

**SESSION****4****Joseph****MEETING AIM**

To understand that God has a plan, despite what our circumstances look like.

**BIBLE PASSAGE**

Genesis 37-45 (sections)

**BACKGROUND**

The story of Joseph is a long one, but clearly demonstrates God's hand on our lives even throughout the toughest of circumstances. Digging into the story will allow the children to build in a foundation of trust in God and his plan for their lives.

+ CIRCLE TIME

As the children come in, share any refreshments you have and ask them about their plans for the next big event (eg Christmas, summer holidays etc). What happens when things don't go to plan? How do we feel?

+ BLINDFOLDED OBSTACLE COURSE

You will need: blindfolds; chairs and tables – anything to make a simple obstacle course

Make a simple obstacle course across the room and ask the children to find a partner. Give one of each pair a blindfold. The other one has to lead them across the course simply by giving them instructions (eg turn left, step over that) – no touching allowed! Chat briefly afterwards about how it felt to be blindfolded and not know where they were going. Did they have to trust the other person?

+ BIBLE STORY

You will need: parental photo consent; props; the scene descriptions below written onto card; children's Bible or story book

Arrange the children into smaller groups. Give each group one scene description card and the appropriate props. Ask them to take selfies and photo-booth pictures for their scene using the props. (If you only have a few children, groups could do two scenes each.) Don't tell the groups what order the scenes should go in.

Scene: a boy, Joseph, has lots of brothers. He's his dad's favourite son but his brothers

hate him! His dad gives him a top-quality coat. One night the boy dreams that one day all his brothers will bow down to him. He makes the mistake of telling them and so they hate him even more. (*Props: nice coat; pillow.*)

Scene: Joseph's brothers hate him so much they want to kill him. His dad gave him a top-quality coat, but didn't give them anything! One brother persuades them not to kill him but to sell him to passing traders on their way to Egypt. Joseph is sold. But the brothers take his coat and put blood on it. They show his dad and he thinks Joseph has died. (*Props: nice coat; red material for blood; money; sign for Egypt.*)

Scene: in Egypt, the traders sell Joseph to a man called Potiphar to be his slave. Potiphar likes Joseph and puts him in charge of his whole house. Everything goes well until Potiphar's wife lies about him because he won't do what she asks. (*Props: smiling emoji; money; fancy wig for Potiphar's wife.*)

Scene: thanks to the lies about him, Joseph is put in prison. Even though he's a prisoner, everyone likes him, even the guards. Two people have dreams, which he interprets correctly, making everyone like him even more. (*Props: prison bars; thought bubbles with "zzz" on; guard's hat.*)

Scene: the king of Egypt has a dream and needs it interpreting. They call for Joseph. He interprets correctly – there will be seven years of great crops and then seven years of famine. He advises the king to save up some food during the good years so that the people won't go hungry during the famine. The king is so impressed with Joseph that he makes him ruler over Egypt. (*Props: crown; thought bubbles with "zzz" on; number "7"; bags of grain or rice; posh hat for Joseph.*)

Scene: during the years of famine, Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to buy food. They don't recognise him. They bow down to him, just as Joseph dreamed. Joseph tests them but eventually reveals who he is. Joseph forgives them for all they've done and makes up with them and their dad. (*Props: bags of grain or rice; posh hat for Joseph; white wig for Jacob.*)

When all the groups have done this, transfer the photos onto a laptop. Challenge the children to put the photos into the correct order, let them use the Bible or a story book to help them if they need it. Once everything is in the right order, show the photos on a screen as you briefly tell the whole story.

+ CHATTING TOGETHER

Ask the children these questions, ensuring all are able to contribute:

- Which character in the story is most like you?
- How do you think Joseph felt when he was put into prison?
- Do you think Joseph's brothers did the right thing?
- How do we feel when things don't happen the way we expect?
- What does this story tell us about God?

+ CREATIVE RESPONSE

You will need: reflective music and means to play it; paper; pens

Play some reflective music and ask the children to find a space where they won't be disturbed or disturb others. Ask them to choose one word each which sums up this story for them. Give out pens and paper. Write this word in the middle of the paper. (You may need to give some examples eg trust, plan, love, forgive.) Make a mind map of this word. What does this word mean for them? Is there anything practical they need to do? Add all their thoughts on to their mind map and then bring to the prayer activity.

+ PRAYER

Continuing to play your music, arrange the children into pairs or threes. Encourage them to share with one another the words they have written down. Ask them to pray for one another if they feel confident. If not, have your helpers join the groups and pray for them.

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