

JOSEPH

God's Plan and Purpose

Lesson 5

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum • Summer 2020

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JOSEPH: God's Plans Don't Change

Lesson 5

Genesis 41:53-42:38

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is from the New Living Translation of the book of Genesis.

Memory Verse: But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations. (Psalm 33:11 NIV)

When we last left Joseph, he was second in command over all of Egypt. Finally, some good news! He was also married with two children and food was plentiful in Egypt, but it wasn't going to last.

"The seven years of plenty came to an end. Then seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had predicted." (41:53-54 TLB) Because of Joseph's grain storage plan over the last seven years, Egypt had a lot of food. So, when the people ran out of what they had at home and "began to get hungry, they cried out to Pharaoh for food. He told all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph. Do what he tells you.'" (41:55) When the people came asking for food, Joseph opened the storehouses and began to sell grain to the Egyptians.

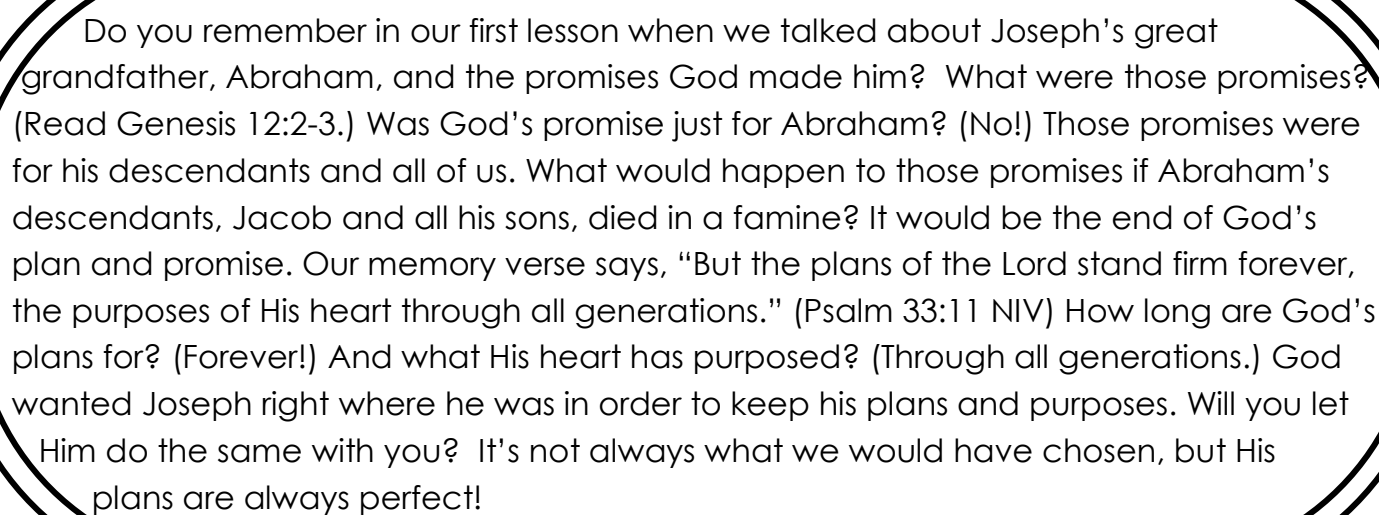
The surrounding countries ran out of food, too. People came from everywhere to buy grain from Joseph, even Joseph's brothers, the ten oldest. When they came to Joseph to buy food they bowed down before him. That's exactly what Joseph's first dream said would happen. Who remembers that first dream? (Wait for a response about the dream of 11 bundles of grain bowing to Joseph's.) Joseph recognized his brothers immediately, but they didn't recognize him. Joseph had changed over the last thirteen years. He was no longer a teenager; he was now a man. He also looked like an Egyptian. He was clean-shaven and would have worn eye makeup; Egyptian men and women did. And who from Joseph's family would have ever thought to find Joseph, their infuriating little brother, as second in command over all of Egypt?

Joseph spoke to his brothers through an interpreter. He spoke harshly to them and asked them a lot of questions. He even accused them of being spies! They explained, "'No, my lord...your servants have simply come to buy food. We are all brothers—

members of the same family. We are honest men, sir! We are not spies.'" (42:10-11) Joseph accused them again and they explained more about their family, even telling Joseph that they were a total of twelve brothers, the ten of them, a younger brother at home, and one brother who was no longer with them (Joseph). Joseph insisted, though, and decided to put to test the story they had told.

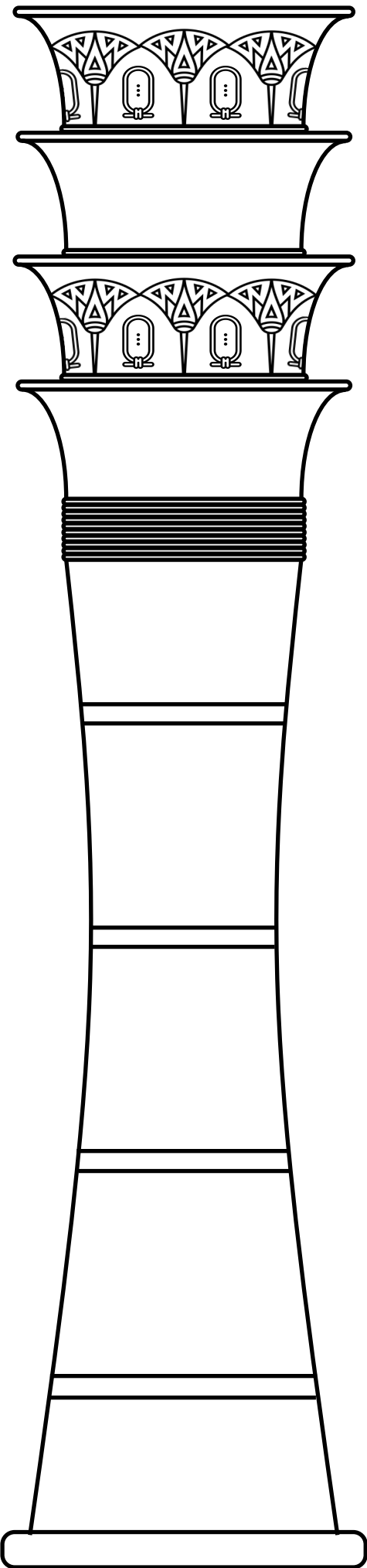
First, Joseph threw all of his brothers in jail for three days. Then, on the third day, Joseph made them choose one brother to remain in jail. The other nine brothers had to return home to feed their families, but they also had to return with their youngest brother. That is how they would prove they weren't spies and that they were telling the truth. While they discussed this in their own language with each other "they said, 'clearly we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his anguish when he pleaded for his life, but we wouldn't listen. That's why we are in this trouble.'" (42:21) What they didn't know was that Joseph understood what they were saying and he had to turn away. What they said brought back so many memories and it made Joseph cry. When he could face his brothers again, they told him that Simeon would stay behind, in jail, while they went back to their father in Canaan.

It seems like Joseph was angry with them and was seeking revenge, but the Bible tells us that when his brother's sacks were being filled with grain, Joseph ordered that their money be given back to them in those sacks. "[Joseph] also gave them supplies for their journey home." (42:25) Does that sound like someone angrily seeking revenge? No, it doesn't. When they finally arrived home, they told their father everything that had happened, even the agreement they made with Joseph. Then they realized everyone's money was in his sack and they were all terrified! They didn't understand that God was using Joseph to keep them alive!



Do you remember in our first lesson when we talked about Joseph's great grandfather, Abraham, and the promises God made him? What were those promises? (Read Genesis 12:2-3.) Was God's promise just for Abraham? (No!) Those promises were for his descendants and all of us. What would happen to those promises if Abraham's descendants, Jacob and all his sons, died in a famine? It would be the end of God's plan and promise. Our memory verse says, "But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations." (Psalm 33:11 NIV) How long are God's plans for? (Forever!) And what His heart has purposed? (Through all generations.) God wanted Joseph right where he was in order to keep his plans and purposes. Will you let Him do the same with you? It's not always what we would have chosen, but His plans are always perfect!

ACTIVITIES



- ◇ Memory Verse Activity: Make Memory Verse Ribbons (like first place ribbons). Print part of the verse on a heart and the remainder on a ribbon attached to the heart.
- ◇ Walk like an Egyptian! Teach your student to extend their arms, bend them, and walk like an Egyptian. Talk about Joseph's transformation of different clothing, hairstyle, and makeup.
- ◇ Run a Grain Relay. Prepare 4 bags: 2 empty bags and 2 bags full of grain (rice, corn, barley, oats, etc.) The relay will consist of two teams scooping grain from their bag with a plastic spoon, running the length of the relay course, and depositing what grain remains in their spoon in the empty bag at the end of the course. The team with the most grain in their bag wins!
- ◇ Provide coloring pages of Joseph in charge, his brothers, buying grain, and the country of Egypt.
- ◇ Provide a map of the route from Canaan to Egypt.



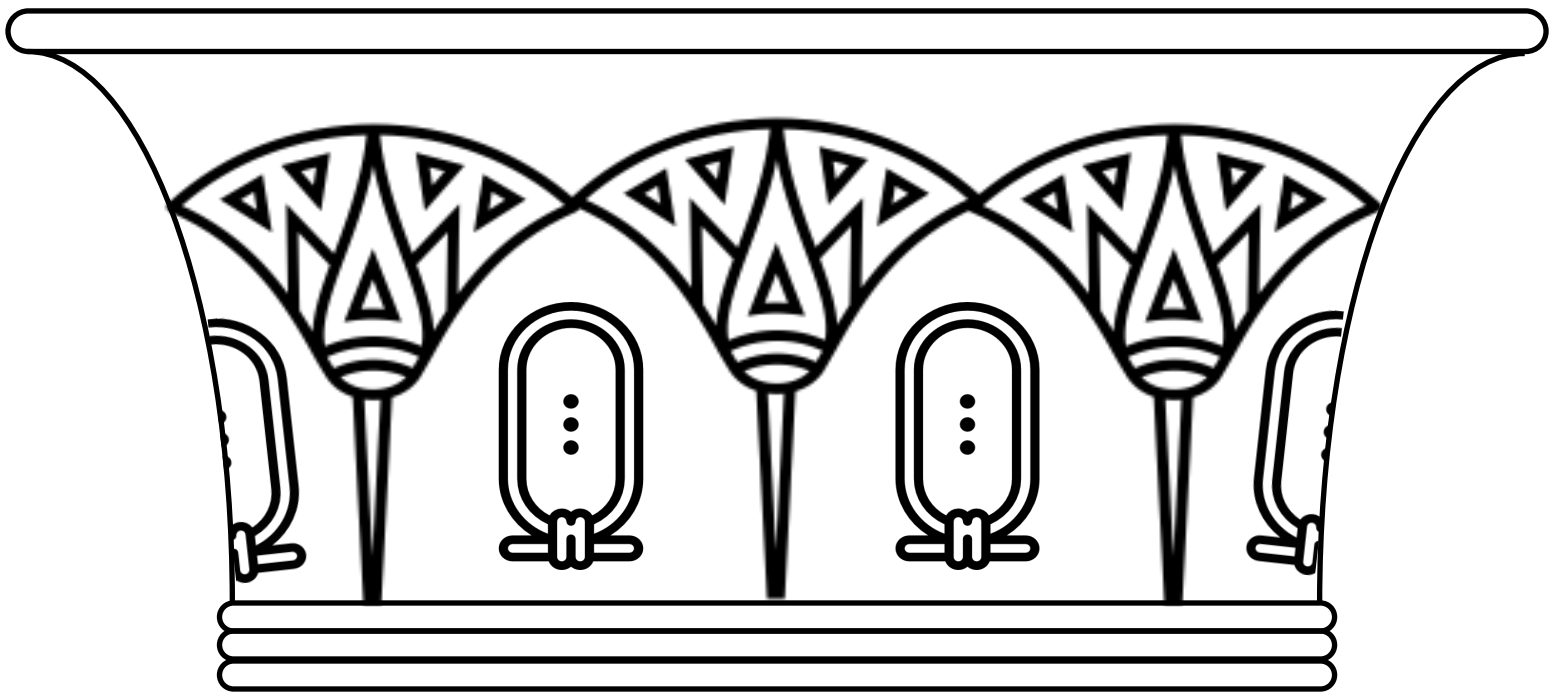
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Psalm 33:11



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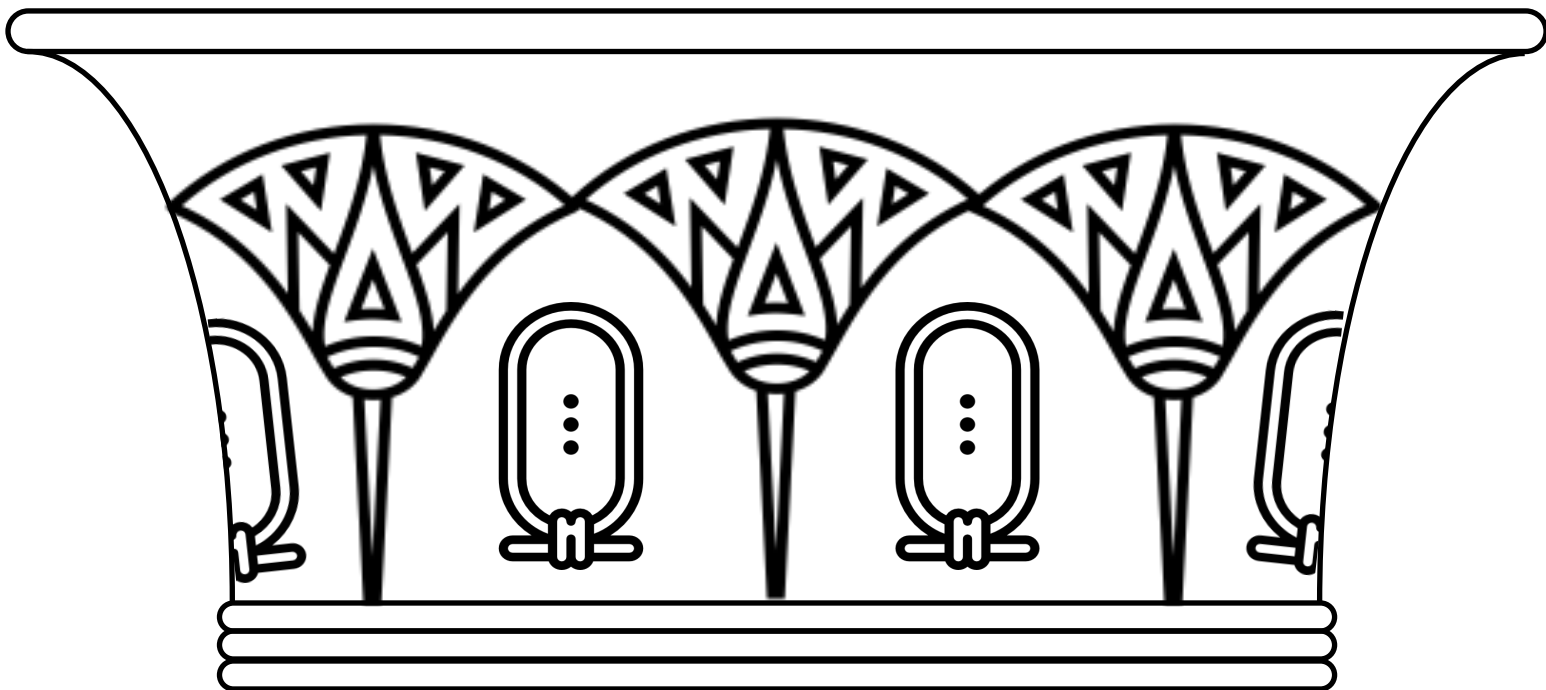
Psalm 33:11



WORD SEARCH

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t	p	y	g	e	n	i	n	i	a	r	g
s	l	b	r	m	e	i	h	i	m	e	i
b	n	e	g	i	w	n	t	t	i	h	m
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n	t	w	o	d	j	a	i	l	s	t	f
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famine	grain in Egypt	brothers
test	Simeon	jail



WORD SEARCH

j	o	c	n	n	p	h	d	l	o	c	a
i	h	u	i	o	c	h	a	r	f	s	t
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m	p	a	t	s	v	t	e	t	n	t	s
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p	j	a	w	l	r	r	d	e	l	m	s
n	t	w	o	d	j	a	i	l	s	t	f
p	l	u	c	k	l	t	r	a	n	e	m

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