

God's Plan for Joseph

Lesson 13a — Joseph's Dreams

Lesson 13b — Sold Into Egypt

Lesson 13c — Joseph in Prison

Lesson 13d — Ruler in Egypt

OVERVIEW

This unit will be a factual account of the life of Joseph, one of the most beautiful stories in all Scripture. Although it is a story of a man who is pure in character, it is more importantly a story of God's providence. Approximately 175 years before Joseph's birth, God had promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation that would possess the land of Canaan and be a blessing to all people (Genesis 12:2,3). Now, God was going to use the jealousy of Jacob's ten older sons and the suffering of this innocent young man to bring about the fulfillment of His promise.

Jacob's actions toward his favorite son and Joseph's words about his brothers, as well as his dreams (Genesis 37:2,6,9), aroused their jealousy to the point that they wanted to kill Joseph. However, when the ten brothers saw the opportunity to do it, God in His sovereignty overruled their plan and replaced it with His own. God found in Joseph a man He could use in spite of extremely difficult circumstances.

One may wonder what God had in mind when He allowed all these events to transpire. In Genesis 15:13 God told Abraham, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." This was God's way of getting the descendants of Abraham into that place. Also God was interested in preserving lives during the coming famine. As Joseph told his brothers, "God did send me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:5). But perhaps more importantly, this was God's means of working repentance in the hearts of these founders of the nation of Israel.

Throughout this unit, teachers will want to stress that God was always with Joseph, and that He had a plan for Joseph's life that was being worked out even through all the trying circumstances he went through. Your students should understand that God has a plan for the life of each one of them too. That plan will come to pass if they trust in God and keep themselves submitted to Him.

GAMES FOR REVIEW

Divide the students into two groups. Prepare several sets of five key words taken from each lesson in this unit. Have each group select two players to work as a team. As in the game of "Password," one player is given a key word and gives one-word clues to his partner who tries to guess what that key word is. Keep score of the total time it takes to determine the answer. Then the next team does a set. At the end, the team with the lowest time-score wins.

Scramble a set of the lesson cards and symbols for each student (see Patterns). Have them match up the correct cards with the symbols and put them in order. Have a prize or a little treat for the first one who finishes correctly.

Print on 3x5 inch cards all the memory verses for the unit — one word per card. Make two sets. Divide the

students into two teams. Give each team a set of cards and tell them to assemble the verses correctly. Have a special sticker or other prize for those on the winning team.

Write questions on the backs of paper "sheaves" (see Patterns). Examples: Who did Joseph's father love most? How old was Joseph? What kind of special garment did Joseph's father make for him? Divide your group into teams. Have the teams take turns drawing a "sheaf" from a basket. If they answer the question correctly, they may paste the sheaf on a large sheet of construction paper. The team answering the most questions wins a prize.

CONTEST IDEAS

Prepare a small box with windows and a door cut into it large enough to accommodate a child's hand. Inside the box place as many small drawstring bags as you

have questions. Fill each bag with wheat, rice, popcorn, etc., and include a small gift (coin, miniature toy, etc.). These would represent food that was stored, then given to the people during the famine. Each child who answers a question correctly gets a bag from the box. This idea would also adapt as an in-class activity.

“A Journey With Joseph” could be the theme for a month-long contest. The journey could begin with the pit Joseph was cast into (a picture or sketch) and end with a scepter or crown, designating the authority given him. The pathway from one point to the other could be illustrated with some of the events in Joseph’s life. (See pattern for bulletin board for this unit.) Give the children points for bringing their Bible, knowing their memory verse, and attending. Each Sunday advance the children accordingly on their journey. The pathway would need to be marked off into as many sections as there would be possible points to gain in the four lessons. Colored map pins, adhesive markers, etc., could be used to indicate the different students.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Make a mural with a long, winding path and use the title, JOSEPH’S LIFE. On the sides of the path have pictures depicting events in Joseph’s life (see Patterns). This could also be done as a flannelgraph. In an envelope have the outcome of Joseph’s life. Seal it and put it on the board to be opened during the last lesson of the month.

Make traffic signs — stop, arrows, etc. (see Patterns), and mount on wall with the heading: “Are You Following God’s Direction for Your Life?”

Spell Joseph in large bubble-type letters (see Patterns), using a different color for each letter. In each letter list an event, or events, and then use them as teaching aids.

CHART IDEAS

Provide each student with a copy of the puzzle showing Jesus in the center and the events of Joseph’s life around the edges (see Patterns). Give them one piece

each week. When the total puzzle is completed, you will need to point out that Jesus was always with Joseph.

Make a copy of the “God’s Plan” finger-play book for each of your students (see Patterns). Have them cut it out and fold it to make a book. Help them to learn the poem and finger play.

Give each child a copy of the FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH THEE chart (see Patterns). Each week let the children color the picture which depicts the lesson for that week. They may color the large figure of Joseph during any of the class sessions.

Give each child a copy of the pull-through strip showing the four scenes from the life of Joseph covered in our lessons this month (see Patterns). Each week let them color (using colored pencils or felt tip markers) the picture representing that week’s lesson. On the final Sunday, help your students thread the strip through the base. Then use the completed chart to review the unit lessons.

UNIT SONGS

“Trust and Obey” (chorus)

“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”
— C.E.F. Salvation Songs — 1,2,3,4

“God’s Power”

“There’s Victory for Me”

“I’ll Do It All for Jesus”

“One Step at a Time”

“Anywhere With Jesus” — Praises for Children

“Never Say No to God” — Lively Choruses 3

UNIT SUPPORT MATERIAL

Joseph: The Forgiver — by Jester Summers, BibLearn Book, Broadman Press

Stories About Joseph — Pict-o-graph, Standard Publishing

The Boy Who Saved His Family — Arch Book, Concordia

Joseph and His Brothers — Lindvall/Molan, Moody Press