

GOD IS GOOD



IPHC KIDS CURRICULUM
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GOD IS GOOD

YEAR 3, UNIT 8

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GOD IS GOOD

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

YEAR 3, UNIT 08 - ELEMENTARY

In this unit, we are learning that **God is good**. Sometimes it's hard to see God's goodness when people do mean and bad things. People were mean in the Bible too. In fact, the two people we will focus on this month, Jacob and Joseph, experienced a lot of mean and bad things. But through it all, we realize that God was good to them and we find that **God is good** to us as well. He is so good that while we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. When we confess that we have done wrong and ask God to forgive us and be our King, He does it every time!

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece | Electronic Device (Tablet or Cell Phone) | Speaker | *Jacob* Activity Page (1 per child) | Crayons or Makers | Variety of Papers (Sandpaper, Scrapbook Paper, Construction Paper, etc.) | Glue | Scissors | Additional Craft Fabric or Fibers (optional) |

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: | Two Toys (optional) | Slips of Paper (optional) | Pens (optional) | Jar (optional) | Puzzle Piece | Children's Bibles | Letter Beads (1 set per child) | Elastic String (1 per child) | Round beads (12 per child) | Scissors |

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece | Colorful, Large Button-Up Shirts (1 per team) | *Joseph* Activity Page (1 figure per child) | *Bible Verse* Activity Page (1 verse per child) | Multi-Colored Yarn | Scissors | Large Craft Sticks | Markers | Pencils | Glue | *Focus Verse Cards* Activity Page (1 set per group) | Rubber Bands |

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece | *Timeline* Activity Pages (1 per class) | Tape | Large Fruit or Vegetable Items (1 per team) | *Timeline Cube* Activity Page (1 per student) | Cardstock | Markers or Crayons | Scissors |

JACOB AND ESAU

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 25:29-34; 27:1-45 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God is Good

FOCUS VERSE

“You meant to hurt me. But God turned your evil into good.” Genesis 50:20 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Electronic Device | Speaker | *Jacob* Activity Page | Crayons or Markers | Variety of Papers (Sandpaper, Scrapbook Paper, Construction Paper, etc.) | Glue | Scissors
| Additional Craft Fabric or Fibers (optional) |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- If so, what is your favorite thing to do with them?
- If not, do you wish you had a brother or sister? Why or why not?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “For the next few weeks, we will learn that **God is good**. And not only is God good, but He is good all the time. Even when we can’t see it, God is at work bringing about His perfect and generous plan because He loves us so much. Let’s sing of God’s goodness!”

Select songs that point to God’s goodness. We recommend using “Goodness of God” by Eleven22 Kids Worship and “Good, Good Father” by ChapelHill Kids throughout the unit. You can find both songs on YouTube.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**God is good** and has good plans for us. Because He is good, we can trust Him with all our needs. Does anyone have a need they would like us to pray about today?” Give the children an opportunity to share prayer requests.”

Sample Prayer: “Heavenly Father, You are good! You are so good that You offer to turn even our worst sins into something beautiful for Your glory. Now, would You give us eyes to see and ears to hear what You want us to learn about You? In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

Say, "This month's lessons begin with a story about Abraham's son, Isaac, and his grandsons, Esau and Jacob. God promised Abraham that He would make an entire nation from Abraham's descendants [children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, etc.] and that God would bless them. However, that does not mean things would always go easily for this family. Because of their sin, they struggled in their relationships and with God. When Rebekah, Isaac's wife, became pregnant with twin boys, God prepared her for trouble." Read Genesis 25:23 (ICB).

Two nations are in your body.

Two groups of people will be taken from you.

One group will be stronger than the other.

The older will serve the younger.

Say, "That's where our story begins, between two brothers with a big rivalry [an unkind competition]. Those boys were Esau and Jacob [Abraham's grandsons]. Now, who would like to add this week's puzzle piece to our wall? [Choose a volunteer.] Great! I like how our puzzle pieces remind us that God has a plan with His grand story. Now, let's play a game together."

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Electronic Device (Tablet or Cell Phone) | Speaker |

BEFORE CLASS BEGINS, FIND AN ONLINE "IDENTIFY THE SOUND" GAME. THERE ARE VARIOUS CHOICES ON YOUTUBE, SO USE THE ONE THAT WORKS BEST FOR YOUR GROUP. ("GUESS THE SOUND QUIZ" BY MISTER TEACH IS ONE OF OUR FAVORITES." PAIR A SPEAKER WITH YOUR DEVICE.

Say, "We are going to play a group game where we will listen closely to a sound and do our best to identify it. We will not see any pictures, so you must pay close attention. Let's go!"

GAME GOAL: To be the team to identify the most sounds correctly**HOW TO PLAY:**

1. Divide your class into two teams. Explain that they will take turns identifying familiar sounds. Each correct answer will earn their team one point.
2. Play the first sound, and have the children decide how to answer as a team. (To avoid having the children yell out their answers, assign an adult volunteer to be the team captain. The children should whisper their guesses to the captain, who will speak for the group.)
3. Reveal the identity of the sound and award points as appropriate.
4. Continue as time allows.

TRANSITION: Say, "Today's story occurs when Isaac [Abraham's son] was old and could not see. When someone can't see with their eyes, we say they are 'blind.' Abraham had to rely on his other senses - hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling - instead of his sight. Isaac's senses play a big part in today's story."



DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE DAY BEFORE YOU MEET TO STUDY. INSTEAD, READ OVER THE WEEK'S SCRIPTURE FOR A FEW MOMENTS EACH DAY. PRAY THAT GOD WILL GIVE YOU INSIGHT AND WISDOM AS YOU PREPARE. REMEMBER THAT YOU AREN'T ONLY THEIR TEACHER ON THE DAY YOU SHARE THE LESSON. YOU ARE THE CHILDREN'S TEACHER SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, LOVINGLY PREPARING TO SHARE THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD.

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's begin by turning to Genesis 25. Today's lesson is about two brothers, Esau and Jacob, who were rivals. What does 'rival' mean? [Wait for responses.] Right! Two people are rivals if they compete for the same thing in an unkind way. The boys' father, Isaac, loved Esau best, while Rebekah, their mother, preferred Jacob. Because of the parents' favoritism, the brothers didn't get along well and likely competed for their parents' attention. It was not a good situation, and this family's behavior was often downright sinful. How could God make anything good out of what was going on with these people? And how could this family be the one God would use to make a great nation? Let's see." Read Genesis 25:29-34 (ICB)

²⁹ One day Jacob was boiling a pot of vegetable soup. Esau came in from hunting in the fields. He was weak from hunger. ³⁰ So Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red soup. I am weak with hunger..." ³¹ But Jacob said, "You must sell me your rights as the firstborn son." ³² Esau said, "I am almost dead from hunger. If I die, all of my father's wealth will not help me." ³³ But Jacob said, "First, promise me that you will give it to me." So Esau made a promise to Jacob. In this way he sold his part of their father's wealth to Jacob. ³⁴ Then Jacob gave Esau bread and vegetable soup. Esau ate and drank and then left. So Esau showed how little he cared about his rights as the firstborn son.

Say, "Jacob's name means deceiver or trickster, and it's easy to see why. It's also easy to blame Jacob for taking advantage of Esau when he was hungry. However, both brothers' behavior was wrong. In Bible times, being the oldest son was extremely important. The eldest would one day lead the family, and it was his responsibility and privilege to point the family to God. In this family, Esau was the oldest. However, the Bible is clear that his position as the firstborn wasn't important to him. He didn't care about the responsibility God had given him.

"At this point in our story, Isaac was old. His eyes were weak, and he could not see well. He also knew he would die soon and wanted to bless Esau and leave him a great inheritance before that happened. Rebekah wanted to trick Isaac into giving the blessing to Jacob instead. However, she knew Isaac would be careful to bless the right son, and his sons looked very different." Read Genesis 27:11-12.

¹¹ Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "My brother Esau is a hairy man. I am smooth! ¹² If my father touches me, he will know I am not Esau. Then he will not bless me. He will place a curse on me because I tried to trick him."

Say, "Rebekah had Jacob prepare a meal for Isaac. Then, she wrapped animal skins on his arms and put Esau's clothes on Jacob." Read Genesis 27:18-27a.

¹⁸ Jacob went in to his father and said, "Father." And his father said, "Yes, my son. Who are you?" ¹⁹ Jacob said to him, "I am Esau, your first son. I have done what you told me. Now sit up and eat some meat of the animal I hunted for you. Then bless me." ²⁰ But

Isaac asked his son, "How did you find and kill the animal so quickly?" Jacob answered, "Because the Lord your God led me to find it." ²¹ Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near so I can touch you, my son. If I can touch you, I will know if you are really my son Esau." ²² So Jacob came near to Isaac his father. Isaac touched him and said, "Your voice sounds like Jacob's voice. But your hands are hairy like the hands of Esau." ²³ Isaac did not know it was Jacob, because his hands were hairy like Esau's hands. So Isaac blessed Jacob. ²⁴ Isaac asked, "Are you really my son Esau?" Jacob answered, "Yes, I am." ²⁵ Then Isaac said, "Bring me the food. I will eat it and bless you." So Jacob gave him the food, and Isaac ate. Jacob gave him wine, and he drank.

²⁶ Then Isaac said to him, "My son, come near and kiss me." ²⁷ So Jacob went to his father and kissed him. Isaac smelled Esau's clothes and blessed him...

Say, "As soon as Isaac gave Jacob the blessing, Jacob left. Esau returned from hunting and prepared food for his father. Then Isaac realized he had been tricked; he trembled and said:" Read Genesis 27:33-35, 41a.

³³..."Then who was it that hunted the animals and brought me food before you came? I ate it, and I blessed him. And it is too late now to take back my blessing." ³⁴ When Esau heard the words of his father, he let out a loud and bitter cry. He said to his father, "Bless me—me, too, my father!" ³⁵ But Isaac said, "Your brother came and tricked me. He has taken your blessing..."

⁴¹ After that Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing from Isaac.

Say, "This is a crazy story! Jacob cheated and lied, and God still allowed him to have money and power over his older brother. How can a good God allow such bad things to happen? Has He lost control? Of course He hasn't. God's story is big and long. We have to be patient. We often do not know how God is weaving His beautiful plan from the messes we make. And Jacob has made quite a mess. However, the Bible promises that God is good and that He 'works for the good of those who love him' [Romans 8:28]. Nothing can destroy God's plan.

"God knew Jacob and Esau's hearts. Jacob was deceitful, and Esau was prideful; he did not care about God's plan. And yet, God was determined to build a nation, and He would use the person He chose to complete it. God's plans are perfect. Even when we mess up, that doesn't mean His plan for us has been destroyed. He uses our mistakes, failures, and even our flaws to help us grow and know Him more and more. He wants only the best for His children. **God is good.**"

JOINING TO JESUS

We aren't that different from Jacob and Esau. Maybe our struggle isn't with deceit or pride, but we all sin. Thankfully, God is gracious. In His mercy, He sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue and redeem us. And He did this while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). As Kevin DeYoung says in *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*, "...I guess the Biggest Story isn't about God's people getting it all right, as much as it's about God blessing his people even when they keep getting it wrong."

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Let's review the story we just heard.

1. What is going on with this family?

Response: Answers will vary.

2. Do you think this family trusted God? Why or why not?

Response: Answers will vary.

3. How did Jacob trick his brother, Esau?

Response: He tricked Esau into giving away his birthright by taking advantage of him when he was hungry, and Jacob tricked his brother again when he disguised himself to get the birthright from his father.

4. Did this family ruin God's plan when they acted sinfully?

Response: No, God is too powerful and good for anyone to ruin His plans. He is always looking for ways to bless us.

5. What was God's good plan for this family?

Response: He will make them into a great nation, and God's Son will be a descendant of this family.

6. What have you learned about God from the story of Esau and Jacob?

Response: **God is good.** God has a plan that cannot be ruined. God loves us, even when we sin. God is in charge, etc.

TRANSITION: Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us! I'm so glad we can learn about how good our God is! Aren't you? Let's pause our conversation to make a craft to help us think more about today's lesson.

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Jacob* Activity Page (1 per child) | Crayons or Makers | Variety of Papers (Sandpaper, Scrapbook Paper, Construction Paper, etc.) | Glue | Scissors | Additional Craft Fabric or Fibers (optional) |

Say, "What do you think Jacob looked and felt like when he visited Isaac? [Allow for responses.] That sounds interesting! Using the supplies before you, let's create an outfit Jacob might have worn when meeting with Isaac."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Jacob* Activity Page, and make the craft supplies available.
2. Instruct the children to use the supplies to "dress" Jacob like he may have looked when meeting with Isaac. (You may need to remind the children how Jacob and Esau were different in appearance. Jacob was fair and smooth-skinned; Esau was hairy and had a reddish complexion.)

TRANSITION: Say: "Those are some creative outfits you made for your Jacobs. Good job! You can take these home to help you share today's story with your families or friends."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "**God is good**, and we need to remember that even when we sin, God can use what was meant for evil

for His good. Let's start memorizing our new Focus Verse. We are going to read it and then practice some motions to help us remember it."

You meant to hurt me. [Lean back with both hands blocking face.]
But God [Point up with both hands.] **turned your evil** [Frown and give a big "thumbs down."] **into good.** [Smile and give a big "thumbs up."]
Genesis 50:20, ICB [hold hands open like a book]

Say, "Great job! It won't take long for you to remember this verse!"

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

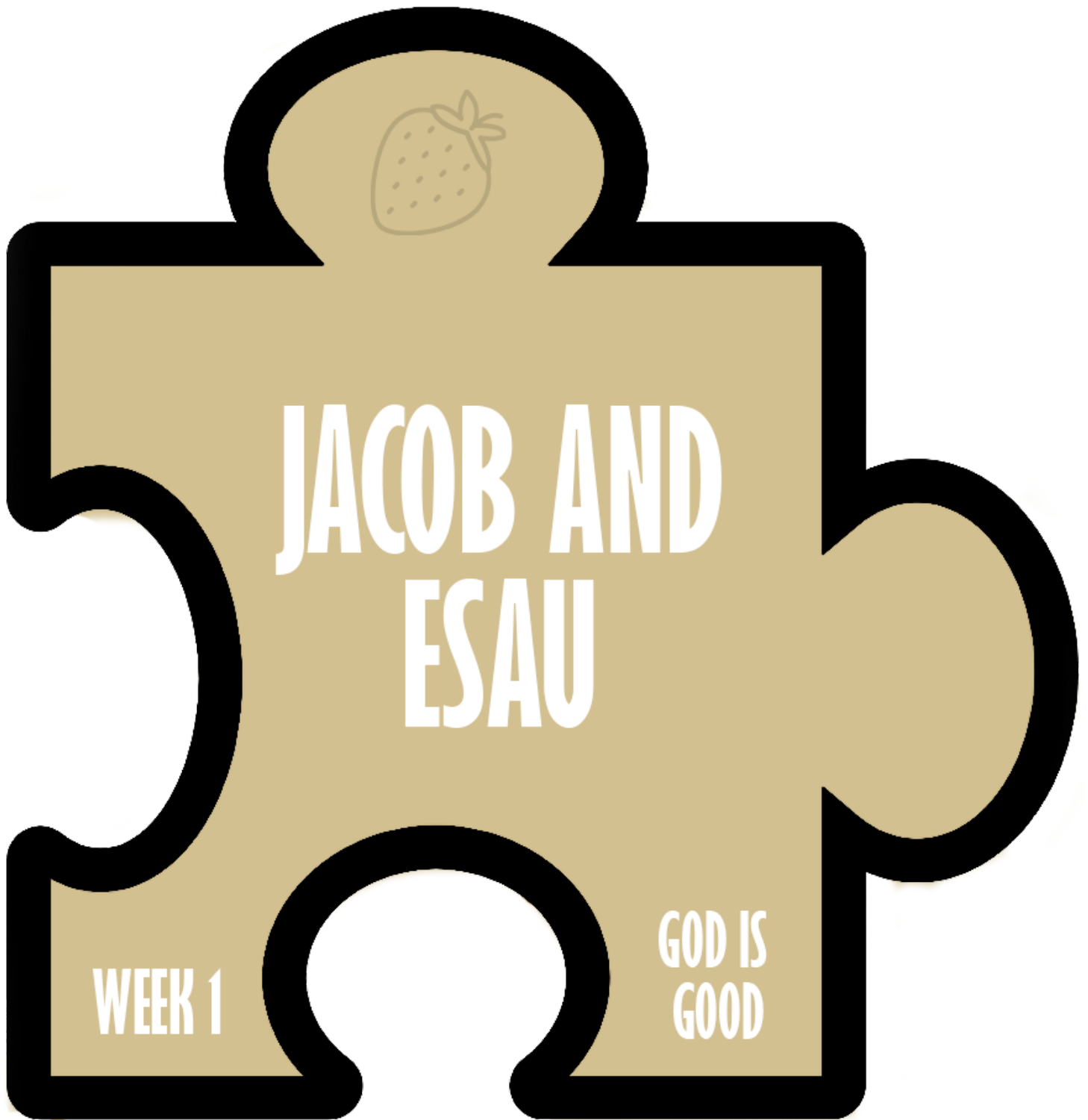
Say: "Do you ever wonder how a good God can use 'bad' people? We must remember that 'all people have sinned,' and none of us are 'good enough for God's glory.' [See Romans 3:23.] When we let God take charge of our lives, we ask Him to turn all the bad things we have done into good things that bring Him glory. And He will do it!"

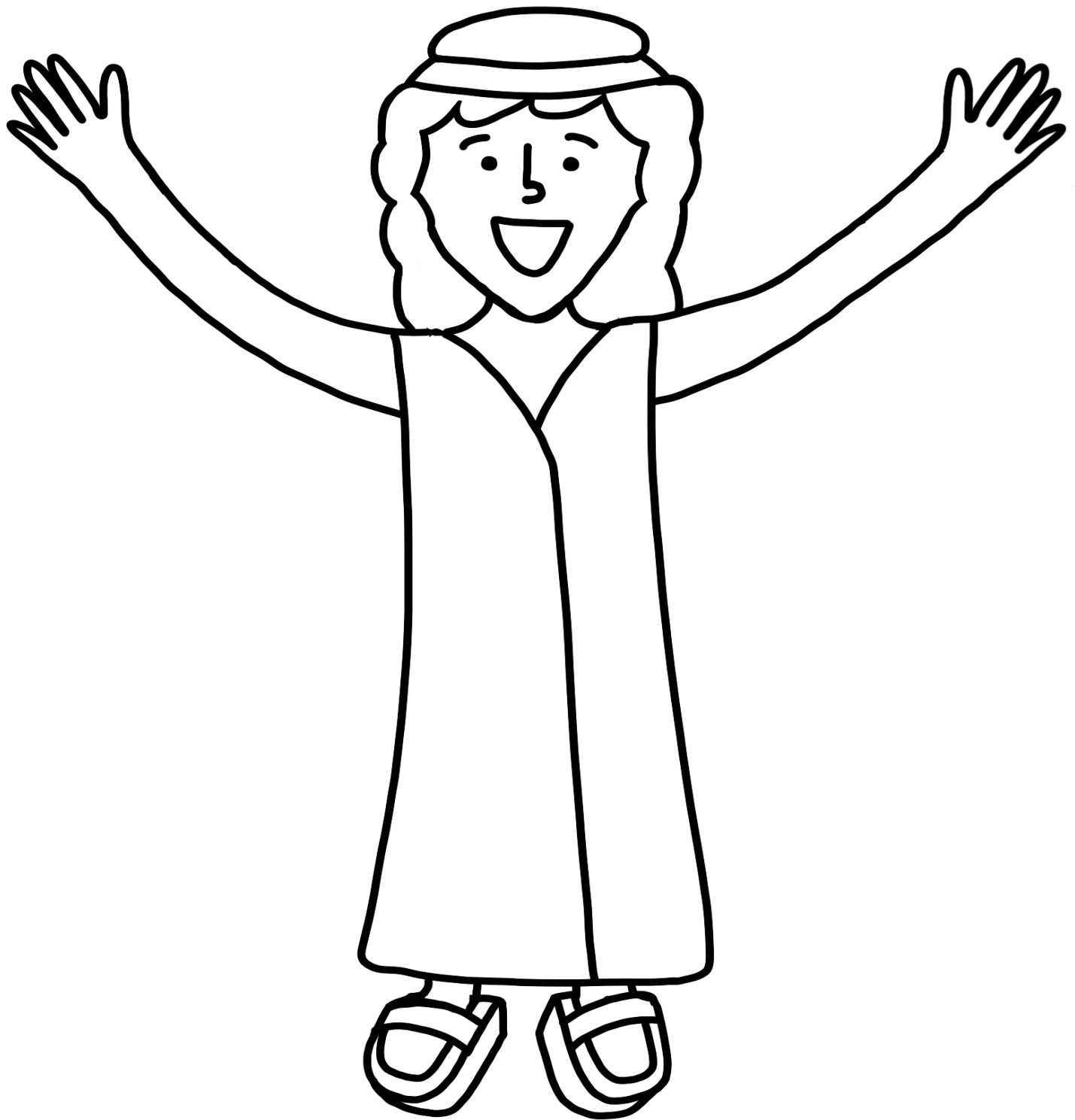
Ask, "How has God used you to bring Him glory? How can God use you to bring good to those around you?"

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"Heavenly Father, we are amazed that You use us for Your good even after we disobey. Help us understand how much You love us and how much we can trust You. Thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit to help us put You first in all we say and do. We love You, for You are good! Amen. "*

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If there is extra time, continue playing the ENGAGE game or sing your favorite worship songs. As the children are dismissed, remind them that **God is good**, and give their parents (or guardians) a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable).





ISAAC DID NOT KNOW IT WAS JACOB, BECAUSE HIS HANDS WERE HAIRY LIKE ESAU'S HANDS. SO ISAAC BLESSED JACOB" -GENESIS 27:23 (ICB)

JACOB, LEAH, AND RACHEL

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 29:13-30, 30:1-24 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God is Good

FOCUS VERSE

“You meant to hurt me. But God turned your evil into good.” Genesis 50:20 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Two Toys (optional) | Pieces of Paper (optional) | Pens (optional) | Jar (optional) | Puzzle Piece | Children’s Bibles | Letter Beads | Elastic String | Round beads | Scissors |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Would you prefer to visit the zoo or the aquarium? Why?
- Would you rather be able to fly or be invisible? Why?
- Would you rather be super funny or brilliant? Why?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

MATERIALS: | Two Toys | Pieces of Paper | Pens | Jar |

Display two toys on a table with slips of paper, pens, and a jar. As the children arrive, ask them to use the pens and paper to vote for the toy they prefer. They should place their vote in the jar. Before you worship, tally the votes, and share the responses.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “We all have our favorite things: favorite foods, favorite games, favorite superhero traits, favorite toys, and even favorite people. However, in today’s lesson from God’s Word, we’ll see how playing favorites can sometimes hurt our friends and family. One beautiful thing about God, though, is that He can take our hurtful actions or our pain and turn it into something wonderful. Let’s stand and sing to our good God.”

Select songs that point to God’s goodness. We recommend using “Goodness of God” by Eleven22 Kids Worship and “Good, Good Father” by ChapelHill Kids throughout the unit. Additionally, we like “I Thank God” by CJ and Friends for today’s lesson. You can find these songs on YouTube.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Take time to thank God for His goodness. Ask the children to share some of the good things the Lord has done in their lives. Then, pray together.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Heavenly Father, You are good, and Your love lasts forever. We are grateful that You can take even our biggest failures and turn them into something beautiful for Your glory. Please help us learn everything You have for us today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

Say, “This month, we are learning that **God is good**. Sometimes it’s hard to see God’s goodness when people do mean and bad things. That happened in the Bible too, and last week, we learned how Jacob deceived his father and brother. It’s easy not to like Jacob, but God used him to build a great nation. [This fulfilled God’s promise to Abraham, Jacob’s grandfather.] Our story picks up at the end of last week’s lesson. Jacob’s brother Esau is so mad that he wants to kill Jacob. Rebekah, Jacob’s mother, tells Jacob to run away to his Uncle Laban’s home in the city of Haran. So, Jacob flees. I can’t wait to share the rest of the story, but first, who would like to post this week’s puzzle piece? Do you see how yet another story fits into God’s big story?” Post this week’s puzzle piece to the wall.

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: None

Say, “Today, we will play a game where we will pretend that we are like Jacob on the run to the city of Haran. Let’s get everything ready!”



TODAY’S GAME IS SIMILAR TO “BRITISH BULLDOG.” IF POSSIBLE, PLAY THIS GAME OUTSIDE.

GAME GOAL: To make it from one side of the space to the other without being tagged.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Before the game begins, mark the boundaries of the playing area, designating one side as the city of “Haran.”
2. Have the children line up, shoulder to shoulder, at the end of the playing area opposite “Haran.”
3. Choose 2-3 kids to stand in the middle of the playing area.
4. Explain that when the children in the middle yell “Arise and Go!” all the other kids must run to “Haran” while staying within the playing area.
5. Anyone tagged moves to the middle to be a tagger for the next round.
6. Play until only 2-3 runners are remaining. They will start the next round as the taggers.

Say: “You all are so fast! I wonder if Jacob ran fast on his way to Haran? You know, on earth, there are consequences to our disobedience. Would anyone like to share a time when you did something wrong

and suffered the consequences? [Share a story from your childhood too.] For Jacob, the consequences he paid for tricking his brother and father were that he had to leave his family and run for his life. [See Genesis 27:42-45.] God never forgot Jacob, though, and He stayed with Him, even during this time of disobedience. God does the same for us. He never forgets us, and He keeps calling us back to Himself, even when we sinfully try to do things our way instead of His. **God is good.**"

LEARN — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Children's Bibles |



TODAY'S STORY INCLUDES SEVERAL SECTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READING. ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS TO FIND AND READ THOSE PASSAGES. IT IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN TO GROW COMFORTABLE USING GOD'S WORD AND READING IT PUBLICLY. REGULARLY INVOLVING THE CHILDREN IN SCRIPTURE READING CAN ALSO ENCOURAGE THE KIDS TO BRING THEIR BIBLES TO CHURCH. HOWEVER, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A CLASSROOM SET OF CHILDREN'S BIBLES AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO ARE NEW, FORGET THEIRS, OR DON'T HAVE A BIBLE.

Say: "Our story starts in Genesis chapter 29. Jacob made it safely to his uncle Laban's house in Haran. Let's see what happens next." Read Genesis 29:13-20 (ICB).

¹³ When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, Laban ran to meet him. Laban hugged him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban everything that had happened. ¹⁴ Then Laban said, "You are my own flesh and blood." So Jacob stayed there a month. ¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "You are my relative. But it is not right for you to keep on working for me without pay. What would you like me to pay you?" ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The older was Leah, and the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel was very beautiful. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel. So he said to Laban, "Let me marry your younger daughter Rachel. If you will, I will work seven years for you." ¹⁹ Laban said, "It would be better for her to marry you than someone else. So stay here with me." ²⁰ So Jacob worked for Laban seven years so he could marry Rachel. But they seemed to him like just a few days. This was because he loved Rachel very much.

Ask, "Does seven years seem like a long time to wait to marry someone? What do you think of Jacob's decision to work for Laban in exchange for marrying Rachel?"



WE LOVE CURIOUS KIDS, AND THIS LESSON MAY CREATE QUESTIONS ABOUT JACOB'S MARRIAGE TO TWO WOMEN. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY MAY WONDER WHY GOD ALLOWED POLYGAMY. THE TRUTH IS GOD'S PLAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN FOR MARRIAGE TO ONLY EXIST BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN (SEE GENESIS 2:24). JESUS REINFORCED THIS POSITION IN MARK 10:2-9. THE PRESENCE OF POLYGAMY IN THE BIBLE DOES NOT JUSTIFY IT, INSTEAD, IT DEMONSTRATES THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS PRACTICE. IN TODAY'S READING, WE SEE HOW JACOB'S POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGE LED TO JEALOUSY AND BITTERNESS THAT NEARLY DESTROYED HIS FAMILY.

Say, "After seven years, Jacob reminded his uncle that it was time for him to marry Rachel. So Laban threw a huge wedding party, but it was not a party for Jacob and Rachel. It was for Jacob and Leah. Laban tricked Jacob into marrying his oldest daughter, Leah, instead. But the thing is, Jacob didn't realize it was Leah until it was too late, and the wedding was over! [It's hard to understand how this could happen, but women often covered their faces in public, and there was no electricity, so if the wedding took place at night, it would have been dimly lit.] Jacob was furious! Let's continue reading to find out what happened next." Read Genesis 29:26-27.

26 Laban said, "In our country we do not allow the younger daughter to marry before the older daughter. 27 But complete the full week of the marriage ceremony with Leah. I will give you Rachel to marry also. But you must serve me another seven years."

Say, "Wow! Can you believe that? Now Jacob must work another seven years before he can marry Rachel. That seems terrible, doesn't it? Maybe you even want to shout, 'That's not fair!' However, I want to remind you of something. Last week we read a story about Jacob and his brother Esau. Do you remember how Jacob tricked his father and brother? That was pretty terrible too. Are you starting to wonder how God is going to turn this family's problems into anything good? There must be more to the story, so let's keep reading." Read Genesis 29:31-32.

31 The Lord saw that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. So the Lord made it possible for Leah to have children. But Rachel did not have any children. 32 Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, because she said, "The Lord has seen my troubles. Surely now my husband will love me."

Say, "Leah went on to have several more children. After Reuben, she had Simeon, Levi, and Judah, but Rachel still had none. The sisters remained jealous of one another, and this family was unhappy. What do you think about all that is happening in this family? [Allow for responses.] God had not forgotten either of these sisters, though. Let's keep reading." Read Genesis 30:22-23.

22 Then God remembered Rachel and answered her prayer. God made it possible for her to have children. 23 She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said, "God has taken away my shame." 24 She named him Joseph. Rachel said, "I wish the Lord would give me another son."

Say, "Years later, God answered Rachel's prayer with another son, Benjamin. He heard the cries of both sisters, and in total, He gave Jacob, Leah, and Rachel twelve sons and one daughter. God is so good that He could use sibling rivalry for His good purpose. Those twelve sons would become the 12 Tribes of Israel."

JOINING TO JESUS

Despite the rivalry and favoritism, God was preparing to send His Son through this broken family. Years later, Jesus would come as a descendant of Judah, one of Leah's sons. Yes, God chose Leah, the overlooked sister, to be one of Jesus' great-grandmothers. What a beautiful reminder that God doesn't love us for our talent, physical beauty, or intelligence. God loves us because we're His. And God chose Leah, His precious daughter, to be in the lineage of His Son, our King.

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk a little more about our story."

1. Who did Jacob love?

Response: Rachel

2. Why did Laban trick Jacob into marrying Leah instead of Rachel?

Response: In Laban's country, the oldest daughter should always get married first.

3. How do you think Leah felt in this story?

Response: Answers will vary, but help the children understand how alone and unloved Leah felt.

4. When Rachel saw that she couldn't have children, how did she feel?

Response: Answers will vary, but we know she felt angry and ashamed.

5. What do you think God thought about how these sisters treated one another?

Response: Answers will vary, but help the children understand that God wants us to live peacefully with one another. See Romans 12:18.

6. How do we see God's goodness in this story?

Response: God did not give up on this family. He had promised to use them to build a great nation, and He did.

7. What did you learn about God in today's lesson?

Response: **God is good.** God does not give up on His people. God does what He says He will do. God's promises are true, etc.

TRANSITION: Today's story reminds us that God loves us and hears our prayers, just as He did with Leah and Rachel. **God is good.**

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Knowing **God is good** helps us love and obey Him. I hope you will believe this truth forever. Today's craft will help us remember everything we've been learning. Let's get started!"

MATERIALS: | Letter Beads (1 set per child) | Elastic String (1 per child) | Round beads (12 per child) | Scissors |

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child 12 round beads, elastic string, and the following letter beads: Y, M, T, H, M, B, G, T, Y, E, I, G.
2. Knot the string on one end. Leave about 1 inch above the knot.
3. String one round bead, followed by the letter Y.
4. Repeat step three until all letters have been strung in order. (The children are stringing together the first letter of each word from this unit's Focus Verse.)
5. Knot the string at the end of the beads.
6. Bring ends together and tie a knot to create a bracelet.

TRANSITION: Say: "These aren't just bracelets. They are 'verselets' that will help you remember our Focus Verse. Let's use them right now as we practice saying Genesis 50:20."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Memory Verselets |

Say, "We're going to practice our Focus Verse a little differently this month. In just a moment, I will put you in pairs, and you will use your verselets to say the verse to one another. Before you begin, though, let's review together." Recite the verse as a group, and then divide the children into pairs so they can continue their memory work.

You meant to hurt me. [Lean back with both hands blocking face.]
But God [Point up with both hands.] **turned your evil** [Frown and give a big "thumbs down."] **into good.** [Smile and give a big "thumbs up."]
Genesis 50:20, ICB [hold hands open like a book]

Say, "Now, it's your turn to say the verse with your partner."

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Think about a time when you felt alone, ashamed, or unloved. [Pause.] Do you think God was with you? [Allow for responses.] God promised never to leave you or forget you. **God is good.** He remembered Leah and Rachel, and He will remember you. Let's take a few moments and thank God for being so good to us."

SAMPLE PRAYER: *"Dear God, You are so good. Thank you for loving us and refusing never to leave or forget us. When we feel alone, ashamed, or unloved, please help us remember that You see us and are with us. Amen."*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the ENGAGE game or allow the children to use the leftover craft materials to make more bracelets. As the children are dismissed, remind them that **God is good** and will always be with them.



JACOB, LEAH, AND RACHEL

WEEK 2

GOD IS
GOOD

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 37, 39:1-2 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God is good

FOCUS VERSE

“You meant to hurt me. But God turned your evil into good.” Genesis 50:20 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Large Button-Up Shirts | *Joseph* Activity Page | *Bible Verse* Activity Page | Multi-Colored Yarn | Scissors | Large Craft Sticks | Markers | Pencils | Glue | *Focus Verse Card* Activity Page | Rubber Bands |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Do you remember your dreams?
- Would you tell me about one of them?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “In today’s story, we will hear about a man named Joseph who had some interesting experiences with dreams. Some would call them a foreshadowing of future events. [Explain that “foreshadowing” is a hint at something that will come later.] Those dreams prepared Joseph to lead an entire nation through extremely tough times, and his work saved thousands of lives. Joseph’s life wasn’t always exciting, however. He endured years of mistreatment, loneliness, and separation from his family. He even spent time in prison. Through it all, though, God was with Joseph and directed his path. He also does that in our lives, even when we can’t see it. So, let’s stand up and sing of God’s goodness.”

We recommend using “Goodness of God” by Eleven22 Kids Worship and “Good, Good Father” by ChapelHill Kids throughout the unit. Additionally, we like “Lord, You are Good” by Kids Praise! Company for today’s lesson. You can find these songs on YouTube.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Take time to remember God’s goodness. Thank Him that His plans are perfect. Remind the children that they can trust Him, even when it seems like things are going wrong.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Heavenly Father, we know You are good. We will sing of your goodness all the days of our lives because you deserve it. Help us to trust You, even when life gets hard, and please give us eyes to see and ears to hear what You want us to learn today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “The last time we were together, we learned about Jacob and his wives, Leah and Rachel. Life wasn’t going well for this family because Jacob loved Rachel more, so he treated her better than Leah. Today’s story picks up years later with one of Jacob and Rachel’s sons, Joseph. Here are some of the things we missed: Jacob left his Uncle Laban to return to his hometown of Canaan. During the journey, Jacob wrestled with God and lived. He also made up with his brother Esau. Sadly, Joseph’s mother, Rachel, died, but not before she had another son. His name was Benjamin.

“As you can see, wonderful and sad things happened, but God remained good, and His plan to make a family into a nation was still in the works. Let’s see how this week’s story fits into God’s big story by adding a new puzzle piece to our wall. Who would like to volunteer to post this week’s puzzle piece?”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Colorful, Large Button-Up Shirts (1 per team) |



YOU CAN PURCHASE THE SHIRTS AT A LOCAL THRIFT STORE FOR A MINIMAL COST.

Say, “Now, our story turns from Jacob to his son, Joseph. Do you know anything about Joseph from the Bible? [Allow for responses, but keep in mind that the children may get the Old Testament and New Testament Josephs confused. Clarify as needed.] Joseph was famous for wearing a particular item of clothing. Does anyone know what it was? [Wait for responses.] Right! A special coat from his father. Sometimes we refer to it as ‘the coat of many colors.’ Now we’re going to take turns wearing our own special ‘coats’ in an exciting relay.

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to complete the relay

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Determine the space for the relay and place the shirts opposite the starting line.
2. Divide the class into two or three teams, and have each group create a line behind the starting point.
3. Explain that the first player from each team will run to their “colorful coat” (or shirt), put the shirt on, and run back to their team.
4. When the first child reaches their team’s next relay runner, they will remove the shirt, and their teammate will put it on. Once that child has the shirt entirely on, they will run to the opposite side of the room and take off the shirt, leaving it for the next child. Then, they will return to their team and tag the next runner, who will run to the opposite side of the space, put the shirt on, and repeat the process until every team member has participated in the relay.
5. The first team to finish the relay wins.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job! You put those 'coats' on super fast, and I love how you worked together. Now, let's find a seat and see what God's Word can tell us about Joseph, his special coat, and all those dreams."

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Our story picks up when Jacob was older, and his sons were grown. Remember, Jacob had twelve sons, and Rachel gave birth to his youngest sons, Joseph and Benjamin. But as seems typical for this family, there was a favorite. [Remind the children that Jacob's father, Isaac, liked Esau best, and Jacob preferred Rachel to his other wife, Leah.] This time it is Rachel's son, Joseph, who is loved best by his father."

Ask, "How do you think things would have been different for this family if there had been no favorite children or wives? [Allow for responses.] I love how much thought you gave to that question! Now, let's read together from Genesis 37:3-10 [ICB]."

³ Joseph was born when his father Israel, also called Jacob, was old. So Israel loved Joseph more than his other sons. He made Joseph a special robe with long sleeves. ⁴ Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than he loved them. So they hated their brother and could not speak to him politely. Joseph didn't make it better for himself. He was in charge of his older brothers and would give bad reports of the work they were doing, but then he had dreams that made his brothers angry. ⁵ One time Joseph had a dream. When he told his brothers about it, they hated him even more. ⁶ Joseph said, "Listen to the dream I had. ⁷ We were in the field tying bundles of wheat together. My bundle stood up, and your bundles of wheat gathered around mine. Your bundles bowed down to mine." ⁸ His brothers said, "Do you really think you will be king over us? Do you truly think you will rule over us?" His brothers hated him even more now. They hated him because of his dreams and what he had said. ⁹ Then Joseph had another dream. He told his brothers about it also. He said, "Listen, I had another dream. I saw the sun, moon and 11 stars bowing down to me." ¹⁰ Joseph also told his father about this dream. But his father scolded him, saying, "What kind of dream is this? Do you really believe that your mother, your brothers and I will bow down to you?"

Ask, "What do you think of Joseph so far? Would you have liked to have had Joseph for a brother? Why or why not? [Allow for responses.] Thank you for sharing your ideas. Let's continue reading." Read Genesis 37:11.

¹¹ Joseph's brothers were jealous of him. But his father thought about what all these things could mean.

Say, "These dreams and Jacob's favoritism made his brothers' anger grow so much that they plotted to kill Joseph. Wow! Can you imagine being that angry? Of all the stories we've heard in this unit, this one might be the craziest. How could God possibly turn this mess into something good? Well, here's what happens next. One day, Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers who were tending to the family's sheep." Read Genesis 37:18-20.

¹⁸ Joseph's brothers saw him coming from far away. Before he reached them, they made a plan to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to each other, "Here comes that dreamer. ²⁰ Let's kill him and throw his body into one of the wells. We can tell our father that a wild animal killed him. Then we will see what will become of his dreams."

Say, "Thankfully, Reuben heard the plan and talked the brothers into not killing Joseph just yet. Instead, they threw him into a well." Read Genesis 37:23-25.

²³ So when Joseph came to his brothers, they pulled off his robe with long sleeves. ²⁴ Then they threw him into the well. It was empty. There was no water in it. ²⁵ While Joseph was in the well, the brothers sat down to eat. When they looked up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites. They were traveling from Gilead to Egypt...

Say, "This is when Judah suggests they sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites. The brothers agree." Read Genesis 37:31-34.

³¹ The brothers killed a goat and dipped Joseph's long-sleeved robe in its blood. ³² Then they brought the robe to their father. They said, "We found this robe. Look it over carefully. See if it is your son's robe." ³³ Jacob looked it over and said, "It is my son's robe! Some savage animal has eaten him. My son Joseph has been torn to pieces!" ³⁴ Then Jacob tore his clothes and put on rough cloth to show that he was sad. He continued to be sad about his son for a long time.

Say, "The future does not look good for this family. Jacob believes his son is dead, and although Joseph is alive, he's been sold as a slave to a man in Egypt, an officer of Pharaoh."

Ask, "Can you imagine being taken far from home and forced to live as a slave among people who don't even speak your language? If God is good, why did he allow such bad things to happen to this family? Let's skip ahead and read the first two verses of chapter 39 to hint at what God might be up to in this family's life." Read Genesis 39:1-2.

¹Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. An Egyptian named Potiphar was an officer to the king of Egypt. He was the captain of the palace guard. He bought Joseph from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. ² The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man. He lived in the house of his master, Potiphar the Egyptian.

Say, "Finally, we hear God mentioned in today's story. I'm going to reread those verses, and I want you to listen for what it says about God. [Reread Genesis 39:1-2.] Did you hear it? What do those verses tell us about God? Right! They say that He was with Joseph. God never left. To Joseph, it must have felt like he was all alone. He had been abandoned by his family and sold into slavery, but the Lord was with him through everything! What a fantastic reminder that **God is good**. We'll hear the conclusion to this story next week, so I hope you'll join us then to see what God is doing in and through this family."

JOINING TO JESUS

There are many similarities between Joseph's life and Jesus'. Joseph was a shepherd, and Jesus is the Great Shepherd. Joseph and Jesus were each stripped of their robe and betrayed by those they should have been able to trust. Joseph's brothers were so jealous that they wanted to kill him, and although they didn't do that, they did sell him for a few pieces of silver. I'm sure that sounds familiar. (See Matthew 26:14-15.) Joseph's story reminds us that God is weaving a grand narrative in which smaller stories, like Joseph's, cause us to marvel at His providence and love.

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Joseph's story has so many ups and downs. Let's talk about it together.

1. What bad things happened in this story?

Response: Jacob picked a favorite son and treated him better than the rest of his children; Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him; Joseph was sold as a slave and taken far from home, etc.

2. Was there a "good guy" in this story?

Response: Answers will vary, but help the children understand that everyone had a part to play in this family's unhappiness. Joseph was prideful and foolish, the brothers were jealous and let their anger get out of control, and even Jacob created tension by favoring one child above others.

3. What did Joseph's brothers do to him?

Response: Joseph's brothers threw him into a pit and were going to leave him there to die, but then they decided to sell him to slave traders.

4. How did today's story end?

Response: Joseph was sold to an important man, Potiphar, who lived in Egypt. Thankfully, God was with Joseph, and he took care of him and made him successful in his new home.

5. What have you learned about God in today's story?

Response: **God is good.** God is always with us. God has a plan for His people. God loves us, etc.

TRANSITION: Did you know that Joseph's story is one of the longest in the Bible? God must have a lot He wants us to learn about him, and we're not finished. Next week we'll hear the conclusion of his story. What God does for Joseph and his family is incredible. I hope you'll come back to listen!

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Joseph* Activity Page (1 figure per child) | *Bible Verse* Activity Page (1 verse per child) | Multi-Colored Yarn | Scissors | Large Craft Sticks | Markers | Pencils | Glue |



BEFORE CLASS, CUT OUT THE JOSEPH FIGURES FROM THE *JOSEPH* ACTIVITY PAGE AND THE BIBLE VERSE FROM THE *BIBLE VERSE* ACTIVITY PAGE. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE 1 FIGURE AND 1 BIBLE VERSE FOR EACH CHILD.

Say, “Although we can’t be sure exactly what Joseph’s special coat looked like, we know it set him apart as his father’s favorite. Some versions of the Bible describe the coat as multi-colored [See Genesis 37:3, ESV], so we will use this yarn to make a ‘coat of many colors.’”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make all of the craft supplies accessible for the children.
2. Give each child a *Joseph* figure, and have everyone draw and color his face, hair, shoes, etc. Explain that they do not need to color his clothing.
3. Then, the kids should glue a craft stick to the back of the figure. (You’ll need to let this dry for a couple of minutes. This would be a good time to review the Focus Verse or help kids pick out the yarn they would like to use for Joseph’s “coat.”)
4. Next, direct the children to wrap the yarn around their *Joseph* figures and glue it in place. The more colors they use, the better.
5. Finally, have each child glue a Bible Verse cutout into the hands of their Joseph figure.

TRANSITION: Read the Bible Verse that the Joseph figures are holding. Ask, “Does that verse sound like something you’ve heard before? Yes! It’s this month’s Focus Verse. I hope it will remind you that even though Joseph’s brothers wanted to harm him, our good God was looking out for Joseph, and He already had plans to use this bad situation to bless all of God’s people. **God is good!**”

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Focus Verse Cards* Activity Page (1 set per group) | Rubber Bands |

Say, “Why do you think God gave Joseph the dream about the wheat? [Wait for responses.] There is probably more than one reason, but I can’t help but wonder if God gave Joseph this dream to give him hope when things were going badly. I think now is a fantastic time to review our focus verse.” Practice this month’s verse together.

You meant to hurt me. [Lean back with both hands blocking face.]
But God [Point up with both hands.] **turned your evil** [Frown and give a big “thumbs down.”] **into good.** [Smile and give a big “thumbs up.”]
Genesis 50:20, ICB [hold hands open like a book]

CHALLENGE: Before the children arrive, create a Focus Verse card set for each group of two or three children by cutting out the cards and mixing up the words before you secure them with a rubber band. Once you are ready to play your review game, divide your class into groups of two or three kids and give each one a bundle of cards. Have the groups put the verse in order. When they have put it in order, have them read it aloud. Additionally, you can have teams compete to see who can correctly assemble their verse the fastest.

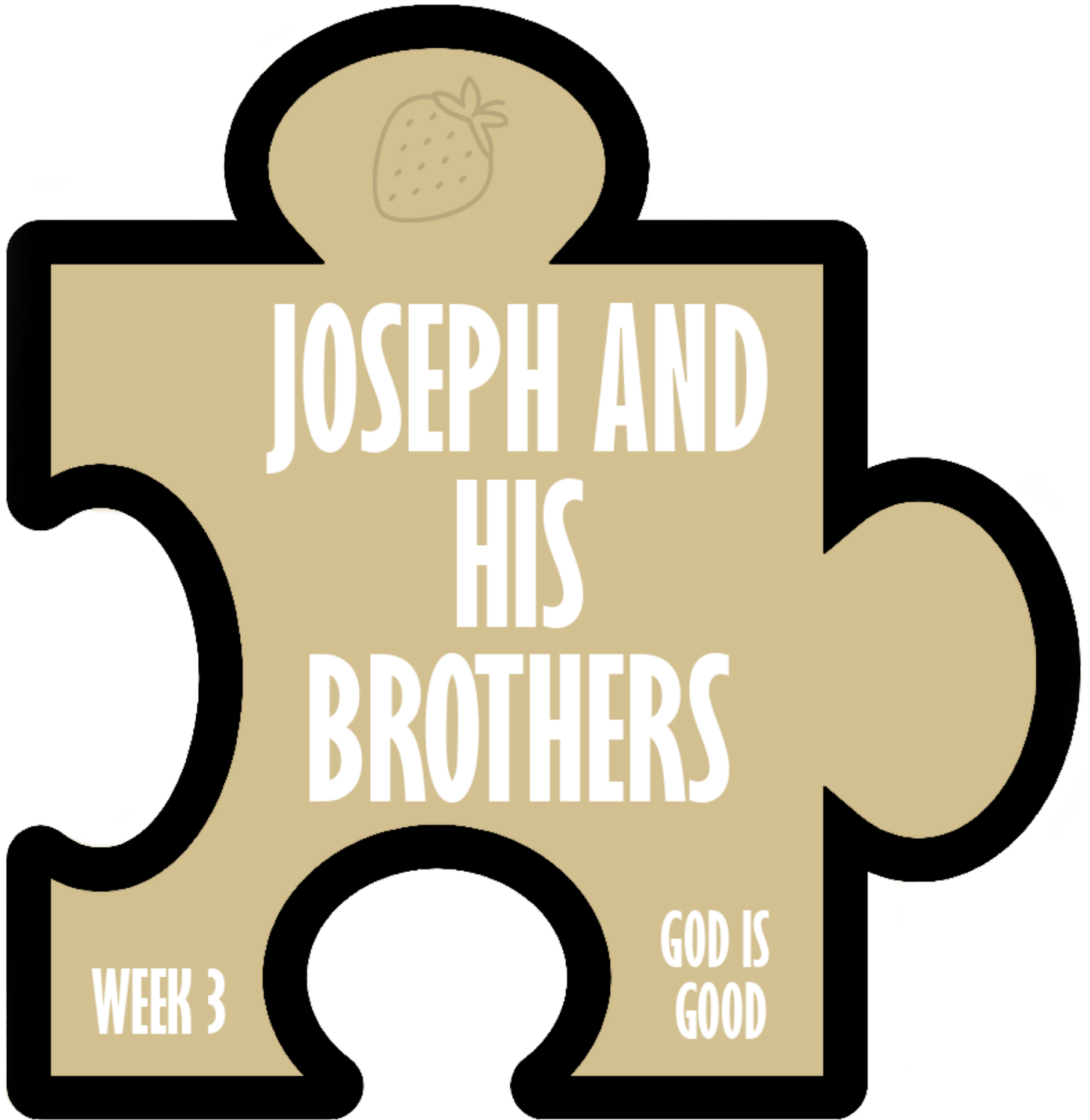
REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

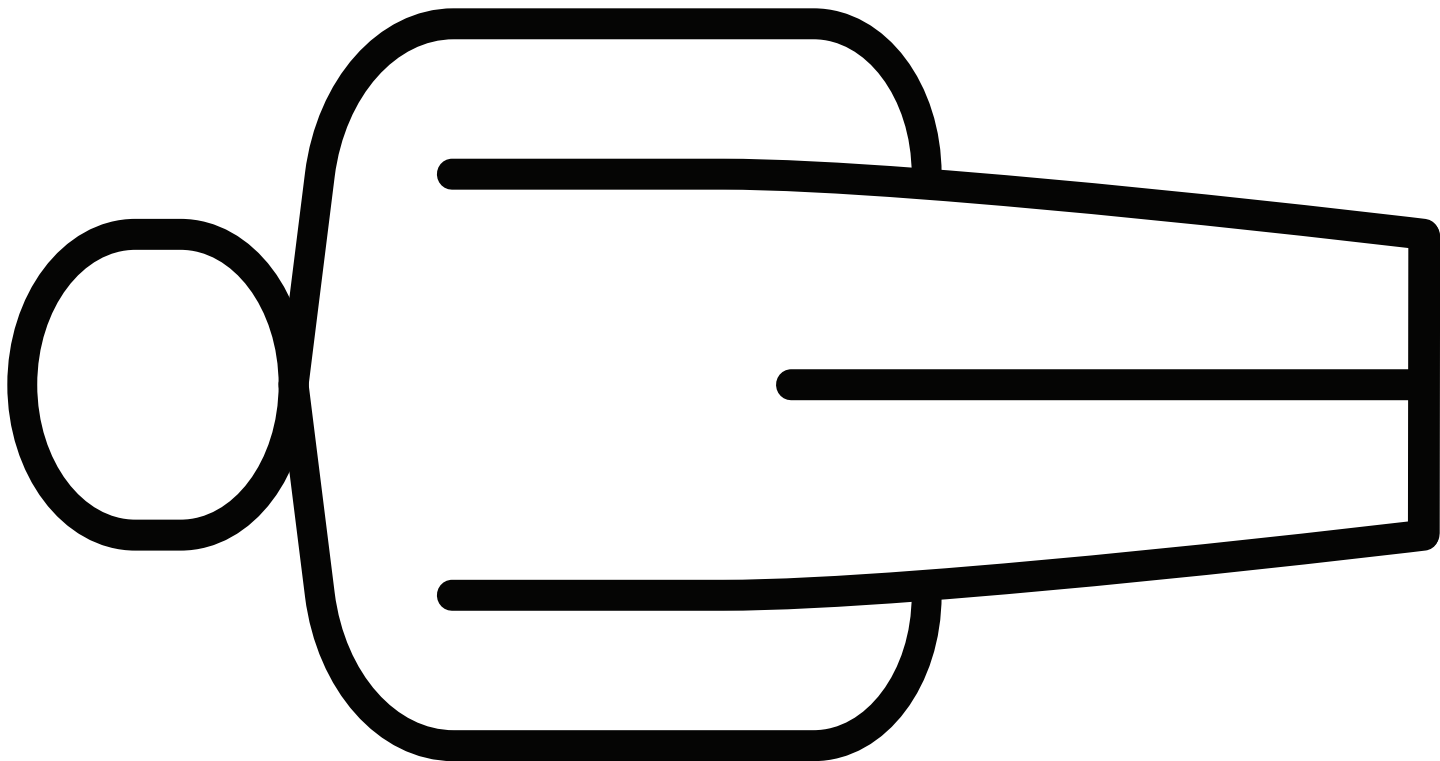
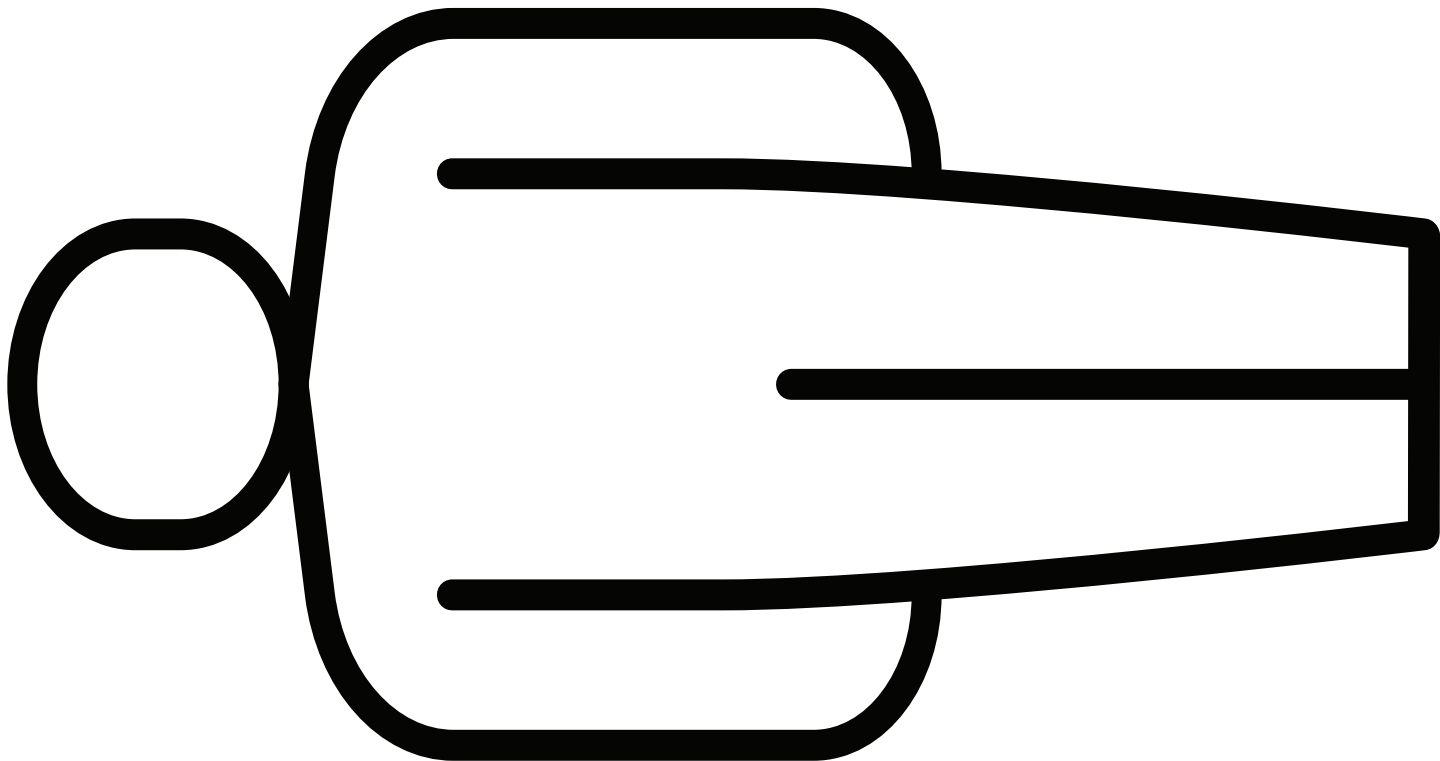
Ask, “How can you remember that God is always with us? [Allow for responses.] God sent the Holy Spirit to help us remember truths like **God is good** and to bring us peace and joy, even when we are sad, angry, or frustrated. Let’s thank God for the Holy Spirit.”

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Heavenly Father, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to remind us that You are good. We are grateful that You never forget us and are always working out a plan for our good, even when we feel lonely, sad, or angry. Please help us to believe these things all the time. We love You. Amen.”*

RELEASE —

If there is extra time, replay the ENGAGE game or sing this month’s theme songs. As the children are dismissed, remind them that **God is good** and that He loves them and sees them, even when times are hard.





**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

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good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

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good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

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good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

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good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

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God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

**You meant to hurt me. But
God turned your evil into
good.” - Genesis 50:20a**

“You

meant

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me.

But

God

turned

your

evil

into

good.”

Genesis

50:

20

JOSEPH AND THE PHARAOH

BIBLE PASSAGE

Genesis 42-50 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

God is good

FOCUS VERSE

“You meant to hurt me. But God turned your evil into good.” Genesis 50:20 (ICB)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Timeline* Activity Pages | Tape Large Fruit or Vegetable Items | *Timeline Cube* Activity Page | Cardstock | Markers or Crayons | Scissors |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever had a hard time forgiving someone?
- Why do you think it’s sometimes hard to forgive?
- Why do you think Jesus wants us to forgive?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, “**God is good.** He is so good that while we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. When we confess that we have done wrong and ask God to forgive us and be our King, He does it every time! Isn’t that amazing? Let’s sing to God and tell Him how grateful we are for His goodness.”

We recommend using “Goodness of God” by Eleven22 Kids Worship and “Good, Good Father” by ChapelHill Kids throughout the unit. Additionally, we like “You Forgive Me” by LifeTree Kids for today’s lesson. You can find each of these songs on YouTube.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children for prayer and discuss how understanding and receiving Christ’s forgiveness helps us forgive those who sin against us. (See Ephesians 4:32.)

Sample Prayer: “Heavenly Father, You are good! You created a grand rescue plan for us and sent Your Son, Jesus, to save and forgive us. You are amazing! As we finish our lessons about Jacob and Joseph, please help us remember that You can use anything and anyone to accomplish Your good plans. We love you. Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece | *Timeline* Activity Pages | Tape |

Say, “Do you remember where we left off with Joseph’s story last week? [Wait for responses.] Right, his brothers sold him to Ishmaelite slave traders, who then sold him to a man named Potiphar. Who was Potiphar? [Wait for response.] Right! Potiphar was an officer of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Things looked bad for Joseph. But if there is one thing we’ve learned this month, it is that **God is good**. The Lord was with Joseph, even when things were terrible. Today’s story jumps forward several years. We’re still talking about Joseph, but there are some things you should know about that happened between last week’s and this week’s stories. Because we have a lot to cover, I will go through the events of Joseph’s life super quickly with these pictures.” Use the images from the *Timeline* Activity Pages for each point. Place the pictures on the wall throughout the lesson.

1. Joseph is sold to an important man named Potiphar. While living there, Joseph works hard. Potiphar sees what a good worker he is and puts Joseph in charge of all of his stuff. (Gen. 39:6).
2. Potiphar’s wife tells her husband that Joseph has been mean to her, so Potiphar puts Joseph in prison. However, the Lord is kind, and the prison guard sees that Joseph is a good man. He puts Joseph in charge of the other prisoners. (Gen 39:22)
3. God helps Joseph understand people’s dreams while he’s in prison. He uses his gift to explain the dreams of two of the workers, Pharaoh’s cupbearer and baker. Both times, exactly what Joseph says about their dreams comes true.
4. Pharaoh, the Egyptian king, finds out about Joseph’s gift when he has a strange dream about corn and cows. He calls for Joseph to explain it. God shows Joseph what the dream means, and Pharaoh makes Joseph a ruler in his kingdom.
5. Joseph is in charge again. This time he is made the leader of the whole country of Egypt. With God’s help, he saves the entire land of Egypt from starving after all their food is gone.

TRANSITION: Now that we’ve caught you up on everything that happened to Joseph between last week and this week, who would like to post this week’s puzzle piece? Great! Do you see how God’s story all goes together? That’s because it’s all God’s story!”

ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES**MATERIALS:** | Large Fruit or Vegetable Items (1 per team) |

Say, “Do you remember that last picture I showed you of Joseph storing food so his country could eat? Because of Joseph, Egypt had food for their entire country and enough to sell to surrounding countries that were also running out of food. Well, before we read our story, we’re going to play a game called *Pass the Food*. It’s an over/under relay game where you will pretend to pass food to your family. Let’s play!”



CHOOSE FRUITS OR VEGETABLES THAT WILL BE EASY TO PASS FROM CHILD TO CHILD.

GAME GOAL: To be the first team to complete their over/under relay

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide the children into two or three teams of equal numbers. Help them arrange themselves into straight lines with everyone facing forward.
2. Provide the first member of each team with the same piece of fruit or vegetable.
3. Explain that when you say, "Go!" the first player will pass the food item over their heads to the teammate behind them. Then that teammate will pass the food item between their legs to the child behind them. The process continues until the food item reaches the last player in the line. That child will then run to the front of the line and start the process again.
4. The game continues until the child, initially at the front of the line, returns to that position. The team to complete their relay first is the winner.

TRANSITION: Say, "Wow! Your teams made that relay look easy! Moving the food was fun, but trying to find enough food for your starving family would have been scary for the people who lived during today's Bible story. Thankfully, our good God always plans ahead. Today we'll see how He turned Joseph's whole story upside down and enabled him to help the same family who had tried to kill him."

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "There is so much to cover in this story. We are going to cover nine chapters in ten minutes. So, hold tight; I'm going to go fast!"

"Our story picks up when Egypt and the nearby countries had run out of food. Fortunately, God warned Joseph that this would happen, and Joseph helped his people save food ahead of time. So now, they had plenty to eat. However, the surrounding countries were unprepared for the famine, so they came to Egypt for grain [food].

"Joseph's family was among those who were growing hungry, so Jacob, Joseph's father, told his ten eldest sons to go to Egypt to buy grain. When they arrived in Egypt, they had to go to Joseph to ask permission to purchase grain; only they didn't recognize their brother. It had been years since they had seen one another, and Joseph's appearance had changed. However, Joseph knew exactly who they were." Read Genesis 42:8-13.

⁸ Joseph knew they were his brothers. But they did not know who he was. ⁹ And Joseph remembered his dreams about his brothers bowing to him. He said to them, "You are spies! You came to learn where the nation is weak!" ¹⁰ But his brothers said to him, "No, my master. We come as your servants just to buy food. ¹¹ We are all sons of the same father. We are honest men, not spies." ¹² Then Joseph said to them, "No! You have come to learn where this nation is weak!" ¹³ And they said, "We are 10 of 12 brothers. We are sons of the same father. We live in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is there with our father right now. And our other brother is gone."

Ask, "How do you think Joseph felt when he saw his brothers in Egypt? [Allow for responses.] Joseph put the brothers in prison, claiming they were spies. After three days, Joseph went to his brothers with a deal. If they left one brother in Egypt and the others would return home and bring Benjamin [the youngest brother] back, he would release the brother who stayed behind. The brothers agreed. Let's read about that from the Bible." Read Genesis 42:23-25.

23 When Joseph talked to his brothers, he used an interpreter. So they did not know that Joseph understood what they were saying. 24 Then Joseph left them and cried. After a short time he went back and spoke to them. He took Simeon and tied him up while the other brothers watched. 25 Joseph told his servants to fill his brothers' bags with grain. They were to put the money the brothers had paid for the grain back in their bags. They were to give them things they would need for their trip back home. And the servants did this.

Say, "After Joseph's family had eaten all the grain, they needed to return to Egypt for more. Jacob was afraid for them to take Benjamin, but he prayed that God would mercifully return his sons to him. Once the brothers were back in Egypt, Joseph prepared a feast for them. The brothers, still not realizing it was Joseph, ate and drank until they were full. In the morning, the brothers set off with sacks filled with grain. Joseph put his silver cup and the money they had brought in Benjamin's sack to purchase the grain. The brothers headed home, but Joseph sent his servant after the brothers to accuse them of stealing the silver cup. The brothers showed them their sacks, and to their surprise, the money was there, and the silver cup was in Benjamin's bag. They were so upset. How could this happen? It must be payment for all the bad things they had done to Joseph years ago. They felt so much shame and guilt for what they had done, and Joseph saw that his brothers were sorry. Still, he tested them. Joseph demanded that Benjamin stay as a slave, but the brothers begged Joseph to let them return their youngest brother to their father." Read Genesis 44:18-20.

18 Then Judah went to Joseph and said, "Sir, please let me speak plainly to you. Please don't be angry with me. I know that you are as powerful as the king of Egypt himself.

19 When we were here before, you asked us, 'Do you have a father or a brother?' 20 And we answered you, 'We have an old father. And we have a younger brother. He was born when our father was old. This youngest son's brother is dead. So he is the only one of his mother's children left alive. And our father loves him very much.'

Read Genesis 44:30-34.

30 Now what will happen if we go home to our father without our youngest brother? He is the most important thing in our father's life. 31 When our father sees that the young boy is not with us, he will die. And it will be our fault. We will cause the great sorrow that kills our father.

32 "I gave my father a guarantee that the young boy would be safe. I said to my father, 'If I don't bring him back to you, you can blame me all my life.' 33 So now, please allow me to stay here and be your slave. And let the young boy go back home with his brothers. 34 I cannot go back to my father if the boy is not with me. I couldn't stand to see my father that sad."

Ask, "Do you see how different Joseph's brothers are? Before, they were selfish and jealous, but now they are putting their own lives on the line for their father and brother. Joseph saw the difference too. Let's continue reading to see how Joseph responds." Read Genesis 45:2-5.

² Joseph cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him. And the people in the king's palace heard about it. ³ He said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But the brothers could not answer him, because they were very afraid of him. ⁴ So Joseph said to them, "Come close to me." So the brothers came close to him. And he said to them, "I am your brother Joseph. You sold me as a slave to go to Egypt. ⁵ Now don't be worried. Don't be angry with yourselves because you sold me here. God sent me here ahead of you to save people's lives.

Say, "Through the years, God taught Joseph that He is always helping His people. Joseph recognized that the Lord had used his own hard times to save people's lives. That experience kept him from being angry at his brothers. He forgave them, and he wanted to see his father." Read Genesis 45:25-28.

²⁵ So the brothers left Egypt and went to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. ²⁶ They told him, "Joseph is still alive. He is the ruler over all the land of Egypt." Their father was shocked and did not believe them. ²⁷ But the brothers told him everything Joseph had said. Then Jacob saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him back to Egypt. Now Jacob felt better. ²⁸ Jacob, also called Israel, said, "Now I believe you. My

Say, "Jacob, the brothers, and their entire family joined Joseph in Egypt and lived with him until Jacob's death. Things seemed 'happily ever after,' but once Jacob died, the brothers wondered if Joseph would change his mind." Read Genesis 50:20-21.

²⁰ You meant to hurt me. But God turned your evil into good. It was to save the lives of many people. And it is being done. ²¹ So don't be afraid. I will take care of you and your children." So Joseph comforted his brothers and spoke kind words to them.

Say, "Do you see how Joseph was able to forgive his brothers? One of the ways God was good to Joseph was by giving him a loving heart. He can do the same for us!"

JOINING TO JESUS

The heart of the Christian story is that God brings life after death. Joseph returns – almost as if from the dead – to his family, forgiving them and rescuing them from death. But his life is just a glimpse of Jesus, the good and better Joseph, who sacrifices Himself to defeat death and save and forgive His betrayers. Help the children see this beautiful gospel message as you prepare to discuss today's lesson.

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "We discussed A LOT of Joseph's story today. Let's see what you remember."

1. Was God with Joseph even while he was far from home?

Response: Yes, God was always with Joseph.

2. How did Joseph help his country?

Response: He carefully saved food so they still had some in storage when all their regular food was gone.

3. Who came to Joseph to buy food?

Response: Joseph's brothers

4. How do you think Joseph's brothers felt when they realized the Egyptian leader was their brother, Joseph?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. I wonder how Joseph could forgive his brothers after they had been so unkind to him.

Response: Answers may vary, but help the children see that Joseph could forgive his brothers because he could see God's goodness and grace in his own life.

6. What have you learned about God today?

Response: **God is good.** God never forgets us. God is always with us. God helps us forgive others, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Do you see how life-changing it is when we believe that **God is good**? Joseph recognized God's goodness to him, so he could pass that mercy on to his brothers. You know, none of us deserve God's goodness. We're all sinners who have disobeyed God, and yet He sent His Son to rescue us while we were His enemies. [See Romans 5:10.] I'm so thankful God loves us, is for us, and is our good Father."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Timeline Cube* Activity Page (1 per student) | Cardstock | Markers or Crayons | Scissors | Tape |



BEFORE CLASS, PRINT A COPIES OF THE TIMELINE CUBE ACTIVITY PAGE ON CARDSTOCK. YOU'LL NEED ONE FOR EACH CHILD.

Say, Today's story covered a lot, and I want you to remember that even through the good and bad things that happened to Joseph, his story shows us that **God is good**. So, we're going to color and create bingo cards to help us remember highlights from today's lesson."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have the children color their cubes with markers (or crayons).
2. Next, have everyone cut out the perimeter of the cube and fold along each line.
3. Instruct the kids to tuck the tabs inside the cube and secure them with tape. Assist younger children as needed.

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's try our cubes out!" The pictures on the cube match the ones you showed the children during the BACKGROUND portion of today's lesson. Go through each image, reminding the children which part of Joseph's life the pictures represent. Then, pair each child with a friend and have them roll their cubes and share the part of Joseph's story illustrated by the picture that lands on top.

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “We’ve all experienced people who are unkind or even mean. When this happens, our natural desire is to strike back. Maybe you feel like punching the boy who makes fun of you on the playground, or you want to exclude the girl who left you out of last week’s conversation. I understand. We’re all tempted to seek revenge. But God says there is a better way. He tells us that we can and should forgive those who hurt us. We can treat even our enemies better than they deserve because that’s what Jesus did for us. Let’s determine to become people who live and act like Christ, no matter what comes our way. We can do this with help from the Holy Spirit, who reminds us of our good and loving God. Now, let’s practice our Focus Verse.”

You meant to hurt me. [Lean back with both hands blocking face.]
But God [Point up with both hands.] **turned your evil** [Frown and give a big “thumbs down.”] **into good.** [Smile and give a big “thumbs up.”]
Genesis 50:20, ICB [hold hands open like a book]

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “Great job memorizing this month’s Focus Verse. Sometimes it is hard to see that **God is good**, but I promise you, He is. He takes unlikable people like Jacob and Joseph and uses them to save His people. He takes sinners like you and me and makes us His friends. Let’s thank God for His goodness right now.”

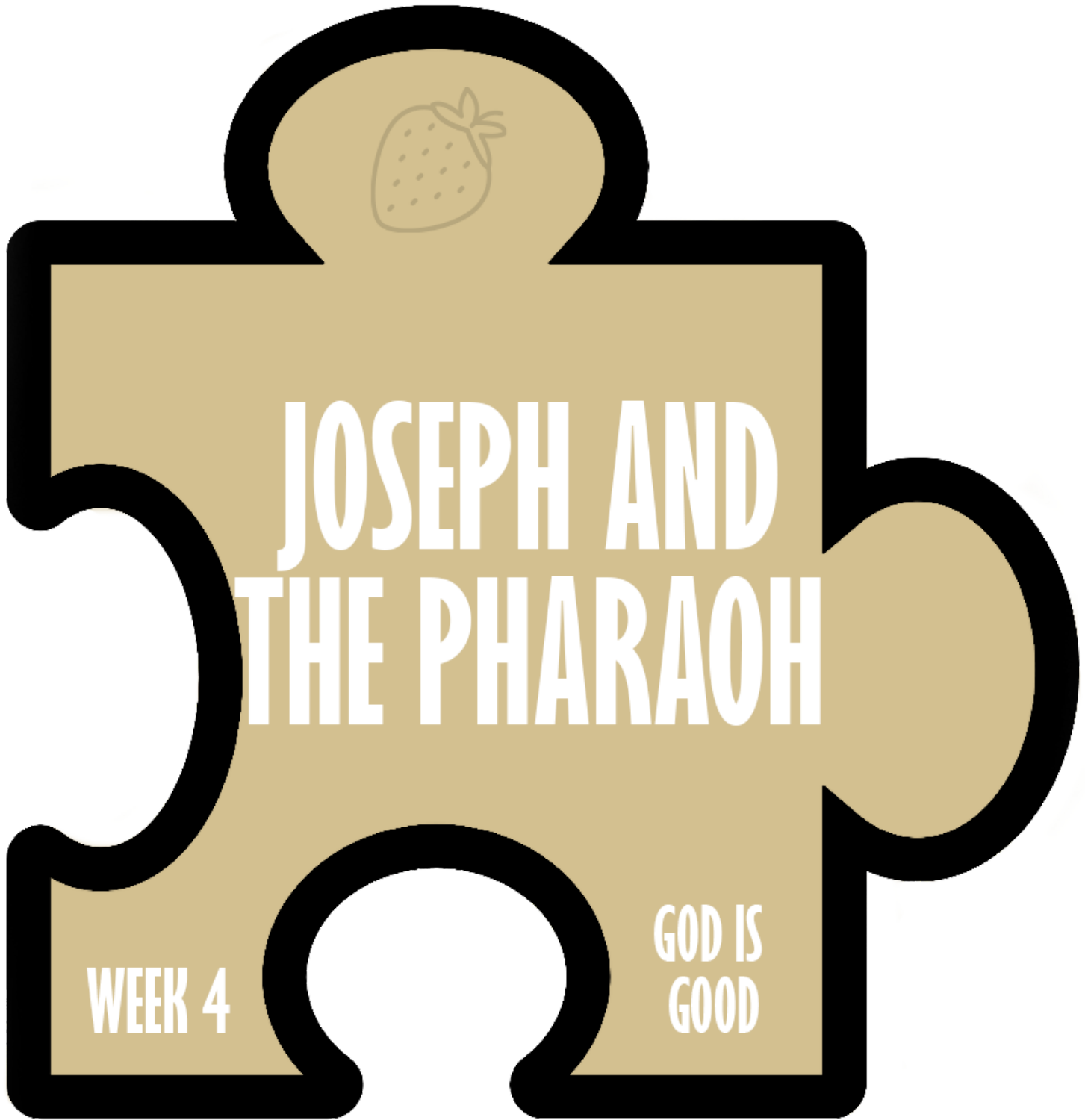


BEFORE YOU PRAY, ASK THE CHILDREN TO RESPOND IN TWO WAYS:
 1) ASK THEM TO SHARE A WAY THEY HAVE SEEN GOD’S LOVE IN THEIR LIVES, AND 2) GIVE THE CHILDREN AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE NEEDS THEY’D LIKE THEIR CLASS TO PRAY ABOUT TOGETHER.

SAMPLE PRAYER: *“Heavenly Father, thank You for generously offering us forgiveness through Jesus. Please don’t ever let us forget how good You are. And now, we pray for the needs of the children in our class. [Pray specifically for the requests that were shared.] Help us be patient, and know that You see us, You love us, and that You are working for our good, even when we don’t notice it. We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If you have extra time, play a favorite game, or sing worship songs from this unit. As the children are leaving, remind them to share their *Timeline Cubes* with their families and retell Joseph’s story.



**JOSEPH AND
THE PHARAOH**

WEEK 4

**GOD IS
GOOD**



1



2

