

Joseph & Potiphar's Wife

Genesis 39

PPT Title

Joseph & Potiphar's Wife

Main Point: The Lord is with those who trust Him, even in the most difficult times.

Key Verse: *But the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him His faithful love.* - Genesis 39:21a NLT

Props: A mousetrap, cheese

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Attention Teacher: The proposition of Potiphar's wife to Joseph is very adult in nature. Some Bible translations (such as NIV) are very explicit in the wording of her offer. Although we LOVE for teachers to read from their Bibles, and for children to read along in theirs, in this case, it is best to paraphrase her words, and not read directly from the Scripture. Even if you are reading a version with "friendlier" wording, children who are following along in their Bibles will come across wording that is not age-appropriate. (Genesis 39:7, 10, 12, 14)

Say: When we left our story, Joseph was in a heap of trouble. His big brothers were very jealous of him. **Ask:** Who can tell me why they were so jealous? *Their father, Jacob, loved Joseph more than all the brothers, Jacob gave him a fancy coat, and Joseph dreamed that his brothers would bow down to him one day.* **Say:** Joseph's brothers held on to their anger and bitterness. Their jealousy grew and grew until some of them wanted to kill Joseph. Thankfully, they didn't kill him. Instead, they sold him as a slave to some traders that were passing by. They took his colorful coat, dipped it in the blood of a goat, and gave it to their father. Jacob believed that a wild animal had killed Joseph. Jacob was broken-hearted to lose his favorite son.



Meanwhile, the traders who had bought Joseph traveled to Egypt. They sold Joseph to a very important Egyptian man.

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

Say: Joseph had grown up in the land that God had promised to his great-grandfather, Abraham. **Ask:** Does anyone remember the name of the Promised Land? *Canaan.* **Say:** Now Joseph was in a new land with different smells, different tastes, different people, a different language, and different gods. All of his life, Joseph had believed in only one God. Now he was in a land where people believed in thousands of gods.

The Egyptians had a long list of gods. They worshipped a sun god, a moon god, a frog goddess, a fish goddess, a cow goddess, a beautiful cat goddess, the god of thunder, and hundreds more! Often, they combined things such as a man's body with a hawk's head, and worshipped it.

Imagine how strange this was to Joseph. His entire life, he only worshipped the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Bible says that there is only one true God. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, "Israel, listen to me. The Lord is our God. The Lord is the one and only God."



Look! I am One!
There is no other
God except Me.

Deuteronomy 32:39

In Deuteronomy 32:39, God declares, "Look! I am One! There is no other God except Me."

The Bible makes it clear that there is only one God, so where do all of these other gods come from? When people look at the world around them, they can tell that there is a powerful God who created everything (Romans 1:20). When they don't know the true God, they make up their own idea of what God must be. Some people make things with their own hands, such as a statue, and worship it (Isaiah 37:19). **Ask:** How many of you made a craft today? **Say:** Can you imagine worshipping the craft you made with your own hands? It sounds ridiculous, but that is what many people around the world do, even today.

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Romans 1:25 NLT

The Egyptians saw things that God made such as the sun, the moon, and animals, and believed that these amazing things must be gods. They even treated their king, Pharaoh, as a god. The Bible says, "They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God **created** instead of the **Creator** Himself, who is worthy of eternal praise!" (Romans 1:25 NLT)

How did the Egyptians fall into this **trap**? **Teacher: Show the mousetrap. Say:** Here is a mouse trap. We all know how this works. If I have a mouse on the loose in my house, I want to keep it out of the good supply of food in my kitchen. Let's face it; there is enough food in my kitchen to keep that mouse fat and happy for his entire life. But I don't want a mouse to thrive in my kitchen. So I need to **distract** it. I would put a piece of cheese in this trap - the smellier the better! The cheese has to smell so good to the mouse that it will distract it from the good food in my kitchen. When the mouse would come out at night looking for food, it would smell the stinky cheese. Before you know it, (**Carefully, SNAP the trap.**) SNAP! The mouse is caught. It can no longer get to the real food supply, and I can do whatever I want with the mouse.

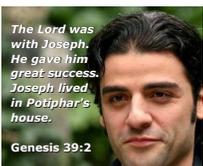
It is very similar with Satan. Satan spends his days and nights setting traps to **distract** people from the truth (1 Peter 5:8). It's Satan's goal to rob God of the worship that God deserves, because Satan is so jealous of God. Satan's desire is that we worship anything or everything - except the one true God. Satan has many lies for people to choose from, and he doesn't care which one they choose.

Application: You must be aware of Satan's traps. His goal is to distract you from the only real source of life. Remember, he is "the father of lies" (John 8:44). He makes his lies sound really good. For example, he may offer you a "scientific" explanation for something that is against the Bible, or he may lead you to believe that you can run your own life without God. Remember that Satan's lies are nothing more than stinky cheese! The only way to tell the truth apart from Satan's lies is to know God's word. Then you only have two choices. You can believe God and live, or you can believe Satan, and be caught in his trap. **God wants you to believe Him - to TRUST HIM - and live!**

JOSEPH & POTIPHAR (Genesis 39:1-6)

Say: Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. An Egyptian named Potiphar had bought him from the Ishmaelite traders who had taken him there. Potiphar was one of Pharaoh's officials. He was the captain of the palace guard. **The Lord was with Joseph.** He gave him great success. Joseph lived in Potiphar's house. - Genesis 39:1-2

Say: Joseph didn't know anyone in this new country. He must have been terrified to be around so many people who were so different from him and who didn't know anything about his God. **Ask:** Do you think he felt afraid or lonely? **Say:** As far as we know, Joseph was probably the only believer in the entire nation of Egypt! But Joseph was not alone! **Ask:** Who was with Joseph? **The Lord!** **Say:** Joseph wasn't alone because God was with Him. God was in Canaan with Jacob and in Egypt with Joseph at the same time. God is everywhere. We call this omni-present.



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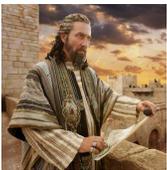
Genesis 39:2

Application: Ask: Have you ever felt like Joseph in Egypt? Have you ever been the only one who followed God on your team, or in your class at school? Remember that you are NEVER alone! God is with you. God was with Joseph when he was the only believer in Egypt, and He will be with you wherever you go. There is nowhere you can go where God cannot go with you (Psalm 139:7-12).



Say: When Joseph arrived in Egypt, he was sold to a man named Potiphar who was the captain of the guards at Pharaoh's palace. **Ask:** Who is the most powerful man in our country? *The president.* **Say:** The most important man in Egypt was Pharaoh. As we said, some people even believed he was a god. And Pharaoh's most important official chose Joseph to be his slave. Why did the most important official of the most important man in Egypt choose Joseph out of all the other slaves? Because God had a plan! (Genesis 50:20)

Say: Joseph went from being the favorite son to becoming a SLAVE! But God was with Joseph in everything he did. God was intimately involved in every detail of Joseph's life.



Joseph's master saw that the Lord was with him. He saw that the Lord gave Joseph success in everything he did. So Potiphar was pleased with Joseph. He made him his attendant. He put Joseph in charge of his house. He told Joseph to take good care of everything he owned.

From that time on, the Lord blessed Potiphar's family and servants because of Joseph. He blessed everything Potiphar had in his house and field. So Potiphar told Joseph to take good care of everything he owned. With Joseph in charge, he didn't have to worry about anything except the food he ate. - Genesis 39:3-6a

Joseph was doing an excellent job in Egypt, but not through his own strength. God was enabling him to be strong and wise. Joseph lived his life differently than all the Egyptians. He followed God in everything he did (Genesis 39:8-9). His life was different; he was set apart from the ungodly. God blessed him and Potiphar could tell a distinct difference between Joseph and all those around him.

Application: Just like Joseph, we live in a time and place where many of the people around us don't know the one true God. Do you stand out as different among the ungodly? Do you allow the Holy Spirit to guide you? Do you follow God in everything you do? When you truly live a God-centered life, those around you will be able to tell that you are different (Philippians 2:15). Sometimes, God sends us places so that people who do not know Him will be able to see God through us.

Say: God blessed Joseph, and the blessings poured out over Potiphar, his family, and even his servants. Everyone and everything in Potiphar's home was blessed because of Joseph's God-centered life. Having Joseph around was wonderful for Potiphar. He trusted Joseph and he no longer worried about running his home.

POTIPHAR'S WIFE (Genesis 39:7-10)

Say: But, Here comes trouble. As we said, none of the people around Joseph followed the Lord. It wasn't long before sin came knocking at Joseph's door.



The Bible describes Joseph as strong and handsome. God gave him great leadership skills and other blessings. After a while, Potiphar's wife noticed Joseph. One day she asked him to act like her boyfriend!

But he said no. "My master has put me in charge," he told her. "Now he doesn't have to worry about anything in the house. He trusts me to take care of everything he owns. No one in this house is in a higher position than I am. My master hasn't held anything back from me, except you. You are his wife. So how could I do an evil thing like that?"

How could I sin against God?" - Genesis 39:8-9

Rightly, Joseph knew that being a boyfriend to another man's wife was a sin against God. In the very beginning, God created one wife (Eve) for one man (Adam). God's perfect plan for marriage has always been one man and one woman together for their lifetime. God's grace made Joseph *want* to obey God. By His grace, God gave Joseph the *power to say NO to sin* (Titus 2:11-12).

The test that Joseph faced was very similar to the temptation that Adam and Eve faced in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve could eat freely of every tree - except for one. In the same way, Joseph had complete control over everything in Potiphar's household - except for one thing, Potiphar's wife. Adam and Eve did not trust that God's plan was best for them. They trusted Satan when he accused God of holding back something good from them, so they took what was forbidden. Just the opposite, Joseph was **content** with all that God had blessed him with. He was humble. He did not think he deserved **more** than God had given him.

Application: Satan loves to tempt people with what God has forbidden. Satan even tried to tempt Jesus to step outside of God's perfect will (Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus knows what it feels like to be attacked from the outside by Satan. But Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). God's grace gives you **power** when Satan tries to tempt you. Hebrews 4:16 says, "So let us come **boldly** to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." (NLT) Even though Satan is powerful, God is immeasurably more powerful. When you face temptation, abide in God. Boldly ask for the grace to say NO to sin.

SENT TO PRISON (Genesis 39:11-23)

Say: Mrs. Potiphar would not give up. She was used to getting her way, and she kept flirting with Joseph. But Joseph refused to spend any time with her. One day, Joseph went to the house to take care of his duties. He didn't realize that Mrs. Potiphar was alone in the house. She grabbed hold of his coat, but he managed to get away from her. As he ran out, she held onto his coat. Then she made up a big **lie** about him (John 8:44). She said that Joseph came in to attack her, she screamed, and he ran away. She used his coat to prove that he had been in the house.



When Joseph's master (Potiphar) heard her story, he became very angry. So he put Joseph in prison. It was the place where the king's prisoners were kept. - Genesis 39:19b-20a



This seems so unfair! Deep down, we want things to be fair. We have a longing for justice, because we are created in the image of a perfectly just God (Deuteronomy 32:4). It is unfair that Joseph did the right thing, yet he was sent to prison! Joseph had lost his master's respect and he was forced to become lower than a slave - he became a PRISONER. Do you think Joseph will be all alone this time? Do you believe that God would go all the way down to a dingy dungeon to be with Joseph? Do you think that this situation was out of God's control? Let's read to find out:



*While Joseph was there in the prison, **the Lord was with him**. He was kind to him. So the man who was running the prison was pleased with Joseph. He put Joseph in charge of all of the prisoners. He made him accountable for everything that was done there. The man who ran the prison didn't pay attention to anything that was in Joseph's care. The Lord was with Joseph. He gave Joseph success in everything he did. - Genesis 39:20b-23*

Say: God did NOT abandon Joseph! Even when things got much worse, the Lord was with him. In this very difficult time, God poured out grace on Joseph that was like a big warm hug. God gave Joseph the peace and strength that he needed in prison. God's

grace can turn any situation around. By God's grace, Joseph did not become bitter, holding onto his anger as his brothers had done. Here in a cold prison, God continued to use Joseph. Joseph clung to God and he was even blessed in prison! Next week we'll see another twist in God's incredible plan for Joseph. We'll start to see how God used this terrible situation for good!

Application: You are young, but some of you have already faced very difficult situations. In your hardest times, God will not leave you. In fact, it's in those times that God pours out an extra measure of grace on you. God's grace gives you strength, peace, and even joy, in any situation (Romans 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:9).

Note to Teacher: The apostle Paul, who suffered greatly for the gospel, opened each of his epistles with the words, "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." For Paul, God's grace was inseparable from peace. Paul understood that true peace could never be achieved without God's grace. Paul relied on God's grace to bring him strength and contentment in the most trying of circumstances (Philippians 4:11-13).

PPT Verse

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