



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**

Children's and Parenting Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

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

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: colorful dot stickers, markers, coloring utensils

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Joseph's Coat Sheet (several copies), Joseph's Story Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you prepare for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Colorful Coat

Se up: Ahead of time, print several copies of the Joseph's Coat Sheet. You can print one for each kid and set out colorful dot stickers and markers, or you can print a few copies and place each in a large resealable baggie with dry-erase markers.

Play: Encourage the kids to color the coats using markers or stickers (or dry-erase markers, if using baggies). Tell them the story today is about someone who got a colorful coat.



Play Station: Joseph's Story Coloring Sheet

Set up: Ahead of time, print one copy per kid of the coloring sheets and set out coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of their siblings or family members.



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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

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Why were Joseph's brothers upset with him?** *(They were jealous; their dad gave him a special coat; he told them his dreams about them bowing down to him.)*
- **What special present did Joseph's dad give him?** *(a colorful coat)*
- **What did Joseph do to help his brothers?** *(forgave them; saved food)*
- **How did God use Joseph's life to save people?** *(Joseph was able to interpret dreams and save food.)*
- **How has God helped you?**
- **Have you ever been treated unfairly? Share about it?** *(If kids need ideas, offer help such as: when someone else won something and they cheated, or when you didn't get a prize that you deserved.)*
- **How does God save us?**

God is powerful and can do anything. He cares about you. Joseph went through some hard times, but God was always with Joseph. God is always with you. Let's talk to God now in prayer and thank Him for helping us.

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Nothing is too hard for God.

— Jeremiah 32:17



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Gather the Food

SUPPLIES: bowls or buckets (2); colored pom-poms; clothespins

Divide the group into two teams and assign each team a bowl or bucket. Place the bowls or buckets on one side of the room. Scatter a lot of colored pom-poms on the opposite side of the room.

We learned today about how God saved the people through Joseph. We're going to pretend we're Joseph gathering grain to pretend to help save the people of Egypt. The more grain you gather, the more food we'll pretend the people will have! The pom-poms will be our pretend food, so grab the pom-poms from the middle of the room, and put them in your team's basket. The team with the most gathered pretend food (pom-poms) wins! You can let the kids use clothespins, bag clips, or chopsticks to pick up the pom-poms. They will carry the pom-poms to their team's bowl or bucket and drop them in.

Give the kids a few minutes to gather their pretend food (colored pom-poms) and place them in the team's bowl or bucket. To make it more challenging, you can call out only certain colors of pom-poms for them to pick up.

Make It Inclusive: For kids who are struggle with fine motor skills, you could have them sweep or kick the pom-poms instead of picking them up.

We learned God used Joseph to save the people of Egypt. Joseph gathered grain so the people would have food during a famine. A *famine* is when there isn't food available. The food that Joseph gathered was stored and kept until the people needed it. We may not be in a famine, but we need God's help too. God was with Joseph, and God is always with us! God helps us and saves us. We can thank God for saving us.



Curiosity

Belief

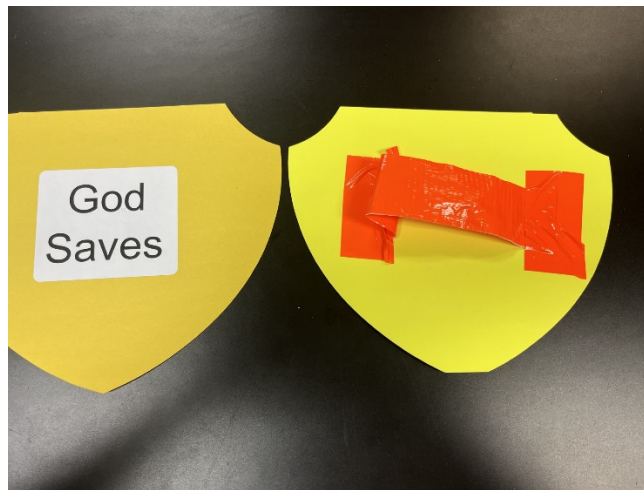
Faith

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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Super Shield

SUPPLIES: duct tape, Shield template (1 per kid), God Saves sticker (1 per kid), coloring utensils



Today we learned from God's big story that God saves. God saved many people through Joseph. Lots of unfair and hard things happened to Joseph. His brothers tried to kill him, he was sold as a servant, and he was thrown in jail. God was with Joseph the whole time. God saved Joseph and his family.

We're going to make a shield to help us remember that God is the One who rescues! As you do, think about how God shielded and saved His people when they needed help. Pass out a shield to each kid and let them color it. Then add the God Saves sticker. Help the kid attach the handle to the back of the shield with duct tape.

Remember, Joseph wasn't the superhero in this story—God is the One who rescues! God saved Joseph and all of his family through Joseph. God saves!

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.