

# LESSON 5

## JOSEPH IS SOLD INTO EGYPT

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### Coat of Many Colors

In Joseph's day, everyone had a robe or cloak. Robes were used to keep warm, to bundle up belongings for a trip, to wrap babies, to sit on, or even to serve as security for a loan. Most robes were knee-length, short-sleeved, and plain. In contrast, Joseph's robe was probably the kind worn by royalty—long-sleeved, ankle length, and colorful. The robe became a symbol of Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph, and it aggravated the already strained relationship between Joseph and his brothers.

The coat was probably an indication of Jacob's intention to make Joseph heir to the birthright (Gen 48:22). Although Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob, he was the firstborn of Rachel, whom Jacob loved most. Jacob's deeper love for Joseph fueled the jealousy of Joseph's brothers, and it probably didn't make things better whenever Joseph wore his beautiful robe, which only reminded his brothers of Jacob's favoritism. All these feelings of jealousy culminated in their desire to murder him.

#### In Potiphar's House

Potiphar was the captain of Pharaoh's bodyguards. Because Potiphar was a royal officer, his slave Joseph was a legal member of his household. Because of the false accusations made by Potiphar's wife, Joseph was put into a special prison with the king's other prisoners. Potiphar might have had reason to question his wife's fidelity. If he had completely believed her story, he probably would have had Joseph executed at once. But even in prison, the Lord was with Joseph, turning a bad situation to good. During his time in prison, Joseph was ultimately raised to the position of prison keeper.

#### Understanding Joseph

Joseph was a god-fearing person. He was honest, humble, obedient, forgiving, hardworking, gentle, helpful, and loyal. Those are many good qualities for one person to have. The Bible said that God was with him wherever he went.

God had big plans and blessings for Joseph, he just didn't know it at the time. Joseph always treated everyone the same, whether they were good or bad to him.

But most of all, Joseph feared God and obeyed His commandments. He did so every day, in every situation, no matter what. Even though he had many problems, he always thought of God first and put God first in his heart. He always asked himself, "Will I sin and make God unhappy if I do this?" Because his heart was always thinking about God, he knew and was able to do the right thing every single time.

### BIBLE TEXT

Genesis 37:1-35; 39:1-23

### BIBLE TRUTH

God sometimes allows good people to suffer to strengthen their faith.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To rely on God when bad things happen.
2. To do what is right even though we may suffer for doing it.
3. To fear God in all situations.

### MEMORY VERSE

"I will set nothing wicked before my eyes."

(Psalm 101:3a)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord, we thank You for bringing us together again to worship Your holy name. We know that sometimes, things don't always go right, but we trust that You are always with us. Help us to rely on You when bad things happen and let us learn from them. May Your Spirit guide today's class. Hallelujah! Amen.

It's not easy to do the right thing. It takes courage and faith to stand up when the world will beat you down. In all things, God is there to hold us up when we rely on Him for support. If hard times, bitterness, resentment or anger are things that you are struggling with, read Joseph's story and learn from his courage. God has a blessing waiting for you at the end of your trials, too.

### Learning from Joseph

As a youngster, Joseph was self-assured. His natural confidence, being his father's favorite, and knowing God's will for his life at an early age made his presence unbearable for his ten older brothers, who eventually plotted against him. But this self-assurance, molded by pain and combined with a good relationship with God,

allowed him to survive and prosper where most would have failed. He added quiet wisdom to his confidence and won the hearts of everyone he met: Potiphar, the keeper of the prison, the other prisoners, the king, and after many years, even his eleven brothers.

Even though Joseph faced many hardships, he didn't turn away from God. His positive response transformed each setback into a step forward. He didn't spend much time asking "Why?" His approach was "What should I do now?" Those who met Joseph were aware that wherever he went and whatever he did, God was with him. When we're facing a setback, we should learn from Joseph's attitude by acknowledging that God is with us. There is nothing like His presence to shed new light on a dark situation.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

It is difficult for children at this age to understand why bad things happen to good people. Some of your students may wonder why they are ridiculed or singled out when they try to do what is right at school. They may wonder why the "smart kid" is always made fun of, and why the "troublemaker" is popular and well-liked.

Through the example of Joseph, they can understand that good people often have to suffer. Prepare them for the fact that life is not always going to be easy if they want to do what is right. But they can be assured that God will always be with them and comfort them in times of

trouble. They can always bring their problems before God, and He will help them do what is right.

Ask the students if they have ever suffered for doing what is right (e.g., being ridiculed by other children for following the rules, getting a lower grade because they didn't cheat, etc.). Let them express how they felt at that time, and if they learned anything from the experience. Oftentimes, God uses trials and tests to teach us and to help us become more mature. When we overcome these trials and continue to do God's will, our faith in the Lord will grow even stronger.

### VOCABULARY

**suffer:** to have pain or grief

**pit:** a deep hole dug in the ground that holds water

**graze:** to feed on growing grass

**prison:** a box-like cage where people are locked up

**sin:** a wrong thought or action

### REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how Jacob and Esau met again after twenty long years. When Jacob left his uncle's house, he sent word to Esau saying that he was coming home. Esau then went to meet him with 400 men. Boys and girls, do you remember how Jacob felt when he heard this news? [Wait for students to respond.] He was really afraid! He thought that Esau had come with all those men to attack him.

That night, Jacob wrestled with a Man and wouldn't let Him leave until He blessed him. Finally, the Man changed his name to Israel. That day, when Jacob (now called Israel) and Esau met, do you remember what happened? Turn to your neighbor and tell him or her what happened after they met. [Give a minute for students to exchange information and call their attention back.] That's right, Esau was not mad at his brother anymore. He was so glad to see him that he ran to hug him. Esau had forgiven Israel for tricking him.

## BIBLE STORY

### Introduction

Today, we will be learning about Jacob's sons. Do you remember how many sons he had when he left his uncle's house? (Eleven, cf. Gen 30:23; Joseph was born before Jacob requested Laban to let him go back to his own country.) How many wives did he have? (Four.) By the time of today's story, though, his wife Rachel had given birth to one more son, named Benjamin, making it twelve sons altogether. From oldest to youngest: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. Israel also had one daughter named Dinah.

### Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors

Out of all the sons, Joseph was Jacob's favorite. Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel. Joseph and his brothers helped take care of the sheep, but his brothers were doing bad things. When Joseph saw what they were doing, he told his father what they had done. His brothers were definitely not happy about Joseph telling on them.

Jacob loved Joseph very much because Joseph was born to Jacob when he was old. To show his love, Jacob gave Joseph a special robe—it was very colorful, long-sleeved, and full-length. Usually, people in those days wore short-sleeved, plain, knee-length robes. So Joseph's coat was really special. Israel had made it just for him.

When Joseph's older brothers saw how their father loved Joseph more than any of them, they became angry and jealous. They hated Joseph and treated him badly. They were unfriendly and would not speak to Joseph or let him join them.

### Joseph's Dreams

One night, Joseph had a dream. He told his brothers about his dream, saying, "We were binding sheaves (bunches of grain) in the field, and my sheaf rose up and also stood up, and your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to mine." This made his brothers hate him even more. They said, "Are you actually going to rule over us?"

Again, Joseph had another dream. He told his brothers and his father, "I had another dream. The sun, moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." His father rebuked him saying, "What is this dream? Shall your mother and I and your brothers actually come to bow down to the ground before you?" Joseph's brothers became jealous, but his father kept this matter in his mind.

### The Terrible Plan

One day, all of Joseph's older brothers went to let the sheep graze. Israel wanted to know if everything was all right, so he sent Joseph to check on them. While Joseph was still far away, his brothers saw him and said, "Here comes the dreamer!" They came up with a terrible plan to kill Joseph.

"Let's kill him and throw him into one of those large pits and say that a wild animal came and attacked him," his brothers said to one another.

But not all of the brothers agreed to the plan. The oldest one, named Reuben, tried to save Joseph. He said to them, "Don't kill him, my brothers. Just throw him into the pit, but don't lay a hand on him." Reuben was planning on coming back later to rescue Joseph from the pit.

### Joseph Sold as a Slave

When Joseph reached his brothers, they attacked him and took his colorful robe. Then they threw him into a pit that had no water in it. Reuben was not with them at that time. Then the brothers sat down to eat. As they were eating, they saw a group of merchants who were on their way to Egypt. Judah thought of a better plan.

He said, "What will we get if we kill Joseph and cover it up? Let's sell Joseph to these merchants. Let's not kill him since he is still our brother, after all." So the brothers pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the merchants. These merchants took Joseph to Egypt.

Soon Reuben came back and went to look for Joseph in the pit. But Joseph was not there. Joseph was already on his way to Egypt.

### Jacob Mourns for Joseph

The rest of the brothers thought and thought about what they were going to tell their father. They came up with an idea. They killed a young goat and dipped Joseph's robe in the blood. When they brought the robe back to their father, they said, "We found this robe. Do you know whose it is?" Jacob replied, "This is Joseph's robe! A wild animal must have killed him!" Jacob was so sad that he tore his clothes and cried for Joseph for many days.

### In Potiphar's House

In the meantime, the merchants sold Joseph as a slave to a man named Potiphar. Potiphar was an important man who worked for the Egyptian king (who was called Pharaoh). While Joseph stayed at Potiphar's house, he worked really hard. Potiphar could see that God was with him and that everything Joseph did turned out very well. Soon, Potiphar put him in charge of everything in his house.

### Potiphar's Wife

Now Potiphar had a wife, and she saw that Joseph was handsome. The wife began to like Joseph and wanted him to sin against God with her. But Joseph refused to sin with her. He said that Potiphar had put him in charge of everything in the house and that he trusted him. He would not do these evil things with her and sin against God.

Day after day, Potiphar's wife kept on asking him, and each time Joseph refused. Soon, he didn't even want to be

in the same room with her.

### The Lie

One day, Joseph had to go inside of the house to take care of some work. None of the other servants were inside. Potiphar's wife saw her chance and grabbed Joseph's coat. She said, "Come with me!" But Joseph ran away, leaving her with his coat.

Potiphar's wife was so angry that Joseph had said "No" again. She thought of a way to punish him for rejecting her. She called all of the servants inside and lied, saying, "Joseph tried to attack me! When he heard me scream, he ran away."

When Potiphar came home, his wife told him the same lie. Potiphar had to throw Joseph into prison, but the Lord was with Joseph in prison. The prison keeper really liked Joseph and put him in charge of the whole prison. The Lord was with Joseph and made everything that Joseph did turn out very well.

Did it seem like Joseph always got in trouble for doing

what was right? First, his brothers hated him for telling their father about them. They sold Joseph into Egypt, and he became a slave in the house of Potiphar. But the Lord was with Joseph, and He let him take charge of everything in the house. Then because Joseph refused to sin against God with Potiphar's wife, he was thrown into prison.

The reason why Joseph was able to do what was right in all these situations was because he relied on God and obeyed God. Therefore, God was with him the whole time. Boys and girls, we all know what it means to obey God, but do we know what it means to rely on God? [Wait for some answers.] Right, it means to trust that God will take care of everything, no matter what happens.

Joseph knew that God was taking care of everything. Sometimes, when bad things happen to us, it doesn't mean that we did something wrong or that God is punishing us. Rather, sometimes they happen because God has a bigger plan for us that we cannot see. Let's rely on God's plan, because we know that He loves each one of us very much.

### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. Why did Joseph's brothers hate him so much?** His father loved him more than any of them.
- 2. What did they do to Joseph one day when he went to check up on them?** They threw him into a pit and sold him to some merchants.
- 3. How did the Lord bless Joseph while he was in Potiphar's house?** Everything Joseph did turned out well, and Potiphar put him in charge of his whole house.
- 4. What did Joseph do when Potiphar's wife asked him to sin against God with her?** He refused and didn't even want to be in the same room with her.
- 5. What happened to Joseph because he refused Potiphar's wife?** She lied and said that he tried to attack her, so Potiphar threw him into prison.
- 6. Joseph had to suffer because he chose to do the right thing. However, the Bible said that God was with him. What can we learn from this?** We need to be God-fearing even though we may suffer for it. Ultimately, God will bless us, just like how He blessed Joseph.
- 7. When is it hard to do the right thing? What can you do to be more like Joseph in this kind of situation?** Answers may vary. It is hard to do the right thing when our friends are doing bad things. What we can do is run away and choose to do differently. We need to stand up for God.

### MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"I will set nothing wicked before my eyes." (Psalm 101:3a)**

### HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes." (Psalm 101:3a)
2. Students' drawings
3. D
4. B
5. pit, sold
6. no, prison, charge
7. False; they let their father believe that a wild animal had killed him.
8. True
9. Answers may vary.
10. Answers may vary.

### SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

#### 1. God sometimes allows good people to suffer to strengthen their faith.

Boys and girls, have you thought about how sometimes life isn't fair? How come sometimes bad things happen to good people? How come this very faithful sister has cancer? Or how come this very faithful brother's family is suffering? From today's Bible story, we learned that Joseph, who was a good person, suffered. Did you wonder why God allowed it? Let's refer to the hymn "It Is Well with My Soul." The author of this hymn, Horatio Spafford, lived in the 1800s. His only son died at the age of four. Then, he lost his successful business in a fire. Two years later, when his wife and four daughters were on a ship across the Atlantic, their ship was hit by another one and sank. Only his wife survived. After these tragedies, he wrote this hymn showing that even though he suffered so much, his faith in God had strengthened. "It Is Well with My Soul" showed that none of the things in this world mattered to him as long as God was with him and as long as he believed that God was his Savior. Even though Joseph suffered, it was only for a short period of time. When God's blessings came, Joseph was released from prison. As a result, his faith in God was strengthened. [If time allows, you can sing the hymn with the students.]

#### 2. Rely on God when bad things happen to us.

We know that being a Christian doesn't mean that bad things won't happen to us. We are still human like everyone else. But what we have that non-Christians don't have is God's abidance; He is always with us. We can rely on Him because He loves us and has the best plan for us.

Let's read Psalm 23. This psalm was written by David, and a lot of bad things happened to him even though he was a good person. [Ask a student to re-read verse 4.] David walked through the valley of the shadow of death. His life was often in danger, but he was not afraid because God was with him.

Just like Joseph and David, and many other people in the Bible, we can always rely on God when bad things happen to us. Remember from today's Bible story that no matter how bad the situation was for Joseph—he was a slave in Potiphar's house, then a prisoner in jail—God made everything that Joseph did turn out well, and He made the people around him like him. Let's remember that God is bigger than any bad thing that happens to us. And let's remember that God's love is more powerful than any evil thing.

#### 3. Do what is right even though we may suffer for doing it.

Sometimes, we may try to do what is right but something wrong still happens. We might still suffer even when we choose to do what is right. For example, maybe everyone cheated on a test and got 100%. But because you didn't cheat, you only got 80%. When this kind of thing happens, how do you feel? [Ask students to share their feelings.]

It's okay to feel bad, but always remember that God is with those who do what is right. We don't have to worry when things start to go wrong because God can make a bad situation into a good situation. As long as we continue to do what is right and rely on Him, God will be with us, just like He was with Joseph.

Read the memory verse again together.

## ACTIVITIES

## 1

## Are You Doing What God Wants?

**Objective:** To understand the importance of doing what is right in the eyes of God.

**Instructions:** Choose the right answer and fill out the crossword puzzle.

## Down

1. God wants me to (share / be selfish).
2. God wants me to be (happy / sad).
4. God wants me to (hate / love).

### Across

2. God wants me to be (honest / dishonest).
3. God wants me to (play / pray) in church.
5. God wants me to (obey / show) my parents.
6. God wants me to be (mean / nice) to my friends.

A crossword puzzle grid with 6 numbered starting points. The grid is composed of white squares for letters and black squares for empty space. The numbers are: 1 (down, top right), 2 (across, middle right), 3 (across, middle right), 4 (down, middle left), 5 (across, middle left), and 6 (across, bottom left).

## 2

**Persistent Prayer**

**Objective:** To understand the importance of praying persistently.

**Materials**

- Construction paper
- Crayons or markers
- Pencils

People tend to talk more about answered prayers than about prayers that are still unanswered. Ask a special guest (a pastor, a teacher, or an older member) to share one prayer request they have had for at least half a year, and how they have waited for their prayer to be answered. They might even want to share the prayer they had been praying the longest for and how it turned out. Encourage the children to keep relying on God even though things might not turn out the way they expect.

After listening to the testimony, have the students do the following activity.

**Instructions**

1. Ask the students to share something that they have been praying about for a long time. Then help each student to compose a short prayer on construction paper using pencils and crayons or markers.
2. The students can include some drawings if they want.
3. Have them share their prayer with the class.

## 3

**Stand Up for What Is Right Even if You Stand Alone**

**Objective:** To stand up for God because God is always with us, even during bad times.

**Materials**

- Sun and moon cutouts from construction paper
- Black construction paper, one sheet per student
- One small picture of each student
- A sharp object to poke holes in the paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- White crayon
- A soft cushion

**Instructions**

1. Distribute one sun, one moon, and one sheet of black construction paper to each student.
2. Ask the students to write at the top of the black construction paper with white crayon, "Stand up for what is right even if you stand alone."
3. Ask students to save the middle of the black construction paper for the photo of themselves. (Glue the photo on if you have them, if not, let them do this at home.)
4. Then, have them arrange where they want to put their sun and moon and glue them on.
5. Use the white crayons to clearly mark eleven spots (just one little dot) on the paper where they want to have the eleven stars.
6. Help students to poke eleven small holes by putting the paper on the soft cushion and poking eleven holes where they have indicated with the white crayon marks.
7. Show the students an example of this craft by putting it up against a window. They'll see light through the eleven small holes!
8. Tell the students that this craft is to remind them to be like Joseph, who stood up for what was right even though he seemed to be alone. But he wasn't really alone, because God was with him the whole time!

## E1 Year 1 Book 2 Lesson 5—Joseph Is Sold into Egypt

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** God sometimes allows good people to suffer to strengthen their faith.**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To rely on God when bad things happen.  
2. To do what is right even though we may suffer for doing it.  
3. To fear God in all situations.**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Psalm 101:3a)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



# Homework Assignment

## Understanding What You Have Learned

1. Write down the memory verse without looking.

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2. On the back of this paper or another piece of paper, draw Joseph's dreams. He dreamed about the sheaves, and the sun, moon, and stars. Be sure you draw the right number of sheaves and stars.

### Multiple Choice

3. \_\_\_\_ : Why did Joseph's brothers hate him so much?
- a. His father loved him more than any of them and made him a colorful robe.
  - b. He told on his brothers when they did bad things.
  - c. He had dreams about his brothers bowing down to him.
  - d. All of the above.
4. \_\_\_\_ : How did the Lord bless Joseph while he was in Potiphar's house?
- a. Potiphar gave him his special robe as a sign of his favor towards Joseph.
  - b. Everything Joseph did turned out well, and Potiphar put him in charge of his whole house.
  - c. Potiphar gave Joseph some land and sheep.
  - d. Potiphar granted Joseph his freedom so he could go back home.

### Fill In the Blank

prison	sold	no	charge	pit
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5. One day, when Joseph went to check on his brothers, they threw him into a \_\_\_\_\_ and later \_\_\_\_\_ him to some merchants.
6. When Joseph said \_\_\_\_\_ to Potiphar's wife, she lied to Potiphar, and he put Joseph in \_\_\_\_\_. But God was with Joseph so that the prison keeper put him in \_\_\_\_\_ of the whole prison.

### True or False

7. Joseph's brothers told his father that they did not kill him but sold him to Egypt. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Joseph refused when Potiphar's wife asked him to sin against God with her. \_\_\_\_\_

### Life Application

9. Work with a parent. Ask your mom or dad if they ever did what was right and suffered for it. Ask them how they felt and how they came to rely on God. Write about what you learned from your mom or dad.
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10. Give an example of when it is hard to do the right thing. What can you do to be more like Joseph in this kind of situation?
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