



# 5

## Bondage in Egypt

### Key Themes

- God is faithful to His promises.
- God's plans are perfect.

### Key Passages

- Exodus 1:7–14; 2:23–25

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Connect the promise of a land given to Abraham with the deliverance of the Israelites.
- Describe God's answer to the groans and cries of the Israelites in Egypt.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

page 5

Students will continue to learn the Twelve Sons of Jacob song by singing the song to the tune of "Skip, Skip, Skip to My Lou."



### Activity 1: Hot Potato Memory Verse Challenge

page 5

Students will review the memory verse one phrase at a time as they pass a "hot potato" around a circle.



### Studying God's Word

page 6

The Israelites cried out because of their affliction in Egypt. God in His mercy heard their cry and acknowledged them, showing Himself faithful and His plans perfect.



### Activity 2: What Did God Promise?

page 8

Students will recognize that God promised the land of Canaan to His people, beginning with Abraham. God is faithful to His promises—even when it seems to take a long time.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- Print one Twelve Sons of Jacob song sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Optional: have candy or some other small prize available to recognize students who have learned the names of the sons of Jacob.

- Twelve Sons of Jacob song sheet for each student
- Optional: reward candy for Sons of Jacob memory work



### HOT POTATO MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE

- Bring a real potato or other safe object to pass such as a bean bag, rolled up mitten, or even a wad of paper.

- Item to serve as the "hot potato"



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



### WHAT DID GOD PROMISE?

- Print one What Did God Promise? worksheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- What Did God Promise? worksheet for each student
- What Did God Promise? answer key
- Pencils



## Memory Verse

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

To prepare for this lesson, read Genesis 49:29–50:26; Exodus 1:7–14; Exodus 2:23–25.

Joseph's life as recorded in Genesis is an amazing display of God's sovereignty over every circumstance—good or bad—and His faithfulness throughout generations to keep His covenant and deliver His people to the Promised Land. Scripture tells us how the promise originally made to Abraham (Genesis 15:18) passed on to Isaac (Genesis 26:3–4) to Jacob (Genesis 35:12) to Joseph (Genesis 48:21) and now to the Israelite nation (Genesis 50:24).

After blessing his sons, Jacob died, and was taken by his family back to Canaan to be buried with his fathers. After Jacob's death and burial (Genesis 49:33–50:14), Joseph demonstrated that the reconciliation he enjoyed with his brothers was sincere—and not merely out of respect for his father (Genesis 50:15). Joseph had always trusted God who turned the evil done against him to good. Joseph's faith in God resonates in his response to his brothers,

“But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them (Genesis 50:20–21).

Will this lesson that Joseph learned so well and so graciously pass to his family and sustain them through the difficulties to come? For we know that after Joseph died (Genesis 50:26) and a new king arose who did not know Joseph (Exodus 1:8), things got bad for the Israelites. This new king was intimidated by their great numbers; he ordered them into slavery and forced them to carry heavy burdens, building cities and bearing much suffering (Exodus 1:9–11). It was during their slavery and afflictions that the Bible tells us the Israelites began to groan because of their bondage and to cry out. God, in His mercy and faithfulness, looked upon them, heard their cries, acknowledged them, and remembered His covenant (Exodus 2:23–24).

## APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Because of the lack of historical records, there are some Bible critics who argue that the Israelites were never in Egypt. Let's consider a couple of things. First

of all, God's Word gives us an extensive account of this journey. His Word is true, infallible, inerrant—He cannot lie. We cannot discount any part of it. If we do so, we open the door to disbelieve all of it.

Secondly, Egyptian records are far from complete, with close to no records being recovered from the Nile Delta, which was the scene of these events.

Thirdly, because Egyptian history did not allow for negative events to be recorded, we would not expect to have the Exodus of more than two million slaves, the devastation to the country by supernatural plagues, the plundering of the wealthy by the slaves, and the destruction of the Egyptian army recorded. No, this was not a time of national pride for the Egyptians—and it appears they had no intention of leaving any record of it for future generations.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As we consider a look at history and how it relates to the Exodus we remember that this was a real event. And because we rely on Scripture to be our final authority and our foundation, we start there and then determine if God has allowed any evidence that might confirm His inerrant Word.

In the case of the Exodus we have determined some things that confirm what God's Word records. According to the new chronology of Egypt, which considers that many of the Egyptian kings had overlapping reigns, the Israelites would have been in Egypt during the 12th and 13th Dynasties. Based on this fact and the chronology of Egyptian Pharaohs, many scholars believe that Pharaoh Sesostri III could very likely be the Egyptian ruler who arose after Joseph died and began the oppression of the Hebrews. He was the fifth king of the 12th dynasty, and was recognized for the cities he built in the delta including Bubastis, Qantir, and Raamses—built by Israelite slaves (see Exodus 1:11).

We also know that a later Pharaoh, Amenemhet III, built two pyramids for himself, one at Dahsur and the other at Hawarra in the Faiyum Oasis. The latter was built of sun-dried mud bricks, and the outside was faced with smooth white stones. It is likely that these very pyramids were also built by Israelite slave labor while under their terrible burden (Exodus 5:7).

When Amenemhet died, his daughter, Sobekneferu, succeeded him, but she only ruled for four years, and with her death came the end of the 12th Egyptian Dynasty. The Hebrews remained in servitude into the

13th Dynasty, but their prophesied time in Egypt was close to an end (Genesis 15:13–14). Now it was God who would act to deliver them and give us one of the greatest pictures of redemption in the Old Testament.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



## **BEFORE THE THRONE**

Lord, I come to you with the groans and suffering of my life. I know you have a purpose for my

circumstances and will be faithful to complete the work you have begun in me. You will glorify your name as you complete your perfect plans. I thank you for this opportunity to present your truth to the children under my care. Please work to soften their hearts to receive your Word. Bring them into the kingdom of the Son you love.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will sing the 12 Sons of Jacob song. Pass out the song sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



## Hot Potato Memory Verse Challenge

### MATERIALS

- Real potato or other object that won't injure anyone when passed around such as a bean bag, rolled up mitten, or even a wad of paper.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Let's do a little work on our memory verse. We should be able to do this easily!

We are going to play Memory Verse Hot Potato. Let's get into a circle.

I will start the "hot potato" by giving the reference to our memory verse, and then I'll pass the potato to the person on my right. That person will quote the first few words of the verse before passing the potato to his or her right. Each person who gets the

potato says a few more words of the verse until we end with the reference. Here we go. *Allow students to look at the Memory Verse poster if needed. Reinforce the verse by playing another round. If your group is able, alter the game in the third round by allowing students to pass left, right, or across during the round.*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

These verses help us to remember that everything God does is good. Remember, Joseph had lived through terrible things, being sold into slavery, going to prison, being separated from his family—yet in the end, he knew that what his family did out of hatred and meanness, God meant for everyone's good.





# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

Joseph and his family survived the famine and continued to live in Egypt until they died. But before they died they had children. Years passed and those children had children who had children and on and on. This is where we begin our reading today—in the book of Exodus.

Exodus is the second book of the Bible. Exodus sounds like the word “exit,” and it means the same thing. In this book of the Bible we learn the history of the Israelites’ exit from Egypt.

Exodus 1:7–14

Let’s read Exodus 1:7–14 together. *Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud. Encourage students to keep the reading interesting for everyone by reading with expression and enthusiasm.*

## EXAMINE THE WORD

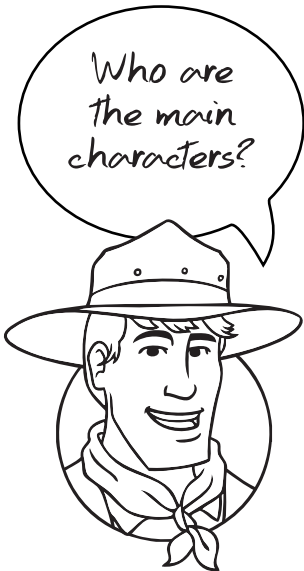
Now that we have read the text, let’s observe what it says by asking some questions.

### Observe the Text

*Refer to the Bible Study poster to remind your students how to dig deeper into God’s Word by asking the right questions.*

- ? Who are the main characters in this passage? You can find the answer in Exodus 1:8–9. *A new king, his people (the Egyptians), and the children of Israel.*
- ? What does Exodus 1:8 say about the new king and Joseph? *The new king did not know Joseph.*
- ? What had happened to the children of Israel? Look in verse 7 for the answer. *They had multiplied greatly.*

The children of Israel were all the descendants—grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and so on—of Joseph’s father,



Jacob, who is also called Israel. And they were increasing in number and filling the land!

- ? What was this new king afraid of? Look in Exodus 1:10. *They would continue to multiply, and in the event of war they would join Egypt's enemies and fight against them.*
  - ? What did the Egyptians and their king decide to do to the Israelites? Look in verse 11. *They set taskmasters over them and afflicted them with burdens.*
  - ? What was the specific task the king wanted the Israelites to accomplish? Look again in Exodus 1:11. *Build supply cities, Pithom and Raamses.*
- The new king was afraid of the Israelites. They were filling the land. So he made them slaves and put them to work!
- ? How did this plan to stop the Israelites from growing in numbers work for the pharaoh? Take a look in Exodus 1:12. Did the new king's plan work? *No, "the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew."*
  - ? How were the Israelites serving the Egyptians? Look in verses 13 and 14. *They were serving with rigor.*
  - ? What do you think that means, "serving with rigor"? *Allow for answers. Should include were given hard labor, were made slaves, were treated cruelly.*

## Discover the Truth

The book of Exodus is a historical account. This is true history—and we know that the Bible is a history book. It reveals how God moved through His people from the beginning to the end—from Creation to the Consummation. *Refer to the Seven C's Timeline.*

Although this was a very difficult time for the children of Israel, when we look closely at this passage, we see that God was busy at work, being faithful to His promises with perfect plans. God was setting the stage to fulfill His promised rescue and return His people to the Promised Land! This promise was made long ago to Abraham. Then the promise was made to Isaac, then to Jacob, then to Joseph, and finally to the children of Israel.





# What Did God Promise?

## MATERIALS

- What Did God Promise? worksheet for each student
- Pencils

## INSTRUCTIONS

Pass out the *What Did God Promise?* worksheets. There are five Scriptures referenced. Students should answer the question, “Who was this promise made to?” In questions 1, 2, 3, and 5, they will need to look up the second verse listed in their Bibles to find the answer.

You can have the students work in teams, individually, or fill in the worksheet together as a class.

Once everyone is finished filling in Part 1, you can proceed to Part 2.

We know God is faithful to His promises. But in today’s lesson, the Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians. I wonder if they doubted God and the promises He made so many years before.

I want you to take these worksheets, read the verses listed under Part 1 and answer the question, “Who was this promise made to?” Look the verses up in your Bibles that are listed in 1, 2, 3, and 5.

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

- ? Is everyone finished? Now let’s move on to Part 2. When I ask the question, I want you all to tell me the answer and fill in the blanks that are there. OK?

? What did God promise Abram? *Land. Fill in the blank on question 6.*

? What did God promise Isaac? *Land. Fill in the blank on question 7.*

? What did God promise Jacob? *Land. Fill in the blank on question 8.*

? What promise did Jacob remind Joseph of? *Land. Fill in the blank on question 9.*

? What promise did Joseph remind the children of Israel of? *Land. Fill in the blank on question 10.*

? What was the land promised so long ago? *Canaan! Fill in the blank on question 11.*

Yes. Each of these men believed that they would one day own the land of Canaan.

? Let’s do a little more digging here. Look on the timeline under the year 2000 BC. Where is Joseph located on our timeline? *1728 BC. Where is his great-grandfather Abraham? 1921 BC. His grandfather Isaac? 1896 BC. His father Jacob, also called Israel? 1836 BC. Allow students to point out the patriarchs on the Seven C’s Timeline.*

When God saved Joseph’s brothers during the famine, it was all a part of His plan to keep His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and even Joseph. However, the children of Israel were a long way from Canaan—in fact they were suffering under slavery.





## READ THE WORD

In spite of God's promise that they would one day have their very own land, the Israelites were living in a land not their own. They were serving the Egyptians; they were being afflicted greatly.

The Bible tells us that the lives of the children of Israel were bitter, which is just the opposite of sweet. Show me the expression you make when you taste something bitter. *Watch as students pucker and wince.*

Their lives were bitter because of slavery and forced hard labor. I expect that the Israelite people were whipped and kicked and yelled at. They were rarely allowed to stop working and take a rest—no play time, no holiday parties, no worship time with other families.

? What would you do in that terrible situation? *Listen to student responses.*

Let's find out exactly what the children of Israel did as we read on in Exodus.

We'll read Exodus 2:23–25 together. *Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud.*

Exodus 2:23–25

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

? What did the children of Israel do because of their bondage or slavery? Look in Exodus 2:23. *They groaned and cried out.*

? And what did God do? See if you can find the four things that God did in verses 24 and 25. *God heard them; God remembered His covenant; God looked on them; God acknowledged them.*

### Discover the Truth

The Israelites groaned and cried out. I would think they felt desperate and hopeless. They may have forgotten God's promises. They may have forgotten that God is faithful. *Refer to the Attributes of God poster.*

They may have forgotten the promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, to give them the land of Canaan as their inheritance.

They could have forgotten that God's plans are always perfect—even if they had to wait and suffer. Although things looked out of control to the Israelites, God was in control, and He would keep His covenant in spite of all the circumstances.

You see, God did not forget His promise or His people! He heard their groaning, remembered His promise, saw the people, and knew what was happening. He had promised them a land, and He would fulfill His promise one day.



FAITHFUL

*(Refer to Attributes poster)*



# Applying God's Word

## WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Beginning way back with Abraham, God promised a special land for the people of Israel. We know that land now as Canaan. This is also called the Promised Land. God also promised this land to Abraham's son Isaac. Then He promised it to Isaac's son Jacob. And then Jacob reminded his own son Joseph of the Promised Land. Joseph, before he died, promised the people of Israel that God would one day bring them into this Promised Land—the land of Canaan. But God wanted the people to wait. And so they **waited**. *Refer to the Seven C's Timeline—under the year 2000 BC.*

We heard today that after Joseph died, a new king arose who did not know Joseph and things got bad for the Israelites. This new king was afraid of them—because there were so many of them. He ordered them into slavery and forced them to carry heavy burdens, building cities and bearing much suffering. The slavery lasted for hundreds of years—just like God had said it would.

It was during this long period of slavery and afflictions that the Bible tells us the Israelites began to groan and cry out because of their bondage. God, in His mercy and faithfulness, looked upon them, heard their cries, acknowledged them, and remembered His covenant, because God is faithful to His promises.

Life was bitter for the Israelites, but God was in control and working through their situation to do some very amazing things in the days ahead.

## GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

At this point in our history of Exodus, we are about here on the timeline. Joseph was no longer living. The current pharaoh was possibly Sesostris III. *Point to "Bondage in Egypt" on the Seven C's Timeline.*

Many people you talk to may tell you they don't believe any of the accounts in Exodus—or the rest of the Bible for that matter. They don't think the Bible lines up with history as they know it. But we know that the Bible is the true history of the universe. And if God says it happened—then it did happen.

God sometimes allows us to discover things that confirm what His Word says. For example, in historical records outside of the Bible, Sesostris III is recognized for the cities he built in the delta, including Bubastis, Qantir, and Raamses.

Someone turn to Exodus 1:11 and read it for me. *Assign a reader.*

Exodus 1:11

The city of Raamses mentioned in Exodus is likely the same city that Pharaoh Sesostris III is known to have built. And it makes sense that he would have used the Israelite slaves to build it. After all, that is what the Bible says.

Other archaeological records reveal that a later pharaoh, Amenemhet III, had a couple of pyramids built for himself. One was built using sun-dried mud bricks. It is likely that these pyramids were also built by Israelite slave labor while they were oppressed (Exodus 5:7).

The Bible has answers and is true. Remember that when you hear things that don't sound as if they agree with the Bible. You need to be wise and use the Bible as your starting point. Don't be led astray. Trust God's Word—it is always right.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



### MEMORY VERSE

**Genesis 50:19–20** Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God that He knows our problems and that He keeps His promises.
- Ask God to remind us to trust Him for the help we need this week.

