

LEADER Bible Study

Jacob had recognized his favorite son's bloody robe and concluded that his 17-year-old son had been torn apart by a vicious animal. He was devastated by the news of Joseph's apparent death. No one could comfort Jacob. (Gen. 37:33-35)

For the next 20 years, Jacob lived with the grief of losing a child. But Scripture shows us what Jacob couldn't see: God was with Joseph, making him successful and blessing him in Egypt. Joseph worked for Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, but when Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of attacking her, Joseph ended up in prison.

God gave Joseph the ability to interpret dreams. Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker were also in custody when they each had a dream on the same night. "Interpretations belong to God," Joseph explained. Then Joseph told them what the dreams meant. The cupbearer would be restored to his position, but the baker would be executed.

Two years later, Pharaoh had a dream which no one could interpret. But the cupbearer remembered Joseph and his ability to interpret dreams, and Pharaoh summoned Joseph. God revealed what would happen: there would be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.

Pharaoh took action, putting Joseph into a position of power to help prepare Egypt for the future. He recognized that Joseph was wise and that God was with him. God blessed Joseph. In one day, Joseph moved from his position in prison to being second in command of Egypt. God had elevated Joseph so he could save the lives of many—even his own people—during the severe famine.

As you teach boys and girls, point them to our God who is with us and blesses us. He blessed us in the greatest way by sending His Son, who gave up His position of honor, to be the Savior of the world. He calls us to action in sharing the gospel with the whole world.

The BIBLE Story

Joseph Explained Dreams

Genesis 39–41

The travelers who took Joseph to Egypt sold him to an important man named Potiphar (PAHT ih fuhr). 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. The prison guard put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. **Two prisoners—the king’s cupbearer and baker—each had a dream.**

Nobody knew what their dreams meant. **Joseph said, “God tells me what dreams mean. What did you dream?”**

The men told their dreams. The cupbearer dreamed about a vine with three branches. Grapes grew on the vine, and the cupbearer squeezed them into a cup and gave it to Pharaoh, the king. The baker dreamed that he had three baskets of bread on his head. The top basket had baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket.

Joseph told them what the dreams meant.

“When your dream happens, tell Pharaoh I don’t belong in jail,” Joseph told the cupbearer. **The dreams came true and the cupbearer went back to work for Pharaoh, but he forgot about Joseph.**



Two years later, **Pharaoh had two dreams.** In the first dream, seven fat cows were eating beside the Nile River. Seven thin, sick cows came and ate up the fat cows. In the second dream, a thin stalk of wheat with seven small heads of grain swallowed a stalk that was growing seven good, ripe heads of grain.

Nobody knew what the dreams meant. At last, the cupbearer remembered Joseph. Pharaoh sent for Joseph and told him about the dream. Joseph said, “God has shown you what will happen. There will be seven years of good harvests. For seven years after that, not much grain will grow. People will be hungry.”

Joseph said, “Find a man to collect part of the grain during the seven good years and store it in cities. Then, during the seven bad years, there will be food enough for people to eat. The people in Egypt will be saved.”

Pharaoh said, “I want you to be in charge of collecting and storing the grain. You will be the most important man in the land except for me.”

Joseph did his job well, and God was with Him.

Christ Connection: God was with Joseph in Egypt, and Joseph was given a big job and lots of authority. God used Joseph’s position to help many people. When Jesus left heaven to come to earth, He gave up His position of honor so He could save people from sin.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Rest and listen:** Provide towels or blankets where preschoolers can rest. Prompt them to pretend to sleep. Tell the Bible story as they close their eyes and listen.
- **Use props:** Show items that relate to segments of the story. Suggestions include a chain, grapes, a cup, bread, pillow, heads of grain, and a toy cow. Pull an item out of a bag at the appropriate time while telling the story.

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Joseph Explained Dreams

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 39–41

STORY POINT: God was with Joseph.

KEY PASSAGE: Hosea 13:4b

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.

Welcome and worship with song

- “It Is Well” song
- “You Are Good” song

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing an action song such as “It Is Well” to engage them and help them feel welcomed. Begin worship by leading preschoolers in “You Are Good.”

Tell or watch the Bible story

- Bible
- “Joseph Explained Dreams” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster
- Giant Timeline

Pretend to sleep and wake up. Talk about what it means to have a dream. Tell about a dream you had while sleeping. Prompt preschoolers to pretend to sleep and wake.

SAY • Our dreams are just regular dreams, but in today’s Bible story, God gave special messages to people through dreams. God helped Joseph tell three different people what God was saying to them through their dreams. Listen to the Bible story.

Open your Bible to Genesis 39–41. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

Practice the key passage and a Bible skill

- Bible
- Key Passage Poster
- Key Passage Marker
- “No God But Me” song

Place the key passage marker at Hosea 13:4. Invite a few volunteers to come up one at a time and open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Clap a beat while saying the key passage. Prompt preschoolers to clap

along while saying and repeating the verse several times.

SAY • God showed He is the one true God and Savior by sending His Son, Jesus, from His home in heaven to live on earth so we could be saved from sin.

Sing the key passage song “No God But Me” together.

Learn the big picture question and answer

SAY • Joseph went from a prisoner to the most important person in Egypt next to Pharaoh! *Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.* God got Joseph to Egypt. God gave dreams to different men. God helped Joseph know what the dreams meant. God gave Joseph a job so he could save many people. *God can do all things!*

• Big Picture Question Poster

Respond through song and prayer

SAY • **God was with Joseph** in Egypt, and Joseph was given a big job and lots of power. God used Joseph to help many people. When Jesus left heaven to come to earth, He gave up His position of honor so He could save people from sin.

Sing “You Are Good” and “The Reason That We Sing” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “Christ the Lord of All.” You may also collect an offering.

SAY • God, You are always with us. Even when we do not understand what is happening, we can know that You have a good plan. You loved us so much You sent Jesus from heaven to earth to save us from sin. Help us to follow Him. Amen.

• Story Point Poster
• “You Are Good” song
• “The Reason That We Sing” song
• “Christ the Lord of All” song
• offering basket

Transition to experience the story

• countdown video (optional)

EXPERIENCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Joseph Explained Dreams

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 39–41

STORY POINT: God was with Joseph.

KEY PASSAGE: Hosea 13:4b

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.

LOW PREP

· plastic cups

Stack cups

Set out plastic cups. Guide preschoolers to stack the cups in a pyramid, knock them down, and build again.

SAY • The cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. **God was with Joseph.** Pharaoh gave Joseph a big job and lots of power. God used Joseph's position to help many people. When Jesus left heaven to come to earth, He gave up His position of honor so He could save people from sin.

Make pillows

Write the story point on a paper bag for each preschooler. Encourage preschoolers to decorate their bags with stickers, markers, and crayons. Guide preschoolers to stuff their bags with fiberfill. Tape or staple the opening to create a pillow. Prompt preschoolers to rest their heads on their pillows.

SAY • God gave the cupbearer, baker, and Pharaoh dreams while they slept. **God was with Joseph** and helped him know what their dreams meant. God used those dreams to give Joseph a job where he could help many people.

- lunch-sized paper bags, 1 per child
- stickers
- crayons
- markers
- fiberfill
- tape
- stapler

- clean, empty plastic food containers with lids

Match lids

Gather a variety of plastic food containers with lids.

Remove the lids and mix them up. Lead children to find the lid that matches each container and put it on the container.

SAY • Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of collecting and storing grain so that the people would have enough food to eat during the time there would be no harvest. **God was with Joseph** in Egypt. God used Joseph's job to help many people. When Jesus left heaven to come to earth, He gave up His position of honor so He could save people from sin.

Taste grapes

Post an allergy alert. Rinse and pat dry the grapes. Guide preschoolers to wash their hands. Give each child a small bundle of grapes, a plate, and a napkin. Demonstrate how to pull the grapes off the stems. Cut the grapes in half lengthwise. Encourage preschoolers to taste the grapes.

SAY • In today's Bible story, God gave a cupbearer a dream about grapes on a vine. He dreamed about grapes on a vine. **God was with Joseph**. God helped Joseph tell the cupbearer what his dream meant.

Form a play dough bakery

Provide play dough for preschoolers to form bread, cookies, donuts, and other baked goods. Encourage preschoolers to work together to line up the items to create a pretend bakery. They may pretend to purchase items in the bakery.

SAY • In today's Bible story, God spoke to a baker in a dream. He dreamed about birds eating baked goods out of a basket. **God was with Joseph**. God helped Joseph tell the baker what his dream meant.

Transition to review the story

- Allergy Alert download
- seedless grapes
- paper plates
- napkins
- knife (adult use only)

Tip: Make sure preschoolers do not eat grapes before they are cut as they are a choking hazard.

- play dough
- play dough utensils

- countdown video (optional)

REVIEW the Story



SESSION TITLE: Joseph Explained Dreams

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 39–41

STORY POINT: God was with Joseph.

KEY PASSAGE: Hosea 13:4b

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.

Review

Point to the giant timeline as you review today's Bible story.

Ask the following review questions:

- Bible
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Giant Timeline
- Story Point Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Key Passage Poster
- "You Are Good" song (optional)
- "No God But Me" song (optional)

1. Where did Joseph meet the king's cupbearer and baker? (*jail*)
2. What did Joseph do for the cupbearer and baker? (*explained their dreams*)
3. Who else had a dreams? (*Pharaoh*)
4. What did God show Pharaoh in his dreams? (*There would be seven years with plenty of food and seven years when there would not be food.*)
5. What did Pharaoh ask Joseph to do with the grain? (*collect and store it*)
6. ***Is there anything God cannot do? God can do all things.***

SAY • Joseph did not deserve to be in jail, but God used his time in jail so he could explain the cupbearer's and baker's dreams. Then, when God gave Pharaoh a dream, the cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. By helping Joseph know what Pharaoh's dream meant, God put Joseph in a job where he could help many people. **God was with Joseph.**

Sing the theme song or the key passage song.

Pray

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

SAY • God, leaving his home in Canaan and being sent to Egypt was hard for Joseph, but You were with him. You gave Joseph an important job where he was able to help many people. Leaving heaven and coming to earth was not easy for Jesus, but He did it so He could help us with what we need most. Jesus saves us from our sin. Help us to follow Him. Amen.



Missions moment

Print the “South Asia Color Map” printable in color. Distribute the individual country cutouts to seven volunteers. Point to the labeled map and share that there are seven countries in South Asia. Review the name of each country by matching their colors to the labeled map.

• “South Asia Color Map” printable

SAY • God wants each person in each of these South Asian countries to know Jesus left His home in heaven to come to earth to save them from sin.

Collect and store supplies

Assign each child a classroom supply or toy to clean up. Take a tour of the room. Show them where supplies and toys are stored. Challenge preschoolers to collect and store their assigned supply or toy.

SAY • **God was with Joseph.** Pharaoh gave Joseph the important job of collecting and storing food. God used Joseph to keep many people from going hungry.