JOSEPH

Objectives: Students learn what it means to never give up and to shine the light of perseverance as Living Prisms for God as they examine the life of Joseph. Each week they will see Joseph overcome incredible difficulties as he trusts in God.

Week Seven – The Rest of the Story

Joseph continues to be swept up in emotion and caught between joy, sadness, and revenge as his brothers return two more trips to Egypt. In the end he makes the decision to reveal who he is and to embrace his family once more. Then his whole family comes to live with him in Egypt (which eventually leads to the Exodus). Joseph’s choices to trust God through all his difficulties lead up to this – the rest of the story.

Supply List

- Opening Activity – 7 sheets of paper for every 10 students. (paper plate may work better)
- Arrival Time Music – see suggestions below. (We have I Get Down You Lift Me Up on file).
- Blue Prism Cards and White Shadow Cards for Shepherd Time – one for each student.
- Worship Time music (2-3 songs of your choice).
- Ability to show vintage Timex commercial video (We need the porpoise and/or boat engine commercial.)
- One sheet of white paper per shepherd group with the message, "It is all about God’s plan," written in white or clear crayon. One washable water color paint, a small cup of water, and a paint brush for each shepherd group. (See experiential activity.)

Teacher and Shepherd Preparation:

- Lead Teacher (Large Group): Be prepared to review Genesis 11-37 – The Patriarchal History of Israel and the last lessons from Genesis 37 -42. Also be prepared to lead an activity and discuss Genesis 43-50. We know it is long. Become a master summarizer!
- Shepherds: Read and be familiar with Genesis 43-50. We know it is long. Take notes and create a summary at home as you prepare.
- Shepherds: Read and be ready to lead the experiential activity.

Arrival Time:

As students are arriving have one to two songs playing with the theme of perseverance. The goal is for the song or songs to become recognizable by students and parents dropping off. See some suggestions in Unit One.

Opening Activity: (15 minutes)

Moving Toward Extinction

As children arrive, place them together in groups of 10 with a shepherd also with each group. Put 7 pieces of paper on the floor. Tell the group that they must move their group from one end of the room to another and their feet must be on the paper. However, they may only do so by standing on their paper. If any one person has a foot that touches the floor they must all start all over again. (Shepherds you will need to enforce this.) As they move start taking away one sheet of paper at a time for each minute they work toward their goal. (Or take away faster if they are making rapid progress.) Stop taking away paper when only two remain. (It should not be easy for them to finish this goal.) You can always tell the group they must come back to the starting point if they finish reaching the other end of the room rapidly the first time.

Lead Teacher Discussion Questions:
• Is it easier to reach your goal when you have more resources?
• When your group only had two sheets of paper with happened? Did your progress slow? Did you have to come up with a new solution?
• Was your solution different when you had 7 sheets of paper? How did it change? Did it become more creative?

Lead Teacher Share with students: We have learned so much about Joseph in the past six weeks. His journey from home to the position of the Prince of Egypt was long and difficult. But the great thing he learned about God is that God brings solutions to our problems that are creative “out of the box” solutions. In the story today Joseph gets an “out of the box” answer to his questions about God’s plan for his life. It was hard for him to see and understand the solution – the answers to why he was enslaved and separated from his family. But God delivers the answers and shares the picture!

Worship Time: (15 minutes)
Your Worship Team can greet students and lead them in two to three songs, depending on time available.

Shepherd Time (10 minutes)

Shepherd Time Question: Tell about a time when someone “took the rap” for you.

• Ask students to fill out the Blue Shadow Card and the White Living Prism Card focusing on perseverance.
• Take prayer requests and spend time in prayer.

Large Group Time (10 minutes)
Review Prism, Blue Buckets, Shadow Cards, Offering, Poem, Rock

Lead Teacher – Review Joseph - who was he, how he fits in the Bible, why he is important – especially the meaning of the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob – the stories of how we get to Joseph. Joseph is part of the Patriarchal History of the Bible. Check out Genesis 11-41.

 o Abraham & Sarah – Ishmael/Isaac
 o Isaac & Rebekah – Jacob/Esau
 o Jacob & Rachel/Leah/Bilhah/Zilpah – Joseph/11 bros
 o The idea that Abraham followed God to the Promised Land but then somehow they end up out of that land and Moses/Joshua lead them back. How did they get out of the land and why? Joseph answers that.

• In the last five weeks we learned how Joseph was on top of the world. He had a special coat and favor and special dreams from God. But all that changed and he could do nothing to stop it when his brothers stripped him of his coat, threw him down a well, and then sold him as slave. He became a slave in Egypt but God blessed his work so much that Potiphar soon put him in charge of his whole household...that is, until Potiphar’s wife accused him and then Joseph found himself back in jail. God opens the door for Joseph in jail for him to help others. He does help the butler and the baker by interpreting their dreams but when the butler and baker leave prison they forget
Joseph’s help. Joseph feels forgotten but God blesses him again and Joseph is promoted in prison. God opens another door in His own timing as he interprets dreams and riddles for Pharaoh. Joseph then is promoted once more as Pharaoh puts him in charge of the kingdom.

- Today Joseph’s story is about how the meaning of his life is revealed. It becomes clear that Joseph had to trust God, and then trust his brothers before God could put His plan into motion.

**Cultural Link:** Reintroduce Timex watches [vintage commercial](http://example.com) and motto: “Take a Lickin’ and Keeps on Tickin.” Use any of the videos you believe is a good match to this lesson. Review how Joseph is like the Timex watch. He takes lickin after lickin and keeps on tickin. Joseph and the watch persevere!

Link commercial to Today’s Story: Joseph is now going to take a lickin that comes from within his own heart. He has to decide to forgive, restore, and reunify his family or punish his brothers. His decision makes the difference and allows not only him but his family to keep on ticking.

**Shepherd Circle (10 minutes)**

- **Shepherds teach the story of Joseph**’s brothers returning to Egypt, Joseph’s final test for his brothers and Joseph’s family’s reunification. *(Genesis 43-50)* We will need to be efficient with time. The story is very long.

> 19 But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20 You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21 So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

**Teaching Points:**

- Joseph is faced with the reality of his childhood dream.
- Joseph realizes that his brothers are willing to sacrifice themselves for Benjamin. They have put his life before their own (a total change from their attitude toward young Joseph).
- Once Joseph sees their willingness to put themselves aside for Benjamin’s salvation, then he is willing to sacrifice his right to revenge and he opens his heart to them.
- He allows God to use him not only to save his brothers and their families from destitution, but he makes it possible for them to live abundantly. He positions them for greatness.
- Main point in your teaching should be that the brothers who were once selfish enough to sell their brother now offer to die for a brother. The second main point is that Joseph, who has already suffered so that they could be saved, accepts their willingness to sacrifice their own lives and instead gives them life abundantly.

**Experiential Activity (15 minutes)**

*(Lead Teacher and Shepherds) – Watercolor Reveal:*

Ask helpers to hand out one sheet of paper with a “hidden” message to each group, along with a watercolor, small cup of water, and a paintbrush.

Lead Teacher: You each have a piece of paper at your table. It is just a piece of paper. Not much extraordinary about it, is there? Now I want you to imagine that this piece of paper represents your life. You know there are going to be good times in your life. Everyone point to your piece of paper and say,”Awww….happiness!” See your paper is smooth and clean. But there will also be trials and difficulties. Shepherds wad up your piece of paper. (Allow them to do so) But something extraordinary happens when we place our lives, our trust, and our
purpose in the hands of the Almighty God. He creates something! Shepherds please take your paint brush and paint and color that piece of paper.

As the paper is painted it will reveal the message, “It’s all about God’s plan.”

Discussion Questions – Lead Teacher:
  • Did you know what was written on that paper before it was painted? Do you know the full plan God has for your life?
  • Was the message still there even though the paper got crumpled? Was the plan for Joseph’s life still moving forward even though his life got “crumpled?”
  • Your shepherd held the paper carefully. Did you trust your shepherd? Did Joseph trust God?

Activity Summary: Joseph did his best to trust God when he could not see. He left the plan for his life in God’s plan. He had to fight one last battle of the heart to find out! When the answers were revealed it revealed an extraordinary plan!

Movie Clip: None (long lesson instead)

Summary Activity -
This is our last lesson about Joseph. We have looked at his story from scripture for seven weeks now. We have seen how Joseph shined the light of perseverance – how he took a lickin and kept on tickin.

Before you leave take a God Story Card and write part of your story on it. With God you will persevere.

Close in prayer asking God to help all the students become Living Prisms of perseverance!