


GOD CALLED OUR FATHERS

UNIT TWO: Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Lesson 6:**Joseph in Prison**

CONTENT:

1. Joseph's brothers sold him to traders. He was taken to Egypt, where he was bought by the captain of the king's guard.
2. Joseph worked so well that he was put in charge of the whole house; but the captain's wife told lies about him and he was sent to the king's prison. Joseph trusted God throughout and did his best.
3. Jesus' close friend also betrayed him for money. Jesus was captured. People told lies about him and he was whipped, insulted, suffered and died on the cross. All along, he trusted God. He knew that God was doing something good for all of us.
-  4. Sometimes we also face difficult times. God is so great that he can work something good even when bad things happen. We must trust God and keep doing what is right.

REFERENCES: Genesis 37:12-36, 39:1-20; Matthew 26:14-16, 59-60, 27:27-44. Luke 23:46.
CCC 312-314; 606-607.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts.

HOME ASSIGNMENT: Read the handout.

I. STARTER:

- Do you remember Joseph's dreams, and how his brothers were jealous of him? What do people do when they are jealous of someone? *[They try to hurt them.]*
- Suppose your classmate or brother or sister became jealous of you and was mean to you, how would you feel? *[Sad, upset, afraid maybe.]*

II. DEVELOPMENT:

Let's hear some more about Joseph and his brothers. Once Joseph's older brothers went off with the sheep and they didn't return for some days. Their father got worried. In those days there were no mobile phones, so what could he do? He called Joseph and said, "Go and look for your brothers and find out how they are. Then come back and tell me."

Joseph went off to search for his brothers. But when he was still far away, his brothers saw his bright colourful coat and they knew it was him. "Oh, here comes the great dreamer! At last our chance has come! Let's kill him. There's no one around to save Daddy's little pet!"

But Reuben, the eldest brother, heard them and said, "No! We cannot kill our own brother. Let's just throw him into a pit. He will die there without any food or water." (Reuben was planning to rescue him quietly when the other brothers had gone away.)

So when Joseph came near, the brothers caught him and pulled off his coat. They threw him into a deep pit, so that he couldn't escape. Then they sat down to eat their lunch. As they were eating, they saw some Arabs with their camels coming that way. They were traders. They used to buy things from one place and sell them in another place.

Judah said, "I have an idea! Let's sell Joseph to those traders. They will take him away and we will never see him again. That way, we will get some money too!" "Good idea!" the others said. So they pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the traders for 20 silver coins. Then the cunning brothers killed a goat, dipped Joseph's coat into the blood and took it back to their father. They pretended to be very sad. "Look what we found lying on the hillside! Is it Joseph's coat?"

Jacob got fooled when he saw the coat with blood all over it. He cried, "Why did I send my son out all alone? A wild animal has killed my precious son!" He wouldn't stop crying for his son for many days.

Meanwhile what about Joseph? Let's see what happened to him. He was tied up with ropes and taken far, far away to a land called Egypt. As he sat on the bumpy camel for days and days in the hot sun he was very sad and frightened. But he kept telling himself, "God is with me! Even if I have no one else, he is my friend. He will look after me."

When the travellers reached Egypt, the traders took Joseph to the market-place. There people were buying and selling camels, horses, sheep and... people. Joseph had to stand and wait for someone to buy him, as if he were an animal. A captain of the king's guard came round looking at all the slaves. When he saw Joseph, he said, "What a handsome, strong young man. I will buy him to work in my house." He paid the traders and took him home.

Joseph was happy to work for the captain. He said to himself, "I will work hard and do my best. That's what God would like." So he did whatever he was asked to do, and he did it very well. His master was so happy with him that he put him in charge of the whole house and all the other servants. But then... TROUBLE again! The captain's wife got angry with Joseph and tried to get him into trouble. She told her husband lies about Joseph. The captain believed his wife and sent Joseph to prison in the king's palace.

So once again Joseph was in a bad place. As he sat in the dark prison he remembered his home and his father and mother. Then he remembered his dreams. "God," he prayed, "I know you can see me even now. You haven't forgotten me. You have a good plan for me. I will trust you and do my best even here in prison."

[Give out the handouts. Children read the 'Joseph Rap' and try to memorise it. They say it in pairs, one asking and the other answering. The rhyme is accompanied by rhythmic clapping: 2 claps in (their own hands) and 2 claps out (with partners). End and begin with the chorus: 'God is good...']

NEXT CLASS:

- What bad things happened to Joseph? *[His brothers sold him to traders. He was taken far away from home. He became a slave. Later he was put into prison.]*
But Joseph didn't stop trusting God. He knew that God could do good things even out of bad.
- There was another good man who was treated very badly because people were jealous of him. Do you know who that good man was? *[Jesus.]*

One night, when Jesus was in a garden with some of his friends, a whole lot of soldiers came there with torches and swords. One of Jesus' apostles had taken money from Jesus' enemies. He came with the soldiers and went and kissed Jesus. The kiss was a sign to show the soldiers whom to catch. The soldiers caught Jesus and tied him up. They took him to the house of the high priest. There people came and told lies about Jesus, so that they could get an excuse to kill him. (Remember how the captain's wife told lies about Joseph?)

Then the soldiers took Jesus to the governor's house. They whipped Jesus and made fun of him. They put a crown of thorns on his head. They made him carry a heavy cross up to a hill and then they hammered nails into his hands and feet and fixed him onto the cross. Jesus hung on the cross for 3 hours. It was a terrible time for him. His whole body was full of pain. He could hardly breathe. But he knew that God was doing something good even at that terrible time. As he died, he knew that God was taking him to himself. He cried out, "Father, into your hands I give my spirit!" Then he died.

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Close your eyes. Think of Jesus and Joseph. So many bad things happened to them. People were mean to them and hurt them. But they knew that God was with them. They kept trusting God. Let's pray.

Dear God / I know that you are good and loving./ Even when bad things happen, I will trust you./ You can make bad things turn into good./ Help me to do my best and not give up./ Amen.

[Children read the handout and colour the pictures. End by doing the 'Joseph Rap once more.]

Home assignment: Read the handout.