

Joseph Helps His Family – School Age

Genesis 45:1-15, 50:15-21

June 2, 2024

GATHER

Write the letters H, A, R, M, G, O, O, and D onto equal size scraps of paper – one letter per piece of paper. Mix them up.

Greet kids as they arrive. Say: I've mixed up some letters here. The letters spell two words that are opposites of each other. See if you can unscramble the letters and figure out what the words are. Encourage the kids to help one another unscramble the letters to make the words HARM and GOOD. Briefly discuss what each word means. Place the word HARM and the word GOOD at opposite ends of the table. Place the word GOD in the middle.

Say: Let's each share something someone did for you this past week that was good. Allow time for sharing.

Say: Today our Bible story is going to show us how God fits in between harmful actions and good actions. God is always working for us to experience something good. Even when something bad happens, God is with us working to make something good out of it.

Prayer:

Dear God. You can change bad times into good. You can change sad days into good. You can turn harmful actions into something good. Thank you for taking care of us. Amen.

Open the Bible

Say: Let's read our story to find out what harmful actions turned out to be for the good of many people. The story is found in the book of Genesis. Who remembers where Genesis is? (*First book in the Old Testament*). The story is in chapters 45 and 50.

(Depending on time, you can summarize Joseph's life prior to him going to Egypt. It would be especially important to tell about Joseph's brother's part in the story of his life – i.e. being sold as a slave, telling their father Joseph was dead, etc.).

Joseph's brothers had come to see him before, wanting to get food because there was a big famine. His brothers didn't recognize him, and he didn't tell them who he was. Now Joseph's brothers are back, and he is going to tell them who he is.

- See the Story: <https://youtu.be/cPqbJWL6uwI>
- Read the story: Genesis 45:1-15 and 50:15-21.

Discussion: Think about what happened in this story. How do you think Joseph felt the first time he saw his brothers? When the brothers came back again, how do you think they felt? How do you think they felt when they realized this important person was their brother Joseph?

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Activate Faith

Family-Friendly Frames – Craft/Activity

Kids create a unique family photo frame to display their favorite family photo. The framed picture will help them remember that God uses people in surprising ways to help during times of need.

Supplies: picture frames, permanent markers or 3-dimensional paint pens, Scratch paper, Markers, stickers or foam shapes.

Instructions:

Ask: What are some words that you would use to describe your family? (*fun, loving, kind, faithful*) We learned in our story today that God uses people in surprising ways to help during times of need. God knows that our families love us, so God uses our families to help us when we need it. Today we're going to make a frame with words that describe our families so we can always have a reminder that our families are there for us.

1. Brainstorm a list of words kids would use to describe their families. Write words on a large piece of paper or white board.
2. Have kids choose a few words and practice writing those words with markers on scratch paper using different styles of printing or lettering. (*Alternately younger kids can draw pictures to describe their families and add stickers with words*).
3. Transfer those words to the frame, fitting them into the blank spaces on the inside. Older kids can write a few words on the frame itself.
4. Encourage the kids to add dots, dashes, or other design elements to their frames. There will be some family themed stickers kids can add as well.
5. Let kids know they can bring home their frames and place their favorite family photo inside.

Say: These turned out great! I know your families will love them. Remember when you see this picture that families can help each other, just like Joseph helped his brothers in the Bible story.

(While kids are working on their frames, read the story "Turning Out Better Than Expected". Discuss any experiences the kids may have had that are like the story)

Food for Famine - Game

Kids play a food relay game to talk about the famine during Joseph's time and how God helped Joseph to help the hungry people. They will remember God always works for good.

Supplies:

Equal number of food items (play food can be used as well), Masking tape, Chairs.

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Set-up:

1. Mark a starting line and an ending line with tape or rope.
2. Set a couple of chairs between each team's starting and ending line.
3. Collect enough food pantry items for each kid to have one can/box to carry.
4. Pile half of the food items for each team at its ending line

Instructions:

Say: When Joseph was in charge, there was a big famine, and many people including his brothers were hungry. God helped Joseph to plan so that people could eat and not be hungry anymore. Did you know that there are hungry people in our community? How does God work through us to help feed them? (*food shelves, food pantry, soup kitchens*) For food drives, we usually collect food that won't spoil. I brought some cans and boxes of food like that today as well as a few other play items for our game.

Divide into two teams and have the kids stand behind the starting line.

Say: Your team's job is to get to the food on the other side of the room and bring it back here to feed our hungry community. But there are three challenges. *Model the relay as you describe it.*

1. First, only one person can go at a time.
2. Second, you need to make a full circle around each of the chairs in both directions before you pass by them.
3. Third, you can only use the back side of your hands to carry the food.
4. As soon as one person has brought one box or can of food back to this line, then the next person can go. Make sure your team is in a single file line. Are you ready? Go!

Allow time for each person to bring the food back to the "community."

If you have more time...

Do the relay several times with different directions for carrying the food:

- *Carry food behind your back*
- *Push or roll food with knees*
- *Carry food between your knees*

Create-a-story (if time)

Ask: How many of you have created a funny story by writing words in the blanks? We're going to have fun with the Bible story by making up some stories.

Ask the kids for the following words:

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1. Verb ending in -ed
2. Singular noun
3. Verb
4. Verb
5. Number
6. Noun
7. Adverb
8. Plural noun

Fill in the blanks by using the words you chose above. Read the story.

Joseph ____ (1) _____ so loudly that the Egyptians could hear him. "I am your
____ (2) _____ Joseph. You shall ____ (3) _____ in the land of Goshen. I will
____ (4) _____ for you since there will be ____ (5) _____ more years of
____ (6) _____. Go ____ (7) _____ and bring my ____ (8) _____

here to live in this place.

Closing Conversation

Say: Today we've had a great time learning about Joseph and his family. How did God turn the harm the brothers intended toward Joseph into something good for many people? God didn't want Joseph to be hurt or sold as a slave. But when it happened, God used the situation to eventually help others.

Today's story has shown us that God can turn things that are intended to harm others into things that can help others. God asks us to forgive those who've been unkind to us. Forgiving isn't always easy, but God promises to help us with that too.