

# Joseph And Potíphar

Genesis 39:1-23

## **MEMORY VERSE**

MATTHEW 5:10

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

Un-popped popcorn kernels and warm popped popcorn

Masking tape and two signs reading "blessed" and "not blessed."

Several belts or pieces of cloth (large enough to tie two partners together for a "three-legged" race) and masking tape.

## **ATTENTION GRABBER!**

### **Taking the Heat**

Take some un-popped popcorn kernels and pass a few out to each child in your class. Ask them if they would like to have some popcorn. It obviously isn't going to taste very good un-popped.

Ask the class what has to be done to popcorn kernels to make it tasty popcorn (It has to be cooked, or heat applied to it). Have your aide with a couple of volunteers pop a bag of microwavable popcorn and bring it into the class.

Let the children each sample some warm popcorn. What is different from the kernels they had seen before? The popcorn had to go through a "terrible trial"...it had to be cooked!

Explain that often difficult times are compared to going through heat. We sometimes refer to a trial as a "fiery" trial; there may be times that you get in trouble (whether you are guilty or not) that someone might say you have to "take the heat." Many times God uses these hard times to make us more usable for His kingdom, like

the popcorn becomes more usable (and tastier) after it has “taken the heat.”

Explain that today we are going to learn about a fiery trial that Joseph went through. We will learn about how we need to deal with difficulties in our lives. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

## LESSON TIME!

As we learned last week, Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. The Ishmaelites bought him and took him into Egypt. There he was purchased by Potiphar, an Egyptian. Today we will learn that **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

### GENESIS 39:1-2

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.

The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand.

Here we find Joseph who was once the favorite son of his father is now a common slave. It wasn't Joseph's fault that he ended up in this place. It was his brothers who were jealous of him who sold him into slavery. So now Joseph finds himself in a very bad situation.

Sometimes we might find ourselves in bad situations that happen to us. Maybe we are sick, or someone we love very much passes

away, or our best friend has to move away. No matter what it is, sometimes bad things will happen in our lives. Just because we love and serve the Lord doesn't mean that bad things will never happen to us. Joseph loved the Lord and he still ended up being a slave in Egypt.

Potiphar was the captain of the guard for Pharaoh. He was a wealthy, influential man. Although Joseph became Potiphar's slave, he still worked hard and was honest. He didn't become angry or refuse to be a good servant. We might be tempted to get upset with others or with God when bad things happen because we don't understand. But we need to trust in the Lord that He will work everything out on our behalf. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

But we also see in these verses that the Lord didn't forget about Joseph. He was still right there with him. And even in the midst of being a slave in Egypt the Lord blessed him greatly. It was soon evident that Joseph was obedient to the Lord and that the Lord blessed all of his work. He was one of Potiphar's best workers. Joseph became a witness of God to his master. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

#### **GENESIS 39:4-6**

**So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put in his hand.**

**So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field.**

**So he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which**

he ate. And Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

Because the Lord blessed Joseph, his master put him in charge of the house. Joseph was over all of the other servants, the crops, the house and all of Potiphar's possessions. God blessed all of Potiphar's house because of Joseph's obedience. The Lord turned a difficult time for Joseph into a prosperous one where he became second in charge and a great witness to the Lord. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

We can be encouraged from this story that—in good times and in bad times—the Lord will always be there for us. The key is that we remain obedient to the Lord even if things around us aren't going the way we would like them to. Our focus needs to remain on the Lord and His purposes for us and we can trust that He will work it all out.

#### GENESIS 39:7-10

Now it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."

But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand.

"There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

And so it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.

Joseph was handsome and Potiphar's wife was attracted to him. She wanted Joseph to commit adultery with her, but Joseph knew this was a great sin before God. Joseph also knew it was wrong to take advantage of the trust that Potiphar had in him. Daily she tried to tempt him, but he would not even be with her; he avoided all opportunity to sin.

So not only did Joseph have to deal with being a slave in a foreign country, he also had to deal with someone trying to get him to sin every day. This was a very difficult time in Joseph's life. But a time he needed to go through in order to be used by God in even greater ways later.

Joseph is faithful to the Lord and passes the test. We can say no to temptation that the enemy puts in front of us. We need to be obedient in every way to the Lord. What are some things that Joseph did to resist temptation that we can learn from when we need to resist temptation? **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

### GENESIS 39:11-12

But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside,

that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.

One day when Potiphar's wife found Joseph alone she tried to tempt him again. He immediately ran away. Joseph did the right thing. He did not fight her or argue with her. He did not assume that he was strong enough to resist temptation. Joseph ran away.

We need to be like Joseph and run when we face temptation to sin. When someone tries to get us to sin, we need to leave immediately.

Sometimes we may want to stick around and think about the sin for a while. But that is absolutely dangerous! Our flesh is weak toward sin and we can't be sure what we will do if faced with temptation. But if we avoid places we know there will be temptation, we will not fall into sin.

### GENESIS 39:13-18

And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside,

that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.

"And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."

So she kept his garment with her until his master came home.

Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me;

"so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

Joseph ran away so quickly, he even left his robe behind because Potiphar's wife had grabbed a hold of it. Potiphar's wife was probably embarrassed and angered that Joseph would not sin with her, so she tried to get him in trouble. Potiphar's wife said that Joseph came to her and tried to force her to sin; she turned the story around.

So now things become even more of a mess. Here is Joseph sold into slavery. He does the right thing and doesn't sin. Then he is lied about to Potiphar and blamed for the very sin that he ran away from. Have you ever had anyone lie about you to get you into trouble? It isn't very much fun is it? Joseph was going through a very difficult time, and it gets worse. Let's see what he ends up doing.

## **Blessed or Not?**

Here's yet another version of the giant squares game, but the kids seem to love to run back and forth to the right square! You need masking tape and two signs: "blessed" and "not blessed."

Tell your class the memory verse and have them say it together. Tell them you will now read a statement and they should tell you whether the person is blessed or not by running to the appropriate box. Remind them that we are blessed only when we're persecuted for doing the right thing.

Read some of these scenarios:

The teacher asked the girl if she had really prayed for her friend at school to be healed of her cold. The girl said "yes" so the teacher told her not to ever do that again at school.

A boy took a book that did not belong to him from his neighbor. His mother found out and disciplined him. Then she made him return the book and apologize to the neighbor.

A boy was making a delivery for the grocery store to a little old widow. When he was almost there, he discovered that the store clerk had forgotten the milk, so he turned his bike around and went all the way back to the store. When the manager saw him and that he still had the groceries, he said, "Haven't you delivered those groceries yet? You're fired!"

A girl was babysitting for her neighbor when the phone rang. It was her good friend from school. While she talked on the phone, the baby got into some paint and got it all over the carpet. The girl was not asked to baby-sit anymore in the neighborhood.

A little girl could not find her favorite teddy bear. She looked all over the house. The girl finally found it on her brother's bed. The mother punished the little brother for taking the bear, but the little girl later remembered that she had left the bear in his room.

### GENESIS 39:19-20

So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused.

Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison.

Potiphar put Joseph into prison because of the false accusation. Sometimes when we do what we know is right, it may seem like the outcome is worse, but if we are patient and trust God, He will work it out for good. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

This is something that is very important to understand as children. Sometimes you will be given choices in life. It may look easier to do the wrong thing and then to lie about it to try to get away with it. Or you may look at doing the right thing and think that you will only get into trouble for doing the right thing. But the important thing for all of us to learn in our lives is that we need to do what is right all of the time no matter what happens. God will honor that!

Perhaps Joseph didn't understand any of these things going on in his life at this time, but God was going to do some wonderful things later. Joseph did the right thing. He is a great example for us today

to do the right thing no matter what. When we do what is right, we will always be blessed by God. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

### GENESIS 39:21-23

But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.

The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's hand, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

Here we see that the Lord was still with Joseph. Even when his circumstances got worse and worse the Lord never left him. That is the promise that we have. Jesus said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you". God may not remove every problem or bad thing from happening in our lives, but He will always go with us through them. That is His promise.

Joseph was still faithful and patient and God prospered him again. He became in charge of all of the other prisoners, and once again he became a great witness to the Lord. God used Joseph, even during this difficult time. We need to keep our focus on the Lord and His plans for us, especially in difficult times. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

## "Two-gether" Forever

God was with Joseph in the pit, in Potiphar's house, in prison, everywhere! He never left Joseph, even though sometimes Joseph had hard times that were not even his fault.

For a game time do a "three-legged race". Have the children pair up. Then make two teams of pairs, splitting the class evenly. Have the children stand next to each other. Using a belt or piece of cloth tie their legs together.

Then have all the pairs line up. Using masking tape make a line at the other end of the room. Have two pairs at a time race to the line and back. Then the next pairs will go. Declare a winner and try again if time allows.

Explain that God is always with us like our partners.

Joseph is a model of faithfulness in hard times. Joseph did what God called him to do, knowing that God had great things planned for him. God prospered Joseph and turned hard times into times of triumph. When we are faithful to God, He blesses us exceedingly, abundantly, and we become a great witness to the lost people who do not know Jesus as the savior. **God blesses those who are faithful in difficult times as well as good.**

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust God even when times get troubled. Thank the Lord for His blessing and presence, even in these times. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.