Lesson 1: Joseph

AIM: To show that Joseph was faithful to God during the hard times as well as the good. Because of this, God blessed Joseph and saved his family during the famine.

MEMORY VERSE: ‘For the Lord protects those who are loyal to him …’ (Psalm 31v23)

ACTIVITY: Use striped wrapping paper or plain paper and let the children colour in the stripes on Joseph’s coat.

STORY: Joseph was faithful in troubled times

Joseph was one of 12 brothers born to Jacob. Now Jacob loved Joseph more than the rest, and gave him a special coat. Because of this, Joseph’s brothers were jealous and hated him. When Joseph was 17 years old, his brothers decided to get rid of him, and planned a way to kill him. However, one of the brothers thought it would be better to sell him as a slave, and they would at least get some money for their trouble.

So they sold Joseph to some traders who were travelling to Egypt. The brothers took Joseph’s coat and dipped it in goats’ blood and returned it to their father, pretending not to know what happened to Joseph. Jacob immediately assumed that his favourite son had been killed by wild animals.

In the meantime, Joseph had been sold in Egypt to a rich man called Potiphar. God blessed Joseph and he was soon made the chief servant in Potiphar’s house. But Potiphar had a wife who was not faithful to her husband, and she asked Joseph to do some wrong things with her. Even though Joseph was only a teenager, he loved God and knew what was right and what was wrong, and so he refused to go along with Potiphar’s wife. She became very angry and told awful lies to her husband about Joseph. So Joseph, although innocent, was thrown into jail like a common criminal.

Joseph was in jail for three years, but during all that time, he trusted God. He knew that God was with him, even when things weren’t going well. God had a special plan for Joseph and was just waiting for the right time to get him out of jail. God gave Joseph the ability to understand dreams, as God often spoke to people through dreams in those days. One day the Pharaoh (king) of Egypt had two dreams that no one could understand, so he sent for Joseph. Joseph told the Pharaoh that it was God who gave him the ability to understand dreams. Joseph did not pretend to be wise himself, but acknowledged God’s power.

Joseph told Pharaoh that a great famine (a time of no rain and consequently, no food) would come to the land after 7 years of good crops, and suggested that Egypt store up extra food during the good years to help through the 7 years of famine. Pharaoh was delighted with Joseph’s interpretation, and as a reward, made him the man in charge of all the country’s food. He was made second in command over all Egypt.
When the famine came, Joseph’s father and brothers had no food either, so they travelled to Egypt, where they discovered Joseph alive and well after so many years. Joseph forgave his brothers and all his family came to live in Egypt and escaped the famine.

GAME: TICK-TACK-TOE (Noughts and Crosses)
Ask the following questions as a reinforcement for the lesson.

1. How many brothers did Joseph have? (11).
2. What was Joseph’s father’s name? (Jacob).
3. Why did his brothers hate Joseph? (Because they were jealous).
4. What did the brothers take back to their father? (Joseph’s coat dipped in blood).
5. Which country was Joseph taken to as a slave? (Egypt).
6. Why was Joseph thrown into prison? (Because he refused to do wrong things with Potiphar’s wife).
7. Whose dreams did Joseph interpret? (Pharaoh’s).
8. What did the dreams mean? (7 years of plenty and 7 years of famine).

Preparation:
On cards 7cm x 12cm, write questions covering material in the current series of lessons. Insert one or two questions in each pocket of the game board. Have ready the X and O markers. The game board has two sides, the right side with 9 pockets holding the questions, the left side with three rows of three equal squares to place the O’s and X’s.

Playing the Game: Divide the children into two teams. The first player on a team calls out the pocket number from which he wants to answer a question. If he answers correctly, place his team marker in the corresponding position on the playing side of the board. If he fails, a member of the opposite team may try to answer the question. If no one succeeds, read the answer and replace the question in its pocket. The first team to score three in a row horizontally, vertically or diagonally wins the game.

Variations: For seasonal interest, use different types of game markers, e.g. at Christmas time, use star and bell shapes, and at Easter time, use crosses and lilies, instead of O’s and X’s.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES:
1. Puzzle
3. Worksheets.
Joseph was faithful to God in both the good and bad times. How did Joseph show his faithfulness?

__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
Make a fourfold card. Fold on dotted lines, cut carefully around thick black line.

Joseph and His Brothers
Genesis 41:1-45:28

One day Joseph told Pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, what his dreams meant. “We will have seven good years of crops and we should save some of them so we won’t starve during the seven poor years,” said Joseph. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge. Seven years later all the countries around Egypt had poor crops and no food, but the Egyptians had plenty to eat, thanks to Joseph.

When Joseph heard this, he couldn’t pretend any longer. He said, “It’s me, I am your brother!” And everyone was happy again.
Joseph’s brothers sold Joseph and he became a servant in Egypt. There is one path that leads Joseph and the traders to the pyramids. Can you find it?

Read Genesis 37:12–36.
Write a sentence about the story of Joseph and colour in the picture:

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Join up the dots. What is Jacob giving to his favourite son Joseph?

You can find this story in Genesis chapter 37, verses 1–4.
Join up the dots. Who was sold for twenty pieces of silver by his brothers?

You can find this story in Genesis chapter 37, verses 19–36.
In the land of Canaan lived a man named Jacob. He had twelve sons. One of his sons was named Joseph. Jacob loved Joseph best. Jacob gave Joseph a nice coat. Joseph's brothers were jealous and hated him. They plotted to sell him to some Egyptian slave traders. They put blood on Joseph's coat and took it home to show their father. Jacob was grief stricken. He thought Joseph had been killed by wild animals.

During the bad years, Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy food. Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not realize that the very important man in the palace of the King of Egypt was the brother they had sold into slavery long ago.

The brothers took the food home. On the way, guards stopped them. In a sack they found a gold cup. The brothers were taken to Joseph. He allowed them to go home, but he said they had to leave Benjamin behind.

Joseph's interpretation of the dream pleased the King. He said it meant 7 years of good harvests, followed by 7 years of bad harvests. The King released Joseph from prison and made him second in charge over all of Egypt.

The brothers eventually decided to sell him to some Egyptian slave traders. They put blood on Joseph's coat and took it home to show their father. Jacob was grief stricken. He thought Joseph had been killed by wild animals.

Joseph had been sold to a man named Potiphar, the captain of the King's guard. Potiphar's wife made trouble for Joseph. She had him thrown into prison. Joseph had gone from favour to son to common criminal, but he still loved and trusted God.

While Joseph was in prison, the King had a dream about 7 fat cows and 7 thin cows. None of the King's wise men or priests could interpret the dream. Someone said that Joseph was good at interpreting dreams. He told them Jacob's test showed him his brothers had changed. He told them he was adopted and invited them to send for their father so they could live in Egypt and escape the famine.
INSTRUCTIONS

The story of Joseph is written in 8 word boxes on page 9.
Cut out each of the above pictures and match them to the 8 word boxes.
Glue the pictures in the box next to the corresponding words.
Joseph's father gave his favoured son a special coat.

Draw a line between the matching pairs. Colour the coat that does not match.