

Joseph in Egypt

Teacher Pep Talk: Joseph's brothers had seen their chance to get rid of him and they did. They sold him into slavery in Egypt. But the LORD was with Joseph in Egypt and gave him success in everything he did. When sold to the captain of Pharaoh's guard, Joseph got put in charge of his household. When wrongly accused and incarcerated, he got put in charge of the jail. When brought before Pharaoh to interpret a dream, he got put in charge of all Egypt. God was definitely with Joseph, and He meant all of this for good and to save many lives.

During our day to day lives, bad things happen; but that doesn't mean that God has abandoned us! We need to remember that we are to do our best and to obey and serve God, no matter what!

You will need: Bible

Major Points: Joseph was Sold into Slavery in Egypt
God was with Joseph in Egypt
God Gave Joseph Success in Everything He Did
Joseph Interpreted Dreams
Joseph was Put in Charge of All Egypt
God Meant it All for Good

Scripture Ref: Genesis, Chapters 39-41

Memory Verse: Genesis 39:2-3 ...**the LORD was with Joseph** ...and gave him success in everything he did.

Lesson: **Joseph was Sold into Slavery in Egypt**

- *[Be sure to start with your Bible sitting on your lap.]*
- *[Review the Timeline in the classroom, if available – See series lessons instructions.]*
- Joseph's brothers had sold him into slavery in Egypt
- Poor Joseph. He hadn't done anything wrong! How do you think he might have been feeling? *(Wait for answers. Answers might include: angry, sad, or scared)*
- That's right; he probably felt all those things! And I wonder if he felt a little sorry for himself. After all, he hadn't done anything wrong! He wasn't a slave! His brothers had betrayed him!
- Sometimes when I feel sorry for myself, I want to get back at the people who have hurt me. If they aren't around, I might just be mean and grumpy to the people who are with me.
- Have you ever felt that way? I wonder if Joseph felt that way.

God was with Joseph in Egypt

- But if Joseph felt that way, he sure didn't act that way.
- Joseph didn't try and get back at those around him.
- He always did the best he could, all the time.
- He worked hard and tried to obey God.
- Because, you see, Joseph knew something... He knew that the God of his fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) was everywhere, all the time. And Joseph was going to serve Him!
- The Bible tells us that God was with Joseph in Egypt

God Gave Joseph Success in Everything He Did

- Not only was God with Joseph, but God also gave him success in everything that he did.
- Even though Joseph had been wrongfully sold as a slave, he always did the best that he could.
 - Joseph served his master well
 - Joseph chose to be very honest
 - Joseph behaved himself very nicely
- And God gave Joseph success in everything he did
- People began to notice! They put Joseph in charge of things!
 - His master put him in charge of his house
 - And it was probably a really big house!
- Unfortunately, Joseph was wrongly accused of a crime and was put into jail. (Once again, he hadn't done anything wrong!)
- He could have felt sorry for himself and quit trying to do what was right. But he didn't! He kept on doing the best he could!
- And, even in the jail, God was with Joseph and gave him success in everything he did
 - The jailor put him in charge of the jail!
 - Joseph was in charge of all of the prisoners!
 - (I wonder if he had a key!) ☺

Joseph Interpreted Dreams

- While he was in prison, two of Pharaoh's servants (*the king of Egypt was called the Pharaoh*), were there
- Each one of them had a dream that disturbed them, but they didn't know what the dream meant
- Joseph knew about dreams. God had told him about the future in some dreams, when he was younger and at home
- Joseph interpreted the dreams for the men (*interpreted means to tell you what they mean*)
- It was good news for one servant, and bad news for the other
- One servant got to go back to work in Pharaoh's court! Joseph asked him to talk to Pharaoh about him, and get him out of jail.
- But the servant went back to Pharaoh's court, and forgot Joseph

Joseph was Put in Charge of All Egypt

- Joseph could have been really angry that the servant forgot to tell Pharaoh about him. He could have quit trying to do good things. But he just kept on doing his best in every situation.
- Later on, Pharaoh had a dream that disturbed him. Now the servant remembered how Joseph had helped him!
- Pharaoh had Joseph come and interpret his dream
- Joseph told Pharaoh what his dream meant
 - There were to be 7 years of plenty (lots of food)
 - Then there would be 7 years of famine (no food)
- Pharaoh was so impressed that he thanked Joseph and put Joseph in charge of all Egypt!
 - Joseph was put in charge of everything under Pharaoh
 - He was to tell all the people what to do
 - They would store up the extra food for 7 years
 - And eat the food during the 7 years of famine

God Meant it All for Good

- Joseph could have felt really sorry for himself because of all of the bad things that had happened to him
 - Sold into slavery
 - Wrongly accused of a crime
 - Thrown into jail
 - Forgotten by the servant and left in jail
- But through it all, Joseph kept trying to do his best and to do what was right
- God was with Joseph in Egypt and gave him success in everything that he did
- In the end, Joseph (who had started as a slave and then been thrown in prison) was put in charge of everything in Egypt
- God meant all the things that had happened for good
 - People of Egypt would have food during the famine
 - Joseph's own family would be saved as well
 - And God would be able to preserve the family line of the coming Messiah, Jesus!
- God was keeping His promises!

Let's pray and thank God for being with us, even when bad things happen.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you were with Joseph in Egypt.
Thank you that you are with us, even when bad things happen.
Help us to always try and do what is right.
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose 1 or 2 that will work with your group.)*

Review the Timeline – *The children will review the Timeline in the classroom.*

Before Class: Update the Timeline in your classroom. See Series Lessons Instructions for directions for making a Timeline.

During Class: Refer to the Timeline and discuss some of the events with the children. Remind them that we start on the left, with the beginning (Creation) and work our way down the Timeline, to the right, as time goes on. Read some of the names of the various persons you have studied in this series of lessons. Talk about some of your favorite stories. Look at the papers (completed activity sheets) that denote each story. Remind the children that these are real stories of things that really happened. Tell the children that we exist way down the Timeline, these things just happened long ago.

What Do You Do Well? – *The children will play Charades, showing things they do well.*

Before Class: Consider some of the things you class members do well. Write some of them down on a piece of paper for your reference during class, in case you need them.

During Class: Tell the children that you are going to play a game. Let them know that you **know** that each of them does many things well. Give some general examples: perhaps you sweep the floor well; maybe you paint very well, or sing very well. Perhaps you like to read, or play sports, etc. Ask them to think of something that they do very well. Ask volunteers to come up in front of the group and act out what they do well. (But no talking or making any noises!) Can the group guess what the child is acting out? Play until most or all of the children have had a turn. Encourage everyone to always do their best!

Memorize the Bible Verse – *The children will learn the Memory Verse. (This may be a review, since this is the same verse from Lesson 11.)*

Before Class: Familiarize yourself with the memory verse. Genesis 39:2-3 **The LORD was with Joseph...** and gave him success in everything he did.

During Class: For younger children, help them learn the first part of the verse “The LORD was with Joseph.” Older children may want to learn the entire verse.

Explain that even though Joseph was in Egypt, God was with him. God didn’t abandon Joseph! And, even though it seemed like some pretty bad things had happened to him, God meant all of it for good! God had a plan to help Joseph and his whole family, and to save many lives! *We will learn more about that in the next few lessons.*

To help with memorization, say the first two words (The LORD...) and have the children repeat the next words back to you (...was with Joseph.) Practice saying Joseph’s name

Say: The LORD... (Point to the sky)
Was with Joseph (Clasp your hands together)

And gave him success... (Shake your clasped hands together in front of you)
In everything he did. (Continue shaking your hands together overhead)

Jack of all Trades – *The children will learn about different types of jobs.*

Before Class: Find a book about (or obtain photos of) people who do different types of jobs. Be sure to include pictures of some professions that the children will recognize: fireman, doctor, minister, teacher, grocery clerk, etc.

During Class: Share the book (or the photos) with the children. Ask them to say what they think the person in the photo does for a job. Think through the various ideas with them. Perhaps some of them will tell what they'd like to be when they grow up. Discuss that all jobs are important, and that it's always important to try and do your best.

Picture This – *The children will cut out pictures of people and glue them on to paper.*

Before Class: Obtain magazines, or cut out pictures of people doing various work or hobbies. Provide large sheets of paper, scissors, and glue. (Glue sticks work best!)

NOTE: *Be sure to bring magazines with appropriate content for Little Guys!*

During Class: Allow the children to go through the magazines and find pictures of people doing work/jobs or hobbies. Pictures of children playing count too, because play is the “work” of children; they are learning when they play. Ask the children to tear out or cut out the pictures and paste them on the paper provided. You could write “Always Do Your Best!” on the top of the paper. Alternatively, use the provided Activity Sheet.

What about Joseph? – *Older children will discuss why Joseph always tried to do good.*

Before Class: Familiarize yourself with Colossians 3:23 quoted below.

During Class: Sit with the children and discuss these questions:

In our story, even though bad things happened, Joseph tried to do his best all the time.

Why do you think he did that?

Do you think you could do your best, if bad things were happening to you?

Does God want us to do good all the time?

Tell the children:

In a different part of the Bible, written a long time after Joseph lived, it says...

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...

Colossians 3:23

This means that, no matter what our job is, as believers in Jesus, we are to work at it with all of our heart. We are to work at it as if we are working for Jesus Himself, not as if we are working for just other people.

If we were to work like we were working for Jesus, do you think we might work harder?

What kinds of things do you work at? (school, chores, homework)

(Give the children examples of things that you work at as an adult, as well.)

Sometimes it can be difficult to work at these things. Perhaps if we remember that we are to work like we are working for Jesus, we would try and be happier about our jobs, or maybe we would just try and do better. *(I know I would!)*

Sing “This is the Day” – *Easy to teach and fun to sing!*

This is the day,
This is the day,
That the LORD has made,
That the LORD has made.

I will rejoice,
I will rejoice,
And be glad in it
And be glad in it.

This is the day that the LORD has made!
I will rejoice and be glad in it!

This is the day,
This is the day,
That the LORD has made!

NOTE: This is a very good marching around song! Clap your hands as you march around! If you have access to bells, or other small music makers, consider allowing the children to shake (or bang) them to keep time to the song as they march around. Remember, the Bible says *“Make a joyful NOISE unto the LORD!”* Psalm 100:1 ☺

Play Wiggle Waters – *The children will play a “wiggly” game!*

Before Class: Gather together some fun fast paced songs and something on which to play them. Bring it all to class.

During Class: Begin the game with you turning the music on and off. When the music is on, the children wiggle and move to the music. When the music stops suddenly they have to stand perfectly still, just as they are. Choose the person who is the stillest! That person gets to turn the music on and off the next time. Take turns, have fun!

OPTION: Don't have any music? You can still play! Say: “1, 2, 3, Wiggle Waters.” Everyone wiggles until you say: “Still Waters.” Then choose the person who is stillest to take over your job starting and stopping the action! Take turns! Have fun!

Always Do Your Best!