

**TEXT** Genesis 37:12-35

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to describe how Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. They will understand that God spared Joseph's life and that He had a plan for Joseph.

**MEMORY VERSE** The Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy.  
— Genesis 39:21

# Sold Into Egypt

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**THE LORD** — Make an L with thumb and first finger of the right hand. Touch thumb to left shoulder, bring across in front of body touching right waist.

**WAS WITH** — Fists touching at chest, palm to palm.

**JOSEPH** — Draw a large J with right hand.

**AND SHEWED HIM MERCY** — With both open palms touching chest, roll both hands up and away from body. Then move palms down as though stroking an imaginary person in front of you.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The visual representation of our memory verse for this week is a graphic design of Joseph's name. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the three sections as indicated by the heavy black lines. Arrange the sections on your display board, one at a time, as your students learn the verse.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Blindfold one of your students and have him put two fingers on the table in a "let your fingers do the walking" position. Tell him you have a plan to help his fingers move to a treat you have placed on the table, but he must follow your instructions in order to get it. Direct his movement until he reaches the reward. Help your students understand that Joseph didn't know what God's plan was for him, but he was willing to follow God and do what was right anyway.

1. Joseph's father sent him to Shechem, where his brothers were supposed to be tending the flocks, to find out how they were doing.
  2. When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they plotted to kill him. They planned to say some wild animal had slain him.
  3. One brother, Reuben, suggested that instead of killing him, they should throw him into a pit in the wilderness.
  4. When Joseph came near, they seized him, took off his coat of many colors, and threw him into the pit.
- Climax: A group of traders passed by on their way to

Egypt, and Joseph's brothers decided to sell him as a slave.

Conclusion: God permitted these things to happen to Joseph as part of His divine plan for his life.

Response: Your students will be able to describe the events which led to Joseph's being taken into Egypt. They will understand that God allowed all of this because He could see what the final outcome would be.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Joseph's brothers, having been antagonized by the favoritism of the father, plotted to kill him and deceive their father into believing an animal had done it. The "pit" they cast him into was likely a cistern, a deep hole cut into rock or hard clay, and used to collect and hold rainwater for watering the flocks or quenching the thirst of traveling caravans.

Cisterns were used also as dungeons when they held no water. The opening was small enough to put a cover on top, with the bottom of the cistern much wider. This shape made it virtually impossible for a person to escape once he was dropped into the cistern. Centuries after the time of Joseph, the prophet Jeremiah was put into a cistern in a prison courtyard.

Dothan, the area where Joseph finally found his brothers tending the flocks, was situated on a major trade route between Syria and Egypt so it wasn't unusual for caravans to be moving through this area. By God's providence a group of Ishmeelite traders came by while Joseph's brothers were still in the area. Instead of his being left to die in the pit, as some of them intended, he was brought forth and sold as a slave to be taken into Egypt. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery thinking to get rid of him forever, not knowing that this was the very means God planned to use to spare his life and eventually their very own lives and the lives of their families. The brothers maybe thought they could prevent Joseph's dreams from being fulfilled. It is good to remember in times of adversity that others cannot prevent God's working in our life or ful-

filling His plans for us. Only we can separate ourselves from the love of Christ and His will or plan for our life.

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Make paper chains and have the students wear them as you tell how Joseph was sold by his brothers and led away into captivity in Egypt.

Bring a large shoe box in which you have cut an opening in the lid. In the box, place small pictures of things pertaining to the lesson — one for each student (see Patterns). Attach each picture to one end of a long piece of yarn. On the other end of the yarn tape a number. Keep the numbers and pictures in the correct order according to when that event happened in the story. Assign a number to each child. Have them pull their picture from the box when it is time to add that numbered picture in the story's sequence.

Have twenty pieces of foil or foil-wrapped candy to represent the price for which Joseph was sold.

Use the desert scene and stick puppet of Joseph to describe the lesson (see Patterns). When you tell how the brothers put Joseph into the pit, lower the puppet into the cutout of the scene.

Make a pit from construction paper to put Joseph in.

Give each child a copy of the dot-to-dot picture of Joseph and his brothers (see Patterns). When the children have completed them, they will see where Joseph was going to spend the rest of his life — Egypt.

## QUESTIONS

Why did Jacob send Joseph to his brothers?

Why did Joseph's brothers wish to do him evil?

Reuben did not want to kill Joseph. What was his suggestion? What did Reuben himself plan to do with Joseph?

Whose idea was it to sell Joseph to the Ishmeelites?

How much did the Ishmeelites pay for Joseph? Do you know who was sold for thirty pieces of silver?

By getting rid of Joseph, did his brothers rid themselves of all the hate and bitterness in their hearts? How do you think they felt as they returned home to tell their father that an animal had killed Joseph?

How do you think Joseph felt, knowing he was sold by his own brothers?

Why do you suppose the brothers took Joseph's coat of many colors away from him?

In what way could Joseph's being sold and taken to Egypt be a part of God's plan for him?

Is it possible for things that seem bad at the time to work out for good and actually be a part of God's plan for your life? Explain.

God has a plan for each person. Name some people you know who have followed God's plan. Tell about them.

Do you believe God has a plan for your life? How do you know?

## PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Use twelve cone figures made from construction paper and glue on round circles for the faces (see Patterns). The angry faces represent the brothers. A smiling face represents Joseph. Use these to act out the story.

Make a pouch and put some money into it. As you discuss how Joseph's brothers traded him for some money, help the children to see that, though money could buy things, it couldn't take the place of a brother. Talk about all the things a brother can do with you: play ball, tell secrets, share a sandwich, build something with blocks, etc.

Give each child a copy of the figure of Joseph with the circle of feet attached by a paper fastener (see Patterns). Let them help Joseph "walk" to find his brothers.

## REVIEW IDEAS

Plan your presentation along the lines of Paul Harvey's, "The Rest of the Story." Using large pictures or an overhead, talk about other Bible characters who could have said, "Why did this happen to me?" Some possible examples: Job, the blind man, Samuel, three Hebrew children, Daniel. Explain how the end result was good in each case: God had a plan, just as He did for Joseph.

Sister Edna Crawford's testimony could be used effectively for this lesson. [Tract No. 33 - Teenager Rewarded for Faithful Stand] It tells how her parents persecuted her and told her to leave home. She came to live with Sister Florence L. Crawford and eventually, one by one, her family was saved — because she continued to love them, pray for them, and was true to the Lord.

Bring a beautiful tapestry or something else handmade and show the children the reverse side first. Compare it with how we don't know why we go through some things here, but later on in life or when we reach Heaven, we will see the full pattern worked out. Turn the tapestry over to show the finished work.

## MEMORY VERSE SONG



The Lord was with Joseph, the Lord was with Joseph, the Lord was with



Joseph and shewed him mercy. The Lord was with Joseph, the Lord was with



Joseph, and shewed him mer - cy.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The LORD was  
with

**JOSEPH**, and  
shewed him mercy. Genesis 39:21

The word "JOSEPH" is rendered in large, stylized, bubbly letters. Each letter is filled with a different pattern: 'J' has diagonal lines, 'O' has a grid, 'S' has dots, 'E' has vertical lines, 'P' has 'x' marks, and 'H' has vertical lines. The text is enclosed in a hand-drawn style border.