



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Saves

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 37; 39–50

WORD OF WONDER: From Jeremiah 32:17

In my struggles, I pray and ask God to respond. I want Him to save me from my suffering according to my plan. But usually, my plan is not His plan.

When our oldest son was a senior in high school, my husband and I prayed for financial provision for college. God answered our prayer by allowing my husband to be laid off from his job.

Wait ... what? That wasn't what we had in mind! How would that help, Lord?

We didn't understand God's plan, but we knew we could trust Him. We had to trust Him. God's plan offered us a solution that wouldn't have been available had my husband kept his job. It created an opportunity for grants and scholarships that covered our son's entire first year of school.

Are you in a season where you don't think God hears? Know that His ways are unique and perfect. He may not choose to save us from suffering. But we can be confident of this: He will save us in it! In our darkest valleys, God saves.

As you read Genesis 50:15–21, think about your situation. Are you able to see that whatever you are going through, God will use for His good and glory?

God had a plan to save a nation of people through Joseph's suffering. God had a plan to save you and me through Jesus' suffering. Isn't that amazing?

God has "made the heavens and the earth. Nothing is too hard for [Him]" (Jeremiah 32:17).

—**Kristi McElheney**

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LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

JOSEPH'S STORY

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Joseph was Jacob's second youngest and favorite son. Joseph had a lot of very difficult and emotional experiences. He was hated by his brothers, thrown into a hole, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and sent to prison. Yet, God remained faithful to Joseph.

WHAT?

The coat of many colors Jacob gave Joseph signified that Jacob preferred Joseph over his other sons. Typically, this type of coat showed honor and was given to the son who had the birthright. This contributed to the hatred Joseph's brothers had for him.

WHERE?

Joseph traveled from Hebron to Shechem in search of his brothers, then headed approximately 65 miles north to Dothan. There Joseph was taken by Ishmaelite traders about 250 miles southwest, to Egypt, where they sold him as a slave to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials.

WHEN?

Joseph was 17 years old when his brothers sold him into slavery. Two years after Joseph was put in prison by Potiphar, he interpreted Pharaoh's dream. He was 30 years old. Approximately 23 years passed between Joseph's being sold into slavery and his family seeing him again.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Joseph had a big part in God's plan to save His people. God worked through Joseph's slavery in Egypt and his eventual leadership role to preserve and grow Jacob's family into a nation, as He had promised. One day, Jesus would be born in that family!



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: Save the Stuffed Animal

SUPPLIES: stuffed animal

We're learning today about how God saves. God worked through someone named Joseph to help a lot of people. Let's take turns saving a stuffed animal when I toss it. I'm going to toss it up, and I'll call on someone to save it. Take turns calling out each child to come catch the stuff animal as you gently toss it up in the air. Many toddlers won't be able to catch very well, and that's OK—encourage them to save it from the floor and take it to another spot in the room that is a “safe” spot. Repeat until every toddler has had a turn to save the stuffed animal.

You did a great job saving the stuffed animal. We'll learn today about how God saves us! God is powerful, and there's nothing He can't do.

Our Wonder Truth today is: GOD SAVES.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD—*Point up.*

SAVES—*Make a superhero pose (right fist to the sky and left fist on hip).*



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for being here with us. We invite Your Holy Spirit to lead us today. Help us understand more about how You save us. Help us remember You are with us even when things are hard. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? ***The Bible***

Ask: Why is the Bible special? ***Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.***

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 71-77

Joseph's Colorful Robe

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Nothing is too hard for God.

—from Jeremiah 32:17



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: Gathering Food

SUPPLIES: colored pom-poms or soft balls, basket or bucket

In God's big story today, Joseph helped save his people by gathering lots of food to give them when they were hungry. God used Joseph to help save the people. Let's pretend to gather food like Joseph!

Spread colored soft balls or pom-poms on the floor. Set out a basket or bucket nearby. Encourage kids to find specific colors of balls they can pretend is food to gather and put in the basket.

Let's help Joseph gather all the yellow food to give to the people. Repeat "yellow" several times, and encourage the kids to gather yellow balls or pom-poms and put them in the basket. Repeat with different colors until all of the pom-poms are in the basket or bucket.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them and thank God for how good and trustworthy He is.

God, You are a big and powerful God. Thank You for how You love us, help us, and save us. Thank You for how good You are to us. Help us trust in You no matter what happens. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: Our God, who loves you, is with you! He is mighty to save and will never leave you. May you always trust Him.