Joseph Goes to Jail

**GRACE** God knows us and cares for us.

**References**

**Memory Verse**
“Nothing can separate us from the love God has for us” (Romans 8:38, 39, ICB).

**Objectives**
The children will:
- **Know** that bad things happen sometimes, but God never stops loving us.
- **Feel** loved by God even in bad times.
- **Respond** by turning to God with their troubles.

**The Message**
God is with us in good times and in bad times.

**Getting Ready to Teach**

**The Bible Lesson at a Glance**
Joseph is sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials. He is soon put in charge of all of Potiphar’s household affairs. Potiphar’s wife wrongly accuses Joseph, and he is put in prison. Again God blesses Joseph’s efforts, and he is soon put in charge of all the prisoners.

When the king’s cupbearer and baker have dreams they don’t understand, God tells Joseph the meaning, and he tells the men. In three days the cupbearer will go back to work in the palace, but the baker will die. Joseph asks the cupbearer to tell the king to let him out of prison, but the cupbearer forgets about Joseph.

Joseph is patient and trusts God. He is cheerful and works hard. He helps everyone he can. God takes care of Joseph in prison and keeps him safe.

**This is a lesson about grace.**
Because He loves us, we can trust God to take care of us regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves—good or bad. He will help us to be patient and cheerful at all times. Even though bad things may happen to us,
ELEVEN

God is still watching over and loving us.

**Teacher Enrichment**

“The marked prosperity which attended everything placed under Joseph’s care was not the result of a direct miracle; but his industry, care, and energy were crowned with the divine blessing” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 214).

“Had Potiphar believed his wife’s charge against Joseph, the young Hebrew would have lost his life; . . . and yet, to save the reputation of his master’s house, he was abandoned to disgrace and bondage” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 218).

Have you ever been wrongly accused of something? Did others know of your innocence because of your upright character?

**Room Decorations**

Make an Egyptian home scene with chair, table, pottery, broom, etc. Use the sheet from Lesson 8 to make a “jail.” Hang black crepe paper or strips of black garbage bags in front of the opening for bars. Or use chairs arranged like a jail in one corner, or a big blanket thrown over three sides of a table.

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Welcome
Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

A. Good Times/Bad Times
Gather a variety of pictures representing good times (picnic with family, swimming, playing with friends, birthday party, etc.) and bad times (storm, flat tire, broken toy, sickness, etc.).

Say: I need volunteers to pick a picture and hold it up for everyone to see. Then I’m going to ask the class if God is with us during that time. Stand up if your answer is yes, and stay seated or sit down if your answer is no.

Debriefing
Allow response time as you ask: Is God with us all the time? Even in bad times? And in good times? Yes, Jesus loves us and cares for us even when things are not good.

Our Bible story is about Joseph. He had good times with his father, who loved him very much, but he also had bad times when his brothers treated him cruelly. In this week’s lesson we will learn more about the good and bad times of Joseph’s life. In all those times Joseph knew God was with him, and Joseph kept trusting Him.

Today’s message is:

God is with us in good times and in bad times.

Say that with me.

B. Book Balance
Have the children balance a book on their heads as they walk from one designated point to another. If the book falls off, they must start again.

Debriefing
Allow response time as you ask: Was it easy or hard to balance a book on your head while you walked? How did you feel? Sometimes things
are hard, and sometimes things are easy. When things are easy, we like them; they feel good. When things are hard, we don’t like them so much, and it feels bad.

Our Bible story is about Joseph. He had good times with his father, who loved him very much, but he also had bad times when his brothers treated him cruelly.

In today’s lesson we will learn more about the good and bad times in Joseph’s life. In all those times Joseph knew God was with him, and he kept trusting Him. Today’s message is:

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**PRAYER AND PRAISE**

**Fellowship**

Report the students’ joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week’s lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.

**Suggested Songs**

“He Cares About You” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 91)
“Jesus Sees Me” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 109)
“God Is So Good” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 88)
“At Sleep or at Play, God Sees” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 122)
“Someone Cares” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 170)

**Mission**

Use a story from *Children’s Mission*. Ask: **How did people worship God in our story today?** Don’t limit discussion to Sabbath activities.

**Offering**

Say: **We can worship God by bringing our offerings so others can know God cares for them too in good times and bad.**

**Prayer**

Sing a prayer, “Jesus Cares for You” (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 92).

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*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.*
**Experiencing the Story**

Divide the children into three groups, each with an adult helper: Josephs, cupbearers, and bakers.

**When you say:**

- **The children:**
  - Joseph: thumbs up
  - Baker: rub tummy
  - Cupbearer: pretend to drink

Have each group practice jumping up and saying their parts. Say: *Whenever I say “jail,” I want everyone to hold your hands like you are holding bars in a jail.* (Fists in front of them at elbow level.)

**Let’s practice.** (Allow time.)

**Remember your parts as we tell the story together.**

**Read or tell the story.**

Joseph [thumbs up] shook his head. He couldn’t believe he was in jail [hold bars]! Yesterday he had been the boss at his master’s house. Today his master had thrown him in jail [hold bars].

Joseph [thumbs up] knew he hadn’t done anything wrong. He knew he didn’t deserve to be in jail [hold bars]. And he knew one more very important thing. He knew that God was with him and would take care of him—even if he was in jail [hold bars].

“Come in here and help serve supper!” the jailer called to Joseph. [thumbs up] And Joseph [thumbs up] did.

“Help clean up!” the jailer said to Joseph [thumbs up] when everyone finished. And Joseph [thumbs up] did. Every day the jailer gave Joseph [thumbs up] work to do. Every day he did his work without complaining. And he always tried to do a good job. Before very long, the jailer put Joseph [thumbs up] in charge of everything in the jail [hold bars].

One morning Joseph [thumbs up] noticed that two of the people in jail [hold bars] looked worried and unhappy. One prisoner had been the king’s cupbearer [pretend to drink]. One prisoner had been the king’s baker [rub tummy]. But the king had become angry with them and put them both in jail [hold bars].

“What’s wrong?” Joseph [thumbs up] asked the baker [rub tummy] and the cupbearer [pretend to drink].

“We had strange dreams last night,” they answered. “And no one here can tell us what they mean.”

“God is the only one who can explain dreams. What did you dream?” Joseph [thumbs up] asked the cupbearer [pretend to drink].

“I dreamed I saw a vine with three branches,” he said. “There were grapes on the vines, and I squeezed the grape juice into the king’s special cup and gave it to him.”

Joseph [thumbs up] said, “God will help me explain the dream to you. In three days the king will set you free, and you will go back to work in the palace.”

The cupbearer [pretend to drink] smiled a huge smile. He was so happy!

“When you see the king, please tell him about me,” Joseph [thumbs up] begged. “I have done nothing bad. I shouldn’t be in jail [hold bars].”

Then the baker [rub tummy] told Joseph [thumbs up] about his dream. “I dreamed there were three bread baskets on my head,” he said. “There were fancy breads and cakes for the king in the top.
happening to him? Do you think you can trust God like Joseph did? Sometimes bad things happen to God’s people, but that doesn’t mean that God doesn’t love us anymore, or that He stops caring for us. God is always with us. Do you remember our message?

God is with us in good times and in bad times.

Say that with me.

Bible Study

Open your Bible to Genesis 39:1-6, 17-23; and 40:1-23. Point to the texts and say: This is where today’s story is found in the Bible, God’s Word. Read selected verses aloud, paraphrasing as necessary.

Allow response time as you ask: Why do you think Joseph trusted God even when bad things were happening to him? Do you think you can trust God like Joseph did? Sometimes bad things happen to God’s people, but that doesn’t mean that God doesn’t love us anymore, or that He stops caring for us. God is always with us. Do you remember our message?

God is with us in good times and in bad times.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

Some things are not very nice, are they? When bad things happen, who helps you feel better? (moms, dads, friends, etc.)

When you feel bad or are hurt, do your mom and dad still love you? Of course they do. Your mom and dad feel sad when you are hurting. They don’t want you to feel bad, but sometimes bad things happen. Your mom and dad try to help you feel better because they love you. How do they try to help you feel better?
God also feels sad when you are hurting. God doesn’t want you to feel bad either, but sometimes bad things happen. God wants you to feel better knowing that He is with you when bad things happen. He doesn’t leave you. He is still caring for you and loving you. Think about this:

God loves me when I’m happy,
He loves me when I’m sad.
God loves me when all things are good,

And also when they’re bad.

Let’s say the rhyme together.
Repeat the rhyme three to five times. Ask the children to make up some actions.
Say: Let’s say our message together:

God is with us in good times and in bad times.

Sharing the Lesson

Happy/Sad Hearts Stick

In advance, copy the happy/sad hearts pattern (see p. 147) for each child (each child should have two hearts).

Have the children draw a simple happy face on the heart that says “God loves me in happy times.” And draw a simple sad face on the heart that says “God loves me in sad times.” The children can color the hearts and cut them out. Then glue the hearts together with the craft stick between them at the bottom of the heart so the children can hold the stick.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: Does God love you in happy times? Yes! Point to the happy face. God loves you and cares for you all the time.

God loves us so much He sticks to us no matter what, just like these two hearts are stuck together.

You can take your “Happy/Sad Hearts Stick” home and share it with someone as you tell them about Joseph in jail, and how he kept on trusting God to take care of him. Let’s say our message together one last time:

God is with us in good times and in bad times.

Does God love you in sad times? Yes! Point to the sad face. God loves you and cares for you all the time.

God loves us so much He sticks to us no matter what, just like these two hearts are stuck together.

You Need:

- happy/sad hearts pattern (see p. 147)
- paper
- crayons
- craft sticks or tongue depressors
- glue

Closing

Encourage a child to pray. Wish everyone a good week. Remind them that God loves them all the time.
Joseph Goes to Jail

Can you think of the best thing that’s ever happened to you? What about the worst thing? Did you know God was with you both times, just as He was with Joseph?

Joseph couldn’t believe it! Yesterday he had been in charge of all of his master’s house. Today his master had thrown him in jail!

Joseph knew he hadn’t done anything wrong. And he knew one more very important thing. He knew that God was with him and would take care of him—no matter where he was.

The chief jailer gave Joseph work to do. Joseph worked without complaining. And every day the chief jailer saw that Joseph did things right. Before long, he put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners.

One morning Joseph noticed that two of the prisoners looked worried. One had been the king’s cupbearer. The other had been the king’s baker. But the king had become angry and had them both put in prison.

“What's the matter?” Joseph asked. “We had strange dreams last night,” the cupbearer answered, scratching his head. “And we don’t know what they mean.”

“God is the only one who can explain dreams,” Joseph said. “Tell me your dreams.”

“I dreamed I saw a vine with three branches,” the cupbearer replied. “There were grapes on the vines, and I squeezed the grape juice into the king’s special cup and gave it to him.”

Joseph said, “God will help me explain the dream to you. In three days the king will set you free, and you will go back to work in the palace. When you see the king, please tell him about me,” Joseph begged. “I have done nothing wrong. I shouldn’t be in this prison.”

Then the baker said, “I dreamed there were three bread baskets on my head,” he began. “There were fancy breads and cakes for the king in the top basket. But birds were eating the food.”

Joseph prayed silently. “I will explain the dream to you,” Joseph said quietly. “In three days the king will punish you, and you will die.”

In three days the king had a birthday, and he gave a big party. During the party he sent to the jail for his cupbearer and baker. The king gave the cupbearer his old job back, but punished the baker, just as Joseph had said.

Joseph waited and waited to hear that the cupbearer had told the king about him. But the cupbearer forgot about Joseph.

Joseph was sorry that the cupbearer had forgotten him. But he knew that God loved him. Joseph trusted God to take care of him even in jail.
**Sabbath**

Each day this week, read the lesson story together and review the memory verse.

- **Nothing can . . . . . .** Wave index finger back and forth to say no.
- **separate . . . . . . .** Palms together, then pull them apart.
- **us . . . . . . . . . . .** Point to self, then others.
- **from the love . . . . . .** Cross arms over chest.
- **God . . . . . . . . . . .** Point upward.
- **has for us . . . . . . .** Point to self, then others.
- **Romans 8:38, 39 . . .** Palms together, then open.

**Sunday**

Make bread or cookies with your child. Talk about the need to trust people who make food or juice for others.

For the evening meal, have your child play the roles of cupbearer and baker and serve drink and bread.

**Monday**

Encourage your child to share the “Happy/Sad Hearts Stick” made in Sabbath School with someone as they tell them about Joseph in jail.

Have your child try walking around the room with a book balanced on their head. How long before it falls off? Ask: Was it easy or hard? Remember that God is with you whether things are easy or hard.

**Tuesday**

Help your child decorate a paper or Styrofoam cup with uncooked noodles, yarn, rice, beans, glitter, etc. Your child can keep it as a reminder of the fancy cup that the cupbearer probably used. He or she may use it to store small items. They shouldn’t drink from it.

**Wednesday**

Think of some things that your child doesn’t enjoy but are important (shots, removing splinters, going to the dentist, etc.). Take turns in acting them out and letting each other guess. Thank God that He loves us in good times and in bad.

**Thursday**

Together with your child, clap the following rhyme: *God loves me when I’m happy, He loves me when I’m sad. He loves me when all things are good, and also when they’re bad.*

Sing “God Is So Good.”

Thank God for caring for you and your child and for being with you all the time.

**Friday**

Have your child act out the Bible story with your family. Ask: How do you know Joseph was a good person?

Talk about good times and bad times. Thank Jesus for being with you in both.