



Secondary Sunday School

April 2, 2017. V67, Q2, W1

Easter

# Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

Lesson Text: Luke 19:28-42; Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9

## Bible Story:

Five hundred years before Jesus came, it was prophesied in the book of Zechariah that He would enter Jerusalem on the back of a donkey as the KING and as the promised Messiah. A donkey, rather than being a symbol of poverty or humility, was a symbol of royalty. It was customary in the Old Testament and in Jesus' time for princes and kings to ride on the backs of donkeys in their processions. Horses were used to go to battle and symbolized war, but a donkey was a symbol of peace.

On what we now celebrate as Palm Sunday, five days before Jesus' crucifixion, Jesus told His disciples to go into the village where they would see a donkey tied up; a donkey upon which no man had ever sat. This donkey had never borne an inferior load, but was fresh and was meant to carry the Son of God, the King of all kings. Jesus told them to untie it and bring it to Him. He said, "If anyone asks you why you are untying the donkey (or colt), tell them it is because the Lord has need of him." Sure enough, when the disciples went into the village, they found the donkey and untied him. Just as Jesus predicted, one of the owners asked them, "Why are you untying the donkey?" The disciples then gave them the message Jesus had instructed them to give.

When the disciples brought the donkey to Jesus, they put their clothes on the donkey's back for Him to sit on. As Jesus rode into Jerusalem (known as The City of Peace), multitudes of people spread their clothes in the road in front of Him. Others cut palm branches and spread them in the road. The people cried and shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest."

Some of the Pharisees knew the people would think Jesus was a king and they did not like it. They told Jesus, "Rebuke your disciples." However, Jesus said to them, "If these people hold their peace the stones will immediately cry

# TRUSTING GOD

I thank the Lord for His salvation, patience, and understanding. I was gloriously saved on Wednesday December 29th, 2004 at the Pacoima meeting at the age of 8 years old. From then on I tried to live a life pleasing to the Lord.

As I entered my teenage years, I strived even harder to be a true Christian and an example to all I came into contact with. Sadly, my lifestyle choice began to conflict with that of my father, who was a Baptist. Due to me trying to obey the true doctrine of Christ, he prohibited me from attending services at the Evening Light Church of God and I had to attend services with him at his church. Not only did that happen, he also called my grandmother, who led me to the Lord, and told her she could not speak to me about the Lord. It truly hurt that I was unable to go to the Church I had attended all my life.

While at his church, I did enjoy being there. I was active as an usher, choir member, and Sunday school teacher. One particular draw for me was the music and the instruments. But, as active as I was, I still felt that something was missing. I wasn't being fed spiritually and it wasn't long before I longed to come back home to the Evening Light. I was able to attend the camp meetings, but not the general worship services.

One Sunday in September of 2012, I decided, with the leading of God, to attend a Sunday morning service at the Fresno Church of God. It was about a mile from my dad's church. I went and

was so blessed and happy to be home. From that time forward, the Lord has blessed that I have been able to attend service every Sunday with the true people of God. Oh, how happy and liberated I felt to be allowed to do so. To worship God with the true saints in spirit and in truth was truly a blessing. My father asked me once where I have been going and after telling him, he was okay with my decision. Just like God softened Pharaoh's heart, he softened my father's.

My dad's family thinks I'm wrong in the way that I've chosen to take. But, I can say like Evening Light song number 131, "I've only come back where God's people belong...." I encourage all to stick to this true way. Getting wrapped up in other churches will leave you empty and confused. Because my heart was right, the Lord shielded me from a lot of confusion. I may be the only one in my immediate family that is saved, but it's totally worth it. I'm too near my heavenly home to turn back now. God bless!

Damar D. Randle

# VERSE MATCH!

Read through the lesson text (Luke 19:28-42; Matthew 21:1-11; Zechariah 9:9), then see if you can match each of the following verses to their references without looking at your Bible!

And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.	Zechariah 9:9
Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.	Matthew 21:4-5
And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.	Luke 19:30
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.	Luke 19:41
All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.	Matthew 21:9

## KEY THOUGHT

Jesus is worthy of our unfailing rather than fickle praise.

## MEMORY VERSE

For he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Revelation 17:14

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. It was customarily recognized that persons of royalty rode on donkeys. What else did the donkey symbolize? What did a horse symbolize?
2. Why then, did Jesus chose to ride a donkey into Jerusalem before His crucifixion?
3. What did Jesus say would happen if the people did not praise Him? Is He worthy of our praise still?
4. In what ways do we want to be like the people in our story today and in what ways should we be different?

## JESUS' TRIUMPHANT ENTRY CONTINUED

out.” Jesus, while humble, did not stop the people on this occasion from proclaiming Him to be the KING OF PEACE--His true title.

When He drew near to Jerusalem,

He looked over the city and wept over it. He said, “If you had only known what would bring you peace, but now it is hidden from you.” Jesus cried because the people whom He loved, and who so desperately needed peace in their hearts, would reject Him.

## Application

Five short days later, many of the very same people who praised Jesus as king were involved in putting Him to death and denied they had ever known Him. We do not want to be fickle as those people were. We should not praise Jesus with our lips only when we are at church or when we think it will sound good, and then go home or to school and act in sinful ways. When we sin or do wrong, it is the same as putting Jesus to death.

Jesus still weeps over us when we do not choose to accept Him as King in our lives and have the peace He wants so badly to give us. We need to make Jesus the permanent King of our hearts. It is worth more than all the money in the world to be able to go to bed at night, lay our heads on our pillow, and have peace in our hearts because we have submitted our lives to Him.

Sister Julie Elwell

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Secondary Sunday School

April 9, 2017. V67, Q2, W2

Easter

## A Crucified King

Lesson Text: Matthew 27:14, 27-29; John 18:33-38; 19:19-22, 30; Matthew 27:54

### Bible Story:

Perhaps the crucifixion of Jesus was the darkest day the world has ever known. While just five days earlier the people had praised and hailed Jesus as a King, He now found himself betrayed and forsaken by His disciples. He was taken late on a Thursday night to the house of the high priest of the Jews for rough questioning. At the heart of the Jews' envy and hatred of Jesus was His claim that He was Christ, the Son of God. When morning time came, they led him into the council of the chief priests and scribes. They asked Him, "Are you the Christ?" When Jesus did not deny this allegation, they angrily took Him to the Roman governor of Judea, a man named Pontius Pilate, seeking his death.

A mob of people had formed as Jesus was led to Pilate early that Friday morning. Loud, raucous accusations were brought against Him by the rulers and people surrounding the fact that he claimed to be the King of the Jews. Jesus kept silent. When Pilate asked Jesus, "Do you hear what they are saying against you?" Jesus again answered him not a word so that Pilate greatly marveled.

Pilate could find no fault in Jesus, but because he feared the people, He turned Jesus over to the soldiers. The soldiers put a scarlet robe on Jesus and a crown of thorns, mockingly bowing before Him as one would a king. Pilate then wrote a sign and put in on the cross upon which Jesus willingly, and out of love, offered Himself. It said, "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS." The Jews did not like what Pilate had written. They urged him to change the sign to say, "He said, I am king of the Jews." But Pilate answered them saying, "I have written what I have written." The sign was written in three different languages; Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Many people and foreigners visiting the city of Jerusalem that weekend were able to read the sign.

# POSSESS THE DOUBLE

“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, . . . and in the world to come eternal life.” Mark 10:29, 30

I remember as a very young child lying in bed at night and having my conscience convicted of some wrong I had done that day. I would go into my dad and mother’s room and ask them to pray with me. Then with a light heart, I would go to bed and sleep soundly. I had a tender conscience from an early age and wanted to do right.

One Sunday afternoon, when I was nine years old, a baptismal service was being held. My father asked me if I was saved and if I would like to be baptized. I needed a complete assurance of salvation, so we bowed down by the chair in our living room and asked God to forgive me of my sins and come into my heart. That afternoon in March, in the muddy red waters of a farmer’s pond, I sealed my testimony with God.

Again, as I was entering my teens, I felt the Lord calling me to make a complete surrender to God and give my all to Him. The time had come that obeying my parents and following the rules was not enough. God wanted me to have a personal walk with Him. He heard my prayer and sent His Holy Spirit to direct my life. As I endeavored to let the Lord lead me in the choices that I made, He proved true to His Word: if I did my part, He would send His blessings to accompany my obedience.

From my vantage point many years down the road, I can assure you that living for God has been the best way. The fellowship of God’s people has brought many wonderful friends into my life. We have a bond that is unlike the casual friendships that are formed in the world because there is a closeness that comes from our mutual faith. Godly living enhances our personal lives, our marriages, our families and is a light to those around us.

There is a verse in Isaiah 61:7 that reads “Therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.”

Some years ago, my pastor, Brother Ostis Wilson, said his boss came into the room where he was working and asked him if he would work for him if he were to give him a penny the first day and double it every day for a month. Brother Wilson thought about that for a while. One penny on day one. Two cents on day two. Four cents on day three. Eight cents on day four. And by the end of the week he was only making sixty-four cents. So he told his boss he didn’t think he would take him up on the offer. His boss left the room and Brother Wilson continued to think about that question. As he studied on it, he realized what a huge mistake it would be to turn down an offer like that. To his amazement, at the end of thirty days he would have made \$10,737,416.67.

God has promised His people that they would possess the double. As we follow Him and are obedient to His commands, His promises build one on top of another, enriching every area of our lives, and they will eventually lead us to eternal life.

Patsy Smith

# WORD SEARCH

ACCUSATIONS

BETRAYED

CRUCIFIED

DEFEND

FORGIVE

FORSAKEN

GREEK

HEBREW

KING

LATIN

PILATE

QUIET

SILENT

THORNS

N T N K B P K T A L B J A X J E O R P C H  
V E H I A X I E H D E Y A R T E B S R T E  
E A K O T W U I R V D C Y A X I E U Z G B  
V I L A R A J U N G T N L H T D C Y A J R  
I S B G S N L Q N C N I C L F I W K C X E  
G X K W J R S K S U P J C S F C W P C K W  
R N E I T E O K A D O J K I R Y M M U P Y  
O I R Z F S H F E H E B E K K L P C S Q E  
F M K B D J X F G O F D S I L E N T A K F  
R D V J E Z E N B G C M P F T I S D T I Y  
B R F Y L N S X N N U S F H X N J E I K T  
T X V S D G F I M O C T Z A E R A Q O L Q  
K E E R G D K U R X P S D H J R P B N C V  
P A O T B B J U Y W U D H W X Q N K S A L  
W E H E I A O H K T P N Q M M W X A D O J

## KEY THOUGHT

In difficult situations, hold your tongue, be silent, and forgive as Jesus did.

## MEMORY VERSE

Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Psalms 34:13

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. For what reason did the Jews seek to put Jesus to death?
2. How did Jesus respond when accused spitefully and very wrongfully?
3. Why is it hard to sometimes be quiet when we feel like lashing out at someone who does not treat us right?
4. Discuss what forgiveness means. What constructive things we can we do to change a bad attitude we might have against someone?

## A CRUCIFIED KING CONTINUED

Some of Jesus' final words were, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." Later, a Roman centurion, passing by the cross said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

But wait. This was not the end of the story of Jesus Christ, the Creator of

the heavens and the universe! He would prove to the world in three short days that He truly is the King of kings!

### Application:

In the middle of unfair accusations being hurled at Him, what did Jesus do? Did He retaliate with loud and angry words? Did he defend Himself? After all, He was in the right. No. He held his tongue and kept silent. Keeping silent is a very difficult thing to do when things are said about or to us that we don't like. Our natural desire is to raise our voice and say what we think. But Jesus knew God would ultimately defend Him. God did have the final say and those who had unfairly accused Jesus became very silent. Furthermore, Jesus forgave His enemies their wrongdoing.

When things are said about us that we don't like, many times we feel like responding in anger. Very rarely do we feel like having a quiet and forgiving attitude. When we are treated in ways we don't like, we need to pray and tell Jesus how we honestly feel. We then need to ask Him for strength to be quiet and forgive. God will give us strength to do this if we ask Him!

Sister Julie Elwell

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Easter

## JESUS OUR RISEN SAVIOUR AND KING

Lesson Text: Isaiah 53:9; John 19:38-42; Matthew 28:1-8; Acts 1:1-3

### **Bible Story:**

Approximately 700 years before Jesus' crucifixion, it was prophesied that He would be put to death with the wicked but buried with the rich. Executed criminals in Jerusalem were typically denied a proper burial and dumped in a deep, narrow valley right outside the city walls. Not Jesus.

Joseph was a rich man at Jesus' crucifixion. He was a disciple of Jesus, a counsellor, and a good and just man who had waited for the Kingdom of God. As soon as he knew Jesus had died, he went boldly to Pilate, the governor, asking permission to take the body of Jesus and bury Him. Pilate granted permission, so Joseph and Nicodemus (the Pharisee who had found Jesus by night to talk to him), took Jesus' body down from the cross. They wrapped Him in fine linen with spices, as was Jewish custom. There was a garden with a new sepulcher (tomb) made out of rock in which no man had ever lain. They placed Jesus inside and rolled a stone in front of the door. Thus, the prophecy of Jesus being buried with the rich was fulfilled.

The Jews were afraid and they also went to Pilate. They said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.'" They were afraid the disciples would steal Jesus' body away by night and then tell people that He was risen from the dead. (Or maybe they were afraid He would indeed rise from the dead?) Pilate said, go make the tomb as secure as you can. So they sealed the stone and set soldiers to guard it.

Early Sunday morning there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. The angel's face was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The soldiers began to shake in fear and fainted as dead men. Later, when the chief priests heard about all that had happened, they gave the

# DRAWN FROM DEEP WATERS

*He sent from above, he took me, he  
drew me out of many waters. Psalms  
18:16*

Each year, over seven thousand people die in drowning accidents. I was one of those people. It's often said the age of miracles is past. The fact that I am still walking and breathing proves this to be false: miracles can and do happen.

In the fall of 2013, I was invited to join friends in going duck hunting at a lake in Oklahoma . The last memory I have of that day is waking up to an alarm at 3:30 that morning. The next memory is regaining consciousness in a hospital bed two days later. Wading into the lake to retrieve a duck, I slipped into an underwater hole and my leg was caught. I was trapped underwater for five minutes before my comrades were able to find me and drag me to shore. At that point I had no heartbeat and was not breathing. They frantically gave CPR for the next ten minutes, after which I began to breathe again--a total of fifteen minutes without a single breath of air. This was the first of miracles since, in ordinary physical conditions, irreparable brain damage and permanent death comes well before this extended amount of time.

It was forty-five minutes before any medical assistance could even find where we were at on the lake. I was rushed to a hospital via MediFlight where doctors did their best to fully revive me, but without success. I was in a comatose state, unresponsive, without brain activity. Understandably so, the medical staff assumed that even if I somehow survived, I would be in a vegetative state, totally brain dead. But God. Brother Curtis, a local minister, was in the near vicinity and was the first person to arrive on the scene. He asked

if he could enter my room to pray, which was granted since the doctors could do no more. Upon his prayer that God would grant mercy, backed by hundreds of saints across the country who had heard of my plight, I began to move and show signs of life.

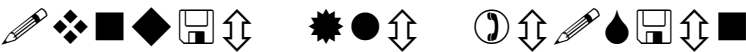
God did a miraculous work. Within two days of my entrance to the hospital I was out of my coma and fully conscious. Within four days I was allowed to leave the hospital on my own two feet. My recovery was far from painless--I suffered a heart attack the following summer from the sustained heart damage. However, I am able to go and do, exert myself physically and was able to return to my University studies (from which I graduate in only four months). For God to grant me life was a miracle in itself, but to fully regain mental and physical capacity is a miracle and blessing unlike any I have otherwise seen or experienced.

There is a dual blessing in what God did for me. Had I passed into eternity in the condition I was when I waded into those waters... I would not have made heaven. By granting me one more chance at life, I had the opportunity to fully gain Salvation and turn my life around for God. It certainly wasn't because I was deserving of anything from God--He has no obligation to anyone when they've denied Him. However, I've since been told of the countless saints across the country that were incredibly burdened and in prayer for me on the day of my accident, before they even got the call of what happened. Without the prayers of so many, I don't know if I would have made it that day. None of us know when our end will come. It is imperative that we heed God's calling while we have the opportunity. We know not what tomorrow may bring, but we can face the future with peace and assurance if our place with God is secure.

Devon Smith

# Crack the Code!

Use hints from the lesson to crack the code!



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
W	X	Y	Z							

## KEY THOUGHT

NOTHING we face is too big for  
Jesus Christ.

## MEMORY VERSE

I am he that liveth, and was dead;  
and behold, I am alive forever  
more, Amen. Revelation 1:18

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Although Jesus was crucified as a criminal, discuss how He came to be buried with the rich.
2. Why were the chief priests afraid and what did they do to try and alleviate their fears?
3. AN ALIVE KING: Discuss what happened on Resurrection morning.
4. How does Jesus' continued LIFE today benefit you? How powerful is He?

## OUR RISEN SAVIOUR CONTINUED

soldiers a great sum of money and told them to say that Jesus' disciples had stolen him away while they slept. How afraid they must have been.

When Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and other women came to the tomb early that same morning, they were perplexed

because the stone was rolled away from the tomb and Jesus' body was gone. Two angels in shining garments stood by and said, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!" What great, amazing joy filled the hearts of Jesus' followers. Jesus then showed Himself to His disciples for forty days, speaking to them of things about the Kingdom of God before ascending into heaven.

### Application:

Incredibly, against all human reasoning, Jesus rose from the dead. Neither the stone nor the soldiers were big enough or strong enough to keep Him in the grave. The terrible, cruel words and actions of those who betrayed and crucified Jesus also lost their power.

Nothing in our lives, no matter what it is, is stronger than the power of Jesus Christ. Whatever hard things we face—discouragement, loneliness, the betrayal of friends, cruel words, or any other mountain of trouble—is not strong enough to destroy us if we will draw our strength and help from Jesus. He is sitting on the right hand of the throne of God waiting and listening for our prayers. Nothing is too big for our risen Saviour. We serve an "ALIVE KING!"

Sister Julie Elwell

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Secondary Sunday School

April 23, 2017. V67, Q2, W4

The Story of Joseph

## Joseph's Lineage: God's Promises

Lesson Text: Genesis 12:2-3; 15:1-6; 18:14; 21:1-5; 25:21-26; 27:6-29; 30:22-24; 32:24-28

### **Bible Story:**

Joseph was a great, powerful, and faithful man of God. He is often looked up to as a Biblical hero, and his story is a true testament to how God can work in a person's life.

Even before Joseph was born, God's plan was in motion. Several generations before his birth, God promised Abraham that he would be a great nation. Abraham's children were to be greater in number than the stars in the heaven! Abraham trusted in God's promise and continued on his way, his faith increasing with every circumstance he encountered. At one point in his life, he said, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Twenty-five long years after God spoke His promise to Abraham, Isaac was born. Abraham was 100 years old! His waiting was over and his faith was rewarded. He now knew that his family would become a great nation.

From Isaac, Jacob and Esau were born. Do you remember their story? Jacob tricked Isaac into giving him the firstborn's blessing, even though it rightfully belong to Esau. Jacob inherited riches, the promise of many children, and God's blessing because of his deception. But in the end, he submitted to God's way. He had two wives and twelve sons. The wife that he truly loved, Rachel, bore Joseph and Benjamin. They were their father's favorites, despite the fact that they were among the younger of Jacob's sons.

From there, Joseph's story begins. But long before he was ever thought of, God's plan was in the works—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all had to follow God's will for their lives in order for Joseph's story to come to pass. How powerful our God is to have worked all of this out!

### **Application:**

Have you ever been through a particularly hard time and wondered why God was allowing it? Perhaps you lost a beloved grandparent and your life hasn't

# GOD'S POWER

After I got saved I had a deep desire to thank God for it. But the enemy was right there trying to hold me back from giving thanks to Him. The devil made it very hard for me to stand up and praise God for what He'd done for me. He brought many excuses to my mind, trying to convince me that I just had to thank God in my heart. At first, I didn't know how to handle this temptation and accepted those thoughts. I remember the day our preacher announced that they planned to perform a baptism the following Sunday. It was just a few weeks after I received forgiveness of my sins. I was willing to follow God's commandments and be baptized, but I was struggling because at this time I hadn't told my salvation experience to the congregation. Even though I was very nervous, I knew that I needed to testify of my salvation experience at least once. So I put all my courage together and with God's help, I said a short testimony in Sunday morning service, right before the baptism was planned to take place. Even while we headed to the place where the baptism was performed, the enemy wanted to hold me back from being baptized, but thank God for the power He gave me to have victory in this trial.

As the following months passed by, God helped me in many situations and blessed me greatly. In my heart, I often had a great desire to praise Him for it, but every time I wanted to tell the congregation of something God had done for me, the enemy came up to destroy it. My own desire and power weren't sufficient to have victory in those battles.

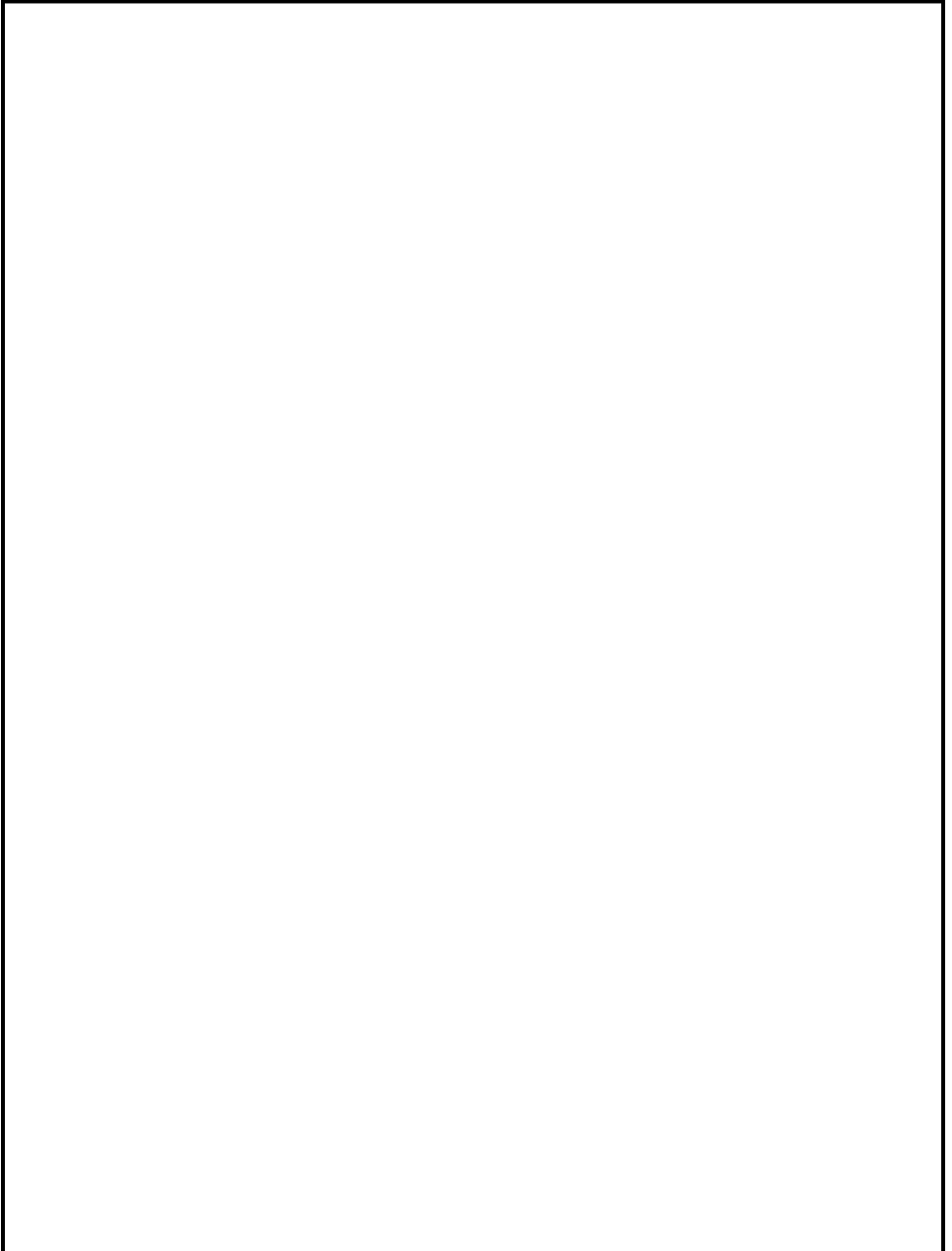
One day, our preacher read Psalms 150 where it calls upon everything that has breath to praise Him. Many following Sunday morning services also started with a Psalm requesting to praise and honor God for His mercies, and deep in my heart I was very ashamed of how often I missed the opportunity to thank Him. My conscience told me that I wasn't doing right and needed to change or I would lose my salvation. I knew that not being completely obedient to the word of God would make me miss heaven. So I started praying very hard because I didn't know what else to do. In this time, God showed me that He wanted me to share my experiences with others to encourage them; I just lacked power to put my desire into practice because I relied on my own power.

This year at Monark, I heard a message of God's power that was titled "Forgotten Power". This message really spoke to my heart that I could've lived victoriously if I would've believed in God's power. I understood that God wanted to give me His power right there to go on having victory in the times when the devil attacked me, especially regarding testifying. While I prayed, regretting the times I didn't obey His calling, He gave me faith to believe that His power is necessary but also sufficient to make me an overcomer in every trial I meet in life. I praise God for His enduring patience with me. He filled me with His power that very evening and still maintains it. I was surprised with myself and still don't know how I got up the last service we attended at Monark to thank him for all His blessings, but what I know is that God is able to change! We just have to ask Him for and believe in His power!

Alwine Voll

# Are You an Artist?

Draw a picture of the people in your life that have helped lead you to Jesus.



## KEY THOUGHT

God has a plan for you that began long before you were born.

Trust in Him!

## MEMORY VERSE

And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son. Genesis 30:24

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. How long did Abraham have to wait before Isaac was born? How did that period of time affect his faith?
2. Is it always easy to see how God is working His plan out in our lives?
3. How can we learn from Joseph's lineage to trust God's long-term plan for us?
4. How will your decisions affect those coming after you?

## JOSEPH'S LINEAGE CONTINUED

been the same since. Perhaps school is a lot harder than you thought it would be and you're struggling to make good grades. Perhaps you and your sibling or best friend aren't getting along like you used to and it seems as though all you do is fight.

God allows hard things to come our way for a purpose. It is often hard to

see His hand working out the details of our own lives, but take a look at how God prepared the way for Joseph! He was making it possible for Joseph to be a great man of faith long before Joseph was even born!

Can you think of anything in your life that has happened that way? Everyone has gone through hard times that seem without purpose, but sometimes God allows us to see the reason for those circumstances later. It becomes clear that the trial was for a reason and a greater good was coming about because of it. Even hard times that your parents and grandparents went through earlier in their lives have made a difference in your life now. Imagine how your actions and decisions are affecting those who will come after you!

The way you choose to live your life impacts more people than you know. Your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, friends, neighbors, and many others are affected by YOU. When a hard time comes your way and you feel like you are struggling to trust God, remember how far back Joseph's story goes. His great grandfather had to BELIEVE in God's promise of a great nation in order for Joseph's life to be possible. You can trust in God's plans and promises the same way!

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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The Story of Joseph

## Joseph's Brothers: Jealousy

Lesson Text: Genesis 37:3-36

**Bible Story:** Joseph was his father's favorite son, and Jacob did not do a good job at hiding it. Instead of treating his children equally, Jacob made Joseph a coat of many colors. Joseph's brothers looked at his new coat and hated him all the more for it. They had nothing nice to say about their brother.

Then, to make matters worse, Joseph had several dreams. In the first, he saw twelve sheaves of wheat in a field. Each sheave represented one of Jacob's twelve sons. Eleven of the sheaves bowed down to the sheave that was Joseph's and worshiped it. In the second, he dreamed that the sun, moon, and eleven stars also bowed to him. When Joseph told his brothers his dream, they became very angry at his words and mocked him cruelly. They simply could not forgive him.

Later, Jacob sent Joseph into the fields to check on his brothers as they watched over the flocks. When they saw him coming, they started scheming amongst themselves. What could they do to enact revenge on their little brother? They mocked him, saying, "Behold, this dreamer cometh!" They were so angry, they decided to kill him and throw his body into a dry well.

Thankfully, the eldest of the brothers stopped the rest from killing Joseph. He said instead, "Do not shed his blood, but cast him into the pit." So when Joseph came upon his brothers in the field, they tore his beautiful coat from around his shoulders and threw him into the pit. Feeling proud of themselves, they sat down to enjoy their meal when they saw some Ishmeelites passing by on their way to Egypt. Quickly forming a new plan, they decided to sell Joseph into slavery and tell their father that he had been slain by an evil beast.

When Jacob heard this, he was so grieved that he tore his clothes and refused to be comforted by his family.

**Application:** Have you ever been in a situation where favoritism was shown? If you are the favorite, it doesn't feel too bad to be treated well! But if you are

# WONDERFULLY CREATED

*"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." John 15:16*

"I wish I could be more like (insert name.) I wish I could sing better, draw more than a stick-figure, solve math problems faster, speak up easier. I wish, I wish, I wish..."

Have you ever wished you could be more like someone else? Discontentment is an easy seed for the devil to plant, and a hard weed to root once grown.

I struggled with discontentment as a teenager. I wondered why I had a more quiet, introspective personality instead of a bubbly, outgoing disposition. I thought I was full of physical "flaws."

I was never really happy, and spent a portion of life berating myself and refusing to accept who I was - who God made. I wanted to act and look like a totally different person, instead of focusing on how God wanted to work through my life.

Thank the Lord for His faithfulness, love, and for lifting me out of bondage. Though I never wish to revisit that time period, I learned valuable lessons and truths through the Lord's gentle dealings.

Jeremiah 1:5 says, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee..."

Psalms 139:14-17 says we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," for "when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my

members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!"

I go to these verses when I'm tempted to complain. God, the Maker of the universe, created me, and I was so focused on myself that it took a long time to grasp this wonderful truth.

If the devil gets us discontented, he gets our eyes off the Lord. It's a fleshly tendency to focus on the world's standard of appearance and success. But no lasting value is found chasing after or longing for these shallow standards.

Speaking of success, it's so easy to look at what someone else has and ignore what you have. I did, for a long time. But God specifically made you and me, which means He has a specific purpose for us.

Some time ago, the Lord impressed me with the thought that He places talents that mirror a little bit of Himself in every person He forms. I heard the Lord so clearly, and I was both encouraged and chastised. I spent so much time looking at the talents of others that I'd failed to recognize my own talents the Lord wanted to use.

Romans 12:6-8 says that we all have different gifts given to us, and that we should utilize those gifts.

What are your gifts? Whatever the ability, skill or interest, it was given by the Lord. Don't ignore the talents God blessed you with, no matter how small you think they are. The Lord desires us to use our abilities to glorify Him and continue His cause.

These thoughts continue to challenge me, as I seek the Lord's guidance for my life and how I can use my talents for Him.

Karissa Carver

# Personal Application

Can you think of a situation in which favoritism was shown? How did it feel? Write about your experience and share with the class.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, and the page is completely blank except for the lines themselves.

## KEY THOUGHT

There is a certain way God wants you to act, whether you are the one in a position of power, the favored individual, or the one being passed over.

## MEMORY VERSE

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.

Genesis 37:3

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What happened that made Joseph's brothers' jealousy even worse?
2. How could Jacob have handled things differently to prevent the rift between the brothers?
3. Discuss how it feels to be favored. How does God want you to handle that situation?
4. Discuss how it feels to be rejected. Where can you find true worth?

## JOSEPH'S BROTHERS CONTINUED

not the favorite, being ignored and passed over is very painful. This is how all of Joseph's brothers felt when Jacob blatantly showed his love for Joseph over them, and the rejection and hurt led them to act in a drastic and terrible manner.

If you end up in a situation where favoritism is being shown to you, how can you act in order to make those around you feel better? Making an effort to include them and showing extra kindness goes a long way toward soothing the hurt of coming in second. Being humble and gracious is absolutely necessary, and definitely a part of God's plan, if you are the one in the spotlight!

But how do you deal with the hurt of being rejected? When someone else is being favored, whether justified or not, it is hard to deal with your emotions. It helps to remember that your worth is placed **SOLELY** in God. His love for each of His children is all-encompassing and equally measured. His love for you is just as powerful as His love toward the person next to you. He does **NOT** play favorites. Hanging onto this truth can be a help if you are struggling with not being the favored individual in a certain situation.

Take a look at Jacob. How did he feel when his favored son died? He **REFUSED** to be comforted by his family. It is so important, if you are in a position of leadership or power, that you do not show favoritism between those around you. Not only does it hurt them, but you will end up being deeply hurt in the end, too.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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The Story of Joseph

## Potiphar's House: Hard Work and Success

Lesson Text: Genesis 39:1-6

**Bible Story:** After Joseph's brothers sold him to the Ishmeelites, he was taken to Egypt and sold to a very powerful man. Potiphar was the captain of the guard, an officer of Pharaoh. He was a man accustomed to wealth and comfort, and probably not very concerned with the slaves that were brought into his household.

However, from the very beginning of Joseph's stay at Potiphar's house, he worked hard and had a good attitude. Everything that he worked on turned out well and for a slave, he became prosperous. Soon, he was brought to the attention of Potiphar himself. Upon observing Joseph, Potiphar realized that the Lord was with Joseph and that He blessed everything he did. Potiphar was very pleased with Joseph's work ethic and attitude. Joseph was promoted to overseer of Potiphar's house!

From that time forward, everything that Potiphar owned was blessed of God. For Joseph's sake, the Lord prospered Potiphar's crops and investments, making him even wealthier than he was before. Potiphar knew this was because of Joseph's management and the blessing of Joseph's God. He turned everything he owned over into Joseph's management, becoming so uninvolved in his own household affairs that he didn't even know of everything he owned! He only knew that he sat down to a well-laden table for dinner every night.

The Bible says that Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored.

**Application:** "How many times have I asked you to pick up your room?"

Have you heard that before? The voice of your mom probably just rang in your head, and she probably didn't sound happy! But if she was scolding you, then most likely you hadn't done what she asked you to do. Normally, our parents don't ask us to work hard all day, every day. But they do usually want us to do a few chores and keep our own belongings clean and organized. Do you do this with a good attitude? Are you a hard worker when you need to be?

# GOD WORKS IN MANY WAYS

*Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing shall be impossible."*

In the summer before the 2016-2017 school year started, I decided that I wanted to do concurrent enrollment. Concurrent enrollment is where you go to college half a day and then you go to your high school for the rest of the day. I was very excited to do this, but at the same time I was also very scared. From what I heard it was very hard, but I wanted to work ahead and challenge myself.

The first week of school was very rough, and I cried at least twice. It was very different from high school and it was not what I was used to. I am not one to go out of my comfort zone but at the end of the first week, I finally just had to get down and pray. My prayer was to ask God to help me through this year: that I would be able to read what I needed to, get my homework done, help my essays be what they needed to be, and to get a good grade.

God definitely helped me a lot fall semester. He showed me that if I need anything, big or small, He could do it for me. He helped me in many of my assignments, but especially on my final essay for my composition class. I had written my essay and was very proud of it because I thought it was my best essay of the semester. My professor always had us turn in our papers online, so I went online and turned it in on the due date, which was Tuesday. I went to class on Wednesday as usual. The teacher did not give any homework so I went to church that night. After church on the way home, I logged into my email and realized that I had gotten an email saying my essay was not turned in using

the right format, and that if I turned it in on Tuesday at midnight she would not take anything off my grade.

Right at that moment I started bawling because it was already too late and I knew that the professor was not very forgiving in these type of situations. When I got home I sent her an email explaining that it was my fault and that I was sorry it had happened. I also attached my paper in the correct format hoping she would have mercy on me and grade it. The next day that I had her class, I went up to her office and told her about how I sent an email but it was late. I also gave her a hard copy in hopes that she would see I tried my very best to make the situation right again, but she did not say a lot so I went ahead and went to class.

Days passed and I did not get a response. I prayed those couple of days that God would work wonders for me like He had done in the past. Eventually she put in the grade for the essay and I saw that she gave half credit for it. I never thought I would thank God for half credit on an essay, but I did! Now looking back on the situation I still thank God for what He did for me! Just remember that God can do anything for you, whether it be big or small.

Amber Inman

# SCRIPTURE MATCH

Match each scripture to it's reference. Use your Bible if needed!

<b>And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;</b>	<b>1 Timothy 5:8</b>
<b>I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.</b>	<b>Proverbs 14:23</b>
<b>In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.</b>	<b>Genesis 2:15</b>
<b>And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.</b>	<b>Proverbs 12:24</b>
<b>The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.</b>	<b>Colossians 3:23</b>
<b>But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.</b>	<b>Philippians 4:13</b>

## KEY THOUGHT

Working hard and having a good attitude can lead to great success.

God blesses those who are not lazy!

## MEMORY VERSE

And his master saw that the LORD was with him [Joseph], and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. Genesis 39:3

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What did Joseph do that caused Potiphar to notice him?
2. In what ways did Joseph benefit from working hard? How was he blessed?
3. How can you apply Joseph's story to your life? Does God want you to work hard?
4. What kinds of attributes make a good worker? Which of these do you need to cultivate?

## POTIPHAR'S HOUSE CONTINUED

If we look at Joseph's life, it's easy to see that he had every reason to be a slow, lazy worker with a bad attitude about his master. He had been born the favored son of a godly man! He didn't deserve to be sold into slavery or to be forced into the mundane tasks of a slave! Certainly, he didn't

deserve to have been forced from his homeland into a strange, foreign place where false gods and wickedness abounded.

But how did Joseph react to his circumstances? The Bible does not record Joseph moping around Potiphar's house, barely finishing the tasks assigned him. No, it says he was a goodly person. That means cheerful, dedicated, self-motivated, and eager to please. He didn't spend a whole day finishing one menial task. He worked hard to get it done and then looked around to see what he could do next! His behavior was so out of the ordinary that the master of the house noticed him!

Sometimes it is really hard to feel motivated to work like Joseph did. Often times, getting in the mood to get our work done is the hardest part. But God is very pleased with hard, cheerful workers. The Bible says, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways." Doing the jobs assigned you in a prompt, willing manner is part of your calling as a Christian. When you don't feel like working hard, remember the benefits that Joseph received from his hard work!

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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The Story of Joseph

## Potiphar's Wife: Resisting Temptation

Lesson Text: Genesis 39:7-20; Matthew 4:10

**Bible Story:** Joseph was a very powerful man in Potiphar's house. Everything Potiphar owned was given to Joseph to manage. Because of his position of power, Potiphar's wife soon took notice of him and began talking to him. Joseph was a good, honest man and he knew it was not a good thing to become friends with another man's wife. But she would not leave him alone!

One day, she came to Joseph and asked him be friends without Potiphar knowing. He refused her, saying, "Your husband has put me in a position of power in his house. It would be very wrong of me to go behind his back, and it would be a sin against God." Despite the fact that Joseph refused, Potiphar's wife continued to pester him.

Soon, she became angry that he would not go along with her wicked schemes! When no one was in the house, she set up a trap to frame Joseph. That means that she made it look like he was going behind Potiphar's back when he really wasn't. Joseph tried to escape her trap, but before he could get away, she grabbed his coat and tore it from around him as he ran.

When Potiphar returned, his wife lied to him, saying, "That Hebrew servant you brought into our house came and hurt me." Potiphar was very upset. He believed what his wife told him for it looked as though she had proof. But Joseph knew in his heart that he had done nothing wrong. Still, Potiphar put Joseph in the prison where the king's prisoners were kept.

Joseph was now in a foreign land, separated from his family, accused of a crime he did not commit, and locked in prison. Still he trusted in God.

**Application:** It is often hard to do the right thing. There is a reason that God's way is called the straight and narrow. It is a lot harder to stay on a narrow path than it is a wide one! Part of staying on that narrow path is resisting when Satan tempts us.

# LET GO AND LET GOD

Life is full of lessons. Any time we go through something, God wants us to learn and grow from it. And sometimes, the best lessons and the most growth comes out of the hardest places in our lives.

A few years ago, I was in one of those hard places. I was struggling with a lot of fears and doubts and worries. The more I tried to figure it all out and fix my problems, the worse they seemed to get. Others talked and worked with me and it helped, but it didn't fix me. I started wondering if I'd ever be free and at rest from it all and if I would really be happy again. I finally began to realize I couldn't fix myself and neither could other people. Some needs in life go so deep there's only one person who can really help us out of the place we're in, and that's our Heavenly Father. It was time for me to fully trust Him.

I think of the story about the little boy trying to get his ball of string untangled, but he can't so he asks his dad to help. His dad can't untangle it either until the little boy gives him both ends of the string. That's like what I was doing. I wanted God to help me and fix my problems, but I wasn't handing it ALL over to Him. I finally realized, though, that was the only way I was going to get better.

Did you know that, as I started letting God have it all (everything I was worried about, everything I didn't understand, etc.), He started working with it and my big, ugly, knotted ball of string started getting untangled. Little by little, the fears and doubts started getting smaller, and hope started rising. Why? Because I was finally "letting go and letting God."

All my questions and problems didn't just disappear, but I wasn't the one trying to undo all the tangles anymore.

And something else started coming because of that: rest, the very thing I was looking for in the first place. It didn't happen all at once, and I can't even explain exactly how it all happened. But I believe God gave me some answers in a verse He showed me later--Hebrews 4:9-10. It says there's still a rest for people of God, but "he that is entered into his rest hath also ceased (stopped) from his own works." Not until I stopped trying with my own efforts did I get rest!

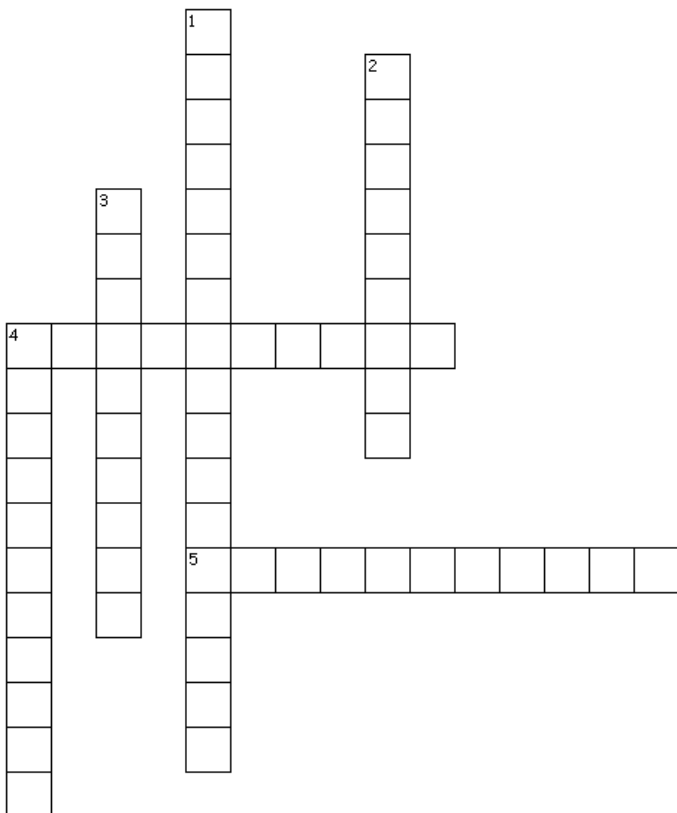
God had given me another promise earlier, but I didn't see at the time how He was fulfilling it. As I looked back later, I could see He really was working it out. It was Psalms 37:5, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass." That word "commit" means "to roll off onto." Think of a man with a big, heavy burden on his back, but he rolls it off onto God's back. He's not bearing the weight of it anymore, and God's the one making things happen. I can testify that this is exactly what God did for me. When I was trusting in myself, or even in other people, to fix all my problems, it wasn't working. But when I "rolled off my way" onto the Lord and started really trusting Him with it, He started "bringing to pass" the help and the healing I needed. I'm so thankful for His love and patience with me, and I'm grateful for the lessons this hard place taught me and the growth it gave me.

Kendra Cole

# Resist Temptation!

Match each of the six verses up to the clues to complete the crossword puzzle.

(The scripture references are the answers to the clues. Write out your references without spaces. Example: Genesis1:1)



## Across

4. Do not tempt the \_\_\_\_ \_.
5. What kind of man falls into temptations?

## Down

1. Reassurance that God gives strength to bear temptation.
2. Admonition to pray against temptation.
3. Temptations are not a strange occurrence in the life of a Christian.
4. the end of Jesus' prayer.

And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

Luke 22:40

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Matthew 6:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1Corinthians 10:13

Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

Mathew 4:7

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

1Peter 4:12

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

1Ti mothy 6:9

## KEY THOUGHT

Both Jesus and Joseph are good examples of how we can resist temptation: use God's power and flee the enemy!

## MEMORY VERSE

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What did Joseph say to Potiphar's wife that made her angry?
2. Discuss the different ways you are tempted in your everyday life.
3. Does God judge us based on our temptations or our actions?
4. Discuss the different tactics you can use to resist temptation.

## POTIPHAR'S WIFE CONTINUED

Joseph was a good man. We know that he loved and trusted God to take care of him. Still, the devil had power to tempt him while he lived in Potiphar's house. Even Jesus was tempted of the devil! But both Joseph and Jesus had God's power to refuse what the enemy was offering them.

There are things that tempt us in our lives, too. Satan is constantly putting situations in our path that lure us away from God's plan. It is not something that we have to be ashamed of when we are tempted to do something that is wrong. We know it is wrong to steal, cheat, lie, disobey, etc. Often times, those are not the things we are tempted with most. More often, a bad attitude, being unkind, arguing with our siblings or parents, or withholding truths are temptations that we face. Do any of these things sound familiar to you?

Thankfully, God remembers that we are just human. Sometimes, we even give into temptation in a moment of weakness. But God's plan for us is that we possess His great power to overcome our temptations and say no to the things that we know are wrong. Remember how Joseph handled himself next time you are tempted: he FLED the enemy! Sometimes, that is the best tactic we can use. When you cannot run away, remember that God's strength is enough to carry you through. You can say, just as Jesus did, "Get thee hence, Satan."

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

May 21, 2017. V67, Q2, W8

The Story of Joseph

## A Captive Interpreter: Doing God's Work

Lesson Text: Genesis 39:20-23, 40:1-19

### Bible Story:

We learned in the last lesson that Joseph was thrown into the prison where the king kept his prisoners. While Joseph was in prison, God showed mercy and allowed Joseph to gain favor in the sight of the prison keeper. Soon, the prison keeper had given Joseph charge over all the other prisoners, and whatever decisions and activities went on were approved by him. Just like Joseph's former master, the keeper of the prison barely paid attention to the things that were happening in his own prison. His trust in Joseph was so complete that he didn't worry about anything!

Joseph met two men while he was imprisoned. They were palace workers—one a butler and the other a baker. Both of them had done something to anger the pharaoh, and that is how they ended up in prison. One day, Joseph noticed that both men looked sad. When he asked why, they said, "We have dreamed dreams but there is no one to tell us what they mean." Joseph responded, "God is the interpreter of all dreams. Why don't you tell me and I will see if I can tell you what they mean."

The butler said, "In my dream, there was a grapevine with three branches. On each branch was a ripe bunch of grapes and I took them and pressed them into pharaoh's cup." The baker said, "In my dream, I held three baskets of baked meat upon my head for the pharaoh. But the ravens from the sky landed upon the baskets and ate all the meat."

Joseph told the butler that his dream meant he would be restored to his position in the palace in three days. However, the baker's dream meant that Pharaoh would hang him in three days! Joseph asked the butler to remember him when he returned to the palace, for he was unjustly imprisoned.

# LIFE LINE

We have all heard people say, "Sometimes things get worse before they get better." A few years ago, I could only hope things could get better. Now, even though I do not understand exactly when it happened, I know it did.

When I was a very young teenager, I struggled with depression and thoughts of self-harm. However awful that sounds, I was forced to contend with it often. Many days, I dreaded getting out of bed. I could not face the day, my problems, or others. In short, I could not face life and as a result, I could not face my own demons. Even though my parents attempted methods to help with my depression, it did not go away. As I got older and went through an emotionally scarring time, problems began to compound upon themselves. I couldn't control my depression or the problems that were destroying my life, so I began to control the one thing that I could--my weight.

I constantly counted calories and purposefully starved myself in a vain effort to measure up to my expectations. I wanted to be accepted, to feel happiness, to feel in control, so I fooled myself into believing that the thinner I became, the more I would attain those goals. If I had only realized how incredibly wrong I was! From that point, I became absolutely hateful. I only cared about myself. As the problem began to worsen, at one point I started to go not only without eating, but drinking as well, because I believed that even liquid would make me feel fat. My soul was hurting and it seemed that even it's screams for help were sometimes barely heard. Some nights, I would lay in bed, unable to lift my arms

without my hands shaking uncontrollably. I felt weak and sick, but, regardless, I was happy that I was controlling how much nourishment I allowed myself. As things progressed, I began disposing of food I was supposed to be eating. Sometimes, I flushed my food or threw it outside. Some days, I wanted to just eat a huge hamburger with no regrets, but I could rarely ever let that happen. In retrospect, I look at how miserable I was and I didn't even realize it. My friends and extended family did not know the struggle I was going through. I could paste a smile on my face and maintain a semi-social life, but inside, I was battling a war I could not win. I do not know how many prayers were offered for me during this time, but I know it was many. I cannot imagine how much I must have hurt my mother as she watched me, unable to help. I know I must have hurt my family terribly with my selfishness and hateful spirit.

As bad as the situation became, God was faithful to love me, encourage me, and give me hope, which was what I needed most. When I was unlovable, He loved me. When I failed, He forgave me. When I could not find my way, He guided me. I cannot thank God enough for always being my rock. Now, my depression has disappeared and even though I have scars from my eating habits, I am at a healthy weight and thriving.

This is my first time sharing my whole story publicly, but I have learned to cherish my story of victory. All praise to God for safely bringing me through some of the darkest days I have ever faced. Having the support network that I had, I have made it out alive and am stronger than ever.

Karissa Bird

# How are you working for God?

Use the space below to write out different ways you have worked for God. Remember, even things that seem insignificant to you are important to God!

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List three things you feel you are good at in the first column and how you think God could use your skill in the second column.

What are your skills?	How can God use your skill?

## KEY THOUGHT

Even simple, mundane tasks are work for God, if done with the right attitude.

## MEMORY VERSE

And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. Colossians 3:23

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the ways Joseph was faithful to God's work, even stuck in prison.
2. Do you think Joseph's attitudes made a difference in his work? How?
3. Brainstorm ways you can work for God in your everyday life.
4. Does it matter if what you do for God seems large or small?

would never be! How was he to find work to do for God when he was stuck in prison? Surely, all of his talents were going to waste in the dirty, dank cells. But that was not Joseph's attitude! We read that, just as in Potiphar's house, he quickly rose to a position of power. We don't know exactly what Joseph was doing or saying, but the simple work that Joseph was completing was the work God had for him at the time.

Because he was faithful, Joseph had access to the other prisoners, and in this way, he got to know the butcher and the baker from the palace. If he hadn't been faithful in his work, this opportunity would never have come his way! When he was given another chance to work for God by interpreting their dreams, he was faithful again.

It is so easy to feel discouraged or lost when it comes to working for God. But even if you aren't a missionary, a teacher, preacher, or song leader, God has something for you to do. If you are praying for a specific calling, be sure you don't miss the everyday opportunities that you have to do God's work—clean the church after service, help your mom out around the house, or help your little siblings with their homework. These are ways that each of us can do God's work, even if they seem small or insignificant.

## A CAPTIVE INTERPRETER CONTINUED

### Application:

Often times, we do not know how we can work for God. We might think, "I am in no position to do anything for God! I have no talents or strengths that might be useful to him." Those thoughts are lies from the enemy! God has something for each of His children to do, no matter their situation or temperament.

Joseph was in a place he thought he

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

May 28, 2017. V67, Q2, W9

The Story of Joseph

## Elevated to the Palace: God's Timing

Lesson Text: Genesis 40:20-23, 41:1-13, 14-41

### **Bible Story:**

The butler and the baker were both taken out of prison, and just as Joseph said would happen, the baker was hanged and the butler was restored to his former position. The butler, however, forgot all about Joseph in his return to the palace. For two more years, Joseph was imprisoned, all the while trusting God to take care of him.

God was at work, for Pharaoh had two dreams that troubled him greatly. He dreamed that he stood by the river where seven fat and flourishing cows grazed. Seven more cows, thin and starving, came out of the river and devoured the fat cows. In the second dream, he dreamed that a stalk of corn had seven hearty, delicious-looking ears on it, but seven thin ears of corn devoured the hearty ears.

Pharaoh was so troubled, he called for all his magicians and wise men to interpret the dreams. None of the men could tell the pharaoh what the dreams meant. Suddenly, the butler remembered Joseph and told the pharaoh about him. The pharaoh quickly called for Joseph, who was brought from the prison and given new clothes and a haircut.

Joseph told the pharaoh, "I cannot interpret dreams, but God shall give you an answer." So Pharaoh told Joseph his dreams. Joseph said, "The two dreams mean the same thing. God has showed me that the seven fat cows and the seven flourishing ears of corn represent seven years when the food will grow in abundance. The seven skinny cows and thin ears of corn represent seven years of famine. If you appoint a wise man, he can store food during the seven years of plenty so your people do not starve during the famine. Pharaoh replied, "God is surely with you, and there is no man as wise as you are. You shall be over my house and all the land of Egypt."

### **Application:**

After all of the kindness and care he had shown toward the butler, surely

# LIFE AND DEATH

When I was six years old, a lot of things happened. We were taken away from our beloved grandmother, who had cared for us dearly since we were babies. I clearly remember seeing my grandmother standing on the front porch crying as the police car backed out of the driveway. It's a memory that will be stamped on my mind forever. In the solitude, away from my grandmother and siblings, I hugged my teddy bear that night with tears in my eyes. I was too small to know what was really happening. For the next two long years, my grandmother fought hard to get us back. God enabled her to do it so then we were a super happy bunch for several years!

Then one evening when I was fourteen, we were playing outside when my grandmother had an aneurysm. We found her lying unconscious on the kitchen floor. She never spoke to us again. My hopes, dreams, ambitions and goals were shattered.

During the next five years, I hoped that my grandmother would regain consciousness and we would be a family again. However, in my heart I knew it wouldn't happen.

This past year, I accepted the idea of moving on in life without her. The days and years had flown by. I began to pray like I had never done before. I asked the Lord to take my grandma home so her suffering would stop. I knew then I had to prepare for death mentally. I gave it all to Him one day, as I prayed with tears in my eyes. After prayer, I never felt so much peace. Never! It was like a burden was off my back. It felt good. Committing her to the Father was the best choice.

Two weeks later, God worked a miracle. I received a phone call from my older sister. My niece was on her way. So with joy, I headed to the hospital.

On my way to the hospital, my cousin called me and told me news about my grandmother passing away. Tears were bittersweet that day. All I could think was why. Why now God? Why not next week or next month?

The next day my beautiful, bright, brown-eyed niece was born. Two words were ringing in my mind as I stared into the eyes of my niece: life and death. Life and death were so clear to me that day. I knew then that God's timing was perfect.

I am very thankful today. God has done many things through my life, especially the last five years. I believe during those five years I have learned and grown. I wouldn't be the person I am today if it weren't for those experiences.

I'm aware that no matter what happens in our lives, God works in mysterious ways. He still does! Everything is perfect in His time. Sometimes, we don't understand it at all and maybe we shouldn't. So, why worry? The biggest questions I ask myself is why or what if? Some things that come in our lives we cannot change. We don't know why things happened the way they do and maybe we shouldn't. I am still standing strong with God's help. God has a plan for your life just like He had a plan for mine. My desire is to help heal broken hearts. One of my favorite verses is: "Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7

We should continue to grow everyday no matter the cost or situations that come in our lives. Be the best you can be today and you will be a better person tomorrow!

Maria Padilla

# WORD SEARCH

CHANGE

DREAMS

ESTHER

EXPECTED

FAITH

FAMINE

IMPRISONED

INTERPRET

NATURE

PATIENT

REVEALED

WAITING

S P W S T N M V I E D Z R S S L Q T N G S  
I N T E R P R E T E X W E M Z N H T F O D  
R I B Q K R G M N Y A P V T A P N S J B T  
L L R X G N C O K I M F E K F L Q K L B A  
U D W E A C S F T F T O A C S Y W O C T M  
S V I H Q I C I I A F H L L T M T T H P V  
B H C K R M N E F I O L E D D E A J L A E  
O O W P E G D N G T T Z D L B G D E Z K Y  
V S M W R N G I N H P N T I H H O Y R N J  
X I H S K I S M N A U X D C S H O G L D F  
E S T H E R Y A W N T B F Z V S S J G V Q  
F A A A J A U F P F T U C L Q A U E K H T  
T N E I T A P B L C S B R W U C A W I C K  
Y S D Y O H M Z S M D M C E U Z W J Y E T  
N H U Z V S S Z U I T J H X B V H D S Z O

## KEY THOUGHT

We are often made to suffer through a period of waiting, but God's timing is perfect and His plan will be revealed.

## MEMORY VERSE

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

Genesis 41:41

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss how Joseph might have felt after the butler moved to the palace and forgot about him.
2. Think of a time you had to wait on God for an answer. Was it easy?
3. How would you have felt in Joseph's shoes when the pharaoh called you to the palace? Would you have been able to remain humble and trusting in God?
4. How are Joseph's and Esther's stories similar? Discuss the similarities in their faith while they waited on God.

## ELEVATED TO THE PALACE CONTINUED

Joseph's heart must have been grieved to be left in the prison. But he continued to trust God.

Have you ever had to wait for something you were very anxious for? Good things or bad, sometimes it is VERY hard to be patient and play the waiting game. It is often doubly hard if there is uncertainty involved. The enemy likes to attack us with questions and doubt. "What will I do

if this happens? How will things change if this happens? I won't be able to manage if this happens!" Thankfully, there is a peace and comfort that is especially provided for those times by God. A common verse in Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

Even in Joseph's waiting and wondering, God's plan was at work. It wasn't what Joseph wanted to be sold by his brothers, forced into slavery, falsely accused, and imprisoned unjustly. But God had a mighty plan that worked all of those terrible things for good, if only Joseph could wait for the right time.

The same type of situation occurred to another faithful servant of God. Esther was taken from her life and forced to become queen. She, too, suffered and was forced to wait for God's plan to be revealed. But her faith, even in her waiting, was strong. She said, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

It goes against our human nature to wait when we want change or an answer right away. But take comfort: if you are waiting, your faith will carry you through. God's great plan will be revealed in His time.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

June 4, 2017. V67, Q2, W10

The Story of Joseph

## Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt: Mercy

Lesson Text: Genesis 41:42-57; 42:1-34

### **Bible Story:**

During the seven years of plenty, Joseph stored up grain from all over Egypt. So much was saved that he stopped counting how much there was! The famine spread far and wide, all the way to Canaan where Jacob and his sons lived. Jacob saw that there was food in Egypt and sent his sons to buy some so his family would not starve. The only son he did not send was Benjamin, Rachel's other son. Benjamin was Jacob's favorite son among those he had left.

So ten of Joseph's brothers came to Egypt and bowed themselves before him, asking if they could buy corn for their families. Joseph immediately knew his brothers, but he hid his own identity from them. He looked, spoke, and acted like an Egyptian, and his brothers believed he was dead. As Joseph observed them bowing before him, he remembered the dreams he had before he'd been sold. They had come true!

Joseph was not sure what his brothers' intentions were, so he accused them of being spies. His brothers said, "We are honest men! We are the sons of one man from the land of Canaan. We have one brother who did not come with us, and one brother who has died." To test them, Joseph put them all in prison for three days. He then came to them and said, "I will let you live if you bring me your youngest brother." Joseph had Simeon bound and imprisoned.

As the brothers left Egypt, they felt very guilty for what they had done to Joseph so many years ago. They believed that God was surely punishing them for their sins. As they traveled home, they noticed that the money they had used to pay for their corn was still in their sacks. When they got home, they told their father everything that had happened.

### **Application:**

Though Joseph was a humble, Godly man, he was also a man of power. His position in Egypt granted him whatever his heart desired. He lived in comfort

# A BUZZING STORM CLOUD

It was a summer day in Oklahoma, about the time when the grass begins to lose its lush appearance. The sun was warm, and the wind blustered as persistently as it always did. At that time, we lived in a bricked doublewide that sat at the back of a five acre lot. There were woods on either side and the back of the property, and an open field in the front led up to the road. Running through the woods, there was a tiny creek that was fairly dry most of the time. But on this particular afternoon, my dad, my sister, and I were headed out to this little creek to turn our pet fish loose.

My sister and I were only about three and four at that time, but I remember following behind Dad, stepping carefully over this and that as we made a path between trees and over fallen limbs. I had on a pair of my favorite pink flip-flops, my short legs trying to keep up with Dad, as well as be cautious of where I stepped. I don't know exactly how I missed the little gray nest sitting on the ground, or how I managed to step on it, but it didn't go unnoticed for long as a much-dreaded hum drifted to our ears. Before I really knew what was happening, my dad whipped around and snatched Kaytra into his arms. The little bag that held our fish lay forgotten on the ground as he helped me onto his back. The hum grew louder as we became enveloped in an angry cloud of rudely awakened bees. Dad took off running for the house, jumping over branches and dodging trees as he carried Kaytra and me. As we gained sight of the house, I remember feeling like my arms could not maintain their lock on Dad's neck any longer. But somehow they did--perhaps it was the nagging of our angry pursuers or the fear of one particular critter buzzing inside my nostrils. Whatever the case, it renewed my desperation and determination to not let go, as my ride to the house solely

depended on me hanging on with everything I had.

By the time Dad stumbled up the hill to the house and busted into the front door, Kaytra and I were covered with stings. Mom quickly got a bath of water and baking soda going. I remember not wanting to get into the water, as my body ached all over from the stings. Meme and Papa were called over to pray for us. I must have lost consciousness after the bath, because I remember waking up on the couch in the den when it was still light outside. I was covered with bags of ice; it was so cold! I looked over across the room where they were huddled over Kaytra, also blanketed with ice, and praying for her. Uncomfortable, I began trying to remove the ice from my body until they stopped me and tried to help me understand that the ice was going to help the stings.

I don't remember anything else beyond that point, but I know things began to get serious. Momma and Dad had no idea if we girls were allergic to bees, which was a scary unknown. We were so young and so small, and our bodies had absorbed enough poison to be detrimental. Meme called Brother Stanley, who was our pastor at the time, for prayer and he warned her that if we started to gasp for breath, it could be too late for Kaytra and I. From a medical standpoint, there could be no hope. When Meme walked back into the room after the phone call, I was gasping for breath. She fell on her knees by my side begging God for mercy, because if He didn't step in, I could easily die.

Not too long afterwards, the Lord had mercy. He answered prayer! Kaytra and I could have died; we showed every symptom. But God had another plan. So He reached down, with His unmerited love and grace, and touched our bodies. Thank the Lord! Because of a loving Savior, my sister and I are alive today.

MaKayla Booher

# Crack the Code!



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
W	X	Y	Z							

## KEY THOUGHT

God's mercy extends far beyond our ability to understand. He can help you treat those around you with mercy as well.

## MEMORY VERSE

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Luke 6:36

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. How do you think Joseph felt when he saw his brothers for the first time?
2. What is the natural reaction to someone when they treat you poorly? Do you think Joseph felt these feelings?
3. Discuss the steps needed to have a merciful spirit like the one Joseph showed his brothers.
4. Why is it so important that we show mercy to those around us?

## JOSEPH'S BROTHERS CONTINUED

and ease and enjoyed great respect from the people and from Pharaoh himself. How easy it would have been for him to grow proud and resentful. However, God kept His hand over him and Joseph surrendered to the gentle spirit God wanted him to have.

How do you think Joseph felt when

he saw his brothers? Could you have forgiven them and been kind to them after everything they had done? Joseph struggled with what to think. He didn't know what had brought his brothers to Egypt. But that spirit of humility and forgiveness kept him from truly punishing them. He tested them and found out as much as he could about his father and younger brother, but he did not treat them in the manner which they surely would have deserved. He treated them with kindness and mercy.

God does the same thing for us when we make mistakes, and even when we choose to do something wrong, knowing it is a sin. Despite our treatment of Him, God is always generous and merciful with us. It is not an easy task to forgive someone when they have wronged us so drastically, but the spirit of mercy is something that God uses freely with us. He wants us to cultivate it in our relationships with others as well.

Has someone wronged you? Are you finding it hard to forgive them and treat them with kindness? Remember that Joseph showed mercy to his brothers, and God shows mercy to you. In fact, His mercy is SO great that He allowed His beloved son to die so that you could spend eternity in Heaven. Surely, if God can do that for you, He can help you have true forgiveness and mercy for someone who has treated you badly.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

June 11, 2017. V67, Q2, W11

The Story of Joseph

## The Famine Grows Worse: Faith in God's Promises

Lesson Text: Genesis 28:13-15; 32:9-12; 42:36-28; 43:1-14

### Bible Story:

When Joseph's nine brothers returned home, Jacob scolded them saying, "You have taken my children away from me! First Joseph dies, Simeon is imprisoned, and you would take Benjamin from me as well. Everything is against me!" Reuben said to his father, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring Simeon and Benjamin back to you." Jacob replied, "My son, Benjamin, will not go with you. He is the only son of Rachel I have left and if something were to happen to him along the way, I shall die in sorrow." So the sons of Jacob stayed in the land of Canaan while the famine grew worse and worse. Soon, their large families ate all of the food they had brought back from Egypt. When Jacob realized this, he said to his sons, "Go again to Egypt and buy us a little food." Judah replied, "The man from Egypt commanded that we did not return unless our brother, Benjamin, went with us. If you allow him to go, we will go and buy more food." Jacob's heart was grieved. He said, "Why did you tell that man you had a younger brother in the first place?" Judah reminded his father, "The man asked us directly if our father was still alive and if we had any other brothers! How were we supposed to know he would demand to meet Benjamin? Please send him with us so we can buy food for our children. If we return without him, I will bear the blame forever." Reluctantly, Jacob said, "If you must take him, take our best fruits, balm, honey, spices, and nuts as a gift to this man. God give you mercy that you can bring Benjamin back to me, for if he is lost, I will be gravely grieved."

### Application:

Do you remember the dream Jacob had early in his life? What did God tell him after he awoke from that dream? "I am the Lord God of your fathers, Abraham and Isaac. I will give you and your family the land where you now lie, and your children will be numbered as the dust of the earth, spreading in all directions.

# CHANGE AND FAITH

When I was asked to write a testimony, I didn't hesitate to jump on it. At the time I wasn't sure what I was going to write about, but I knew that the Lord was dealing with me a lot. I figured He would tell me what to write.

I was right; He did. The Lord has been speaking with me about change and faith. These two words typically don't go together, but they do in my life.

As I've been getting older, I'm starting to have a whole new relationship with the Lord. I'm not saying I didn't understand what I was doing when I first got saved, which was when I was about seven years old, but there is a certain level of maturity that has grown as I go along my path to serve the Lord. Trusting the Lord and knowing He has all the answers is not always easy. My personality certainly doesn't help. I tend to want the answers right away, and I have zero control over the Lord's timing.

That's where faith comes in. Lately I've been asking for the Lord to give me patience, faith, and humility.

A couple weeks ago, I just started praying until I felt the Lord give me peace about things I was dealing with. One of those things is discouragement. When I prayed, I automatically felt joy right away. Dealing with discouragement can often be one of the most dangerous things, in my opinion. I began to get discouraged about how everything was changing around me. Then the Lord showed me that it was my fault that I wasn't growing through Him. I was too busy looking at how other people were so close to God that I didn't allow Him to show me what He had for me.

I'm still working on letting the Lord show me where to go and what to do, but I'm glad He has the patience to show me my flaws.

A reason for the discouragement I was going through was a series of bad things happening. They weren't necessarily big things but, small ones that caught my attention. I was really starting to get tired of it. Then the Lord showed me again, "I can see the future, you can't." Those words have never meant more to me than they do now.

I've always heard people say "Only God knows the future," but I never really thought about it. Now, every time I run into something and start to get frustrated and wonder why the Lord is doing this to me, I just remember "Only God can see the future." I'm not saying that solves all my problems, but I will say it gives an instant peace to know it's in His hands.

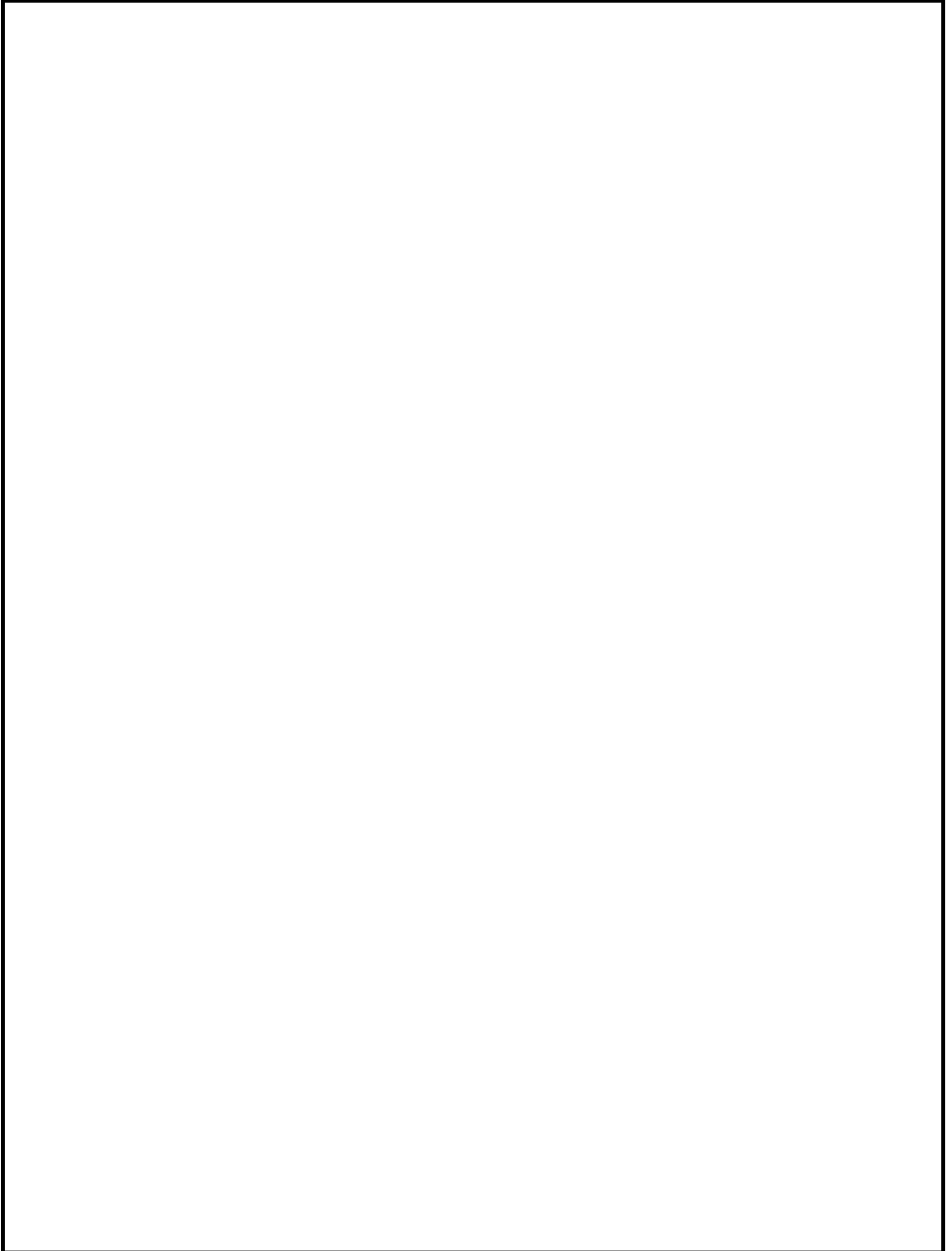
I'll end with this: new year's resolutions. I've begun to realize, it's not a bad idea to have resolutions! As long as you don't wait till the end of the year to change things, sometimes it's nice to challenge yourself! This year I have decided to be more dedicated and eager to learn more about the Lord. Maybe a good resolution would be to read the whole Bible this year, finish a devotional, or take more time to give the Lord the praise He deserves.

I hope this little insight into the last couple months of my life has encouraged you not to let yourself be overwhelmed by how much life changes. If you let Him, the Lord wants you to grow in Him, and keep learning how amazing He is!

Summer Beverage

# Are You an Artist?

What is your favorite promise from God? How has He kept that promise to you? Draw a picture of God's faithfulness to you.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing. It occupies the majority of the page below the text.

## KEY THOUGHT

Having faith in God's promises, despite our circumstances, is the only way to guarantee spiritual success.

## MEMORY VERSE

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Hebrews 11:6

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Why did Jacob have his sons take gifts back to Joseph?
2. What did God promise Jacob early on in his life? Has God promised you anything?
3. Discuss how differently Jacob spoke about meeting his brother and sending Benjamin to Egypt.
4. Was it right for Jacob to have very little faith about sending Benjamin to Egypt? How should he have reacted to this crisis?

God, saying, "God, you told me you would deal well with me. I am not worthy of any of the mercy you have showed to me, but now I am in trouble! I pray, deliver me from the hand of my brother!"

How different this prayer sounds than the words he spoke to his sons. Jacob's faith earlier in his life was almost tangible. He was SO sure that God would take care of him because God had promised it. Where was this faith when it came to his favored son, Benjamin? Where is the prayer full of confidence that God would deal well with him?

How easy it is to be like Jacob and forget God's promises to us. Did you know there are over 5,000 promises in the Bible that say God will take care of us? Sometimes it takes great faith to step forward and act on those promises, but it is far worse if we sit back and grumble in fear, as Jacob did in this instance. Choose to be like the young Jacob—his faith in God was unshakable, and only faith will ensure that God's promises will be fulfilled for us.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

## THE FAMINE GROWS WORSE CONTINUED

All of your children will be blessed. Behold, I am with you and I will keep you wherever you go, and I will not leave you until these promises are fulfilled." Later on in Jacob's life, he was facing possible death at the hand of his brother. He prayed to

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Secondary Sunday School

June 18, 2017. V67, Q2, W12

The Story of Joseph

## Joseph's Test: Repentance

Lesson Text: Genesis 43:15-34; 44; 45:1-9

### Bible Story:

When Joseph saw his brothers coming, he told his servant to make a large feast and invite the men to eat with him. His brothers were afraid because of the money they had found on their way home, but the servant eased their fears and brought Simeon out to them. When Joseph came home to eat, he asked how his brothers were. When he saw Benjamin, he was so moved to see him that he ran from the room and wept. Later, they feasted, and Joseph gave Benjamin five times as much food as the rest of the brothers. When the brothers were leaving, Joseph placed his silver cup in Benjamin's sack. He then sent his servant after his brothers and accused them of stealing. The men knew no one had stolen a silver cup, so they promised if Joseph's servant could find it, the man whose sack it was in would die and the rest would become slaves. When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, the men returned to Joseph and fell before him on the ground. They begged that Benjamin's life would be spared. Judah said, "Our father favors his youngest two sons. The one is dead, and Benjamin is left. If I came home without him, my father would surely die. Please, let Benjamin go and take me as a servant instead." Joseph could no longer stand the secret. He cried out with a loud voice and revealed who he was to his brothers. He said, "Do not be sad or angry that you sold me into slavery, for God sent me here to preserve our family through the famine. Now hasten to my father and tell him I am still alive and that God has made me ruler of Egypt!"

### Application:

The Bible says that Joseph commanded his servants to make a feast for his brothers when he saw that they had returned to Egypt. Does this sound familiar to you? Is there another story where a feast was prepared when someone returned home? The father of the prodigal son did the same thing as Joseph. Both instances tell stories of repentance.

# A GREAT ADVENTURE

By the time we started our long journey home back to the States, the sun was beginning to set over the desert horizon in the little Indian village of Santa Catarina, Baja California, Mexico. What an adventure it had been... and little did I know it would be the beginning of an unexpected and very surprising new adventure in my life!

It all started one day when my dad asked if I would like to go with a group of saints in search of a Pai-pai Indian tribe living miles into the desert interior of Mexico. Virginia Wittenborn had read about them in a magazine. The goal: find this tribe and take the gospel to them. Well, I was just a worldly, almost 15-year-old boy visiting my dad, and I had no interest in helping take the gospel to anyone; but, hey, I was good-to-go on what sounded to me like a great summer adventure before returning home and starting back to school! We did find the Indians we were looking for, and a gospel mission was eventually built there.

But what happened on the drive home that 4th of July weekend in 1958 changed my life forever. As I lay alone in the bed of the pickup camper Dad was driving, my mind was filled with the exciting thoughts of going home, seeing my friends, and starting high school. For an almost 15-year-old, my life was full of worldly fun and activities. I loved sports, music, parties... and dancing. My stepdad and mom were quite well-to-do; I had everything. Yeah, everything... but peace in my heart. I would sometimes lie awake at night and think about my life and the miserable way I acted and talked and lived. And I would think about heaven... and hell. Do you ever do that? Lie in bed at night and

think about your life? Think about heaven? Hell? Eternity? I knew from a boy what it meant to be saved, have my sins forgiven and live a Christian life. I had even given my heart to God a few times when visiting my dad during summer vacations, only to go back to the same old life when I returned home to Mom and my stepdad. Deep down, I was not happy. Not happy at all.

As I lay there thinking about all that stuff, God began talking to my heart, convicting me of my sins, letting me know He loved me, and asking if I would give my heart to Him. Finally, alone in that camper, in the middle of the night, I said, "Yes, Lord." But then, as clear as anyone ever spoke to me, He said, "If I forgive you of your sins and come into your heart, will you live for me forever, and NEVER TO GO BACK ON ME AGAIN?" Whoa! Hold on! That stopped me cold. FOREVER? NEVER GO BACK? I hit the wall on THAT! That was one life-changing decision to make! There I struggled for some long time: give up my sports? give up my worldly music? give up my parties? give up my dancing? Right then and there I said one big YES! And I meant it. A literal weight lifted off my shoulders! I felt light and free and happy! Liberated! I wanted to sing!

I have never wavered from that decision. Never gone back. It's been 58 years since that 4th of July weekend, and I have never once regretted that decision. It was the best decision I ever made. As the great American poet, Robert Frost, said, "...it has made all the difference." I thank God everyday for the change He brought about in my life.

"What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought, since Jesus came into my heart!"

Clifford Smith

# Verse Match

Use your Bible to match the references to the verses about repentance.

<b>Matthew 4:14</b>	<b>Acts 3:19</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 7:9</b>	<b>Revelation 3:3</b>
<b>Matthew 3:18</b>	<b>Romans 2:4</b>	<b>Jeremiah 31:19</b>	<b>Revelation 2:5</b>

<p>Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.</p>	<p>Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?</p>	<p>Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:</p>	<p>Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;</p>
<p>From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.</p>	<p>Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.</p>	<p>Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.</p>	<p>Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.</p>

## KEY THOUGHT

True repentance requires action and well as sorrow for the wrongs we have committed.

## MEMORY VERSE

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the tests Joseph set for his brothers. Was there more than one?
2. How do you think Joseph felt when his brothers offered themselves for Benjamin?
3. Discuss the similarities between Joseph's brothers and the prodigal son.
4. What must we do to show God we are truly repentant?

that they were changed men by the time the famine struck the land.

Do you suppose sometimes God tests our repentance the way Joseph tested his brothers? Joseph wanted to be sure that his brothers were sorry for the wrong they had committed against him. It had been many years since he had seen them, and he had no way of knowing how their actions had affected them. So he set up tests to determine the state of their hearts. They proved to be repentant!

Often times, we tell God we are sorry for the sins we have committed, but we are unwilling to change our ways. God will send tests and trials to solidify our resolve to do what is right. Repentance is more than just being sorry for what we've done wrong—it's being willing to COMPLETELY change the way we live in order to do what we know is right. That takes a lot more commitment than simply uttering the words, "I'm sorry."

Let's learn from Joseph's brothers. If we commit a wrong, let's be willing to give up everything in order to make it right.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

## JOSEPH'S TEST CONTINUED

The prodigal son came home to be a servant in his father's house. Joseph's brothers, the very men who had plotted to kill him, offered themselves as slaves in the place of their younger brother. How changed their hearts had to have been to be willing to become slaves! It appears

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The Story of Joseph

# Jacob Moves to Egypt: Parent's and Children

Lesson Text: Genesis 46:29-30; 47:7-10, 12, 28-31; 48:12; 50:1-14

## Bible Story:

Joseph's brothers returned to Jacob and informed him that Joseph was alive! At first, Jacob did not believe his sons, but soon he was convinced to make the journey to Egypt to reunite with his beloved Joseph. When Joseph saw his father coming, he went out to meet him in a chariot and fell upon his neck, crying with joy.

Joseph settled his family in the land of Goshen, then took his father and presented him to the pharaoh. Pharaoh asked Jacob, "How old are you?" Jacob responded, "The days of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years." The Bible says that Joseph nourished his aging father, giving him the best of the land, along with enough bread to feed everyone in his family. For seventeen years, Jacob lived in Egypt. In one instance, Joseph bowed himself before his father, displaying love and respect beyond words. When his time came to die, Jacob requested that his body be returned to the place where Abraham and Isaac had been buried. Joseph swore to his father that his wishes would be followed. When Jacob finally died, Joseph wept over his father's body and mourned deeply. He then took Jacob's body and returned it to the land of Canaan to be buried with his ancestors. Joseph dedicated seven days to the mourning of his father at his burial place. His grief was so intense, that the people of the land looked on and said, "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians."

## Application:

It is clear as you read through Joseph's story that he was highly favored by his father. But how did Joseph treat Jacob? There is not much recorded about their relationship before Joseph was sold into slavery, but after he was reunited with his family, Joseph's respect and admiration for his father is abundantly clear.

# JOURNEY WITH JESUS

I am a girl who has been raised in a very good Christian home. My parents taught me the ways of the Lord. They showed me by example how the Lord wants us to live a selfless life, and they showed me the benefits of a life lived for Christ. So, you would think with that kind of training, I would just automatically want to do the right thing. But no, it doesn't work that way. Jesus deals personally with each one of us. He knows the kind of background each one of us has. The battles that I have to face may be different from a brother who came from a broken background, but Jesus knows that. He knows how to deal with each one of us personally.

Jesus did start dealing with me as a young girl. I remember one evening when I was around eight years old, we were reading Pilgrim's Progress in family worship, and God started convicting me through that story. After worship I asked Mom to the pray with me. I believe this incident was the start of my journey with Jesus.

Yes, indeed it has been a journey of growing and learning. I have had failures, but I have not given up. I have had attitudes, desires, and temptations to overcome, but Jesus is with me and we are conquering them together! That is part of the joy of this journey. We are not alone. We are on a team with Jesus, and He wants us to win even more than we do.

We must always remember to include our team player in what we do. Ask Him what He thinks about what we are doing. I have often thought of that phrase of song that says, "Sin made all my life so bitter. Jesus makes it sweet and pure." It's so very true. There is such a bright, simple joy in living for Jesus. I

have seen the shame and hurt that sin brings to lives, and I am so, so thankful Jesus made a way for us to live above sin. He has made my life so full! No, not perfect, but so good. I have learned that life will never be perfect, but I know that with Jesus by my side I can face anything.

It has not always been easy submitting my will to Him. That is something that I have really struggled with. A Scripture that has really stood out to me recently is Isaiah 1:19: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." In the past year, there have been two specific incidents in my life where I came to a crossroads in some specific situations and I had to choose whether I was going to submit my will to God or do what I wanted. Already I am so thankful that GOD HELPED me to submit. It's a journey of continuously submitting my wants, desires, and dreams to Him. I know that if I obey I will eat the good of the land He has for me.

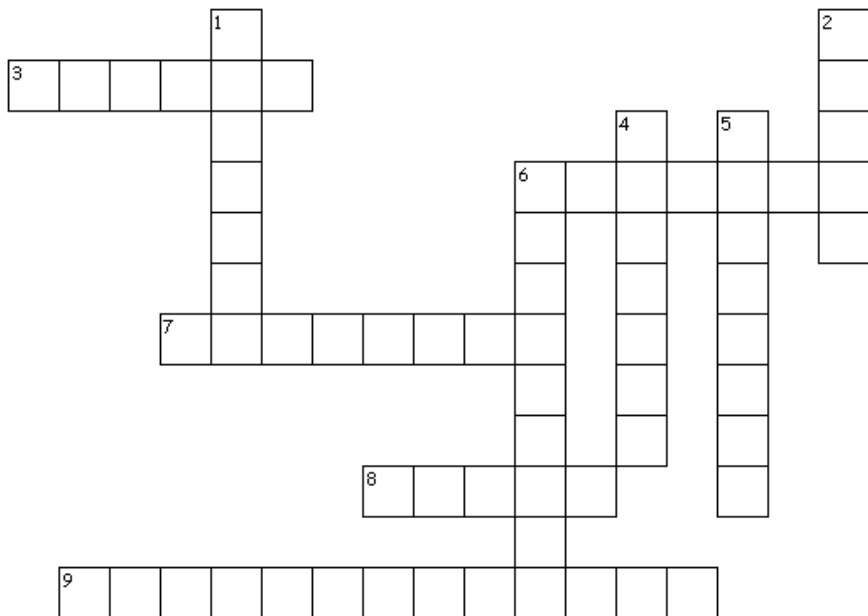
More and more I am learning that the inward rest and peace far outweighs what self wants. The happiness you have only lasts a short while and then you are left with a guilty conscience and restlessness. Living for Jesus brings such a rest and peace to my life. Sometimes it's so easy to start doubting God's plan and feeling restless, but it's when I fully trust in Him that I feel His peace and rest. Nothing is worth giving that up, and in the end absolutely nothing will be worth missing Heaven.

I pray that God will continually deal with me, and that I will live completely and solely for Him. I also pray that each one of you reading this will submit yourself to your Creator and learn to rest in His ways. I promise it will be worth whatever you have to give up. God bless you! Kelsey Gellenbeck

# CROSSWORD

ABRAHAM  
ATTITUDE  
CIRCUMSTANCES  
FIFTH  
GOSHEN

RESPECT  
REUNITED  
SEVEN  
SEVENTEEN  
SUBJECT



## Across

3. The land where Jacob and his family settled.
6. Children and young adults are \_\_\_ to their parent's decisions.
7. Children must not develop this against their parents.
8. The number of days Joseph grieved at his father's burial place.
9. These should not change the respect we have toward our parents.

## Down

1. Joseph had great \_\_\_ for his father.
2. The commandment that instructs children to honor their parents.
4. Jacob was buried where \_\_\_ and Isaac were buried.
5. Joseph and Jacob were \_\_\_ in Egypt.
6. The number of years Jacob lived in Egypt before he died.

## KEY THOUGHT

No matter your age or success, you ought to show respect for your parents, for God has put them in a position of authority.

## MEMORY VERSE

And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. Genesis 50:1

## LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What was the name of the land where Jacob's family was settled?
2. How old was Jacob when he was reunited with Joseph?
3. In what ways did Joseph show respect to his father?
4. Discuss ways you can show respect to your father and mother.

Joseph made a promise to bury his father in the manner which he desired.

As children and young adults, we are subject to our parent's decisions and leading. The fifth commandment is to "honor your father and mother," but that is not always the easiest thing to do. Often times, their decisions cross what we want to do, or the guidelines they set seem too overbearing. Developing an attitude of resentment is such an easy thing to do, and it is a tool the enemy uses against us. However, God desires that our hearts remain soft and receptive to the leadership of our parents.

Like Joseph, there may come a time where you are highly successful or come into a position of leadership. Despite his power, Joseph showed immense respect for his father. That is how we should always treat our parents—with a deep honor and due respect for the sacrifices they made to raise us. Circumstances of life change. You will not always be subject to your parents, but how you treat them should remain consistent. Do as Joseph, and display a heartfelt and unmoving love and respect for your parents until their last day on Earth.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

## JACOB MOVES TO EGYPT CONTINUED

Upon first seeing him in Egypt, Joseph fell on Jacob's neck and wept for an extended period of time. He took the time and trouble of presenting his father, no doubt with much pride, to Pharaoh. He went to a great amount of effort to ensure that Jacob's family was cared and provided for in the land of Goshen. When Jacob was on his death bed,

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