

HOPE IN HARDSHIP

Joseph
Genesis 37;
45:1–10; 50:20
1899–1876 BC

OVERVIEW

BIBLE TRUTH

God works for the good of His people.

BIBLE VERSE

You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.
Genesis 50:20

LEARNER GOAL

I know God helps me with my troubles.

LAW & GOSPEL

We question God's will for us and are tempted to doubt His love for us when we experience troubles.

God assures us of His love for us through Jesus, our Savior, and helps us in our troubles, enabling us to serve our neighbors in the vocations He has given us.

SCRIPTURE SNAPSHOT

The account of Jacob's favorite son, Joseph, occupies a turning point in the history of God's people. The unusual timeline of Joseph's life includes him being despised by his brothers, sold into slavery, attaining success and then losing it all to false accusations, being imprisoned, and serving the court of Pharaoh. Joseph summarizes his life in one sentence addressed to his brothers: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20).

LESSON PREP

BASIC Read Genesis 37; 45:1–10; 50:20 and notes in *The Lutheran Study Bible*.

MORE TIME Read the leader devotion, found in the digital resource center.

IN DEPTH Review the section "The First Article (Part 2)" in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017), paying special attention to Question 138 and how Christians are to respond to evil and suffering.

SUPPLY LIST

FOR THIS LESSON

- Egg cartons & buttons or beads
- Blocks or boxes, wrapping paper & bows
- Gift bag
- Paper plates
- Chairs or carpet squares & paper hearts in assorted colors
- Round crackers & pressurized cheese in a can, fruity cereal or fruit gummy snacks
- Large paper bags & decorating supplies

FOR EVERY LESSON

- Bible, songbook & classroom supplies
- Copies of *Discover Leaflet*, stickers & music downloads
- Supplies for bonus activities



LEADER NOTE

Greet children and get them started in an activity that builds a foundation for what they will learn in class today, or start with Jesus Time.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Use “Play Dough Fun.”



LEADER NOTE

Show Bible. Remind children that all the stories in God’s Word are true. Read the Bible Verse from your Bible, then learn it.

LAUNCH

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

MANIPULATIVES Set out egg cartons and colored buttons, wooden beads, or the like to sort into the egg cups. Count to twelve. Tell children that today’s Bible story is about twelve brothers. Say, **Some of the brothers were mean to one of their brothers. But God was with him and helped him in his troubles.**

BLOCKS Set out blocks or small boxes, wrapping paper, and bows. Have children wrap presents. Talk about gifts they like to give and receive.

JESUS TIME

SING “We Are in God’s House Today” (digital resource center) or “Happy Now We Gather” (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 9)

SAY How do you treat someone you don’t like? Do you say or do mean things? Today you’ll hear about a boy who got a new coat from his dad. That made his brothers mad so they were mean to him. But God helped the boy in his troubles.

PRAY Dear God, *help us use our ears* to listen* and to learn* that You are with us* and help us in our troubles.* Forgive us* for Jesus’ sake* when we do mean things.* Help us always trust in You.* Amen.*
*At the asterisks, have children echo the phrase to God.

LEARN

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

Put the “God helps us in our troubles” stickers inside a gift bag. Have enough so each child gets one. Show the gift bag, then count the children out loud.

Say, I count [five] children. But I have just one gift. What should I do? How would you feel if I gave my gift to [Nolan]? That might make you feel mad or sad, right? You might even feel left out or think I like [Nolan] best. That is what happens in our Bible story today. Only one person gets a gift.

But you don’t have to feel bad. Take out the stickers. I have enough stickers for everyone. The stickers say, “God helps us in our troubles.” Let’s find out how God does that for a boy named Joseph.

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Draw faces on three paper plates to show these feelings: glad (happy face), mad (angry face), and sad (sad face), or ask children to show these emotions on their faces as you tell the story, using the leaflet as a guide. Review with the questions.

SAY THE BIBLE VERSE

Divide the children into two groups to say the verse. Say it twice, then switch parts.

Group 1	You meant evil against me,	Point to others, then self.
Group 2	but God meant it for good.	Point up. Cross arms over self.
All	Genesis 50:20	Hold hands like an open book.

LIVE

DISCOVER LESSON TRUTHS

Separate each *Discover Leaflet* into two pages. Send the first page home with the children. Hand out the second page of the leaflets, stickers, and crayons.

SIDE 1 Review the story as children color Joseph's coat.

SIDE 2 Talk about how God is with us even when we have troubles. Say, **God was with Joseph in happy times and sad times. He helped Joseph when he had trouble. He gave Joseph a new home, an important job, and everything he needed. Sometimes things happen that make us feel sad too. Sometimes we are afraid or have troubles. But God is with us and helps us in our troubles too. Let's look at some ways He does that.** Discuss each scene and give children a sticker to add to it.

ENGAGE IN ACTIVE LEARNING

Reinforce the Learner Goal with one or more of these active learning options. Turn to "Active Learning" on the back page for instructions to do the activities below.

□ MOVE

Use pairs of colorful hearts to play Joseph's Coat.

□ SNACK

Choose from two snack options that will reinforce learning.

□ CREATE

Help children make their own coat using paper bags and decorating supplies.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

When bad things happen, God is still there, working His good for us and His kingdom. We know that because God helped us with our biggest troubles—sin, death, and the devil—by sending Jesus to be our Savior. Say, **God helps us with our troubles.** Check for understanding by asking children to name ways God helps them and is with them when they have troubles.

LEAVE

SING "Hooray! God's There!" (digital resource center) or "God's Care" (*Little Ones Sing Praise*, p. 24)

SAY Today we learned God helps us in our troubles. When we have troubles, we might be sad or scared. But we can remember that God is with us. He works through people to care for us. He sent Jesus to be our Savior. He will help us in all our troubles.

PRAY Dear God, sometimes we're sad. Sometimes we're mad. Help us remember that You love us and always take care of us. Thank You for helping us in our troubles. Thank You for sending Jesus to help us with our biggest trouble, sin! That makes us glad! Amen.



CHRIST CONNECTION

God sent Jesus to help us with our biggest troubles—sin, death, and the devil—by dying on the cross for us and rising again. God promises to help us with all our troubles for Jesus' sake.



BONUS ACTIVITY

Follow up the leaflet activity with the "Action Rhyme."



BONUS ACTIVITY

Try the "Beanbag Toss."

ACTIVE LEARNING

□ MOVE

Play Joseph's Coat. Move chairs or carpet squares into a circle. Have pairs of hearts in different colors (two orange, two red, etc.). Hand out the hearts, making sure that there are always two children with the same color. If there is an uneven number of children, you take a heart too. When the leader calls a color name, the two children with that color exchange spots. Continue with other colors. Periodically, call out, "Joseph's Coat." When you do that, have all the children move to a new place.

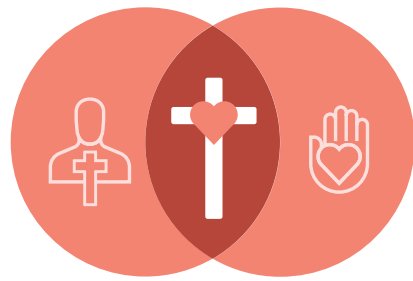
□ SNACK

Set out round crackers with pressurized cheese cans. Help the children make happy and sad faces or crosses on their crackers. Talk about how God cares for us through happy and sad times. *Option:* Serve colorful fruity cereal in a cup or packages of fruit gummy snacks. Talk about the colorful snack and Joseph's colorful coat. Review the story as you enjoy the snack.

□ CREATE

Give each child a large paper bag to make Joseph's coat. Turn the bag upside down. Cut a vertical slit in the center front of the bag, beginning at the bottom opening and moving up. Cut a hole in the bottom of the bag to make the neck opening of the coat. On each of the narrow sides of the bag, cut armhole openings.

Give children crayons, markers, or paint to color their "coats." If you use paints, provide paint shirts to protect clothing. Allow the coats to dry before sending them home. Encourage children to wear their coats as they tell the story of how God was with Joseph in his troubles.



CONNECTING IDENTITY & CALLING

IDENTITY: WHO AM I?

God claims me as His redeemed child through Christ, regardless of any circumstances or trials in life.

CALLING: WHY AM I HERE?

I am to love God and serve my neighbor, even when times are difficult. As I do so, I remember that, in the end, God works good for His people.

GROWING IN FAITH FOR LIFE

See how this lesson builds on learning for each age.

ADULT

I can explain how God is faithful to fulfilling His plan of salvation in the midst of treachery and great adversity.

YOUTH

I can express that God is with me in hardships and He gives me hope.

ELEMENTARY

I understand that God works for the good of His people.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

I know God helps me with my troubles.

★ BONUS ACTIVITIES

PLAY DOUGH FUN

10 minutes

Set out play dough in different colors. Encourage the children to make their family members out of play dough. As they work, talk about happy/glad, sad, and angry/mad times in families. Tell them will hear about a big family in today's Bible story. This family had glad, sad, and mad times too.

ACTION RHYME

5 minutes

Talk about where God watches over us (e.g., in the car, at the park, in bed). Say and do together:

God keeps me safe all through the day, (*Point up. Hug self.*)

When asleep and when at play. (*Put head on hands. Jump.*)

He watches over all I do. (*Point up. Point to self.*)

He does the same for you and you! (*Point up. Point to others.*)

Thank You, God. (*Clap.*)

BEANBAG TOSS

10 minutes

Put paper-plate faces on the floor. Have children take turns tossing a beanbag on the faces, then telling about a happy, sad, or mad time depending on where it lands. Say, **Joseph had happy and sad times. We do too. Sometimes we feel angry or mad. We do bad things. We sin. But God loves us and helps us with our troubles, especially our sin trouble. How does He do that? He sent Jesus to be our Savior. We can trust Him to help us in all our troubles!**