

JOSEPH

God's Plan and Purpose

Lesson 6

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum • Summer 2020

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JOSEPH: God's Plan and Purpose Understood



Lesson 6

Genesis 43-45

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

Memory Verse: And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. Romans 8:28

When we last left Joseph he had seen his brothers, but they did not recognize him. He provided them with grain and provisions and returned their money to them hidden within the grain bags. His brothers returned to Canaan to feed their families and were not to return without their youngest brother, Benjamin.

The Bible tells us that the "famine in Canaan got worse." (43:1 CEV) The grain that Joseph's brothers bought in Egypt was almost gone, so Jacob told his sons to go buy more. Judah reminded his father of the condition; to receive more grain, they had to return with Benjamin. As much as Jacob didn't want to let Benjamin go, he knew he had to or they would all starve. All eleven brothers prepared to go and packed gifts to take with them. They packed the best products of the land like honey, pistachio nuts, and almonds. Then they set off on another 200 mile journey.

When they finally arrived in Egypt and Joseph saw that Benjamin was with them he instructed that they be taken to his palace to have lunch with him. They were terrified. They thought they were in trouble for the money they had found in their bags, but were returning, so they spoke with the manager of Joseph's house. "Relax. Don't be afraid...Your God, the God of your father, must have put this treasure into your sacks. I know I received your payment." (43:23) Then Simeon was brought to them and they were given water to wash their feet.

When Joseph came home for lunch, his brothers presented him with all the wonderful things from their land, the land where Joseph had grown up. Then they "bowed low to the ground before him." After greeting them and asking about their father, "they bowed again." (43:26, 28) At seeing Benjamin, Joseph left the room, went to his private room and cried. It had been twenty-two years since Joseph had seen Benjamin. After he washed his face, Joseph returned to the dining room. He "told each of his brothers were to sit, and to their amazement, he seated them according to age, from oldest to youngest." (43:33) Benjamin was served more than the others, but everyone ate and drank as much as they wanted. The next morning at dawn, Joseph's brothers were up and ready to go. Joseph sent them away with their donkeys loaded and their grain sacks full, but he had one more test for them. Joseph under-

stood that, after he disappeared, his father's life was bound up in the only other child of Rachel, Jacob's second wife, but his first love. So Joseph continued testing his brothers to see how they would respond. When their grain sacks were prepared, Joseph had his own silver cup placed in Benjamin's bag and as his brothers left for Canaan he had them pursued and accused of stealing. Sure of their innocence, they promised to be subject to death or slavery if found guilty. Beginning with the oldest, everyone's bag was searched, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack!" (44:12) All of them were very upset. Can you imagine what they were thinking as they returned to the city? They were sure God must be punishing them for their sins.

The time had come for Joseph to see what his brothers were really like. Would they be as cruel and hateful with Benjamin as they had been with him? Thankfully, somewhere along the way, these brothers had begun to change. At the thought of leaving Benjamin as a slave in Egypt and killing their father with sadness, Judah stepped forward and begged to take Benjamin's place.

"Joseph couldn't stand it any longer." (45:1) He asked everyone to leave the room so that he could be alone with his brothers. "He broke down and wept...so loudly the Egyptians could hear him, and word of it quickly carried to Pharaoh's palace." (45:2) More than 20 years had passed since Joseph had lived in Canaan, since he had seen Benjamin and his father and it all spilled out, "'I am Joseph,' he said to his brothers." (45:3) And he began to ask about his father again, but his brothers were so shocked they couldn't speak! Joseph reassured them. Yes, he was their brother, the one they sold into slavery, but they didn't need to be afraid. Joseph explained that it was really God who sent him to Egypt to keep them alive! God was also the one who made Joseph Pharaoh's adviser.

Then Joseph said, "Now go! Hurry back home and bring my father and your families. There are still 5 more years of famine. You will live here so you don't starve." Pharaoh even offered to send wagons to make the trip back easier for the women and children and told them, "Don't worry about your personal belongings, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours."

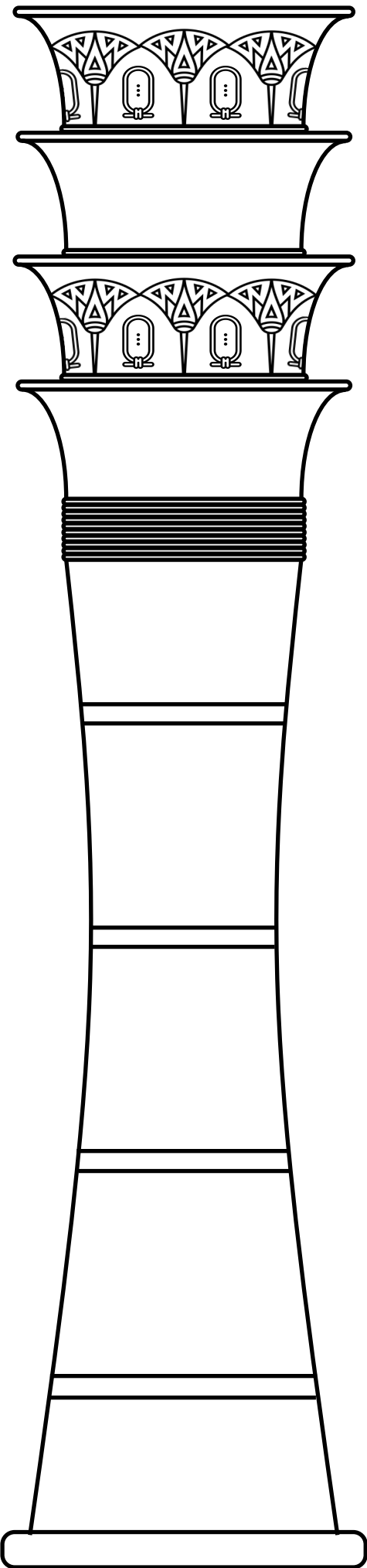
When they arrived in Canaan and told Jacob all that had happened and that Joseph was still alive, it encouraged their father. "Then Jacob exclaimed, 'It must be true! My son Joseph is alive! I must go and see him before I die.'" (45:28)

What family was Joseph from? Who was his great-grand-father? And what promise did God give to Abraham that could bless you and me? (Jesus would come through the descendants of Abraham.)

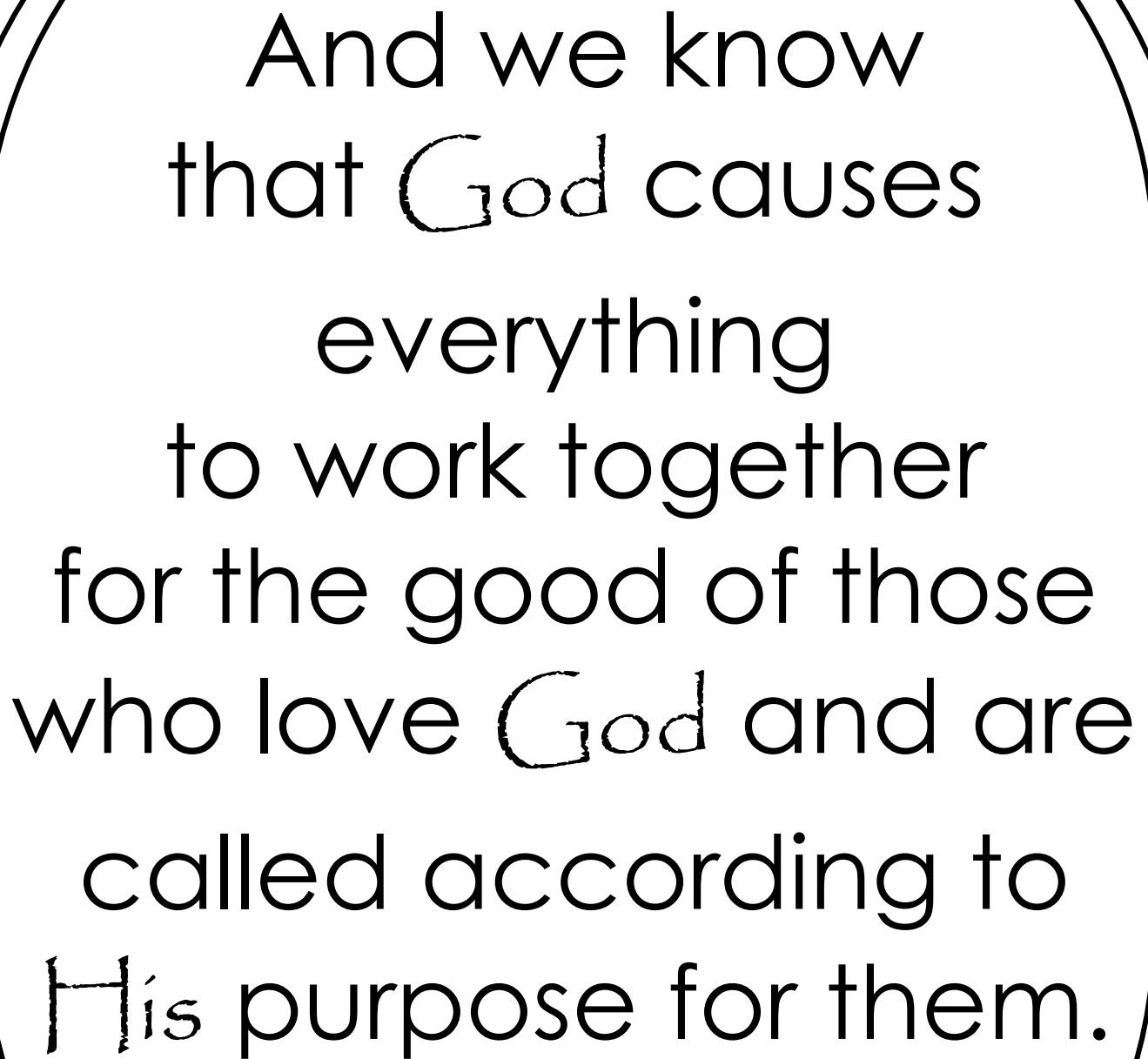
Do you remember when Joseph explained to his brothers that it was really God who sent him to Egypt to keep everyone alive! Joseph had looked past all the bad things that had happened in his life and could see that God had a bigger plan, bigger even than Joseph and his own family, even though it included them. That sounds like our memory verse: "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." (Romans 8:28)

Is that you? Do you love God? Are you following the plan and purpose God has for you, at least what you understand of it right now? If so, you can be sure that God will work everything out for your good, even the bad things!

ACTIVITIES

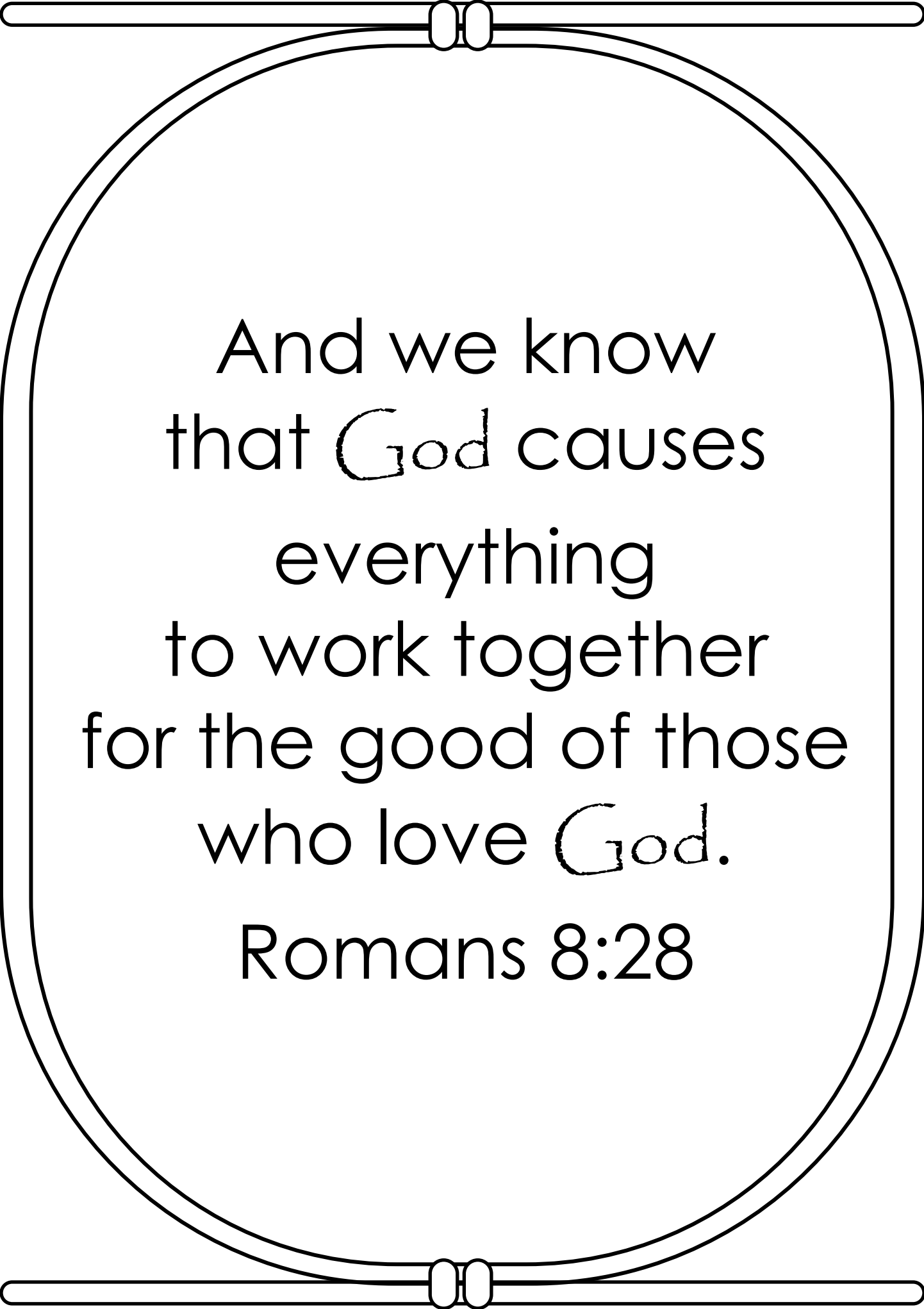


- ◇ Memory Verse Activity: Make a simple memory verse puzzle. Print the memory verse on a solid piece of paper. Cut the paper into pieces. Encourage your students to fit the pieces together to practice the memory verse.
- ◇ Make papyrus. Tear craft paper or paper bags into strips. Dip the strips into glue and lay down side by side on waxed paper or plastic. Repeat the above, laying the strips perpendicular to the previous layer. Allow to dry and decorate.
- ◇ Try another Grain Relay. Prepare 2 bags full of grain (rice, corn, barley, oats, etc.) and place at the end of the relay course. The relay will consist of two teams moving down the length of the relay course with a coin between the knees. The coin is to be deposited into the full bag of grain. The team with the most coins in their bag of grain wins!
- ◇ Provide nuts and honey for snack. (Be aware of those with nut allergies and provide something else like grainy crackers.) Talk about the gifts Joseph's brothers brought him from home. Ask your students what some of their favorite foods from home are.
- ◇ Provide coloring pages of Joseph's reunion with his brothers.
- ◇ Provide a map of the route from Canaan to Egypt. Discuss the distance of about 200 miles and share places that are 200 miles from where you live.



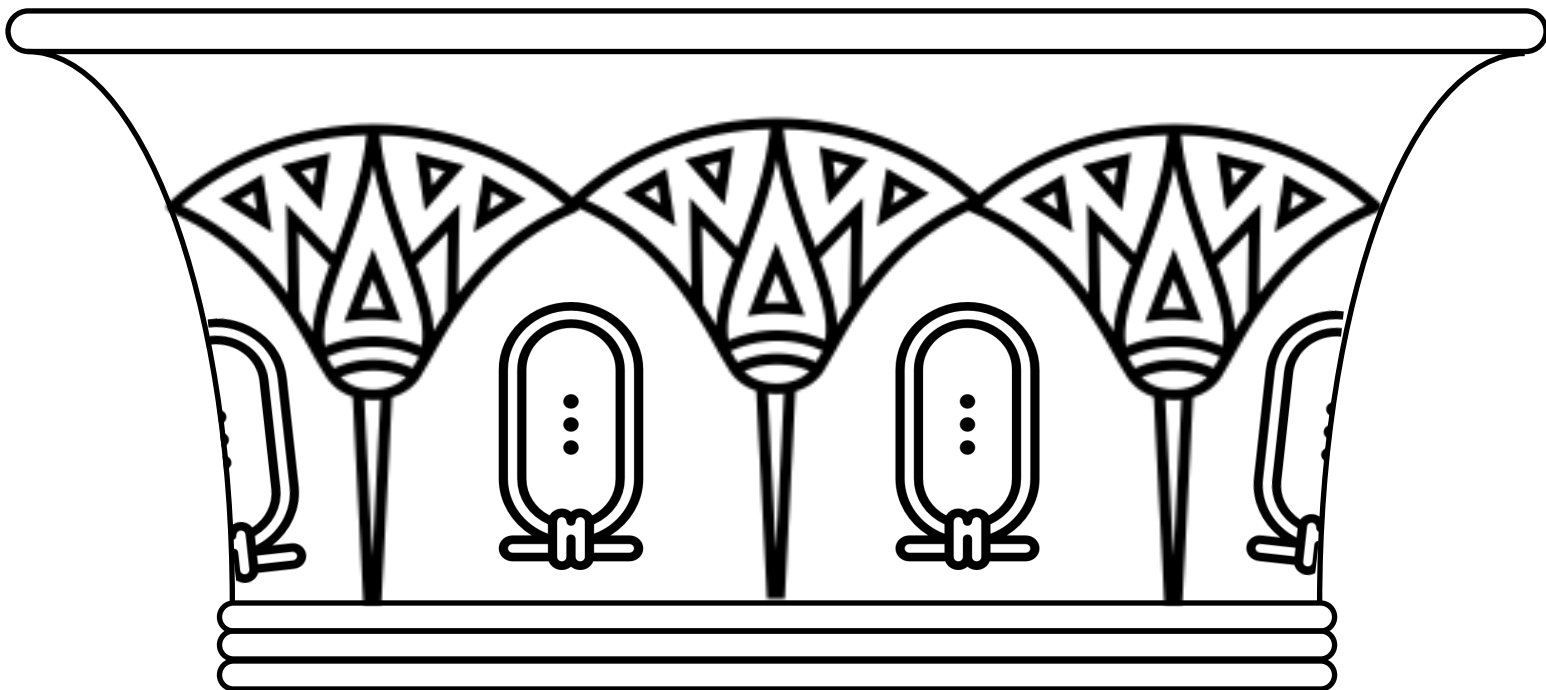
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Romans 8:28



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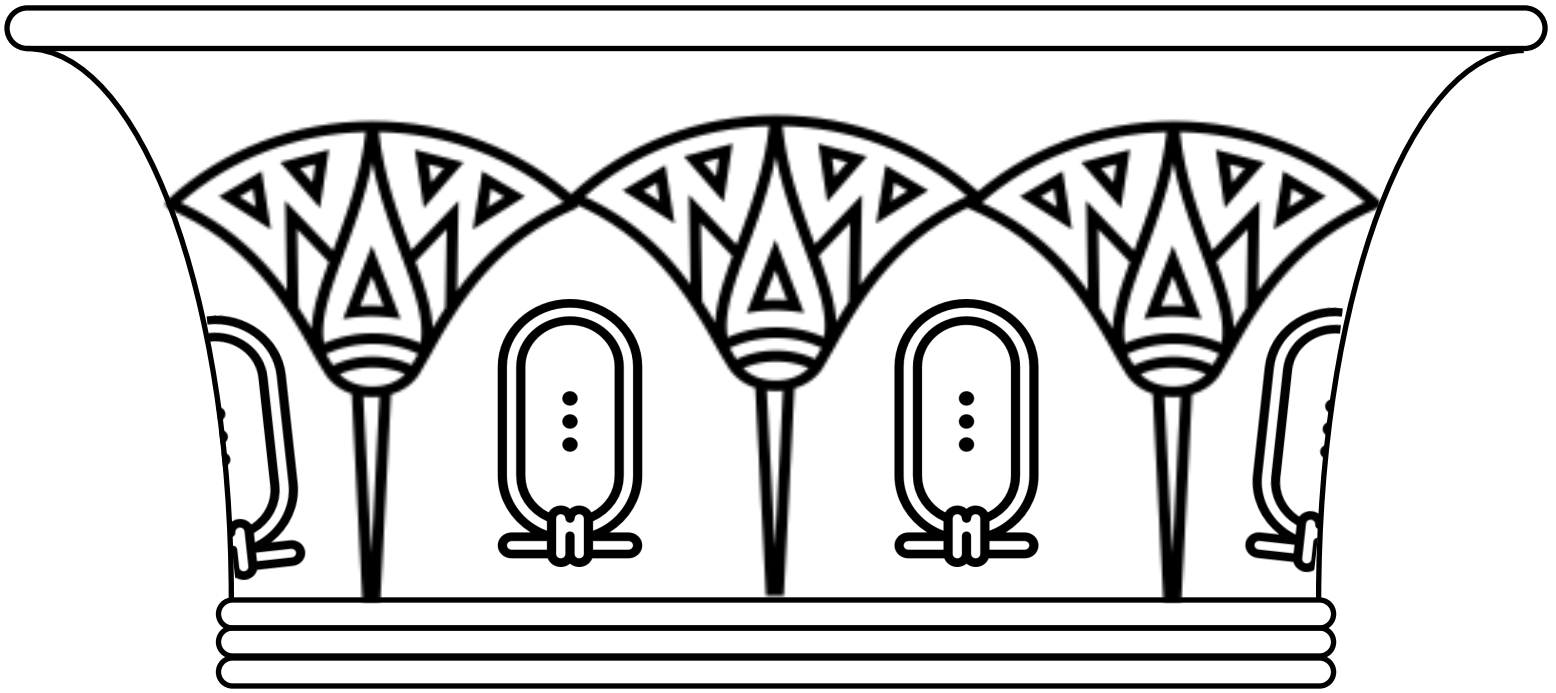
Romans 8:28



WORD SEARCH

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

Joseph	Benjamin	brothers
test	God's good plan	bring father



WORD SEARCH

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

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