



5

Bondage in Egypt

Key Themes

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

Key Passages

- Exodus 1:7, 1:11–12, 1:14, 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.” Students will make play dough handcuffs, chains, or brick pyramids.



Activity 1: Color Card Memory Verse Drill

page 6

Groups of students will stand and recite the memory verse one phrase at a time as their card color is called out by the teacher.



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 find Promise of Land cards in the room, answer questions, and 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
- A ball of play dough for each student
- Optional: reward candy for sons of Jacob memory work



COLOR CARD MEMORY VERSE DRILL

- Cut small red, blue, and yellow squares of paper so that each student gets one square of one of the colors.
- Bring masking tape to attach the paper squares to the students' shirts.

- Squares of colored paper, one per student
- Masking tape



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Lesson Board Work outline



WHAT DID GOD PROMISE?

- Print one What Did God Promise? worksheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- Print, cut out, and hide the five Promise of Land cards from the Resource DVD-ROM in your room before class begins.

- What Did God Promise? worksheet for each student
- Pencils
- Promise of Land cards



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, 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 Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties. Based on this fact and the chronology of Egyptian pharaohs, many scholars believe that Pharaoh Sesostris 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 Twelfth Dynasty, and was recognized for the cities he built in the delta including Bubastis, Qantir, and Raameses—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 “Twelve Sons of Jacob” song to the tune of “Skip, Skip, Skip to My Lou.” (Song sheet is on the Resource DVD-ROM.)
- They will make play dough pyramids, chains, or handcuffs.



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.





Color Card Memory Verse Drill

MATERIALS

- Small squares of colored paper for each student. Use three different colors like red, blue, and yellow. Large classes may want to use more colors.
- Masking tape for attaching the colored paper squares to the students' shirts.

INSTRUCTIONS

Before we get started today, let's do a little work on our memory verse.

We are going to play Color Card Memory Verse Drill. I am going to give each of you a color card. Tape the color card on your shirt so you can remember your color.

To begin, let's just practice the first step of this game. I will call out the color "blue" and everyone who has a blue card stand up. When I signal with my hands, stop and sit down. Sit down, blue. Now "red" stand up. When I signal to you, sit down. OK. "Yellow" stand up. Watch for my signal; sit down!

Practice with all the colors then add "all," directing all the children to stand and then sit.

I know you can do a lot more than just stand and sit; so we are going to add our

memory verse. I will start the game by calling out a color, let's say "red." All those who have red should then stand up and begin reciting together the reference and memory verse until I signal you to stop and sit down. Then I will call another color. Those students will then stand up and continue saying the verse where the last group left off. You will need to be really alert to be ready in case I call your color. If I call "all," everyone should stand up and say the verse. **Here we go.** *Allow students to look at the Memory Verse poster if needed. Reinforce the verse by playing another round. At the end say "all" and have all the children stand and recite the verse.*

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 for more than 200 years. 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.

The Bible tells us that the Israelites were the grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and so on of Joseph's father, Jacob, who is also called Israel.

Open your Bibles to Exodus 1. Look at verse 7. I'll read it to you. Then I'll be reading other verses from Exodus 1. *Read verse 7 to the children.*

Exodus 1:7

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? How many Israelites were living in Egypt? I just read it in Exodus 1:7.
Many—the land was filled with them.

They went into Egypt with just 70 people, but after many years there were thousands of them! There were so many Israelites that the Egyptian king and his people worried that the Israelites might join Egypt's enemy and fight them in a war. So he came up with an evil plan.

Follow along as I read from Exodus 1:11. *Read after children find the verse.*

- ? What did the Egyptians and their king do to stop the Israelites? *They put taskmasters over them.*

When we read here that the king put taskmasters over them, we know that they were being made slaves—forced into slavery for the new king. And this verse said they were being used to build cities for the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh thought that if he made the Israelites work and suffer, they would stop having so many children and there wouldn't be as many Israelites to deal with.

Let's read on to see how that plan worked. Look at Exodus 1:12. *Read Exodus 1:12 to the students.*

The king was trying to stop the Israelites from having more children. But the verse says that the more the Egyptians tried to stop them the more children the Israelites had and the more their numbers grew!

God was keeping His promise to Abraham by giving him many descendants. But the Egyptians did not want the Israelites to increase in number.

Let's find out what the Egyptians did as I read on in Exodus 1:14.

- ? How does the Bible describe the lives of the children of Israel in Egypt?
Bitter with hard bondage.

Yes. The Egyptians were making the lives of the Israelites very hard. They were suffering and very sad. But they were still increasing in number.

Discover the Truth

The book of Exodus is a historical account. This is considered history—and we know that the Bible is a history book. It reveals how God is



Exodus 1:11

Exodus 1:12

Exodus 1:14

moving 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 to Isaac, then to Jacob, then to Joseph, and finally to the children of Israel.



What Did God Promise?

MATERIALS

- Promise of Land cards
- What Did God Promise? worksheet for each student
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Before class, hide the five Promise of Land cards in the classroom, possibly taping them under the seat of five students' chairs. Pass out the worksheets and pencils to the class.

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 wonder if they even remembered them.

I've hidden five Promise of Land cards under some of your chairs; can you find them? *Allow students to look for cards; then call the five card-finders to come to the front of the class to display their cards and verses. Help them arrange themselves in chronological order. Have each child read the verse on the card he has.*

- ? **What did God promise?** *Land! After children read each verse, stop to ask what God promised.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let's fill in our worksheets! When I ask the question, I want you all to tell me the

answer, fill in the blanks that are there, and circle the word in the verse. OK?

- ? **What did God promise Abraham?** *Land. Fill in the blank on question 1. Circle the word land.*
- ? **What did God promise Isaac?** *Land. Fill in the blank on question 2. Circle the word land.*
- ? **What did God promise Jacob?** *Land. Fill in the blank on question 3. Circle the word land.*
- ? **What promise did Jacob remind Joseph of?** *Land. Fill in the blank on question 4. Circle the word land.*
- ? **What promise did Joseph remind the children of Israel of?** *Land. Fill in the blank on question 5. Circle the word land.*
- ? **What was the land they were all waiting for?** *Canaan! Fill in the blank on question 6.*

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

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

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 sour or 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 I read on in Exodus 2:23–25. *After the children find the verses, read them.*

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. *Re-read the verse to them if necessary. They groaned and cried out.*

? Who heard their crying? *God heard them.*

? That's right. And what did God do? Listen carefully as I read the verses again. *Read Exodus 2:24–25 again. Help the children find these answers in the text. Write on the board, "God heard them; God remembered His covenant; God looked on them; God acknowledged them."*

► Print the Lesson Board Work outline from the Resource DVD-ROM for easier planning.

Discover the Truth

The Israelites groaned and cried out because when they looked only at their circumstances, 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 God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph to give them the land of Canaan as their inheritance.

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

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

We will soon see that God was ready to act on His promises and deliver His people out of slavery.



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 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 Promise of Land cards and the Seven C's Timeline.*

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. *Refer to the board work.*

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, because God's plans are perfect.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

You know, the Israelites waited a long time through some very difficult and hard times before God finally fulfilled His promise. I wonder if any of you have been waiting for God to answer a prayer or do something for you or your family. We often have situations where someone is sick, loses a job, moves away, gets divorced, or even dies. And we wonder what God is doing and if He is even there to hear our prayers.

I think that may have been how the Israelites felt as well. They had a very hard life for many, many years. Yet we know that God did hear them, and He remembered His promise to them. We need to remember that God is a faithful God. And even when we don't know what He has planned next or it just seems like we have waited a very long time for an answer, God does know what He is doing. And His plans are perfect—even when they seem far from perfect to us at the time.



► 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 to 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.

