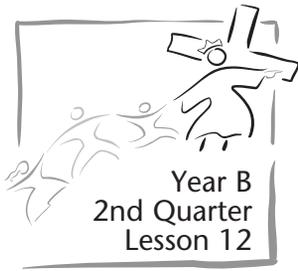


LESSON



A Wise Choice

GRACE God knows us and cares for us.

References

Genesis 41; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 219-223.

Memory Verse

"I cannot do it, . . . but God will" (Genesis 41:16, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that God has a special work for each person to do for Him.

Feel that God will help us do what He asks us to do.

Respond by being willing to do something special for God.

The Message



God can help us do anything.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Pharaoh has a dream. He knows it is important, but he doesn't understand what it means. His wise men can't explain the dream either. Then his cup-bearer remembers that Joseph knows about dreams. Pharaoh sends for Joseph. God tells Joseph what the dream means, and Joseph gives God the credit.

Pharaoh is so pleased with Joseph

that he lets him out of jail and puts him in charge of everything in Egypt. God blesses Joseph because he is willing to be used to do God's will.

This is a lesson about grace.

We don't know what God has planned for our lives, but if we are willing to be led by God He can help us do anything.

TWELVE

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>God Does</i> B. <i>Mission Possible</i>	none paper, scissors
* Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	See page 127. *Prayer and Praise* may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	pillows, blankets, or large towels
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>But God Can</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Joseph's Chain</i>	chain pattern (see p. 148); yellow, orange, or gold paper; scissors; stapler or tape

Teacher Enrichment

"From the dungeon Joseph was exalted to be ruler over all the land of Egypt. It was a position of high honor, yet it was beset with difficulty and peril. . . . But Joseph's character bore the test alike of adversity and prosperity. The same fidelity to God was manifest when he stood in the palace of the Pharaohs as when in a prisoner's cell. He was still a stranger in a heathen land, separated from his kindred, the worshipers of God; but he fully believed that the divine hand had directed his steps, and in constant reliance upon God he faithfully discharged the duties of his position.

Through Joseph the attention of the king and great men of Egypt was directed to the true God; and though they adhered to their idolatry, they learned to respect the principles revealed in the life and character of the worshiper of Jehovah" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 222).

Do we, like Joseph, trust in God to work in our lives according to His will? Are we attentive to follow God's leading and give Him complete control?

Room Decorations

Use the "throne room" from Lesson 8. Continue to use the "jail" from Lesson 11.

Teaching the Lesson

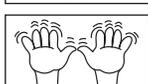
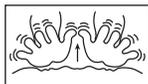
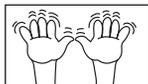
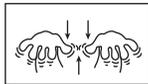
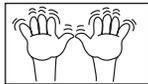
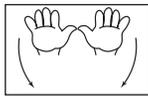
Welcome

Welcome each child by name as they come in the door. Ask them how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.



A. God Does

Teach the children the following finger play. Go through it a few times.

- Who makes the sun shine?** Put arms out and move in big circle.
- God does, God does.** Raise arms in the air; wiggle fingers and hands.
- Who makes the rain fall?** Raise arms and lower them while wiggling fingers like rain falling.
- God does, God does.** Raise arms in the air; wiggle fingers and hands.
- Who makes the grass grow?** Put hands on ground; wiggle fingers while bringing them up.
- God does, God does.** Raise arms in the air; wiggle fingers and hands.
- Who makes the wind blow?** Move arms back and forth like wind blowing.
- God does, God does.** Raise arms in the air; wiggle fingers and hands.

Alternative: Ask the questions as the children act them out, and let them respond with the answer, “God does, God does.”

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Can you make the sun shine or the rain fall, or the grass grow or the wind blow? No, but God does. Some things are impossible for us to do. And sometimes there are things that we are asked to do that seem very hard! When things seem very hard, God can help us. Our Bible story is about Joseph doing some very hard things. Today’s message is:**



God can help us do anything.

Say that with me.

B. Mission Possible

Practice this in advance. Fold an 8½" x 11" (or A4) piece of paper in half lengthwise. From the folded side, make nine partial cuts that come within an inch of the edge of the paper. Flip over the paper and make eight similar cuts. Without cutting each end piece, cut along the fold of the inner pieces to make a paper loop that is large enough to step through.

You Need:

- 2 pieces of plain 8½" x 11" or A4 size paper
- scissors

Allow response time as you ask: **Who thinks I can step through this piece of paper? Don't you think I could fit? Could you fit?** Cut a large hole in the middle of one piece of paper and try to fit it over a child (but don't make it work). **It seems it's impossible, but watch this.** Cut another paper, (same size) as you've practiced, and step through it. Allow the children, one at a time, to step through your paper, too.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **It sounded impossible when I said I was going to step through that piece of paper, didn't it? Sometimes there are things that we are asked to do that seem very hard! We just don't think that we can do them. You didn't think you could fit through that small piece of paper, but all of you did it!**

When things seem very hard, God can help us. Our Bible story is about Joseph doing some very hard things that God wanted him to do and helped him to do. Today's message is:

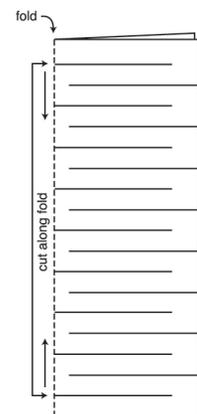
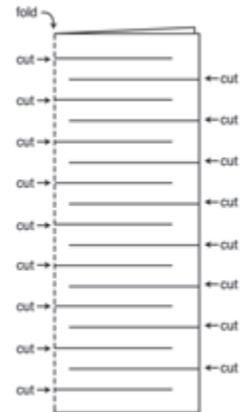


God can help us do anything.

Say that with me.



NOTE: Prayer and Praise appears on page 127.



2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- pillows
- blankets
- or
- large towels

*Have a pillow and blanket (or towel) for each child. Say: **Every time I say the word “dream” put both of your hands together and hold them to the side of your head as if you’re sleeping. Come and sit in the “jail” and pretend to be with Joseph in jail as we listen to the story.***

Read or tell the story.

One night Joseph was sleeping nicely. Can we all lie down and pretend to sleep? Suddenly, there were the sounds of footsteps. Some of Pharaoh’s servants (Pharaoh was the king) came right to Joseph’s bed. They said, “Joseph! Get up. Pharaoh wants to see you right away! He had some dreams in the night, and nobody can tell him what they mean. Pharaoh’s cupbearer said that you can tell the meaning of dreams.”

What do you think Joseph did? *[Allow responses.]* Joseph jumped out of bed and went with Pharaoh’s servants to the palace—that’s the big house that Pharaoh lived in. *[Have the class leave the “jail” and go to their seats.]*

But Joseph had to do something before he could see Pharaoh. In jail, they probably didn’t have baths every day, so maybe Joseph was a bit smelly. He also hadn’t shaved in a long time and his clothes were dirty.

Let’s pretend to get cleaned up like Joseph did. Wash our hair and face, put on nice clean clothes. Pharaoh’s servants helped Joseph get cleaned up. Then they took Joseph to Pharaoh. *[Move to the “throne room” scene.]*

Pharaoh said, “They tell me you can tell me what my dreams mean. Is this true?”

Joseph shook his head. “No,” he said,

“I can’t do that, but God can. God knows the meaning of your dreams.”

Pharaoh told Joseph about his dreams. In the first dream, Pharaoh was standing on the riverbank and out of the river came seven big and healthy-looking cows. Let’s pretend our left hand is a big, healthy cow walking along. Then seven ugly, skinny, sick-looking cows came out of the river. *Let’s pretend this hand (right hand) is a skinny, sick-looking cow.* Can you guess what happened next? The skinny cows gobbled up the fat cows! *[Have your right, skinny-cow hand “gobble” up your left, fat-cow hand. Let the children do it too.]* But, you know what? The skinny cow was still skinny and sick-looking!

Pharaoh had another dream, too. In this one, there was a stalk of grain with seven beautiful, fat, and healthy-looking heads of grain. *[Use your hands as before to act this part out. Hold your fingers straight up for the healthy grain.]* Then there was a stalk with seven tiny, floppy heads of grain. *[Use other hand with fingers drooping.]* Can you guess what happened? The tiny floppy heads of grain ate the healthy straight ones!

Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I asked my wise men to tell me what my dreams mean, but they couldn’t help me! They didn’t know. Do you know?”

Joseph told Pharaoh, “God is giving you a message. He sent you the dreams to tell you what He is going to do. Your dreams both mean the same thing. The seven fat, healthy-looking cows and the seven fat, healthy-looking grains mean that you will have seven good years of everything growing big. There will be lots of rain and lots of food to eat.

“The seven skinny cows and the seven thin, floppy heads of grain mean that you will have seven bad years after the good years. There will be very little rain, and the things in your fields won’t grow very well.

It will be a time of famine. People will be hungry. The people won't remember all the good years. God is telling you this so that you can be prepared."

Joseph told Pharaoh that he should put someone in charge to save food during the seven good years so the people would have food to eat during the seven bad years.

Pharaoh thought that was a very good idea, and he asked Joseph to do the job! Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of the whole land of Egypt. He gave Joseph a special ring and beautiful clothes. Pharaoh put a gold chain around Joseph's neck that meant he was in charge. So it was that Joseph went throughout the land helping the people save food.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you think Joseph felt when he was called to see Pharaoh? Did Pharaoh know what his dreams meant? Did Pharaoh's wise men know what the dreams meant? Who told Joseph what Pharaoh's dreams meant? What did they mean?**

What work did Pharaoh give to Joseph? Did the king make a wise choice? How do you think Joseph felt? Would it be a big job for Joseph to do? Who would help him?

God helps you, too, when you have big things to do that seem very hard. He is always with you, helping you and loving you. Remember our message?



God can help us do anything.

Say that with me.

Bible Study

Open your Bible to Genesis 41. Point to the text and say: **This is where today's story is found in God's Word, the Bible.** Read selected verses aloud, paraphrasing as necessary.

You Need:
 Bible

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you think Joseph thought the cup-bearer had forgotten all about him in jail? Who hadn't forgotten about Joseph? (God) God never forgets about you either.**

Who helped Joseph tell Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams? Who helped Joseph with his new job?

God will help you, too, when you have big things to do that seem hard. Remember . . .



God can help us do anything.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Turn to Genesis 41:16 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God's Word, the Bible.** Read the verse aloud: **"I cannot do it, . . . but God will."** Then proceed to teach the memory verse as outlined below.

You Need:
 Bible

- I** Point to self.
- cannot do it, . . .** Wag finger back and forth "No."
- but God will.** Point upward, then nod head "Yes."
- Genesis 41:16** Palms together, then open.



3

Applying the Lesson

But God Can

Have the children spread out. Say: **Let's see what we can do! Do what I say, if you can. If not, let's say together, "No, but God can!"**

Do the actions together as you say:

**Can you . . . hop three times?
Smile and giggle?
Make the sun shine?
NO, but God can!**

**Can you . . . touch your toes?
Say "Thank you"?
Make the rain fall?
NO, but God can!**

**Can you . . . turn around?
Clap your hands?
Make the grass grow?
NO, but God can!**

**Can you . . . touch your ears?
Bend sideways?
Make the wind blow?
NO, but God can!**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What are some things that you really like to do? Why? You can do many things, but there are some things that you can't do. What are some things that you still need help with?** (tying shoes, riding a bike, reaching a high shelf, make a bed, etc.)

Moms and dads can't do some things either, but God can! What are some things that only God can do?

Sometimes God asks you to do things that seem hard, like obeying quickly and with a smile, or sharing your toys with your friend, or letting your neighbor go first in the game you are playing. Can you think of any other things that you have a hard time doing? God will always be with you, helping you to do hard things. It's good to remember:



God can help us do anything.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- chain pattern (see p. 148)
- yellow, orange, or gold paper
- scissors
- stapler or tape

Joseph's Chain

In advance, copy the chain pattern (see p. 148) onto yellow, orange, or gold paper, one page for each child. Cut the chain pattern along the dotted lines to make 16 strips of paper (two will be blank to separate the memory verse from the message).

Say: **You are going to make**

a chain out of paper. We will help you put the paper strips in order, and then start a chain by looping the first memory verse word strip and stapling or taping it. Then take the next word of your memory verse and loop the strip (words side out) through the first one and staple or tape it. Put in a blank loop after the memory verse.

Put another blank loop after the last word of the message and staple or tape them to make a complete chain.

Debriefing

Say: **The chain that you made can remind you of the gold chain that Pharaoh gave to Joseph when he put him in charge of all of Egypt!**

Take it home and share it with someone as you tell them how God helped Joseph when he had big jobs to do. He will help you, too, if you just ask Him. Let's say our message together one last time:



God can help us do anything.

Closing

Have a child pray. Wish everyone a good week and remind them to share the story with their family.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

- "He's Able" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 93)
- "Jesus Never Fails" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 108)
- "My God Is So Great" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 112)
- "Wonder Song" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 74)
- "Jesus Loves Me" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, No. 102)

Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Say: **God can help us do anything. One thing we can do is share our offerings with others.**

Prayer

Pair children with adults. Give each pair a picture or an object of something for which to thank God (animals, family, food, bed, sunshine, etc). Let them thank God for the thing in their picture.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

STUDENT LESSON

A Wise Choice

References

Genesis 41;
Patriarchs and
Prophets, pp. 219-
223

Memory Verse

"I cannot do it,
. . . but God
will" (Genesis
41:16, NIV).

The Message

God can help
us do
anything.

Have you ever been asked to do something that was really hard? Joseph was asked to tell Pharaoh about some dreams, but he couldn't do it alone.

The morning light poured through the palace windows. Pharaoh woke up. His head ached. He had not slept well at all. He had had very strange dreams. "Bring the wise men to me!" he called to his servants.

The wise men listened carefully as the king told them about his strange dreams. They whispered together and shook their heads. "We don't know what the dreams mean," they admitted.

Suddenly Pharaoh's cupbearer stepped forward. "When I was in prison two years ago," the cupbearer began, "I had a strange dream too. A young man named Joseph told me what my dream meant. And everything happened exactly as he said it would."

Pharaoh pointed toward the door. "Bring this Joseph to me!"

The guards rushed to the jail. They waited impatiently while Joseph shaved and put on clean clothes. Then they hurried him to the king.

"I had a dream," Pharaoh told Joseph. "No one here can tell me what it means. I hear that you can explain dreams. Tell me what my dream means."

Joseph answered truthfully, "I cannot explain the meaning of dreams. But God will tell me, and I will tell you."

"I dreamed I was standing on the riverbank," Pharaoh began. "I saw seven beautiful, fat cows come out of the river and begin to eat grass. Then seven skinny cows came out! And the seven

skinny cows ate up the seven fat cows!

"And then I had another dream," Pharaoh continued. "I saw seven plump heads of grain growing out of a stalk. Then seven more thin, ugly heads of grain grew out of the same stalk. And the thin heads of grain swallowed up the plump, full heads!"

"Both the dreams mean the same thing," Joseph began. "God is telling you what He is going to do. There will be seven good years for growing food. And then there will be seven years of hunger because food will not grow.

"You need to choose a man who is wise," Joseph said. "Let him store the extra food that grows in the seven good years, so there will be food during the seven years of famine, and the people will not die of hunger."

Pharaoh was pleased to hear Joseph's ideas. He took his own ring off his finger and put it on Joseph. He put a gold chain around Joseph's neck. "You are in charge of all the land of Egypt," Pharaoh proclaimed. "You are second in command under me."

So Joseph began his new work. He rode around the land and arranged to store all the extra food that grew in the seven good years.

Joseph was not in jail anymore. He was working for the king. But Joseph knew one thing was the same. God would take care of him in the palace, just as He had in the jail.



Do and Say

Sabbath

Read the lesson story together every day this week and review the memory verse.

I Point to self.

cannot do it, Wag finger back and forth
"no."

but God will. Point upward, then nod head
"yes."

Genesis 41:16 . . . Palms together, then open.

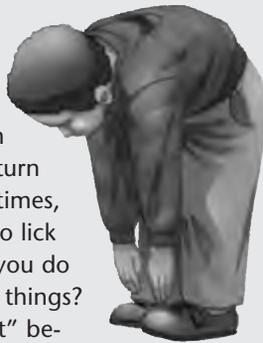
Sunday

Together read Genesis 41, paraphrasing as necessary. Ask: How long was Joseph in jail after the cup-bearer was set free? How do you think Joseph felt when he was called to see Pharaoh? What did Pharaoh ask Joseph to do? Could he do it?

Monday

Ask your child to do a few things (such as hop up and down three times, touch your toes, pat your tummy, turn around, blink your eyes five times, yawn, etc.). Then ask them to lick their elbow. Ask: Why can't you do it? Who can help us do hard things?

Sing "My God Is So Great" before prayer.



Tuesday

Encourage your child to share the Joseph's Chain

made in Sabbath School with someone as they share the memory verse and story. (Or cut eight strips of paper and write one word of the memory verse on each strip. Help your child tape them together to make a paper chain.)

Wednesday

Ask your child:

What are some things that are easy for you to do? (Run; sing; count to 10; hop; etc.) What things are hard now but you will be able to do when you are bigger? (Tie shoes; reach a high shelf; read; count to 1,000; etc.) Help your child do some of these things. Remind them that God can help them do hard things.



Thursday

Ask a family member about a time God helped them when they couldn't help themselves.

Sing "Jesus Loves Me," then pray, thanking God for helping us when things are hard for us.

Friday

Make a pretend "jail" out of chairs and blankets. Act out the story. Let your child pretend to be Joseph and "burst" out of jail when called for by Pharaoh. Talk about how God cares for us.

Sing "He's Able," then thank God for helping us grow to do bigger and better things.