Joseph Sent to Egypt

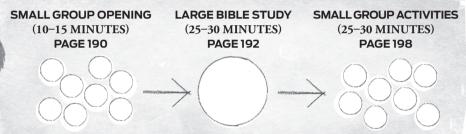
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1–41:57

MAIN POINT: God used Joseph's suffering for good.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop

God's perfect plan.



Leader BIBLE STUDY

Jacob grew up in strife with his twin brother, Esau. He deceived his father, Isaac, to steal Esau's blessing. Then he spent many years away from his family to avoid Esau's anger. God spoke to Jacob in a dream and reaffirmed to Jacob the promise He gave to Abraham and Isaac. Finally, God called Jacob home to the land of Canaan. God blessed Jacob and changed his name to Israel.

Jacob had 12 sons. They would become the leaders of the tribes of Israel. But Jacob's favorite son was Joseph. Joseph was the son of Rachel, Jacob's favorite wife, and Jacob didn't hide his favoritism. He gave Joseph a gift that his other sons did not get: a beautiful coat of many colors.

Of course, this did not endear Joseph to his siblings. Neither did Joseph's announcement that God had spoken to him in dreams—dreams that revealed that one day everyone in Joseph's family would bow down to him. Joseph's brothers planned evil against him, and Joseph ended up in a hole in the ground. Then he was sent to Egypt and was accused of a crime he did not commit.

Maybe Joseph felt alone in the pit and in prison. Did God forget Joseph? No. God was with Joseph, and He had a wonderful plan. God raised up Joseph into a position of power in Egypt. God used Joseph to establish a remnant—a small, surviving group of His people. Centuries later, God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world as part of that family.

Jesus experienced true loneliness and ultimate suffering as He died on the cross for our sins. God raised Jesus from the dead. When we trust in Him, God forgives our sin. We won't experience true loneliness because Jesus promised to always be with us. (Matt. 28:20) And compared to the weight of glory awaiting believers, our suffering on earth is "momentary light affliction" (2 Cor. 4:17).

God is in control of our lives, and He uses suffering and injustice to accomplish His plans in and through us. We can trust God's faithfulness. Through all circumstances, God's will prevails—all for His glory and our good.



Additional resources for each session are available at *gospelproject.com*. For free training and session-by-session help, visit *www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject*.

The BIBLE STORY

Joseph Sent to Egypt

Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57

Jacob and his family were home in Canaan, the land God promised to Abraham and his family. Jacob had 12 sons, but his favorite son was Joseph. Jacob gave Joseph a colorful robe. The other brothers hated Joseph.

One day, Joseph shared with his brothers a dream he had. He dreamed that he and his brothers were putting together bundles of grain. Suddenly Joseph's grain stood up and the others bowed down to his. Then Joseph had another dream. In this dream, Joseph saw the sun, the moon, and 11 stars bowing to him. This dream meant all of Joseph's family would one day bow down to Joseph.

Some time later, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, who were tending to the sheep. When the brothers saw Joseph coming, they decided to kill him. Reuben, Joseph's oldest brother, convinced the others to throw him into a pit instead.

The brothers threw Joseph into the pit. Then they saw a caravan of people heading to Egypt. The brothers sold Joseph to them as a servant. The brothers dipped Joseph's robe in goat's blood and showed it to Jacob. Jacob thought an animal had killed Joseph, and he 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 realized this and put him in charge as his personal assistant.

Potiphar's wife tried to get Joseph to sin against God and Potiphar, but Joseph refused. This made her angry, and she accused Joseph of doing something he didn't do. Potiphar believed his wife, and Joseph went to jail.

God was with Joseph and blessed him. The jail warden put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners, and God made Joseph successful. Two of the prisoners Joseph cared for were Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker. Both of them told Joseph about dreams they had, and Joseph told them what the dreams meant. Joseph said that one day, the cupbearer would serve Pharaoh again, but the baker would not because in three days, the baker would die. Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him and to tell Pharaoh that he did not deserve to be in jail.

The cupbearer did serve Pharaoh again, but he forgot about Joseph for two years. At that time, Pharaoh had two dreams. Pharaoh saw seven fat cows eaten by seven skinny cows, and seven fat heads of grain eaten by seven thin heads. No one knew what these dreams meant! That's when the cupbearer remembered Joseph.

God told Joseph what Pharaoh's dreams meant, and Joseph explained the dreams to Pharaoh. "The dreams represent seven years of lots of food followed by seven years with no food. You should pick someone 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—no one was more important than Joseph, except for Pharaoh himself. Joseph stored away food during the good years, and during the famine, people came to him to buy grain.

Christ Connection: God sent Joseph to Egypt and blessed him so that he rose to a position of great power. God used Joseph to help Joseph's family and many others. Jesus gave up His position of great power to be the Savior of the world.



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET BIBLE EXPRESS!

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that God sent Joseph to Egypt to save people from many nations. (Gen. 41:57) God also sent Jesus to earth to rescue from sin all who trust in Him. Order in bulk, subscribe guarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/ devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Joseph Sent to Egypt

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1–41:57

MAIN POINT: God used Joseph's suffering for good.

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop

God's perfect plan.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share their favorite travel destination.

Activity page (5 minutes)

• "Sent Away" activity page, 1 per kid

pencils or markers

Distribute activity pages and pencils. Point out that the word at the top of the page (CEWNR) doesn't make any sense. Explain that to solve the code, kids should go forward two letters in the alphabet for each letter. (Example: A = C.)

• According to the puzzle, where was Joseph sent? (*Egypt*) Joseph's family lived in the land of Canaan. Today's Bible story is about how Joseph ended up far from his family—in the land of Egypt.



paper

pencils

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Ancient Egypt facts

Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Announce that you will read several facts. Kids should listen carefully and try to guess which country you are describing.

When kids think they know the answer, they should write the name of the country on their papers. Read all of

the facts, and then invite kids to hold up their answers.

- 1. This country is located on the continent of Africa.
- 2. One of the world's longest rivers flows through this country. (*the Nile River*)
- 3. This country is home to one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. (*the Great Pyramid*)
- 4. This country is mostly made up of hot deserts.
- 5. Many events in the Old Testament take place in or around this country.
- 6. The kings in this country were known as pharaohs.
- 7. Long ago, people made homes in this country from bricks made out of mud.
- **SAY** Did anyone guess Egypt? All these facts describe Egypt, a key location in today's Bible story.

OPTION 2: Dream sequence

Post the four dream pictures in separate corners of the room. Demonstrate motions for each object:

- wheat—Wave your arms overhead.
- stars—Do a jumping jack.
- moon—Hold your arms in a circle overhead.
- sun—Spin around one time.

Invite kids to choose corners to stand in. Call out one of the objects. Kids in that corner must perform the motion. The last player to do so is out. Between rounds, kids may move between corners. Play until one kid remains.

SAY • A boy named Joseph had dreams about these items. We'll find out in our Bible story what they meant.

Transition to large group

- "Joseph's Dream Pictures" printable
- tape

Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- · leader attire
- gym towel
- sweathand

[Large Group Leader enters quickly, slightly out of breath. A gym towel is draped over the leader's shoulders and a sweatband is around his or her head.]

LEADER • Hey, everyone! I sure am glad to see you. But I'm afraid have some bad news about the big game. We are in the third quarter of the semi-final, and the opposing team is up by 16 points. I really hope things can turn around. The team could really use another win. If they beat this team, they will make it to the final game, and then if they win that game, they will be champions! Hurray!

You know, sometimes good things do come out of bad situations. That reminds me of today's Bible story. Let's get started.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

· Giant Timeline

Point to the giant timeline to review previous Bible stories. Remind kids that God made a covenant with Abraham. and God repeated the promise to Abraham's son Isaac and grandson Jacob.

LEADER • Jacob grew up, and God changed Jacob's name to Israel, the name of God's covenant people. Jacob got married and had 12 sons. Yes, 12! One of his sons was named Joseph. Today's Bible story is called "Joseph Sent to Egypt.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • I wonder why Joseph went to Egypt. As you listen to the story, keep in mind our big picture question, What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's perfect plan.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "Joseph Sent to Egypt."

Encourage kids to show emotions as you talk about the Bible story. When they hear about something happy that happened to Joseph, they should smile. When they hear about something sad, they should frown.

LEADER • Can you imagine how Joseph felt when his brothers threw him into a pit and then sold him to travelers going to Egypt? Joseph was probably glad just to be alive, but he probably missed his father.

In Egypt, Joseph worked for Potiphar, an Egyptian leader. God was with Joseph and made him successful. So Potiphar promoted Joseph to be his personal assistant. Just when things were looking up, Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of doing something he didn't do. So Potiphar put Joseph in jail.

- Bibles
- "Joseph Sent to Egypt" video
- Big Picture Question
 Poster
- Bible Story Picture
 Poster

Not only was Joseph far from home, he was locked up in prison for two years! How did Joseph get out of jail? Pharaoh needed someone to interpret his dreams. God told Joseph what Pharaoh's dreams meant, and Pharaoh made Joseph a leader of Egypt.

God sent Joseph to Egypt and blessed him so that he rose to a position of great power. **God used Joseph's suffering for good.** He used Joseph to help Joseph's family and many others. In a similar way, Jesus left His position in heaven to come to earth and be the Savior of the world.

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Rest in His Promise" song **LEADER** • Can you think of anyone else in the Bible who was hated by people whom He loved? Can you think of anyone who suffered so that something good would happen?

Jesus was rejected by people, and He died for our sins. God promises to forgive everyone who trusts in Jesus as Lord. That's a promise we can rest in, no matter what kind of day we are having. Will you sing with me?

Sing together "Rest in His Promise."

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

Show the "Unit 3, Session 3" discussion starter video. Lead kids to talk about a time they moved away or a time a best friend moved away. Prompt discussion with the following questions:

- "Unit 3, Session 3" discussion starter video
- 1. Have any of you ever moved to a new place?
- 2. What did you like least about the move?
- 3. What did you like most?

Lead kids to talk about situations that seemed bad at first that turned out to be good. Be prepared to share a couple of examples of your own.

LEADER • When we hear about Joseph and know the whole story, it's easy to see that **God used Joseph's suffering for good.** Do you think Joseph knew what God was up to when he was sitting in jail? Maybe not. Sometimes we have to trust God's plan even when we do not understand what He is doing.

God used Joseph's suffering for good, and He can use hard things in our lives for good, too. Remember that God is in control over everything. He is good, and He has a plan. What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's perfect plan.

Key passage (5 minutes)

LEADER • God's promise to Abraham extended to Abraham's future offspring. In this verse, God promised to be with Isaac. God was with Isaac, with Jacob, and with Joseph.

Show the slide or poster of Genesis 26:24. Guide everyone to read the verse together, performing any motions you may have created for key words.

Then lead the girls to read the verse together. Then lead

- Key Passage Poster
- "I Am With You" song

the boys to read the verse. If any kids have memorized the verse, invite volunteers to recite it aloud. Then sing together "I Am With You."

Prayer (2 minutes)

Before dismissing to small groups, lead kids in prayer.

LEADER • Lord God, thank You for Your Word. Thank You for stories like Joseph's so we can know You better.

You are working in our lives even when we do not realize it. Help us to trust You for everything. Help us remember Jesus, who suffered the most to give us the greatest good—salvation from sin. We love You!

Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Joseph Sent to Egypt

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1–41:57

MAIN POINT: God used Joseph's suffering for good.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 26:24

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop

God's perfect plan.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- rubber or foam ball
- Show the key passage poster and lead boys and girls to read it aloud together. Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Give one kid a ball. Prompt him to say the first word of the key passage. Then invite him to toss the ball to another player.

Kids should continue passing the ball, saying one word of the verse at a time. As kids master the verse, encourage them to pass the ball more quickly. For an added challenge, randomly call out, "Stop!" and guide the player holding the ball to recite the entire key passage.

SAY • In this verse, God was speaking to Abraham's son, Isaac. God was working out His plan to grow Abraham's family. Joseph was Abraham's greatgrandson. Even though Joseph's brothers sent him away to Egypt, God was with Joseph and **God used Joseph's suffering for good.**

Encourage kids to work on memorizing Genesis 26:24 during the week. Remind them that God is with them, too.

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- red construction paper squares
- green construction paper squares
- Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Give each kid a Bible, a red square, and a green square. Explain that you will read a sentence about the Bible story. If kids think the story is true, they should hold up the green square. If they think it is false, they should hold up the red square. Call on a kid holding the correct square to find and read the corresponding verse from the Bible.

- 1. Jacob's favorite son was Benjamin. (false, Joseph; Gen. 37:3)
- 2. Joseph's brothers loved Joseph. (false, they hated him; Gen. 37:4)
- 3. Joseph had a dream about grain bowing down. (*true, Gen. 37:6-7*)
- 4. Joseph's dreams meant Joseph would rule over his family. (*true*, Gen. 37:8-10)
- 5. Joseph's brothers threw him into a deep pond. (false, an empty pit; Gen. 37:23-24)
- 6. Joseph was sold to people traveling to Bethlehem. (false, Egypt; Gen. 37:28)
- 7. Joseph was in prison with the king's cupbearer and baker. (*true, Gen. 40:2-3*)
- 8. Pharaoh had a dream about seven healthy crocodiles. (*false, cows; Gen. 41:1-4*)
- 9. Pharaoh made Joseph second in command in all of Egypt. (*true, Gen. 41:40*)
- 10. Joseph stored up gold in Egypt. (false, food; Gen. 41:48)
- **SAY** Joseph was a young man when his brothers sent him away to Egypt. He spent two years in jail. Everything seemed to be going wrong! But God was with Joseph, and Pharaoh put Joseph in a position of power so he could store up food for the famine. **God used Joseph's suffering for good.**



Bible

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Brothers echo game

Invite a volunteer to read the names of Jacob's 12 sons from Genesis 35:23-26. Be prepared to assist with pronunciation:

- 1. Reuben (RHOO ben)
- 2. Simon (SIGH muhn)
- 3. Levi (LEE vigh)
- 4. Judah (IOO duh)
- 5. Issachar (ISS uh KAHR)
- 6. Zebulun (ZEB yoo luhn)
- 7. Joseph (JOH zif)
- 8. Benjamin (BEN juh min)
- 9. Dan (*DAN*)
- 10. Naphtali (NAF tuh ligh)
- 11. Gad (*GAD*)
- 12. Asher (ASH uhr)

Read the names again slowly. Encourage kids to pay close attention to the names of Joseph's brothers. Then call out a name. Instruct kids to echo by repeating the name; boys repeat the name first, and then girls repeat it quietly.

Randomly call out names like *Noah*, *David*, or *Paul*. Any kids who echo a name that does not belong to Joseph or his brothers must sit down. Play until one or two kids remain.

SAY • Joseph's brothers decided to throw Joseph into a pit, and then they sold him to some travelers going to Egypt. Joseph's brothers rejected him, but God had a plan to use Joseph to help the brothers and their families. **God used Joseph's suffering for good.**

God blessed Joseph so that he rose to a position of great authority. God used Joseph to help his family and many others. Like Joseph, Jesus gave up His position of authority to be the Savior of the world.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

OPTION 2: Care for people who suffer

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. Remind them that Jacob gave Joseph a colorful coat; suggest they color the bags like Joseph's coat.

Kids may also write encouraging notes or the big picture answer: *Nothing can stop God's perfect plan.*

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. **God used Joseph's suffering for good**, and He can use others' suffering for good too.

- lunch-size paper bags
- markers
- care items: tissues, toiletries, hard candy, puzzle books, and so on

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Lead kids to draw a picture of Joseph when he first arrived in Egypt and a picture of Joseph after he was given a position of power in Egypt. Point out that God was with Joseph in Egypt.

SAY • When we suffer or when others suffer, we can trust that God is in control of all things. He is good.

Let's pray. Father, You are good. Comfort us when we suffer. Help us to trust You. We love You. Amen. Challenge kids to unscramble the words on the activity page to discover the main point: **God used Joseph's suffering for good.**

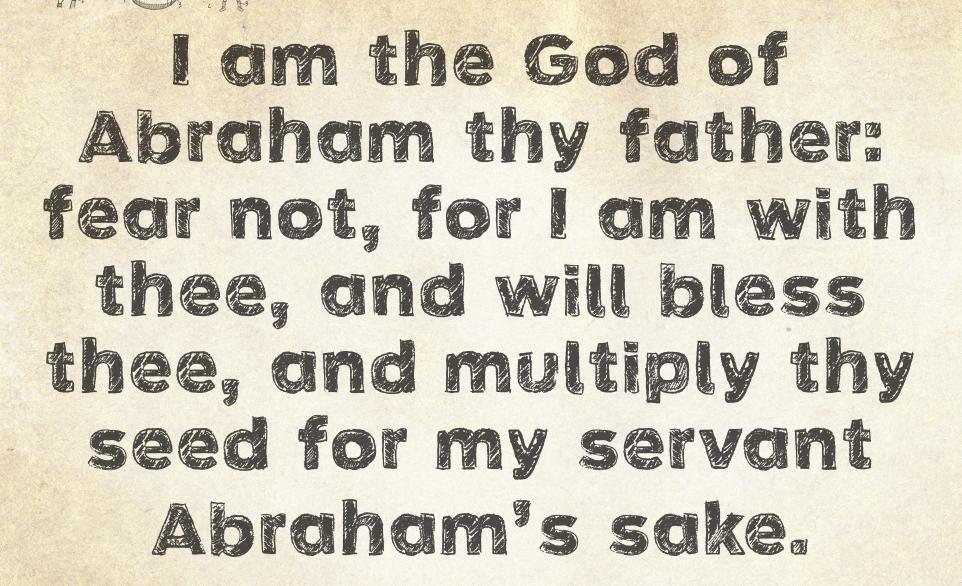
- Journal Page
- pencils
- "Evil for Good" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home

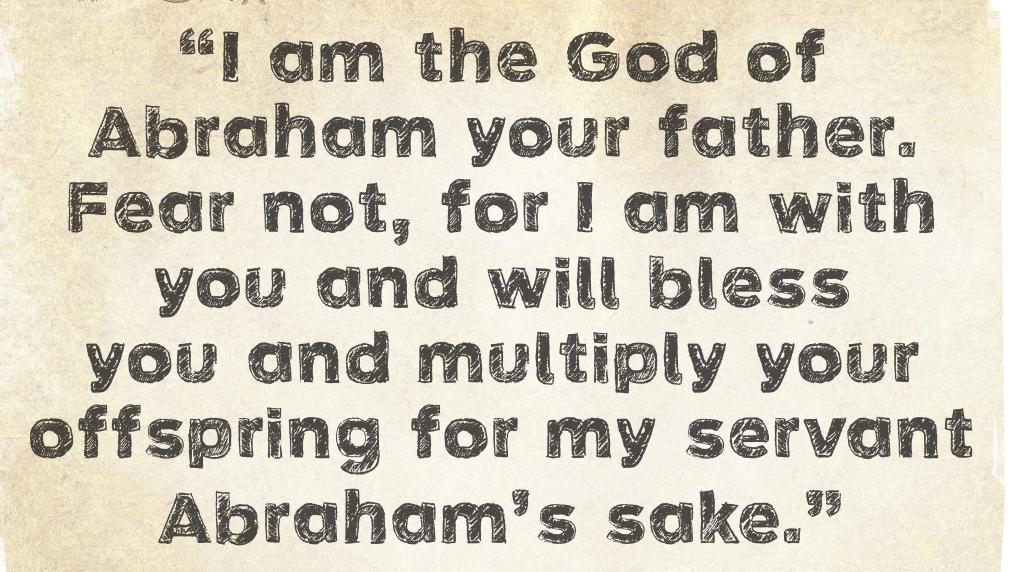
Journal Page **God the Covenant-Keeper** Key Passage: Genesis 26:24 Big Picture Question: What can stop God's plan? Nothing can stop God's perfect plan. Session 1: The Stolen Blessing Genesis 25:27-34; 27:1-45 Jacob stole Esau's blessing. Session 2: Jacob's New Name Genesis 32–33 God changed Jacob's name to Israel, the name of God's covenant people. Session 3: Joseph Sent to Egypt Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57 God used Joseph's suffering for good. Session 4: Joseph's Dreams Came True Genesis 42:1-46:34; 50:15-21 God sent Joseph to Egypt to establish a remnant.

til am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your offspring because of My servant Abraham."





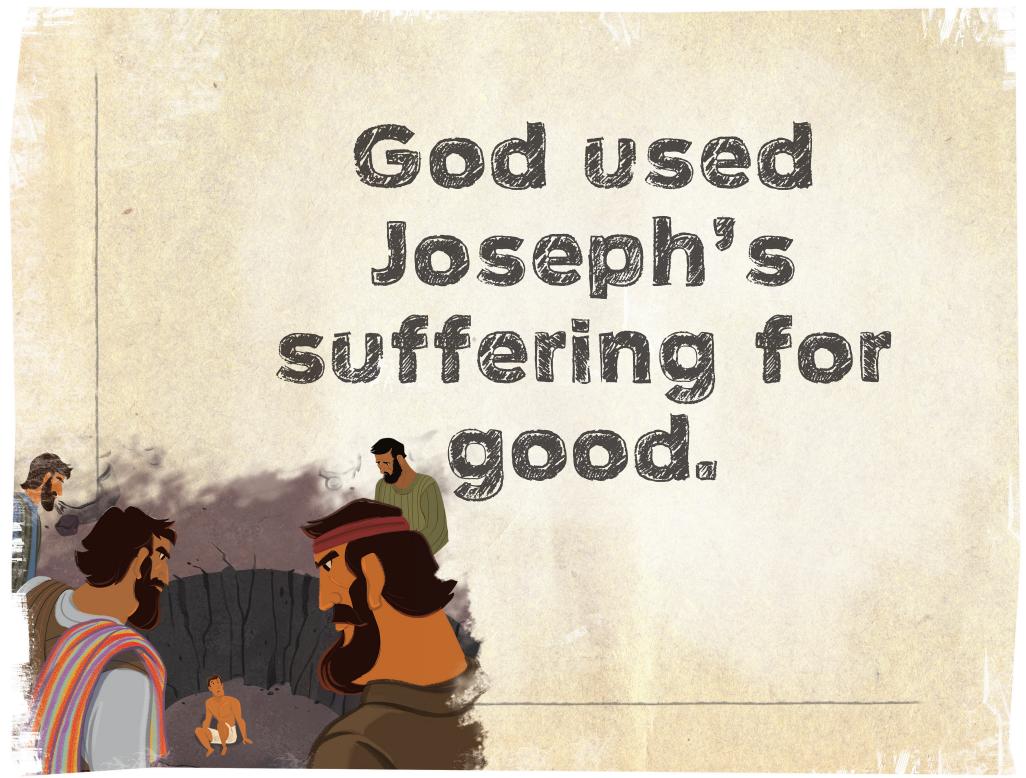


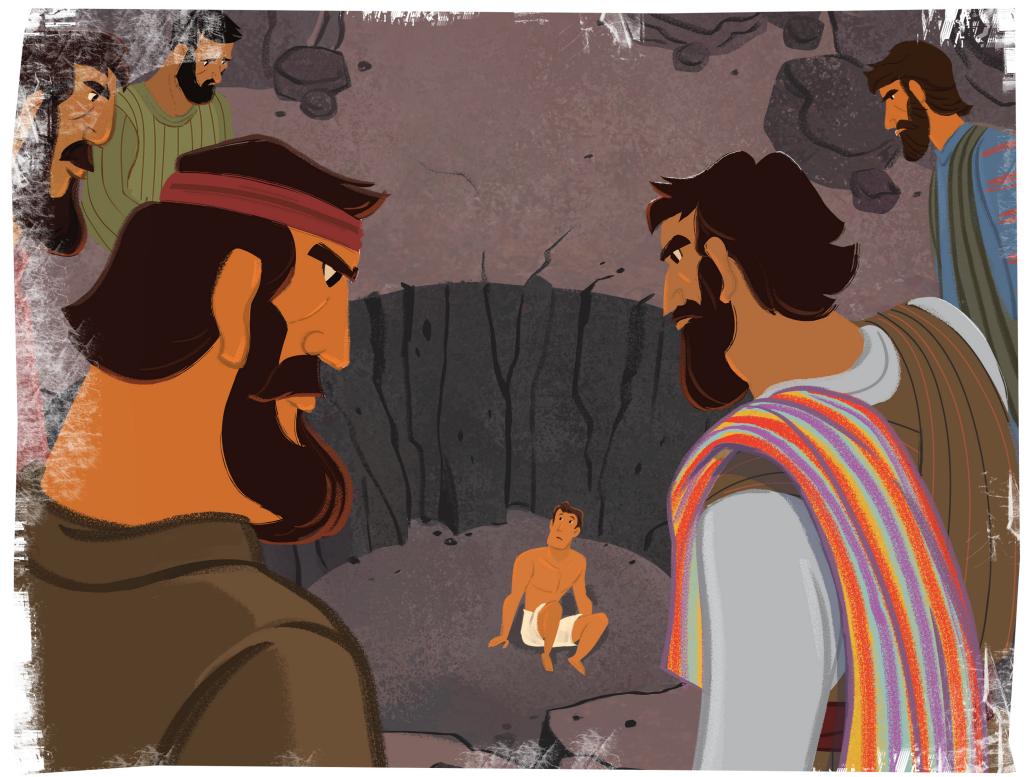




tel am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you: I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.







 $\textbf{Joseph Sent to Egypt (Genesis 37:1-36; 39:1-41:57)} \bullet \text{Unit 3, Session 3} \bullet \textcircled{0} \text{ 2015 LifeWay OK to Print}$

Journal Page

Draw a picture of Joseph when he first arrived in Egypt and a picture of Joseph after he was given a position of power in Egypt. God was with Joseph in Egypt. When we suffer or when others suffer, we can trust that God is in control of all things. He is good.



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Why did Joseph's brothers hate Joseph?
- Have you ever felt envious, wanting what someone else had?
- How is Jesus like Joseph? (Both of them were betrayed by people close to them.)



Joseph Sent to Egypt

Genesis 37:1-36;39:1-41:57

MAIN POINT: GOD USED JOSEPH'S SUFFERING FOR GOOD.

Jacob had 12 sons, but his favorite son was Joseph. Jacob gave Joseph a colorful robe. The other brothers saw that their father loved Joseph the most, and they hated Joseph.

One day, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, who were tending to the family's sheep. When the brothers saw him coming, they decided to kill him. Joseph's oldest brother convinced the others to throw him into a pit instead.

The brothers saw a caravan of people heading to Egypt, and they sold Joseph to them as a servant.

The travelers sold Joseph to an Egyptian officer named Potiphar. But Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of doing something he didn't do. Potiphar believed his wife, and Joseph was thrown into jail.

Even in jail, God was with Joseph. The jail warden put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. Joseph cared for two of Pharaoh's top officials. Joseph told them what the dreams meant. Joseph said that one day, the cupbearer would serve Pharaoh again. Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him and to tell Pharaoh that he did not deserve to be in jail.

Pharaoh had two dreams. Pharaoh saw seven fat cows eaten by seven skinny cows, and seven fat heads of grain eaten by seven thin heads. No one knew what these dreams meant! That's when the cupbearer remembered Joseph. God told Joseph what Pharaoh's dreams meant, and Joseph explained the dreams to Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh made Joseph second in command in all of Egypt.

Joseph stored away food during the good years, and during the famine, people came from all nations to buy grain from Joseph.

Christ Connection: God sent Joseph to Egypt and blessed him so that he rose to a position of great power. God used Joseph to save Joseph's family and many others from death by starvation. Jesus gave up his position of great power to be the Savior of the world.

