

Morning Overview

Lesson: Patriarchs: Joseph

Lesson Objective:

This week we begin our story of Joseph. We learn of a dreamer and a slave, but more importantly of God who is always in control. For today, three events guide our understanding of Joseph: First, his dreams, second his kidnapping and enslavement, and third his time in prison. We find Joseph to be a bratty, high-horsed kid who likes to tell his brothers of his grand visions (dreams) and destiny, which in turn sets up his kidnapping and enslavement. Our story then jumps to Joseph's imprisonment. Alone and forgotten we might see Joseph as one no longer part of God's story of rescue. It is possible in these moments that Joseph, remembering his dreams as a young boy, asked himself and God, "Will God be faithful to His promises?" God has not forgotten! God's promises always come true. In the darkest moments Joseph, and we too, must trust that what God says and promises will come true. The theme of Joseph's story can be found later, and in his own words, "What you meant for harm, God meant for good so that many lives would be saved" (Genesis 50:20).

Teaching Points:

- God is faithful and never changes. God keeps His promises.
- God is sovereign (or in control).
- Man is sinful.
- God is kind and merciful.
- God is everywhere all the time.
- God is all knowing.

Scripture: Genesis 37:1-36; 40:1-41:9

Story: *Vos Child's Story Bible*, Pages 42-46; *Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 44-47, *Jesus Storybook Bible*, Pages 76-79; *The Beginner's Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 38-43; *The Beginner's Bible*, Pages 73-77

Scripture Memory for November: Exodus 20:2 (ESV)

I am the Lord your God (*point index finger upwards toward the sky*)

who brought you out of (*reach down to ground like you are scooping or grabbing something*)

the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (*wrap hand around opposite wrist like a handcuff*)

Craft: Joseph's Coat and Dreams

Supplies: 3's - Cardstock picture of Joseph, star stickers, dot markers

4's/5's - Cardstock picture of Joseph, silver stars, glue, crayons/markers

Instructions:

- 3's
1. Help children place star stickers on stars.
 2. Color Joseph's coat with dot markers.
- 4's/5's
1. Glue silver stars under moon and sun.
 2. Color Joseph's coat.



If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet

Story

Review

Does anyone remember who we were learning about before Advent? It was a long time ago, but it was Jacob! Jacob's name was changed to what? (Allow for answers: Israel)! The Bible tells us Israel had a very large family – 12 sons – that's a lot of boys! But one son in particular was Israel's favorite: Joseph. In today's story we begin to learn about Joseph and some very sad things that happen to him. But as we learn more about Joseph, we see that God doesn't forget Joseph and God does not forget the promises He has made.

The Coat

The Bible tells us that Israel and his family lived in the land of Canaan. Israel had a very large family, and we see in Genesis 37 that he has 12 sons. Joseph, however, was Israel's favorite son.

Most of Joseph's brothers were older than him, and he had one brother who was younger. Israel had Joseph when he was very old and he loved Joseph's mother, Rachel, very much. Joseph was a reminder to Israel of Rachel and how much Israel loved her. But making Joseph the favorite was a sin that caused much unhappiness for the whole family. To show Joseph how much he was loved, Israel gave his son a coat. It was a very special coat. The coat was made with many beautiful colors. Upon seeing the coat, Joseph's brothers were quite upset. When they saw Joseph in it, they knew their father had given it to him. Because of this special gift, Joseph's brothers hated him.

The Dreams

It was God's plan that one day Joseph would be a great leader. To show this God gave young Joseph two dreams. We all have dreams sometimes; some are silly, some are even scary. But these dreams were different than the ones we have.

One dream was that the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to Joseph. The dream meant that all his brothers and even his mother and father would one day come before Joseph and bow down to him. Joseph told his brothers and his father about the dream. That made the brothers angrier than before. "Does Joseph think we will bow down to him?" they said to each other. The Bible tells us the brothers were very jealous. They didn't want God to give Joseph those dreams. The brother's hatred for Joseph grew. They did not like what God had in store for Joseph.

Joseph Finds His Brothers

One day, Joseph's brothers had taken the sheep far away to find good green grass for them. Joseph had not gone with them. Later that day his father asked Joseph to go find his brothers and see if everything was okay and then come back. The brothers saw Joseph coming from far away. At that moment, the brothers started to make a plan. "Here comes that dreamer!" the brothers said to each other. "Let's kill him." "No", said Reuben who was the oldest brother. "Do not kill him. Let's just throw him in this pit." The pit was a big deep hole in the ground and would fill up with water sometimes, but the pit was empty. When Joseph got close to his brothers, they grabbed him, tore off his beautiful coat, and threw him into the pit.

This was an awful thing. Joseph cried out to his brothers to lift him out, but they ignored him. The Bible says they just sat down and ate their lunch.

Selling Joseph

While the brothers were eating lunch, off in the distance they could see a group of people riding camels. There were lots of things packed on their camels like spices, cloths, and other things they were taking back to Egypt. One of the brothers named Judah said, "Instead of leaving Joseph in that pit, why don't we sell him? These people will take him far away to Egypt and we'll make some money!" So, the brothers quickly pulled Joseph from the pit and sold him to the men with the camels for 20 pieces of silver. The strangers took Joseph far away to Egypt.

Joseph's brother would need to explain what happened to Joseph. So, they made up a big lie. They took Joseph's coat, ripped it, and then put blood all over it to make it look like he was attacked by a wild animal. The brothers went back to their father and showed Israel the ripped, bloodied coat. The Bible tells us Israel cried and was sad for a very long time.

Joseph Is Forgotten

Joseph was taken to Egypt and sold to a very important person named Potiphar. Joseph worked hard for Potiphar. But one day, Potiphar's wife did a terrible thing and lied about Joseph. This made Potiphar very angry! Potiphar had Joseph thrown in jail. The Bible tells us that "the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." Joseph was put in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Yes, "the Lord was with Joseph."

While in prison, Joseph met two men. One was a cupbearer. A cupbearer is responsible for bringing the Pharaoh something to drink. The other man was a baker who made delicious breads and sweets for Pharaoh. Both men had made mistakes in serving Pharaoh and were now in prison!

The Bible tells us one night both men had different dreams. Both men told Joseph their dreams. The cupbearer told his dream. "In my dream there was a vine with three branches, and the branches had grapes on it. I went over with Pharaoh's cup to the branches and squeezed the grapes into his cup. Then I took the cup and placed it in Pharaoh's hand." Joseph told the cupbearer what the dream meant, "The three branches are three days. In three days, Pharaoh will take you out of prison and make you his cupbearer once again." Then Joseph asked the cupbearer for a favor in return. "When you are free, remember me. Be kind to me. Tell Pharaoh about me so that I can get out of this prison."

When the baker heard what Joseph said was good news, he told Joseph his dream, "I also had a dream. I dreamt there were three bread baskets on my head. In the top basket were all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh. But the birds were eating this food out of the basket on my head."

Joseph answered, "I will tell you what the dream means. The three baskets stand for three days. Before the end of three days, you will die." And in three days, just as Joseph had said, the baker died.

The Bible tells us that when the cupbearer was released from prison, he did not remember Joseph.

Two Dreams

The Bible says after two whole years had passed, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt had a dream. In his dream Pharaoh was standing by the river when seven cows came walking out of the river. That sounds kind of funny, doesn't it? – seven cows walking out of the river! These cows were chunky and healthy. They went to the edge of the river and started eating some of the tall plants that grew there. After those seven cows, seven more cows came walking out of the river! These cows were very scrawny and very unhealthy. The Bible says they looked bad. They looked like they were sick! Then, in Pharaoh's dream, the sick-looking cows went over to the healthy cows, which were eating by the edge of the river, and they ate them up! What a dream! And then Pharaoh woke up.

But in a short time, Pharaoh fell asleep again. While Pharaoh was asleep this time, he had another dream. This time Pharaoh dreamed he had a stalk of wheat, like this (show the stalk of wheat). On the stalk there were seven heads of grain. (Show.) Here is a head of grain. The grain in Pharaoh's dream was big and healthy. Then in his dream, seven other heads of grain grew out, but those new heads of grain did not look good at all. They were tiny. In Pharaoh's dream, the tiny heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy heads. In the morning, when Pharaoh finally woke up and got out of bed, the Bible says he was worried. He was troubled about those dreams he had had, about the cows and the grain. He just felt confused. So, Pharaoh called wise men to come to his palace. Pharaoh wanted the wise men to help him understand what his strange dreams meant. All the wise men of Egypt came. Pharaoh told them about his dreams, but no one could tell him what they meant. Then the cupbearer remembered Joseph.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have the kids answer “Yes” if it is true, or “no” with the correct answer if it is false.

- Joseph told his brother about his dreams. (Yes)
- Joseph was not his father’s favorite son. (No! He was his favorite.)
- Israel, Joseph’s father, gave him a beautiful coat. (Yes)
- Joseph’s brothers sold him into slavery. (Yes)
- Joseph went to Florida. (No! Joseph was taken to Egypt.)
- Joseph worked for a man named Potiphar. (Yes)
- Joseph was thrown into prison because Potiphar’s wife lied about him. (Yes)
- Joseph was trusted and respected in prison. (Yes)
- Joseph met a soldier and banker in prison. (No! He met a cupbearer and baker.)
- The cupbearer and baker had strange dreams and told Joseph about them. (Yes)
- Joseph did not know what the dreams meant. (No! Joseph did know.)
- The cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. (Yes)
- God was with Joseph the whole time and never left him. (Yes)