would not have been possible if he hadn't gone through the series of awful events.**

Joseph endured fraternal hatred, slavery, and prison. In each situation, Joseph stayed faithful and obedient to God. God worked each and every horrible circumstance toward His goal of Joseph being accepted into Pharaoh's confidence and a high-ranking position. There, Joseph would be able to save his family from the famine in Canaan. Joseph's father and brothers were the descendants of Abraham, from whom God promised to make a mighty nation. God used Joseph and all of the talents He had given him to carry on His promise. When Joseph helped his family survive the famine, he was making sure Abraham's descendants would survive. Joseph not only saved his family from the famine, but also the millions of Egyptians living in the nation at the time.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

▶ **Find Your Brother | Supplies:** name tags

Provide each student with a name tag with the name of one of Jacob's sons. Then, provide each child with the name of a brother that he or she is supposed to find. The goal is to avoid being the last one searching for the brother. If you have more students than names, repeat names and assignments until everyone in class is included.

MEMORY VERSE MEANING

▶ **Romans 8:28:** Bad things happen to good people. God can make these bad things turn into incredible blessings for those who love Him.



POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

Ripple Effect | Supplies: paper bowls, crayons, and small pebbles.

Provide each student with a paper bowl. Ask the students to use the crayons to color a number of people or stick figures all along the bottom and sides of their bowls. Fill the bowls with water, and give each student a pebble. Explain to the students that the pebble represents an instance in which they obeyed God and did something good. Once the water is still, tell the students to drop the pebble into the middle of the bowl. Explain that the pebble, or good deed, caused ripples in the water. When we do as God asks, our actions ripple out and affect other people. Walking the path God has made for us has a positive effect in our lives as well as those around us.

TAKE HOME

Like Joseph, God has a plan for our lives. No evil thing that happens to us will put us off from it. God will use the bad things that happen in our lives for good because we are called to do His work. When we face difficult situations, we are never alone—God is with us every step of the way, and from that, we can find comfort and strength.

The plan God has for our lives reaches into the lives of other people. Like we saw with Joseph, God's plan for his life helped to continue fulfilling God's promise to Abraham to make his line of descendants a mighty nation. God's plan for Joseph's life also helped millions of Egyptians who were able to survive the famine.

When we love and obey God, we are working toward something much bigger than just living a good life. As Christians, we are living out God's will for us and others.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: How many sons did Jacob have?

A1: Jacob had 12 sons.

Q1b: Have you ever had a teacher who had an obvious favorite student?

TN: When this happens, it sometimes feels like there is nothing we can do that will make the teacher like us or approve of our work as much as he or she does for this one preferred student. It can be discouraging. While this can make us feel bad in the classroom, imagine how awful it would feel to know that your parent liked your sibling better than you! This likely would make us jealous, just like Joseph's brothers' were of the love and attention he got from their father. God is our father, and He loves every one of His children equally. God's love is unconditional and limitless.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: How did Joseph's father and brothers respond to his dreams?

A2: Joseph's father rebuked him, and his brothers got angrier at Joseph.

Q2b: You and your friend both try out for the same role in the school play. You get the role. How do you act around your friend?

TN: We have every reason to be happy, and a good friend would be happy for us. But too much celebrating in front of this particular friend might come off as a little insensitive. We don't want to gloat about our success. It didn't take a master dream interpreter to figure out what Joseph's dreams meant. When he told his father and brothers, they took it to mean that he was gloating that his dreams indicated that one day they would all bow down to Joseph. Whether Joseph told his family about his dreams as a way of providing them information about the future or to brag, we don't really know; however, a little more care could have been taken in giving them this bad news about their future.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: How did Joseph's brothers get rid of him?

A3: They sold him to some traders who were on their way to Egypt.

Q3b: Which would you prefer: being thrown into a pit and left to die or being sold into slavery?

TN: Neither! We don't want to be treated like that by anyone, especially by those who are supposed to love us! We should always try to treat others the way we would like to be treated, even—and maybe even especially—when we don't particularly like someone. Jesus calls us to love our neighbors.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: Who bought Joseph as his slave?

A4: Potiphar bought Joseph.

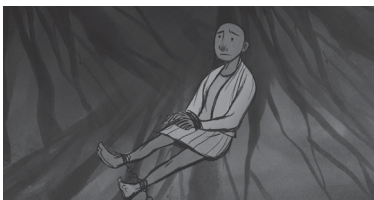
Q4b: You're at a store with a new friend, and she tries to get you to steal something. What do you do?

TN: Like Joseph, we should run away. Not giving in to pressure from friends can be difficult, but we should never feel like we have to do things we know are wrong to keep a friend. A real friend would not ask us to do something wrong or that we're not comfortable doing. If we are comfortable doing so, this can be an opportunity to explain why stealing is wrong and why we won't go along with such plans. If we are unable to make this person understand that they shouldn't steal, then we don't need this person in our lives.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What happened after Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph?

A5: Joseph was put in jail.

Q5b: Your dog knocked over a lamp and broke it. How would you feel if your parent accused you of breaking the lamp?

TN: That's unfair. While we have no evidence that the dog broke the lamp, our parents should be willing to listen to our side of the story. Potiphar wasn't going to take the word of a slave over his own wife, so Joseph ended up in jail.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What was troubling Pharaoh?

A6: He had bad dreams, and he did not know what they meant.

Q6b: Are you known within your family or around school for being particularly good at something?

TN: Having a good reputation can be a very handy thing. It can lead to all kinds of opportunities that can help to advance us in school and in life. Joseph had become known for being able to interpret dreams. All it took was one man to remember Joseph's abilities and then mention it to Pharaoh for Joseph's life to change dramatically. Being good at interpreting dreams wasn't enough though. Despite being in jail, Joseph was also known for being wise and trustworthy. It is unlikely that the servant would have recommended Joseph to the Pharaoh if Joseph was a bad guy with a bad character. It is important to not only be good at the things we are talented at doing, but also to be good people with strong morals and ethics. Having God at the center of our lives will ensure that we are the type of people others will want on their team.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: How did Pharaoh honor Joseph?

A7: Pharaoh made Joseph second in command over all of Egypt.

Q7b: Did all of the bad stuff have to happen to Joseph in order for God to get him into a position of power in Egypt?

TN: No, God can do anything, so the suffering that Joseph endured didn't have to happen. However, because God can do anything, it is a fact that the way Joseph did come to power was exactly the way everything needed to play out in Joseph's life. Why? We can speculate, but we'll never know for sure. When we go through trials in our lives, it strengthens our faith, our character, and our dependence and love for God. As those who love God, we can be assured that all of the hard times we face, God will use them to make something good. That is a promise recorded in God's Word, and God never fails to come through on His promises.

SLIDE 8



Q8a: Who came to Joseph for help?

A8: Joseph's brothers came to him for help.

Q8b: If you were in Joseph's position, would you have forgiven and helped your brothers?

TN: That's a tough call. While it would be very hard to get over the hurt feelings and trauma they caused in our lives, God calls us to forgive others as He has forgiven us.



**MEMORY
VERSE**

- ▶ **Romans 8:28:** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.

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BIG IDEA

- ▶ God will help us get through hard times in life and will make them work to our good.

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**CLOSING
PRAYER**

- ▶ Dear God, we know that You work things out for good to those who love You and are called by You. Help us to trust, follow, and love You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Jacob had a big family—12 sons in all. Joseph was the next to youngest son of the family, and his father loved him most. Jacob even gave Joseph a special, colorful coat, showing that he was his favorite son, which made his brothers jealous of him.

SLIDE 2



Joseph had some strange dreams. Once, he dreamt that he was in a field with his brothers, binding up stacks of grain in the field. Everyone else's stack of grain bowed to his. Another time, he dreamt that the sun, moon, and 11 stars all bowed down to him. When he told his brothers and father these dreams, they weren't too happy. His father rebuked him, but he kept the dreams in mind. Joseph's dreams only made his brothers angrier at him. Joseph may have been his father's favorite, but his brothers hated him and wanted to kill him.

SLIDE 3



One day, Jacob sent his son Joseph to go find his brothers who were out taking care of the flocks of sheep. As Joseph approached, his brothers saw him from a long way off. "Here comes the dreamer," they said to each other. "Now is our chance to finish him off! Let's kill him!" The oldest brother, Reuben, did not want to kill Joseph, so he suggested they throw him into a pit and leave him there. Reuben had planned to come back later and rescue Joseph. But before he could do that, some traders who were on their way to Egypt passed by, and his brothers decided to sell Joseph to them. And so, Joseph was tied up behind a camel and forced to march hundreds of miles to Egypt, where they spoke a different language and served strange idols. It was a strange new land, and Joseph would be separated from his family.





LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



Joseph was sold as a slave to a man named Potiphar, a very important official in the land of Egypt. Joseph was an obedient and capable slave. While working in Potiphar's home, he caught the eye of Potiphar's wife, who tried to tempt Joseph to sin. Joseph refused to sin and dishonor God. Potiphar's wife was determined to get her way, and one day she grabbed Joseph and tried to force him to sin. Still, Joseph resisted and ran away from the scene. Before he could get away from her, she grabbed his coat. Joseph took off his coat so he could escape. Potiphar's wife used the coat he left behind as evidence in a lie she told to Potiphar about Joseph.

SLIDE 5



The accusation landed Joseph in jail. Not only had he been traded as a slave to Egypt, but now he had been thrown in jail for something he didn't do. Even while he was in jail, Joseph stayed true to God. God had big plans for him. While he was in that Egyptian jail, he had a reputation for being wise, and for telling the meaning of people's dreams.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 6



One day, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had bad dreams that perplexed him. He could not understand what they meant and was dead-set on trying to figure out their meaning. He asked his advisors, but they could not help. He asked his magicians, but even they could not explain the dreams. One of Pharaoh's servants, who had been in prison recently, remembered Joseph's ability to interpret dreams. Joseph was brought from prison and taken to Pharaoh. Pharaoh told Joseph everything that had happened in his strange and scary dreams. Joseph knew exactly what the dreams meant, and he carefully explained the meaning to Pharaoh. Not only did Joseph tell Pharaoh what the dream meant, but he also told him what to do about it. The land would experience famine in seven years, and they needed to store up food to prepare.

SLIDE 7



Pharaoh was impressed, and he honored Joseph. In fact, he made Joseph the second-in-command ruler over all of Egypt. Although he had been rejected by his family and left for dead, he had risen to power and greatness because God was with him.

SLIDE 8



Later on, when Joseph was giving food to the people, his own brothers came to him for help. You can imagine how surprised they were to see their own little brother, whom they had left for dead, now ruling one of the greatest countries in the world. Joseph brought his whole family to live in Egypt. Even though things looked bad for Joseph, God turned it into good.