

UNIT 3 | SESSION 5

GOD HAD A PLAN FOR JOSEPH

GENESIS 37-50

CHRIST CONNECTION:

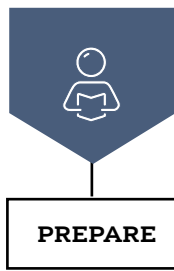
Joseph's brothers hurt Joseph, but God had a good plan. God used Joseph's hurt to save His people from hunger. One day, people would hurt God's Son, Jesus. God's good plan was to use Jesus' death to save His people from sin.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

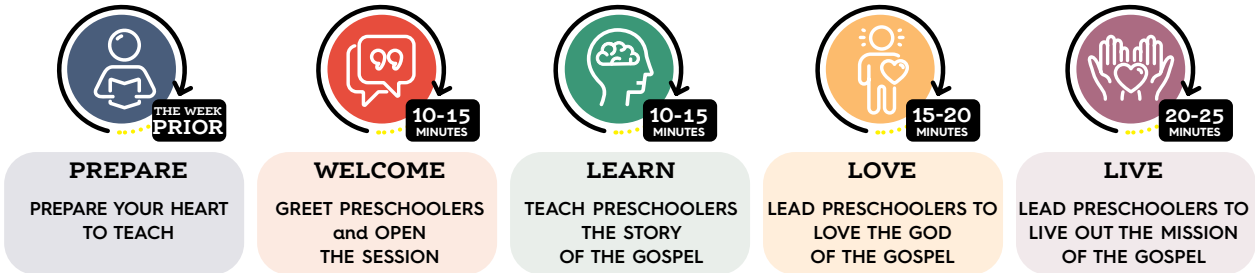
Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

KEY PASSAGE:

Psalm 135:6



YOUR HEART TO TEACH



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.

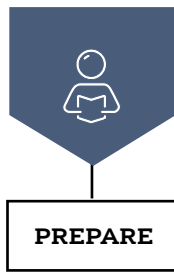
Joseph refused to let the evil actions of others steal his faith. When he had the chance to take away from others who had taken from him, Joseph showed generosity instead.

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 |



YOUR HEART TO TEACH

GATHER Supplies

Keep these items on hand for each session: Allergy Alert, Bibles, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map or globe, snack food, paper cups, and napkins.



WELCOME

Welcome

- “Psalm 135:6” song

Activity Page

- “Right and Wrong” activity page, 1 per child

Pick your favorite (low prep)

- classroom items, 12

“Shop” for food

- “Food Cards,” printable
- toy coins, 10 per child
- clean, empty food packages (optional)
- toy cash register (optional)

Transition

- countdown video (optional)



LEARN

Learn about the Bible

- bookmark
- Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline

Tell the Bible story

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

Practice the key passage

- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- “Psalm 135:6” song

Learn the Big Picture

Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Missions moment

- “Abby’s Challenge” missions video



LOVE

Snack and talk

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster



LIVE

Lace up Joseph’s prison

- “Joseph in Prison Lacing Cards,” several copies
- heavyweight paper
- hole punch
- yarn

Sequence the story

- heavyweight paper, 3 sheets
- 5-by-8-inch index cards, 9 (optional)

Count money

- \$32 in cash
- play money (optional)



WELCOME Preschoolers

Post an allergy alert, if needed. Set out supplies to engage preschoolers as they arrive. Play music as you welcome preschoolers. Greet children by name at eye-level. Follow your church's security procedures.

1 ACTIVITY PAGE

Lead preschoolers to complete “Right and Wrong” on the activity page.

SAY “ Jacob had twelve sons. In today’s Bible story, some of Jacob’s sons did something wrong to their brother, Joseph. Listen to the story to find out how God took care of Joseph and his family. ”

2 SESSION STARTER

Use one or both of the following options to engage curiosity about today’s Bible story.

PICK YOUR FAVORITE



Set twelve classroom items on a table. Ask preschoolers to help you count the items. Tell preschoolers you will choose a favorite item of the twelve. Lead children to take turns guessing which is your favorite item. The child who names your favorite item first gets to whisper to you her favorite item. Then the group will take turns guessing the item she chose. Continue to play until each child who wishes gets a turn at choosing his favorite.

SAY “ Picking our favorites out of these twelve items was fun. In today’s Bible story, Jacob had twelve sons, and he chose one as his favorite. Jacob having a favorite son was wrong and caused his family a lot of trouble. Listen to the story to find out what happened. ”

“SHOP” FOR FOOD

Print and cut apart “Food Cards.” Place cards faceup on a table. Give each child ten toy coins. Allow children to take turns buying one item by giving you the number of coins shown on the card. Continue playing until all coins are spent. Make this activity more realistic by using clean, empty food packages and assigning a value to each item or use a toy cash register.

SAY “ Once all your coins were spent or all the food was gone, you could no longer buy food. How terrible would it be to be hungry but not have money or food to buy? In today’s Bible story, there was very little food for people to eat or buy. Listen to the story to hear God’s good plan to provide. ”

3 TRANSITION TO LEARN

Gain preschoolers attention by showing the countdown video, turning the lights off and on, or clapping a simple rhythm for children to copy. Lead children to count off as they transition to Learn.

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





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Choose one child to stand in front of the group.

SAY “ How would you feel if I said [child’s name] is my favorite child and that I was going to give [him or her] a special gift? [Allow responses.] That would not feel good for everyone else, would it? You might feel jealous. I do not have favorites, but in today’s Bible story, Jacob had a favorite son. Listen to the story to hear how the rest of Jacob’s children felt. ”

2 LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE

Place a bookmark at Genesis 37 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY “ This Bible contains the words of God and every one of God’s words is true. The Bible story we are about to hear happened in real life. We find it here in the first book of the Bible called Genesis. ”

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline or small group timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

3 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Tell the following Bible story using the provided storytelling tips or show the video. Use the bold version of the Bible story for younger preschoolers.

GOD HAD A PLAN FOR JOSEPH

“ Jacob had 12 sons, but his favorite son was Joseph. Joseph’s brothers saw that Jacob loved Joseph most, and they did not like Joseph.

One day, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers, who were tending to the sheep. When the brothers saw Joseph coming, they made a plan to get rid of Joseph. They sold Joseph as a servant to some travelers going to Egypt. Then they made Jacob think that wild animals had attacked Joseph. Jacob was very sad.

The travelers who took Joseph to Egypt sold him to an important man named Potiphar. God was with Joseph. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything he owned. One day, Potiphar’s wife told a lie about Joseph, and Potiphar put Joseph in jail.

But God was still with Joseph, even in jail. **God made it so Joseph could understand what people’s dreams meant. When Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had two dreams, he asked Joseph to explain the dreams. Joseph said, “There will be seven years of good harvests. For seven years after that, not much grain will grow. People will be hungry.” Joseph told Pharaoh to store some of the grain during the good years to**



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

use during the bad years.

Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of much of Egypt. Joseph did his job well, and God was with Him.

One day, Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy food. The brothers went to Joseph, but they did not know who he was. When Joseph was ready, he said, “I’m your brother Joseph! You wanted to hurt me, but I know God sent me here to help our family.”

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

When Jacob got older and died, Joseph’s brothers were afraid. Was Joseph going to punish them for what they did? No. Joseph said, “You had a bad plan, and you did a bad thing. But God planned it for something good. God’s plan saved the lives of many people.” ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Show thumbs-up and thumbs-down: Invite preschoolers to show a thumbs-up when something happy happens to Joseph and a thumbs-down when something sad happens.

Picture it in your mind: Invite children to close their eyes and make pictures in their mind as if they are dreaming the Bible story as you tell it.

4 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Joseph’s brothers hurt Joseph, but God had a good plan. God used Joseph’s hurt to save His people from hunger. One day, people would hurt God’s Son, Jesus. God’s good plan was to use Jesus’ death to save His people from sin. ”

5 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ A lot of bad things [thumbs down] happened to Joseph, but a lot of good things [thumbs up] happened too. Joseph’s brothers sold him as a servant, and that was terrible [thumbs down]. But Potiphar put Joseph in charge of all he owned, and that was good [thumbs up]. Then, Potiphar’s wife told a lie, and Joseph was thrown into prison [thumbs down]. God gave Joseph the ability to understand the Pharaoh’s dreams, and he was let out of prison [thumbs up]. Joseph was put in charge of all of Egypt, and that was very good [thumbs up].

Then there was a famine. That means there was no food. That was very bad [thumbs down]. But Joseph had stored away extra food so that people could buy it from him [thumbs up]. When Joseph’s brothers came to him to buy food, did Joseph do something bad [thumbs down] to them? No! Joseph gave them food and invited the entire family to come live with him in Egypt [thumbs up].

Joseph understood that no matter what happened to him—good [thumbs up] or bad [thumbs down], God is always good [thumbs up] and has a good plan [thumbs up].

Many years later, people did bad things to hurt Jesus [thumbs down], but God had a good plan [thumbs up]. God’s good plan was to use Jesus’ death to save His people from sin [thumbs up]. That is the best thing of all! ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

6 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Place the key passage marker at Psalm 135:6. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Be prepared to offer assistance and praise each child for his or her effort.

SAY “ Our key passage tells us that God does whatever He pleases. God can do whatever He pleases because He has power over everything. I am so glad that God is good and only pleases to do what is right and good. Sometimes bad things happen to us, but we can know God is still in control and can bring something good out of the bad. Let’s sing a song of praise to our good God! ”

Sing the key passage song, “Psalm 135:6.” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

SAY “ Our big picture question asks, **Who is in control of everything?** Do you remember the answer? **Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.** Many bad things happened to Joseph. He may have felt like God had forgotten him, but that was not true! **God is in control of everything,** even bad things. God used the bad things that happened in Joseph’s life to save many people. And God used the bad things that happened to Jesus, to save all who will trust in Him. God’s good plan was to use Jesus’ death to save His people from sin. ”

8 MISSIONS MOMENT

SAY “ We are going to watch a video about an 11-year-old missionary kid named Abby. Abby was supposed to go on vacation with her grandparents, but they had to cancel their vacation because of Coronavirus. God took the sad thing of Abby not being able to go on vacation and used it to bring something good to many people. Let’s watch Abby’s story. ”

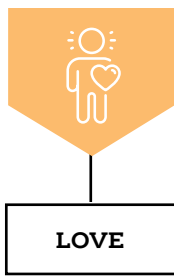
Show the “Abby’s Challenge” missions video.

SAY “ Abby realized she could make a difference by giving to missions. Every gift matters, even if it’s small. Do you think you could save \$32 to give to missions? **[Allow responses.]** ”

Consider contacting preschool families to encourage them to give an offering to add to Abby’s Challenge or another missions effort. They may give at www.imb.org/abbyschallenge.

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





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to close their eyes and think about God as they talk with Him.

SAY “ God, we praise You because You are good all the time. Please help us remember that You have a good plan even when bad things happen. We thank You for Jesus. Even though people killed Jesus, You used His death to save us from our sin. We love You and put our trust in Him. Amen. ”

2 SNACK AND TALK

Post an allergy alert. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer. Serve a snack. Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

SAY “ What was your favorite part of today’s Bible story? ”

SAY “ What did you learn about God in today’s Bible story? ”

SAY “ How did God make something good out of all the bad things that happened to Joseph? ”

SAY “ Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything. ”

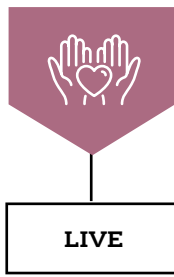
3 SING “GOD IS SO GOOD”

Lead preschoolers in singing the song “God Is So Good.” If you are unfamiliar with the lyrics or tune, look them up online before the session. Suggest that your group write additional lyrics for the song. Ask preschoolers to name ways they know God is good. Be prepared to offer assistance. Work their answers into lyrics, still ending each verse with “He’s so good to me.” Do not spend much time making the lyrics fit. Keep the emphasis on helping preschoolers see God’s goodness.

SAY “ Good things and bad things happen to all of us, but God never stops being good. God promises believers that He works all things, both good and bad, together for our good. Joseph may have wondered if God was good when bad things happened to him, but God had a good plan. Joseph discovered that when God used him to save His people from hunger. Bad things happened to Jesus. He was killed on a cross, but God had a good plan. God used Jesus’ death to save people from sin. Someday, we will live forever with God when we put our trust in Jesus. ”

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





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

- 1 Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group, all at the same time; in small groups that rotate through each activity; or set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

PLAY “BROTHER, MAY I?”



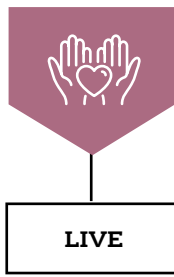
Play this version of “Mother, May I?” using the traditional rules, but line up children on one side of the room, shoulder to shoulder about a foot apart. Choose a child to play brother. Direct brother to stand across the room from the rest of the group. Brother will call out a child’s name and give him or her a command about how to move forward. The child called on must say, “Brother, may I?” and wait for brother to respond yes or no. If brother says yes, the child may move forward as directed. If brother says no, the child must remain in place. If a child moves without saying “Brother, may I?” he must move back to where he started. After a few rounds, choose another child to be brother. Any child who reaches brother before her turn is up is the winner. Play as time allows.

SAY “ Joseph’s brothers sold him as a servant to Egypt, but years later, his brothers came to Joseph to ask if they could buy food for their family. Joseph’s brothers hurt Joseph, but God had a good plan. God used Joseph’s hurt to save His people from hunger. One day, people would hurt God’s Son, Jesus. God’s good plan was to use Jesus’ death to save His people from sin. ”

LACE UP JOSEPH’S PRISON

Print several copies of “Joseph in Prison Lacing Cards” on heavyweight paper. Cut apart the cards and punch holes where indicated. Give a preschooler a card and a 2-foot length of yarn. Show him how to lace the yarn through the holes so it looks like Joseph is behind bars.

SAY “ Even though Joseph did nothing wrong, he was sent to jail. Sometimes bad things happen to us, and it is not our fault. God is in control of everything, including the bad things. Joseph’s brothers hurt Joseph, and he ended up in prison, but God had a good plan. God used Joseph’s hurt to save His people from hunger. One day, people would hurt God’s Son, Jesus. God’s good plan was to use Jesus’ death to save His people from sin. ”



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

SEQUENCE THE STORY

Cut heavyweight paper into four equal pieces. You may also use large index cards. Write a sentence describing a part of the Bible story at the top of each card. Use the suggestions below or write your own. Give each preschooler a card. Read the sentence on their card and encourage them to draw a picture to illustrate the sentence. Once each child is finished, gather the cards and work together to put the cards in order of the events in the Bible story. Mix up the cards and play again as time allows.

1. Joseph was Jacob's favorite son.
2. Joseph's brothers sold him as servant.
3. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything he owned.
4. Potiphar put Joseph in jail.
5. Joseph explained Pharaoh's dreams.
6. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of much of Egypt.
7. Joseph sold food to his brothers.
8. Joseph's family moved to Egypt.
9. Jacob hugged Joseph.

SAY “ Look at all the things that happened to Joseph. Let's point to all the good things that happened. Now, let's point to all the bad things that happened to Joseph. Just like Joseph's life, good things and bad things happen to us. But God is in control, and He promises to use all things for His glory and our good. That means God can bring good things even from the bad things that happen. Do you remember how God did this in Joseph's life? God used Joseph's hurt to save His people from hunger. Later, God used Jesus' death to save His people from sin. ”

COUNT MONEY

Remind preschoolers about Abby's \$32 from the missions video. Set out \$32 in cash to show preschoolers what \$32 looks like. Count out \$32. Put the real money away, and set out play money or cut rectangles from green construction paper to represent bills. Invite preschoolers to count and play with the pretend money. Talk about items they or their family buy with money. Ask what items they might want to buy with money. Talk about how people give money to help missionaries who serve around the world.

SAY “ An 11-year-old girl named Abby gave \$32 for missions. She had saved that money for a vacation, but instead gave it to help missionaries tell other people about Jesus. Other people heard about her gift and added more money to it, and now it is much bigger. We can give money to help missionaries tell other people about Jesus. ”

2 TRANSITION

Invite preschoolers to complete the coloring page. Consider leading preschoolers to sing the key passage song or involving them in a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Give parents the completed activity page. Distribute the big picture cards for families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.