

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

### 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, is 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 all the Joseph summaries in *Know the Bible Now* (pages 44–51).

**IN DEPTH** Read the section "The First Article (Part 2)" in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (2017), paying special attention to Questions 136–38.

## SUPPLY LIST

### FOR THIS LESSON

- Find and prep a video of "animal fails"
- Large paper and markers

### FOR EVERY LESSON

- Device with downloaded music
- Pens or pencils
- Student copies of *Explore Bible Guidebook*
- Bible
- Copies of downloadable activity page
- Supplies for bonus activities
- [cph.org/digitalcontent](http://cph.org/digitalcontent)



### LEADER NOTE

Before class, search online for a video of “animal fails.” Find a selection that is appropriate for kids. Make sure it’s ready to go on your device of choice.



### GUIDEBOOKS

Hand out student copies of the *Explore Bible Guidebook* and turn to Lesson 6.



### LEADER NOTE

If you have confident readers, have them read this account directly from their Bibles. If you do that, summarize the content of chapters 38–44 by reading the headings in the Bible.



### BONUS ACTIVITY

Check the bonus activity “Joseph’s Coat” on the back page for a creative way to extend this lesson.

## LAUNCH

**PRAY** Dear Lord, bless us as we gather to study Your Word today. Help us to learn that You work for the good of Your people. Amen.

**SING** “We All Believe in One True God”  
“Builder of Everything”

Music can be found in the digital resource center.

**SAY** Have you ever seen videos of animals making mistakes? Sometimes it can be pretty funny. How do you react when things don’t go your way?

## LEARN

### READ “HOPE IN HARDSHIP”

Read the Bible narrative aloud to your students, or ask volunteers to take turns reading sections.

### DO SOMETHING

**FOR ACTIVE LEARNERS** Joseph’s life was kind of like a roller coaster—lots of ups and downs. As you read the account, ask students to stand, sit, and kneel as Joseph experiences highs and lows in life.

**FOR VISUAL LEARNERS** After learning the account for the day, jot down some main highlights of Joseph’s life as well as some key points in the story. Pass out some paper (the larger the better) and markers, asking students to work in small groups to make a movie poster for the account. If you have space, hang them up in the room or in the hallway for a week.

### KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- God works for the good of His people.
- Joseph planned to stay home with his family. His brothers planned for him to be gone forever. God’s plan was bigger than anyone could have imagined: it involved rescuing Joseph, Egypt, Joseph’s family, and ultimately everyone, as Jesus was a descendant of Joseph’s brother.
- Joseph’s story is amazing, but it was not because Joseph was so great. God blessed Joseph with the gifts he needed in each situation.

# LIVE

## EXPLORE THE CONTEXT

Before you start the discussion questions, use the *Explore Bible Guidebook* for more facts about Joseph.

## TALK ABOUT IT

- ▶ Joseph's family had problems. His mom was in competition with his aunt. His dad picked favorites. His brothers hated him. It seems that he was boastful at times. Do you sometimes have problems in your family?
- ▶ People lied about Joseph. His brothers said he was killed by an animal, and Potiphar's wife accused him of wrongdoing. How do you think Joseph felt? How might you feel?
- ▶ Joseph's brothers planned for Joseph to be gone forever. Potiphar's wife planned for him to stay in jail. Joseph probably had planned to stay with his family. But God's plan was bigger than all of that. How did God's plan for Joseph bless Joseph? his family? Egypt? surrounding areas? all people, including you?

## SAY THE BIBLE VERSE TOGETHER

You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.

Genesis 50:20

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Read **Romans 8:28**: "For those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." What is the best way that God has worked good for us? In Jesus!
- Read **Jeremiah 29:11**. God promises a future and a hope to His people. Even when we fail, even when things don't go according to our plan, His best plan for us is saving us in Jesus. And God used Joseph's life to preserve His people and keep His promise of a Savior. Wow!

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Ask students to tell you their favorite thing about Joseph and how it relates to the Bible Truth.

# LEAVE

**SAY** Joseph reminded his brothers and us: "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). God used Joseph to bless others, and He uses us wherever He places us for the good of others.

**SING** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"  
"The Lord's Prayer"  
Find music in the digital resource center.

**PRAY** Thank You, heavenly Father, for knowing exactly what we need. Help us to remember that You work for our good in Jesus. In His name we pray.  
Amen.



## DOWNLOADABLE PAGE

Extend learning by printing the downloadable activity page, found in the digital resource center. See the back page of this guide for details.



## CHRIST CONNECTION

God is always working for our good. 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.

## DOWNLOADABLE PAGE HELPS

Make copies of the downloadable activity page by accessing the digital resource center. Use the helps below as a guide.

1. Use a dark marker or crayon to trace the path of Joseph's life.
2. Cut the two puzzles apart. Place the word list over the maze, lining them up exactly.
3. Trace over the path, using a light-colored crayon or marker on the word list. (You may need to hold the pages up to the light for help.) The answer is as follows: "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good. Romans 8:28."

Younger students may need more assistance with the reading and fine-motor tasks. Provide help as needed.

**HOPE IN HARDSHIP—JOSEPH**  
Unit 1, Lesson 6

**Joseph**

**Directions**

1. Use a dark marker or crayon to trace the path of Joseph's life. Remember, God was with him wherever he was.
2. Cut the two puzzles apart. Place the word list over the maze, making sure they line up exactly, and tape the word list to hold it in place.
3. Use a light-colored crayon or marker to trace over the path on the word list. (You may need to hold the pages up to a window or a light to see the old path.) This new path will reveal a blessing from God.

morning	And	running	dogs	paper	Peter
pretty	we	pizza	those	who	love
jumping	know	that	for	kangaroos	God
pencils	James	shiny	cookies	singing	all
hippos	crayons	John	together	work	things
smooth	Romans 8:28	good.	for	soda	walking



### 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

### MINI MOVIE

15 minutes

Ask different groups to act out a portion of the account today. They could perform it live, or you could take a video of each scene and show it together as a mini movie. Be sure you have parental permission to record students.

### FOOD DRIVE

Times may vary

God used Joseph to help others. How can your class help others? Maybe they can gather from "plenty" and give to others in need, as Joseph did. A food drive might be an option, or you could hand out some candy and encourage students to give extras to a younger class.

### JOSEPH'S COAT

20 minutes

Make Joseph's coat! For younger students, provide a simple template (try a search online). They can decorate with yarn, buttons, markers, or bits of construction paper—whatever you can find. For older kids, bring in plain white T-shirts, and let them decorate with permanent or fabric markers. Use newspaper to keep tables and the backs of the shirts safe.