

Unit 3: God's Rescue Plan

Unit Description: God's solution for sin, which He promised in Eden, became clearer when God made a covenant with Abraham. God promised to bring the Rescuer through Abraham's family. This family was far from perfect and endured great adversity, but through it all, God remained faithful, revealing that nothing could stop His plan.

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.



SESSION 1: God Made a Covenant with Abraham
Genesis 12–20



SESSION 2: Melchizedek Blessed Abraham
Genesis 14; Hebrews 5; 7



SESSION 3: God Provided Isaac
Genesis 21–22



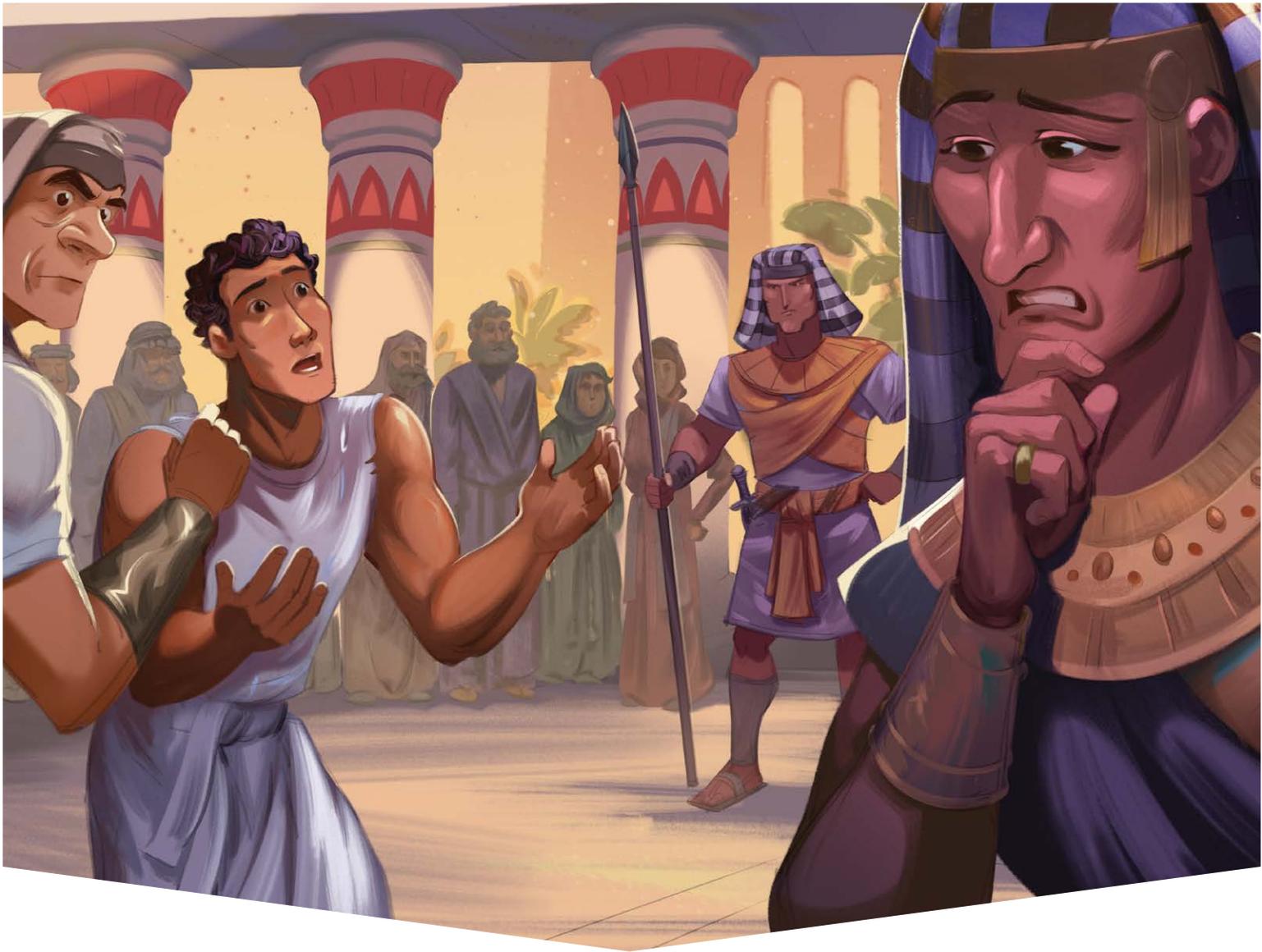
SESSION 4: God Changed Jacob
Genesis 25–33



SESSION 5: God Had a Plan for Joseph
Genesis 37–50



SESSION 6: God Controls Everything
Job



UNIT 3 | SESSION 5

GOD HAD A PLAN FOR JOSEPH

GENESIS 37–50

KEY PASSAGE:

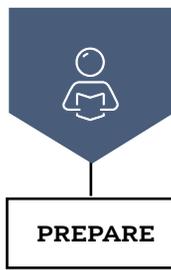
Psalm 135:5-6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God had a plan for Joseph's life. He allowed Joseph to suffer in order to rescue a whole nation. God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

The story of Joseph is packed full of moments that resonate with us. Maybe you were the favorite child or the favorite child's sibling. Some people resonate with being cast away from family or being undeservingly welcomed into a new family. Some resonate with finding favor with an enemy or showing favor to an enemy. In Joseph's story, we can see ourselves and our need for Jesus in so many ways.

On at least four occasions in Joseph's journey, others gave him tremendous blessings. Though Joseph lost some of these earthly treasures, he remained faithful to the Lord. We normally focus on Joseph's adversity, but we can't miss that both the lows and highs of Joseph's life were also marked by God's blessing through others.

First, Joseph's father blessed him with a beautiful multi-colored robe as a representation of his favored status. This tangible symbol was taken from him when his brothers sold him into slavery. Yet Joseph remained faithful.

Next, Potiphar blessed Joseph by making him overseer of his entire household. The role lent itself to all the tangible and monetary things anyone could want. But when Joseph fled from the advance of Potiphar's wife, it was all taken from him. Yet

Joseph remained faithful.

Third, the prison warden blessed Joseph by making him overseer over the entire prison. Finally, Pharaoh blessed Joseph by placing him as second in command over all of Egypt, putting Joseph in a position to save his family from famine.

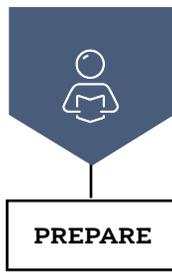
Joseph refused to let the evil actions of others steal his faith. When he had the chance to take away from others who had taken from him, Joseph showed generosity instead.

We experience various common grace blessings from the Lord every day. These blessings can tempt us to worship the gift rather than the Giver. Like Joseph, we must remain steadfast under trial and faithful to the Lord. In famine and in plenty, blessed be the name of the Lord. He is good and in control.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Twelve Sons of Jacob (Israel):

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Reuben | 7. Simeon |
| 2. Levi | 8. Judah |
| 3. Issachar | 9. Zebulun |
| 4. Joseph | 10. Benjamin |
| 5. Dan | 11. Naphtali |
| 6. Gad | 12. Asher |



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “Grain Sack Mix-Up” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- index cards

Session Starter (Option 2)

- index cards



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “God Had a Plan for Joseph” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 3, Session 5” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Abby’s Challenge” missions video

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “For I Know (Psalm 135:5-6)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

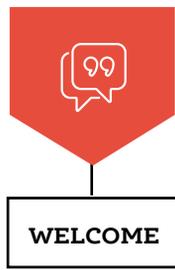
- construction paper

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Big Picture Question Poster
- note cards
- stickers
- paper bags
- various care items (hard candy, puzzle books, toiletries, and so forth)

Journal and Prayer

- Journal Page
- “Joseph’s Life Story” activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Can you think of a time someone else had something you wanted? How did you feel about that person? Why? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Grain Sack Mix-Up” on the activity page. Kids should unscramble the words and phrases to find the answer to the big picture question.

SAY “ **Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God’s good plan.** Do you believe that? Today’s Bible story is about a time everything seemed to be going wrong, but God used it for good. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BROTHER MATCH



Write the names of Israel’s sons on separate index cards. Make two sets so each name has a match: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher.

Mix up each set of cards. Form two teams and give each team a set of cards. The teams should arrange the cards facedown on the floor or table. Team 1 will turn over one card. Then team 2 will turn over one card. If the cards match, team 2 keeps the cards. If not, both teams turn the cards facedown. Then team 2 will begin by turning over one card. Team 1 will turn over a card attempting to match team 2’s card.

Continue back and forth, alternating which team begins. The team to collect the most cards wins.

SAY “ These are the names of brothers. Twelve brothers! Can you imagine? Today’s Bible story focuses on one of these brothers: Joseph. ”

OPTION 2: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Before the session, write various situations on separate index cards. Stack the cards and ask a volunteer to take a card. The volunteer should read the card silently and then act out a reaction.

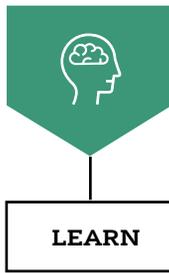
Let the rest of the kids guess what caused the reaction. Allow several guesses and then reveal the answer. After each round, choose a new volunteer to play again.

Suggested situations: stung by a bee, thrown into a pit, stepped on a nail, put in jail, blamed for something you didn’t do, earned a high score on a video game, received a beautiful new coat, visited by a loved one you haven’t seen in a long time.

SAY “ Have any of these things actually happened to you? Some of these things actually happened to Joseph. We’ll hear about that in today’s Bible story. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hello, there! It’s so good to see you today. If you brought your Bible, hold it up. [Provide Bibles for kids who need one.] Can anyone tell me what the Bible is about? [Allow kids to respond.] The Bible is God’s Word. It tells us the wonderful story of God’s plan to rescue sinners.

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. Today, we will see how God works in our lives—through easy times and hard times—for His glory and our good. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Let’s say our big picture question and answer together: **Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God’s good plan.**

This truth is comforting because no matter what happens, nothing surprises God. Nothing is outside of His good plan. We may be caught off guard by unexpected events, but God already knows. He is in control and we can trust Him. Keep that in mind when you hear today’s story. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ We’ve been hearing about God’s solution for sin, which He promised in Eden. God’s plan became clearer when God made a covenant with Abraham. He promised to bring the Rescuer through Abraham’s family. Abraham’s family struggled with the challenges and consequences of sin. Through it all, God was faithful. Nothing could stop His plan.

Last time, we saw that God changed Jacob. He made Jacob’s name Israel. Jacob’s future family would form the nation of Israel, and the people would be called Israelites. Jacob’s family grew through his sons. There were 12: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. Out of all of his sons, Jacob loved Joseph the most. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 37–50. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Had a Plan for Joseph.” Use the bolded text to retell or review the story.

GOD HAD A PLAN FOR JOSEPH

“**Jacob had 12 sons, but Joseph was his favorite. Jacob’s other sons hated Joseph. One day, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, who were tending to the sheep. The brothers saw Joseph coming, and they made a plan to get rid of him. They sold Joseph as a servant to some travelers going to Egypt.** Then they convinced Jacob that wild animals had killed his favorite son. Jacob was very sad.

Meanwhile, **the travelers sold Joseph to an Egyptian officer named Potiphar. The Lord was with Joseph and made him successful at everything he did. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of many things, and Potiphar was happy with him. But Potiphar’s wife lied about Joseph, accusing him of doing something he didn’t do. Potiphar was angry, and he put Joseph in prison.**

God was still with Joseph and blessed him, even in prison. God gave Joseph the ability to understand the meaning of dreams. Years passed, and Joseph was forgotten in prison until **Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had two dreams. He sent for Joseph. Joseph explained the dreams: Egypt was going to have seven good years with plenty of food followed by seven bad years of no food.** Joseph told Pharaoh to save food during the good years to use during the bad years.

Pharaoh realized that God was with Joseph, so he made Joseph second in command in all of Egypt. Joseph stored away food during the good years. Then, during the famine, people came to him to buy grain.

One day, Jacob sent 10 of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. The brothers came to Joseph and bowed down. Joseph knew who they were, but they did not recognize him. When Joseph was ready, he told his brothers who he was. “I’m Joseph!” he said. “Don’t be afraid. God sent me here so I could save your people, a remnant, from the famine.”

Joseph’s brothers went home to bring all their family and belongings back to Egypt. Jacob hugged his son Joseph, and they cried.

Jacob’s family was blessed in Egypt, but Jacob got older and died. Now Joseph’s brothers were afraid Joseph would punish them for what they did to him. **Joseph said, “You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people.”** Joseph comforted his brothers and spoke kindly to them.

Christ Connection: God had a plan for Joseph’s life. He allowed Joseph to suffer

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display art: Show the Bible story picture or use a flannelgraph to depict the story as you tell it.

Use props: Gather and display items related to the story. For example: toy sheep (shepherds), handcuffs (prison), pillow (dreams), bread (grain).



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

in order to rescue a whole nation. God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved. ”

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ Joseph was 17 years old when his brothers sold him to travelers going to Egypt. He was in Egypt for 20 years before he saw them again! During that time, Joseph was falsely accused of wrongdoing and thrown into prison. Why did Pharaoh later put him in a position of power? Look at Genesis 41:37-40. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Gen. 41:37-40.] God was with Joseph. God gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams, and He made Joseph wise.

When there was a famine, Joseph was in charge of the food in Egypt. How did God use Joseph’s position for good? Look at Genesis 42:6. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Gen. 42:6.] Joseph’s brothers came to Egypt for food. Without his help, their family would have died. God also used the famine to bring Joseph’s family back together.

Joseph believed that God was in control and working out His plan to rescue His people even through the actions of Joseph’s brothers. Joseph didn’t realize all God was doing while it was happening, but he was able to look back and see how God provided a way for his family to thrive in Egypt: Had Joseph’s brothers not done evil, Joseph would not have been in Egypt. Had Potiphar’s wife not lied, Joseph would not have been in prison. Had Joseph not been in prison, Pharaoh’s servant would not have met him. Had Pharaoh’s servant not met him, Joseph wouldn’t have been introduced to Pharaoh, who put him in charge of Egypt.

What Joseph’s brothers intended for harm, God intended for good. Joseph invited his family to come live in 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). ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God had a plan for Joseph’s life. He allowed Joseph to suffer in order to rescue a whole nation. God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved. Jesus died on the cross to save people from their sins. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 3, Session 5” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What should you do if someone says mean things to you?
2. What are some of the true things God says about us in the Bible that we need to remember?



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “ Abby is an 11-year-old girl who realized that she can make a difference by giving to missions. Every gift matters—large or small. Let’s watch her story. ”

Play the missions video and ask kids if they think they could save or raise \$32 to give to missions. Plan to collect a missions offering over the next few weeks to add to Abby’s Challenge or to support missionaries from your church. Note: You can give through the International Mission Board (IMB) at www.imb.org/abbyschallenge.

Choose a volunteer to pray for missionaries your church supports. Pray that people who hear the good news about Jesus would trust in Him and find peace even in life’s sufferings.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 135:5-6 together. Then hide the key passage poster so kids cannot read it.

Form two teams. Explain to kids that you will read the key passage. Teams should listen carefully. If a player hears you say an incorrect word, she should shout, “Gotcha!” If you said an incorrect word, award a point to the first team to call out. If a player shouts for a correct word, take away a point from his team. Play a few rounds, replacing several words of the key passage each time.

Example [substitutions in brackets]: I [think] that the LORD is great; our Lord is greater than all [mountains]. The LORD does [nothing] he pleases in [rain] and on [walks], in the [pool] and all the [trees]. [Proverbs] 135:5-6

SAY “ When we hear Joseph’s story, we don’t think about how great Joseph was. We think about how great God is! God was working to bring about good from evil. Keep practicing our key passage so you remember that God is great and in control. ”

Lead kids to sing “For I Know (Psalm 135:5-6).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

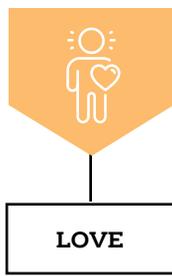
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning from **LEARN** to **LOVE**.

SAY “ Lord God, thank You for Your Word. Even when our circumstances are not good, we know You are always good. You are working in our lives for Your glory and our good. We love You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 50. Remind them that the Book of Genesis is the first book of the Old Testament Law—the first five books of the Bible. Challenge kids to recite the names of the first five books. (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Genesis 50:19-20.

SAY “ Joseph trusted that God is in control. Even though Joseph’s brothers caused him to suffer, God used their evil actions for good. Israel’s family moved from Canaan into Egypt where there was food during the famine. ”

Choose a volunteer to locate Jacob’s home in Canaan (G9) and Joseph’s home in Egypt (H8) on the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Egypt.)

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ How did Joseph react to the difficult circumstances he faced? ”

Explain that we don’t know all of Joseph’s thoughts and actions, but the Bible doesn’t record any instance of Joseph turning away from God. His faith in God seems to lead him to trust in God no matter what. The difficulties even increased his faith in God. Joseph declared to his brothers that he believed God was using the evil they did to bring about something good.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 5:3-5.)

SAY “ If you were Joseph, would you get revenge on your brothers or show them mercy? Why? ”

Encourage kids to consider why they feel or think the way they do. What do they believe about God or themselves that leads them to seek revenge? What do they believe that leads them to show mercy? Point out that our sinful nature seeks revenge, but God can change our hearts to want to show mercy like He has shown us mercy through Jesus. We can forgive others and even repay them with good.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 3:9.)

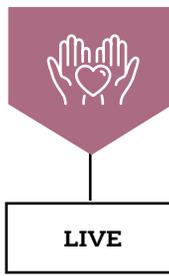
SAY “ Does God always reveal the way He uses evil or suffering for His good plan? ”

Kids may recognize evil and suffering in the world that seemingly has no purpose or good outcome. Remind kids that injustice, disease, natural disasters, and much more exist because creation is fallen. We can trust that no suffering is meaningless. We can fight for justice, peace, and truth, knowing that God is good and in control. The Bible says one day, Jesus will return and make everything right.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 16:33.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: MISSIONS GIVING CHALLENGE



Form groups of kids and give each group a piece of construction paper and a marker. Encourage kids to think of ways to raise \$32 (or more!) to give to missions.

Can they hold a car wash or bake sale?
Can they do extra chores around the house?

Encourage them to get creative. Also encourage them to set a realistic goal for giving. You might consider a group goal or a goal for each family. Share ideas and make plans to work together to add your offerings to Abby's Challenge or to support missionaries from your church. Emphasize that kids can make a difference to missionaries all around the world.

SAY “ The \$32 that Abby first gave is now more than \$13,000 because others chose to give. How high do you think the offering will get when many kids' groups choose to give? ”

OPTION 2: CARE FOR PEOPLE

Invite kids to create care bags for people who may feel alone or who may be suffering. Provide markers for kids to decorate paper bags. Kids may also write encouraging notes.

Help kids fill the bags with various care items such as toiletries, hard candy, puzzle books, and so forth. Consider including a handmade card or providing information about your church. Arrange to deliver care bags to a local hospital, nursing home, or assisted living center this week.

SAY “ God cares about people who are suffering. We can pray for people who are suffering and serve them. Suffering is hard, but we can trust that God is in control. **Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. Nothing is outside of God's good plan.** God used Joseph's suffering for good, and He can use others' suffering for good too. ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for His Word and for the hope we have in Jesus. Pray that kids would be comforted by His presence in times of suffering and trust that He is good and in control. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Joseph's Life Story” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 3 • Session 5

GOD'S PLAN FOR JOSEPH

Genesis 37–50

WHO IS IN CONTROL OF EVERYTHING? GOD IS IN CONTROL OF EVERYTHING IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH. NOTHING IS OUTSIDE OF GOD'S GOOD PLAN.

Jacob had 12 sons, but Joseph was his favorite. Jacob's other sons hated Joseph. One day, the brothers sold Joseph as a servant to some travelers going to Egypt.

The travelers sold Joseph to an Egyptian officer named Potiphar. The Lord was with Joseph. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of many things. But Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph. Potiphar was angry, and he put Joseph in prison.

God was still with Joseph and blessed him. God gave Joseph the ability to understand the meaning of dreams. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had two dreams. He sent for Joseph. Joseph explained the dreams: Egypt was going to have seven good years with plenty of food followed by seven bad years of no food.

Pharaoh made Joseph second in command in all of Egypt. Joseph stored away food during the good years. Then, during the famine, people came to him to buy grain.

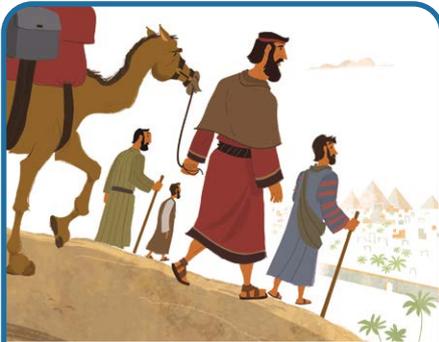
One day, Jacob sent 10 of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. The brothers did not recognize him. When Joseph was ready, he told his brothers who he was. Joseph said, "You planned evil against me; God planned it for good to bring about the present result—the survival of many people."

Christ Connection: God had a plan for Joseph's life. He allowed Joseph to suffer in order to rescue a whole nation. God planned for Jesus to suffer so that many—people from all nations—would be saved.

FOLD

Grain Sack Mix-Up | Unscramble the words and phrases to find the answer to the big picture question:

Who is in control of everything?



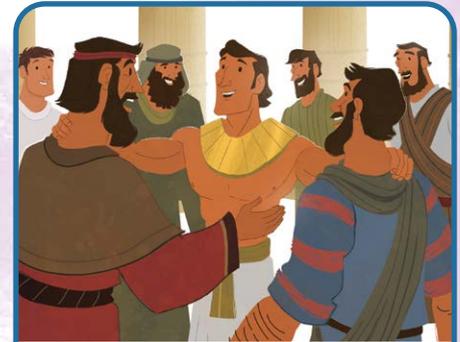
Genesis 37:12-28



Genesis 39:21-40:15



Genesis 41:17-32



Genesis 45:1-15

Joseph's Life Story | Find and read the references. Write a brief description of each event in your own words.