

JOSEPH'S ROBES

Genesis 37 and 39-47

Author: Eleanor Delport

JOSEPH'S ROBES NOTES FOR ALL SESSIONS

Throughout the story of Joseph, his robes or outfit changes are very significant symbolically and help us to understand what is going on. Therefore, while we are going through the story, we will be using 4 outfits as a visual learning tool. The outfits are as follows:

1. Robe of the beloved son
2. Robe of the servant
3. Rags of the prisoner
4. Robe of the prince of the nations

You can use these outfits as you tell the story. For example, as a costume to act it out or as a prop to display while you read the story.

During the discussion part of the morning, a discussion questions about the outfit will be suggested along the lines of: what the outfit represents? How did Joseph act during that part of his life? How did God look after him Joseph?

In the last session, you will look at how Jesus stepped through the same phases of His life, using Phillipians 2:5-11 as a key text.

There are many parallels between Joseph and Jesus, which you can have fun thinking about as you study, but these are the key overarching ones that we are focusing on for this series:

ROBE OF THE BELOVED SON

Joseph was beloved by his father, was set to inherit the double portion and was given authority over his family.

Jesus was beloved by His Heavenly Father and ruled with Him in Heaven

ROBE OF THE SERVANT

Joseph was sold as a slave where he was a faithful and trustworthy servant and refused to sin

Jesus put aside His glory and took the form of a servant, being without sin.

RAGS OF THE PRISONER

Joseph was betrayed, falsely accused, humiliated and treated as a criminal

Jesus was betrayed, falsely accused, humiliated and killed as a criminal

ROBE OF THE PRINCE

Joseph was raised up as a prince of Egypt, bringing bread of life to the nations and forgiveness to his family

Jesus was exalted, sits above every other principality and power, gives bread of life to the nations and forgiveness to the nations

He raises

the poor from

the dust

and lifts the needy

from the ash heap;

He seats them

with princes

and has them inherit

a throne of honour

1 Samuel 2v8a

SESSION 1: JOSEPH THE BELOVED SON

Big idea: Joseph was loved

Jacob bestowed blessing and honour on Joseph. He gave him authority in his household and the promise of a great inheritance. This was symbolised in the giving and receiving of a beautiful coat of many colours. Joseph's brothers did evil and hated Joseph. They envied him, kidnapped him, tore off his coat and sold him into slavery. Despite all this, God promised great things for Joseph.

5-9 years

SESSION 1: JOSEPH THE BELOVED SON

WELCOME

INTRO - BIBLE TIMELINE

Using the Bible timeline, identify where this story comes in the storyline of the Bible.

It is about 2000 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem and yet the story is going to point us forward to who Jesus is, because many of the things that happened to Joseph are similar to what happens to Jesus. We will think more about that as we go along.

BIBLE STORY - GENESIS 37 - See notes on Joseph's robes to help tell the story

GAME - Coat run relay

ENVY AND THANKFULNESS SKIT

DISCUSSION AND PRAYER - BELOVED SON, ENVY

MEMORY VERSE

He raises the poor from the dust

and lifts the needy from the ash heap;

he seats them with princes

and has them inherit a throne of honour. 1 Samuel 2v8a

CRAFT - COAT COLLAGE

EXPLORE THE STORY



5-9 years

GAME: COAT RUN RELAY

This game is a clothes run relay

Equipment: 2 coats, 4 cones

1. Line the children up into two equal teams and have a coat at the start cone for each team. Place a cone or marker at the other end of the room, one for each team.
2. The first child must put the coat on, run to the end of the room, around the cone marker and back to their team
3. Then they take the coat off and give them to the next person who puts them on, runs to the cone, around it and back to their team and so on
4. When everyone in the team have completed their run the team sits down
5. The first team sat down wins

ENVY SKIT PART 1

Use two puppets or actors to act out this skit. You will need two objects. They can be anything from a duplo brick to an action figure to anything else that a child might like. We will use the example of an action figure in the script, but substitute in whatever you are using.

Narrator: Here are two friends, Sam and Suzie. Sam would like to show you something.

Sam: Ooo I just love love love my action figure! I've had it for weeks and it is still as good as new. I play with it every day.

Suzie: Hello children, do you like my new action figure? I received it just yesterday. I'm so excited to play with it.

Narrator: Oo Suzie that is lovely!

Sam: Hey! Why does he get a new action figure? That should be mine. I don't care about this old thing anymore. I want that one.

Narrator: What's wrong Sam? You look angry.

Sam: Suzie has a new action figure. I hate Suzie and her fancy action figure. I want to hurt her.

Narrator: But Sam, you have an action figure that you love.

Sam: I don't love it. I hate it now. It's not as good as Suzie's.

Suzie: Would you like to play together Sam?

Sam: No. I don't want to play with you.

Narrator: Oh no! What's gone wrong children?

Discuss how Sam let envy grow in his heart and it is ruining his friendship with Suzie. Suzie has not done anything wrong. She simply received a gift. Because Sam is not turning from evil, he is letting these feelings of envy stop him from playing with Suzie and the new toy.

ENVY SKIT PART 2

Narrator: Let's rewind the story and see if Sam can choose a different way of reacting to Suzie's new toy

Sam: I love love love my action figure!

Suzie: Hi Sam, I have a new action figure! Do you like it?

Sam: Oh wow, that is a super action figure Suzie! It makes mine feel a little bit old, but I am pleased for you. I'm very thankful for my action figure. I have had many happy weeks playing with it and I hope you will have a long happy time playing with yours.

Suzie: I think yours is great too. Shall we play with them together? We could take turns with them if you like.

Sam: Thanks, that would be great!

Narrator: Instead of letting envy get in and ruin everything, Sam chose to be thankful for what he had. Thankfulness is a far better way to live.

DISCUSSION: BELOVED SON, ENVIED

What was Joseph given by his Father?

Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colours. It was a symbol of Joseph being raised up above his brothers and given responsibility over the family. Joseph was set to inherit a double portion, which meant that when Jacob died, Joseph would receive twice as much of his father's property and blessing as the rest of his brothers

What was Joseph given by God?

God gave Joseph two dreams and a promise that one day he would reign over his family

How did Joseph's brothers feel and do about this?

They envied Joseph, attacked him, stole his robe and sold him into slavery

How did God look after Joseph?

He prevented Joseph from being killed and He remained with Joseph even as Joseph was taken to Egypt.

Do you think the brothers could have made a different choice like Sam made a different choice? If they had chosen to be thankful instead of envious, it would have saved them a lot of heart ache, but even now, God is going to work things together for good.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you choose to be thankful. Go around the circle and say one thing you are thankful for.

CRAFT: COAT COLLAGE

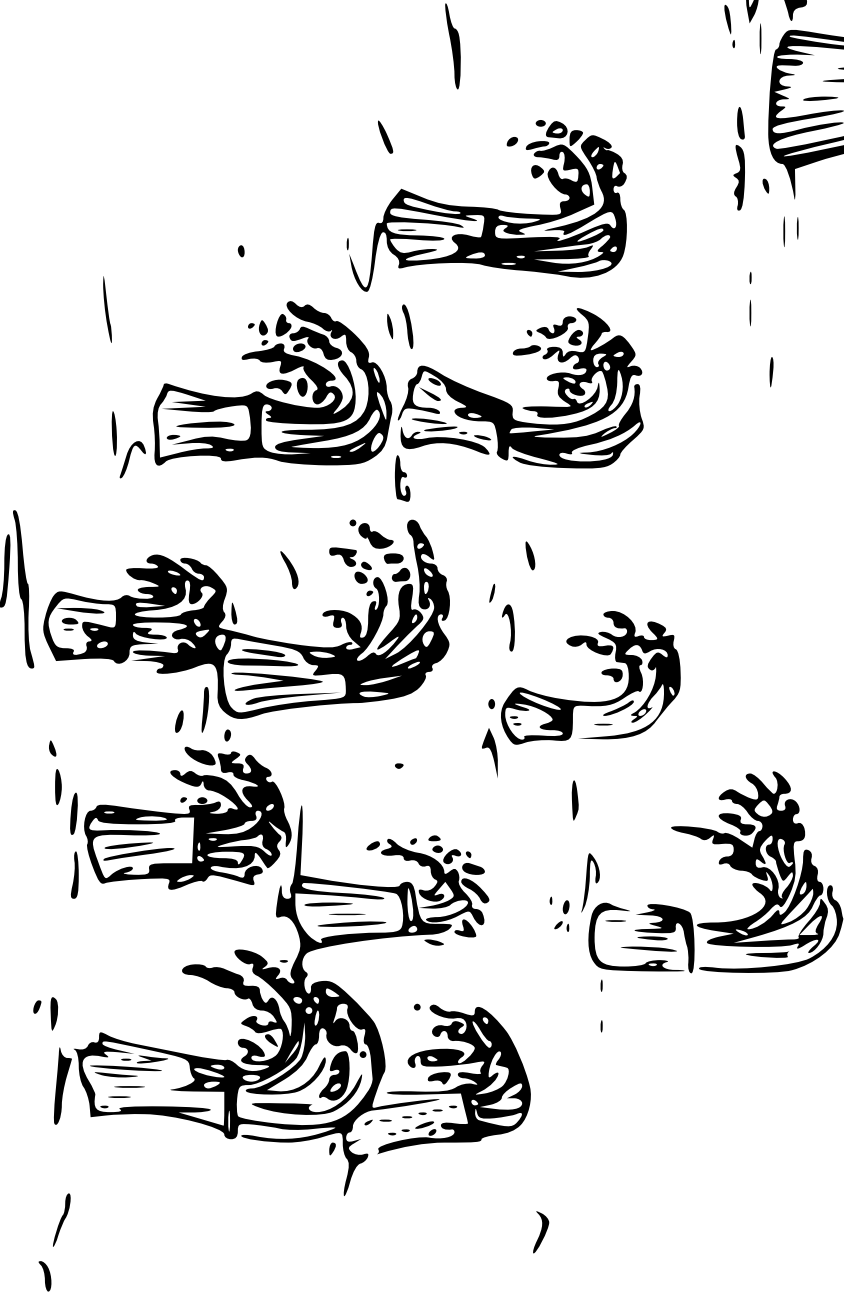
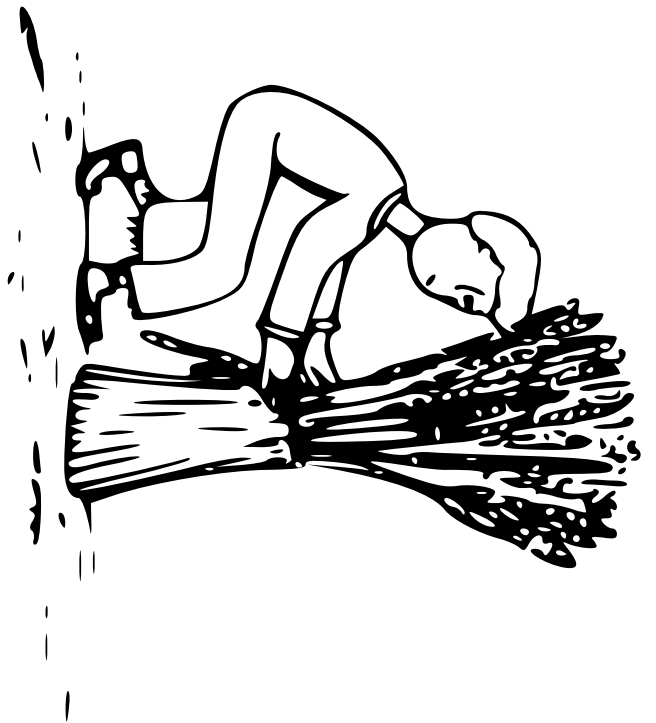
You will need: colouring sheets printed 1 per child, tissue paper and glue for collaging

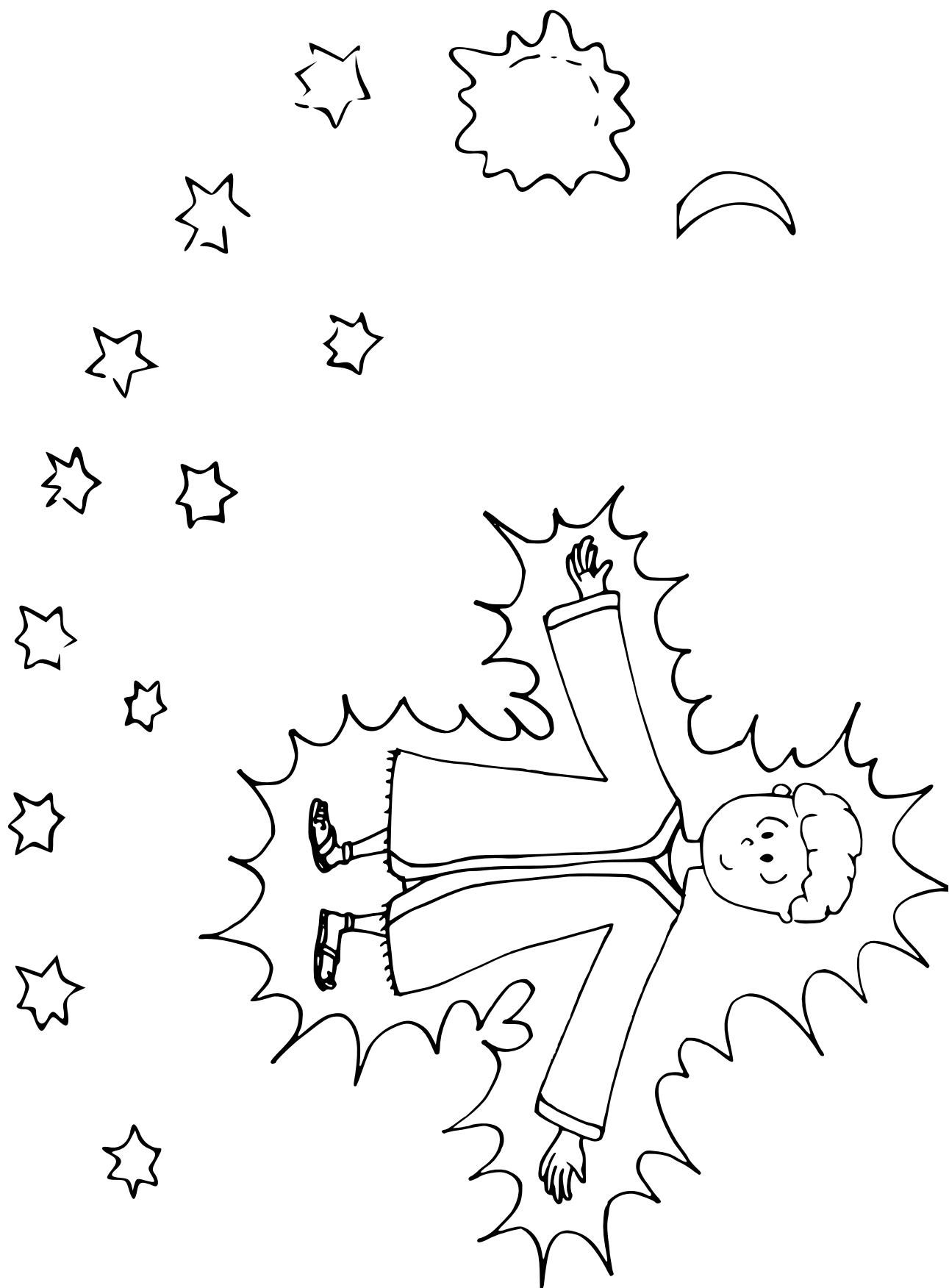
Colour in the picture and use tissue paper and glue to create a multicoloured coat

JOSEPH



ROBE OF THE BELOVED SON





5-9 years

EXPLORE THE STORY

You will need: sculpting toy like playdough /plasticine and/or construction toy like duplo/lego

Set out playdough in one tray and duplo on another spread out enough in the room so that the kids can have space to think and build.

Ask the children to choose either the duplo or playdough to create a scene from the story. For example, they might want to make a well, moon and stars, wheat, brothers, a coat.

As they are building, talk to them about the story. You might want to ask some of these questions:

1. What does the coat symbolise?
2. How did the brothers react?
3. What did God promise Joseph in the dreams?

SESSION 2

JOSEPH THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

Big idea: Joseph was a faithful servant

Even though Joseph experienced hardship, he was faithful, hard-working and trustworthy and God was with him.

5-9 years

SESSION 2: JOSEPH THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

INTRO

Recap the story of Joseph's dreams and being sold into slavery.

BIBLE STORY – Retell the story of Joseph becoming a servant in Potiphar's house, being betrayed by Potiphar's wife (see suggestion in Joseph: Faithful Servant of how to tell the story) and then being faithful and given responsibility in the prison. Use the faithful servant and prison rag outfits to help you tell the story.

GAME – FLIP IT!

DISCUSSION – SERVANT TO PRISONER

PRAYER – HOLDING ONTO HOPE

MEMORY VERSE

He raises the poor from the dust

and lifts the needy from the ash heap;

he seats them with princes

and has them inherit a throne of honour. 1 Samuel 2v8a

CRAFT – Hope through it all

EXPLORE THE STORY



JOSEPH THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

Narrator: What a terrible time of things Joseph was having. A young lad of seventeen, with a bright future in front of him. His envious brothers had ripped his beautiful robe from him, almost murdered him and then sold him as a slave in Egypt. Joseph was far from home and far from his friends and family, but he wasn't far from God. God was with him in Egypt.

Joseph was sold to a rich man named Potiphar, who quickly realised that Joseph was trustworthy, skilled and the Lord was with him. He put him in charge of his entire household and was very pleased to have such a hard-working servant working for him.

Potiphar's wife liked Joseph too. She liked him too much and wanted him to be like a husband to her. Joseph knew this was wrong. He was not her husband and it would be a sin to act like he was, so he avoided her. He would not even be in the same room as .

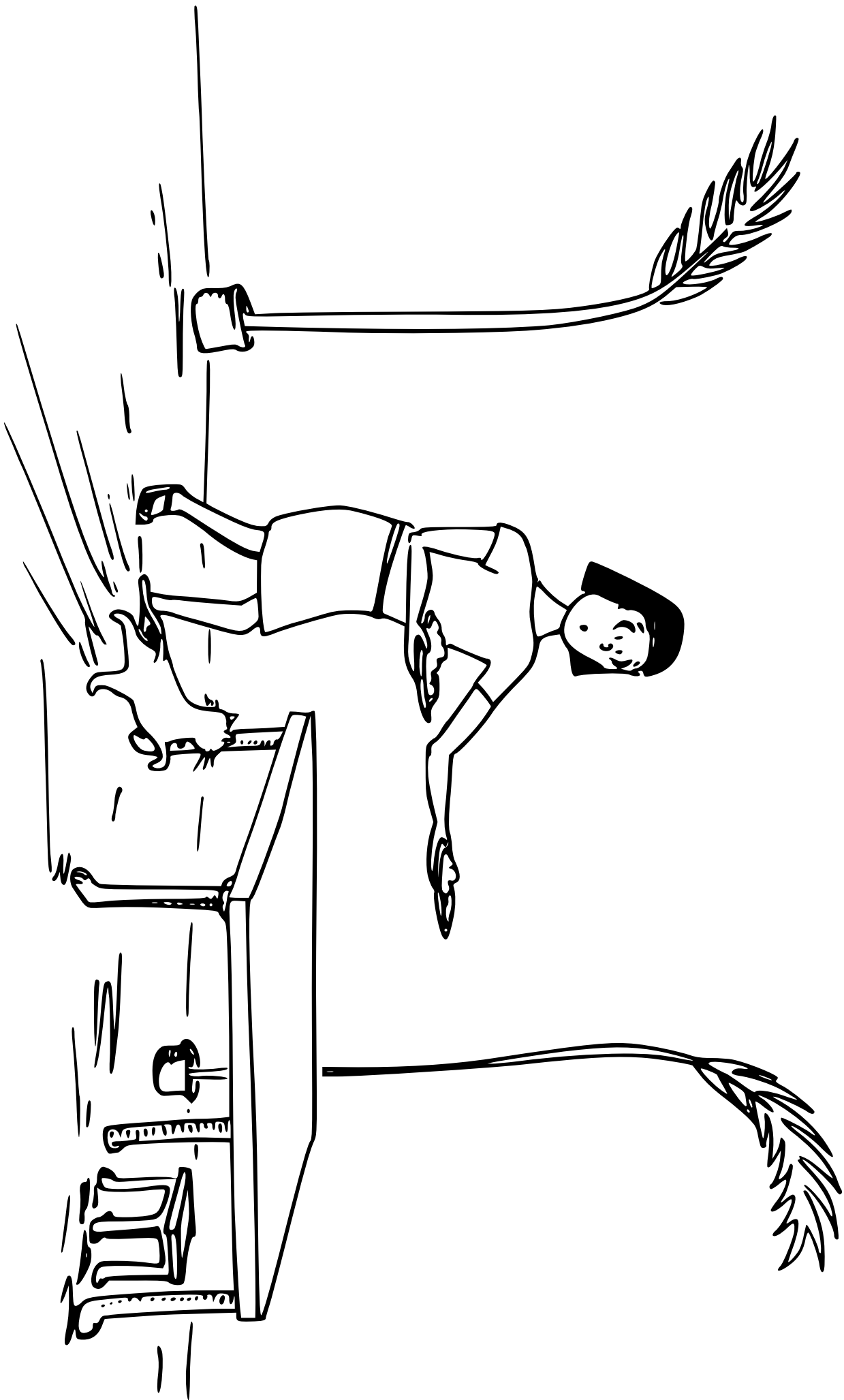
But one terrible day all the other servants were out of the house and Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's robe and wouldn't let him go. So he left the robe in her hand and ran out of the house. He would not sin against his master or against God.

When Potiphar came home, his wife lied to him and said that Joseph had tried to attack her, but she screamed and he left his robe with her and ran away. Potiphar was very angry with Joseph. Joseph was innocent, but no one believed him. Potiphar thought that Joseph had betrayed him and sinned against him.

What a terrible time of things Joseph as having! Joseph's servant robe had been ripped off him. He had been lied about and humiliated and Potiphar was so angry that he threw Joseph in prison. Joseph was far from home and far from his friends and family, but he wasn't far from God. God was with him in the prison.

In the prison, the jailer quickly realised that Joseph was trustworthy, skilled and the Lord was with him. He put him in charge of all of the prisoners and was very pleased to have such a hard-working prisoner in the jail.

But what about his dreams about being a ruler one day? There would have to be a miracle for that to happen! But God still had a plan...



5-9 years

GAME: FLIP IT!

Joseph's world was turned upside down when he was sold as a slave. This game is about turning things over from cones to cups and cups to cones.

Equipment: sports cones

1. Spread out the cones around the room with half upside down so that they are a cup shape
2. Divide the children into two teams. Team one will try to flip all the cones over so they are cups, team two will try to flip all the cups over so they are cones
3. Call "time!" and count up how many cones and how many cups there are
4. If there are more cups than cones, team 1 wins. If there are more cones than cups, team 2 wins

DISCUSSION: SERVANT TO PRISONER

At which point in the story might Joseph have worn a servant's robe? What sort of things might he have done at that time?

How did God look after him in Potiphar's house?

Why was Joseph thrown into prison?

How did God look after Joseph in prison?

How might Joseph have felt in prison?

Joseph had gone from being the beloved son in his Father's house, to a slave in Egypt, to a prisoner. Life seemed to be going the exact opposite way of what God promised him in his two dreams as a young man. When Joseph was in prison, it may have been very difficult for him to keep hoping that the dreams that God had given him as a young man would come true. Yet Joseph still acted with a good character, working hard and looking after people, even when he was in prison.



PRAYER ACTIVITY: HOLDING ONTO HOPE

You will need: post it notes and a pen

Sometimes things happen in our lives that might make us want to give up hope, but Joseph was not at the end of his story, only in the middle of it and you are not at the end of your story, only the middle.

What things do we hope for as Christians which remain true even when life is in a hard patch?

Have a think together and a leader or couple of older children can write down each idea on a post-it note as they are called out and add it to the table or board that you are working around.

It could be things like:

That God is good

That God is with us

That one day we will be in Heaven with Jesus

That God loves us

That we are God's children

That God can save us

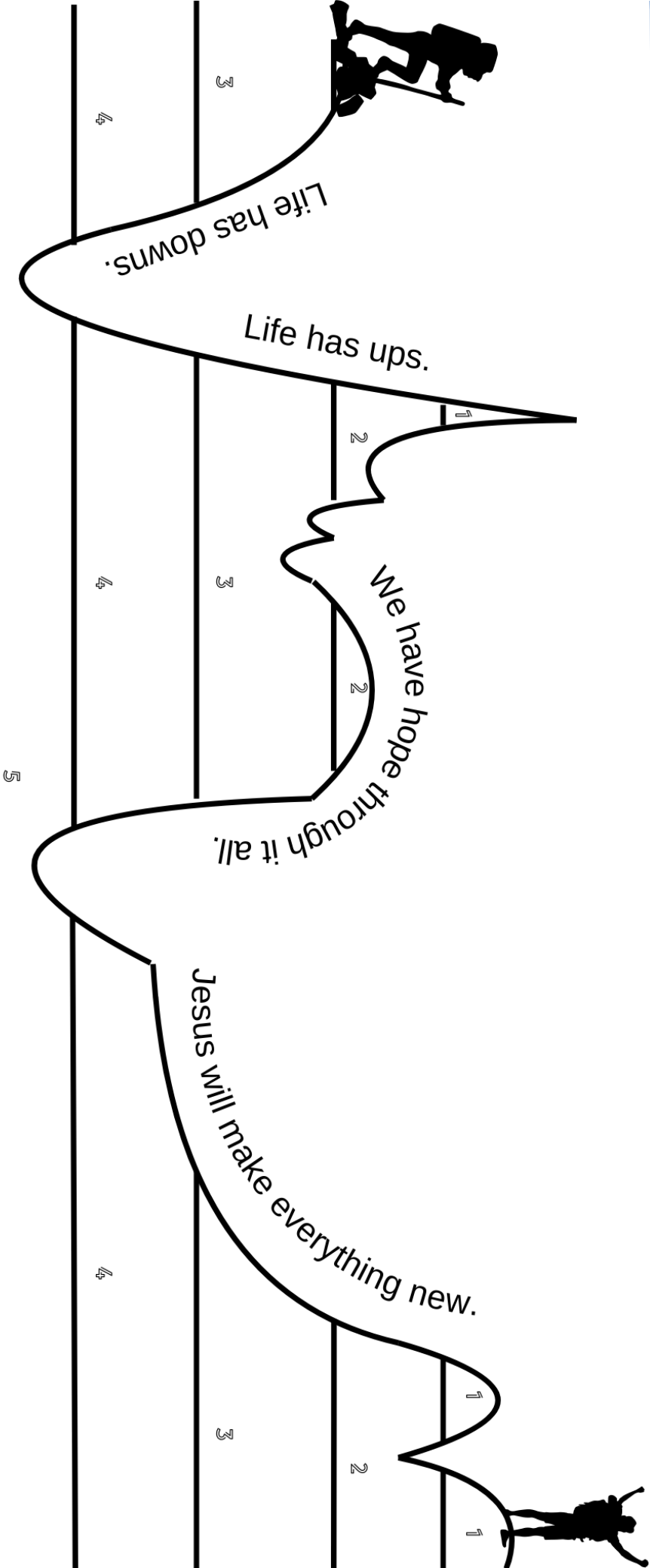
That God is making everything new... and so on

Once you have written down as many post-its as there are children (you can duplicate ideas as necessary), ask every child to pick one up. Then turn to the person to their left, stick the post-it note on that person and pray that they "**will always remember that...**" and read out what is on the post-it note.



6

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” Phillippians 1:6b



1 = yellow

2 = orange

3 = green

4 = purple

5 = black

6 = blue

CRAFT: HOPE THROUGH IT ALL

You will need: worksheet, coloured pens or coloured tissue paper and glue

The colouring sheet represents the ups and downs of life. Sometimes we hit bumpy roads, sometimes glorious heights and sometimes dark valleys, but the promises of God soar above them all and give us hope along the journey.

Use the numbers to help you colour or collage the worksheet to show the different layers of life experiences.

5-9 years

EXPLORE THE STORY

You will need: sculpting toy like playdough /plasticine and/or construction toy like duplo/lego

Set out playdough in one tray and duplo on another spread out enough in the room so that the kids can have space to think and build.

Ask the children to choose either the duplo or playdough to create a scene from the story. For example, they might want to make a house, a prison, servant's equipment, etc.

As they are building, talk to them about the story. You might want to ask some of these questions:

1. How do you think Joseph felt when he was in prison?
2. What hopes do we have that help us through difficult times?

SESSION 3

JOSEPH

INTERPRETS

DREAMS

Big idea: God helps Joseph to explain dreams and prophecy

God gave Joseph wisdom and understanding to know the meaning of dreams and the best way ahead. After Joseph had waited patiently for years in the prison, God lifted him up to be a ruler of Egypt.

5-9 years

SESSION 3: JOSEPH – WISE AND UNDERSTANDING

INTRO

Recap the story of Joseph's dreams and being sold into slavery. Joseph was a faithful servant in Egypt and then betrayed and put in prison.

BIBLE STORY – Retell the story from Genesis 40 and 41 using the script and pictures. Use the prince outfits to help you tell the story.

MEMORY VERSE RELAY GAME

He raises the poor from the dust

and lifts the needy from the ash heap;

he seats them with princes

and has them inherit a throne of honour. 1 Samuel 2v8a

DISCUSSION AND PRAYER – DREAMS

MEMORY VERSE CRAFT

Joseph is lifted up maze

Using the worksheets, draw a picture of Joseph on one side of the paper as a prisoner and on the other side of the paper as a ruler

EXPLORE THE STORY



JOSEPH – WISE AND UNDERSTANDING PAGE 1

You will need: prince's robe, pictures of dreams 1 to 4

Suggestion: cut out the parts for the baker, cupbearer and Pharaoh as on the next page and give these to 3 different actors/actresses to read out. When each of the dreams are being read, have another child hold up the picture for each dream. A leader or very strong reader can read the narrator's part and Joseph's part.

Narrator: Joseph had grown up in the land of Canaan where he was loved by his father Jacob. He had been betrayed by his brothers and sold as a slave to a powerful man called Potiphar in Egypt. Joseph had been betrayed by Potiphar's wife and thrown into the royal prison. God was with Joseph and gave him favour in the eyes of the jailer. The jailer made Joseph his servant. Joseph's job was to look after the other prisoners.

One day two of the other prisoners were looking very upset. They told Joseph that they had both had dreams last night that troubled them. Joseph said that God knows what the dreams mean and asked them to share.

The first person to share was Pharaoh's cupbearer. He had once had the job of tasting the wine and serving Pharaoh his drinks. Here's what he said....

Cupbearer: In my dream I saw a grapevine with three branches. The vine budded, blossomed, and produced beautiful clusters of grapes. I squeezed the grapes into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in Pharaoh's hand. [Dream 1]

Joseph: In three days' time you will be released from prison and will have your old job back, serving Pharaoh his wine. When you get out of prison, can you tell Pharaoh about me? I shouldn't be in prison at all. I have not done anything wrong.

JOSEPH – WISE AND UNDERSTANDING PAGE 2

Narrator: When the baker saw that the cup bearers dream had been good news, he had courage to share his dream. He said...

Baker: In my dream I had three baskets of bread on my head filled with delicious bread and cakes, but the birds were eating it all. [Dream 2]

Narrator: Joseph looked at him sadly and said

Joseph: In three days' time you also will be released from prison, but you will be killed.

Narrator: Three days later it was Pharoah's birthday and he had the baker and cupbearer brought before him. He gave the cupbearer back his old job, but he had the baker killed. It happened just as Joseph had said it would, but the cupbearer forgot about Joseph. That was until two years later when Pharoah himself had two troubling dreams that no one could interpret. The cupbearer remembered about Joseph and his ability to understand dreams and Pharoah sent for him.

Joseph was scrubbed and cleaned up so he could be presented before Pharoah. Pharoah asked Joseph if he could interpret dreams, to which Joseph replied that understanding belongs to God. Pharoah told him the dreams.

Pharoah: In the first dream, I saw seven fat cows coming out of the Nile, but then seven skinny cows gobbled them up. They were the skinniest, most starving cows I had ever seen. Then I had a dream immediately after that one where I saw 7 strong ears of corn grow up and then 7 withered, thin ears of corn gobbled up the strong ones. What does it mean? [Dreams 3 and 4]

Joseph: Your dreams both have the same meaning. There will be seven years of abundance and then seven years of famine. The famine will be so severe that no one will remember the time of plenty. Everyone will be hungry.

Now let Pharoah find a wise man and put him over the land of Egypt and have officials over each area. In the seven years of abundance, have them gather up a fifth of the food into storehouses. Then when the years of famine come, you can sell the food that you have stored up and no one will starve.

Narrator: Pharoah was amazed by Joseph's wisdom. He said "Who can we find who has the spirit of God in him like Joseph has?" He took off Joseph's prison robes and gave him fine robes, his own signet ring and a gold chain around his neck. He made him second in command over all Egypt and chose a wife for him. Joseph was 30 years old when he became a ruler in Egypt. [Pharoah places prince's robe on Joseph]

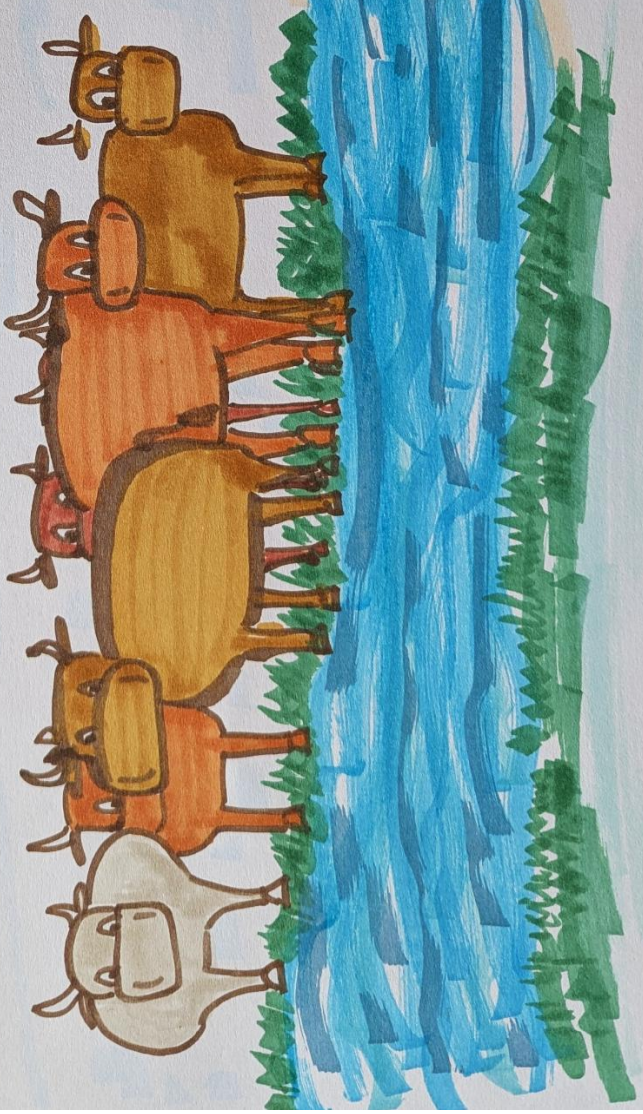
Cupbearer: In my dream I saw a grapevine with three branches. The vine budded, blossomed, and produced beautiful clusters of grapes. I squeezed the grapes into Pharoah's cup and put the cup in Pharoah's hand. [Dream 1]

Baker: In my dream I had three baskets of bread on my head filled with delicious bread and cakes, but the birds were eating it all. [Dream 2]

Pharoah: In the first dream, I saw seven fat cows coming out of the Nile, but then seven skinny cows gobbled them up. They were the skinniest, most starving cows I had ever seen. Then I had a dream immediately after that one where I saw 7 strong ears of corn grow up and then 7 withered, thin ears of corn gobbled up the strong ones. What does it mean? [Dreams 3 and 4]









MEMORY VERSE RELAY GAME

Equipment: 2 beanbags, 2 cones, 2 buckets

1. Line the children up into two equal teams behind a starting cone for each team. Place a bucket with one set of memory verse cards in it at the other end of the room, one for each team.
2. Give the first child of each team a beanbag.
3. When you say go, they must balance the bean bag on their head, hop to the bucket, pick a memory verse card and run back to their team.
4. Give the beanbag to the next child who hops to collect another card etc.
5. The first team to collect all their memory verse cards, arrange them in the correct order and sit down wins.

DISCUSSION AND PRAYER – DREAMS

Joseph had been very patient, waiting for God to lift him up. He was suddenly lifted from the lowest place, being in prison, to the highest place, being second only to Pharaoh! The thing that changed everything was the dreams. We are going to have a think about dreams and how God speaks through them.

Who did Joseph say that the understanding of dreams comes from?

Joseph had been in Egypt about 13 years and his own dream had not yet come true. Even so, he still believed that God spoke through dreams and gave the interpretation of dreams.

Some dreams come from God. God can speak to us in pictures and visions as we sleep. God spoke in Bible times in this way and He speaks today in this way. However, some dreams are affected by our worries or simply are processing what has happened in our day and some are affected by Satan and scare us and these are what we might call nightmares or night terrors. These are not from God.

If you have a dream and remember it, what can you do to help you understand what kind of a dream you have had?

- 1) ask the Holy Spirit if it was from God or not
- 2) if it was very scary, it was probably not from God (though there are exceptions – Pharaoh was scared after his dream, but the dream was to warn and prepare him)
- 3) tell your mum or dad or church leader what happened and ask them about it

What can you do if you have a dream that you think is from God? Write it down or draw it or share it with your mum or dad or church leader and then ask God what it means

Our sleep is very important. Good sleep keeps us healthy. It is also a time when God may choose to speak with us. God watches over us and looks after us in the daytime and in the night time.

Psalm 4v8 says “I go to bed and sleep in peace. Lord, only you keep me safe.”

What can you do if you have a nightmare? Pray that God would look after your mind as you sleep. Ask other people to pray with you for peace at night time.

PRAYER:

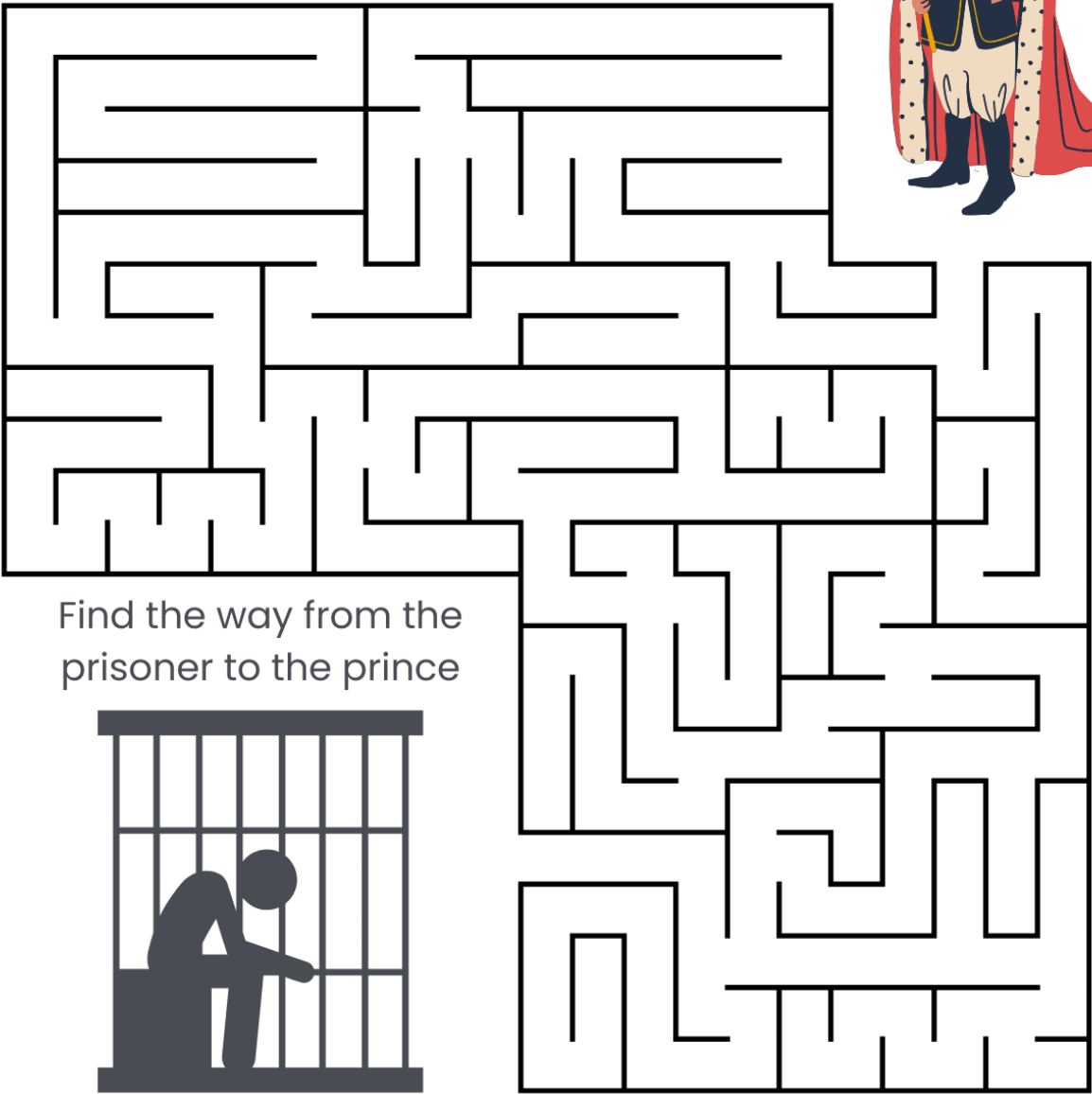
Pray that God would speak to us through our dreams and that He would teach us to understand what they mean like He taught Joseph. Pray that God would protect our sleep and give us peace at night. If anyone suffers from nightmares or struggles to get to sleep, pray that they would have peace and good sleep.

If you have a dream from God this week, write it down or draw it and bring it next week to share with the group.

JOSEPH IS LIFTED UP

He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap;
he seats them with princes
and has them inherit a throne of
honour.

1 Samuel2v8a



Find the way from the
prisoner to the prince



He raises the poor
from the dust
and lifts the needy
from the ash heap;
he seats them with
princes
and has them
inherit a throne of
honour.
1 Samuel 2v8a

JOSEPH: PRISONER

JOSEPH: RULER

5-9 years

EXPLORE THE STORY

You will need: sculpting toy like playdough /plasticine and/or construction toy like duplo/lego

Set out playdough in one tray and duplo on another spread out enough in the room so that the kids can have space to think and build.

Ask the children to choose either the duplo or playdough to create a scene from the story. For example, they might want to make bread baskets, cups, cows, a royal palace, etc.

As they are building, talk to them about the story. You might want to ask some of these questions:

1. Who helped Joseph interpret the dreams?
2. What new job did Pharoah give Joseph to do?

SESSION 4

JOSEPH TESTS AND FORGIVES

Big idea: God used the bad things that happened to Joseph for good

Joseph tested his brothers to see if their hearts had changed. Then he forgave them and provided for them and their families

5-9 years

SESSION 4: JOSEPH TESTS AND FORGIVES

INTRO - RECAP

Use the costumes to recap the story so far (See notes for all sessions, Joseph's robes). Joseph was promised responsibility by God, but then his jealous brothers sold him into slavery. In Egypt, Joseph was faithful and God looked after him, even though he was falsely accused and thrown in prison. Joseph was given the ability to understand dreams and lifted up out of prison by God and made a ruler over Egypt. Now Joseph is helping keep people alive by providing food at a time of famine and hunger.

BIBLE STORY - Joseph tests his brothers, paraphrase of Genesis 42-47. Use the script and have the children act out the parts of Joseph, the brothers, Joseph's servant and Jacob

GAME - COPS AND ROBBERS

DISCUSSION - Used for good

PRAYER

MEMORY VERSE

He raises the poor from the dust

and lifts the needy from the ash heap;

he seats them with princes

and has them inherit a throne of honour. 1 Samuel 2v8a

CRAFT - Reunited

EXPLORE THE STORY



JOSEPH TESTS HIS BROTHERS (PARAPHRASE OF GENESIS 42-47) PAGE 1

Narrator: Joseph had become a ruler in Egypt, when he interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh and God lifted him up from being a prisoner to being like a prince! Can you remember the dreams that Pharaoh had? [show the pictures]

With God's help, Joseph prophesied that there would be 7 years of good harvests and plenty of food, but then there would be 7 years of poor harvests and no food. People would become so hungry that they would forget what it was like to have full tummies. Pharaoh realised that God's spirit was with Joseph, so he put him in charge of Egypt and Joseph had been collecting food into large store houses during the 7 years of plenty.

Now the 7 years of plenty have finished and we pick our story up 2 years into the years of hunger and famine. People were coming from all of the surrounding nations to Egypt, because the famine was so severe and people heard that a wise man in Egypt had stored food so that everyone could stay alive.

Joseph's brothers in the land of Canaan were also hungry. They and their little ones had nothing to eat, so they ask Jacob, their father if they could go to Egypt. "Go," said Jacob, "But you must not take Benjamin with you. I have already lost his brother (that was Joseph) and I don't want to lose him too."

Joseph's brothers travelled to Egypt and stood in line with growling tummies. They got to the front of the queue and bowed before Joseph. Joseph was shocked to see them! It was just like the dream he had had as a young lad. They were bowing with their sheaves of corn before him and where the sun, moon and stars bowed before him. [Show the pictures]

Joseph wanted to speak with them, but he did not know if he could trust them. The last time he had seen them. They had been throwing him down a well and selling him as a slave. So, he tested them. He asked them lots of questions and found out that his brother Benjamin and his father were both alive, but he did not tell them who he was.

He said to them, "you men are spies! You have come to see where the land is weak, so you can attack us!" They pleaded with him, saying they were honest men.

Joseph said, "this is how you will prove that you are honest men. I will keep one of you here with me and the rest of you can go home and feed your families. However, you will not get your brother back or receive any more food unless you come with your brother Benjamin, so that I can see that you are telling the truth."

JOSEPH TESTS HIS BROTHERS (PARAPHRASE OF GENESIS 42-47) PAGE 2

He kept Simeon in Egypt and the others went home to Canaan. When they got home, Jacob was upset at what had happened. He did not want Benjamin to go to Egypt, in case he lost him too, but eventually their hunger became too much. Judah said, "you can hold me personally responsible for Benjamin's safety" and with that, Jacob let them go.

When they arrived in Egypt, Joseph was glad to see Benjamin. He released Simeon to them and brought them into his house to eat with him, but he still did not let them know who he was.

They feasted and drank freely and had a wonderful time. Joseph watched his brothers, but he still did not know if their hearts had changed. So, when he sent them away, he secretly hid his silver cup in Benjamin's sack of food.

When they were a little way off, Joseph sent his servant after them. His servant said to them, "Why have you repaid evil for good and stolen my master's cup? Whoever is found with the cup will die!"

They didn't know what he was talking about, but when they opened the sacks of food, they were horrified to find Joseph's silver cup in Benjamin's sack. Frightened, they were put under arrest and taken back to see Joseph.

When they saw Joseph, they threw themselves at his feet and begged for mercy. They said they would become Joseph's slaves. Joseph said that only the one who had been found with the cup would become his slave. Judah said to Joseph, "Please Lord, our Father is very old. The only other son of Benjamin's mother has already died. If we do not bring Benjamin back to our Father, he will die of sadness. Please, take me instead. I will remain in Egypt and be your slave, but let Benjamin go."

Joseph saw that his brothers had changed. They loved Benjamin, where once they had hated Joseph. They loved him so much that they were willing to give up their own freedom to save him.

Joseph could no longer contain his tears. He told the Egyptian servants to leave them. He told his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?". His brothers were so frightened to see him again that they couldn't speak.

"Come near. Don't be afraid," Joseph said, "There will be 5 more years of famine in the land. God sent me here ahead of you, to save you. What you meant for evil, God used for good to save the lives of many people."

JOSEPH TESTS HIS BROTHERS (PARAPHRASE OF GENESIS 42-47) PAGE 3

Joseph hugged his brother Benjamin. He forgave his brothers, and they wept together. Soon, all of Egypt heard that Joseph's family had come to him. Joseph sent for his father and all his household. Pharaoh let Jacob and all of his family settle in Egypt in the land of Goshen. Jacob's other name was Israel and in Egypt, God blessed the Israelites.

5-9 years

GAME: COPS AND ROBBER

Equipment: something to be the prison like a bench or tree

1. Choose two cops and the rest are robbers
2. The cops chase the robbers. When the cops tag a robber, the robber has to go to the prison
3. Once the robber is in the prison, they have to stay there until another robber tags them again to set them free

DISCUSSION – USED FOR GOOD

Why do you think Joseph tested his brothers before he revealed to them who he was?

Why did Joseph not take revenge on his brothers, but chose to forgive them?

How did Jesus go through similar steps to Joseph (you might want to read Philippians 2:5-11 and use the robes to move through the stages)? Jesus is the Beloved Son of God, but He chose to take on the form of a man and become a servant. Jesus was faithful and God was with Him like Joseph was faithful. Jesus was betrayed like Joseph was betrayed. Jesus died for our sins, but was lifted up on the third day and now rules over all the nations. Joseph was sent to prison, but lifted up and made a ruler of the nations.

How did Joseph being sold into slavery, betrayed and put in prison and then being lifted up from prison, turn out to be good news for his family and the nations around Egypt?

How is Jesus dying and being raised from the dead good news for us?

Just like Joseph, Jesus chooses to forgive those whose heart are turned towards Him and who ask for forgiveness.

Just as Joseph was reunited with his father, when we trust in Jesus, we are reunited with Father God.

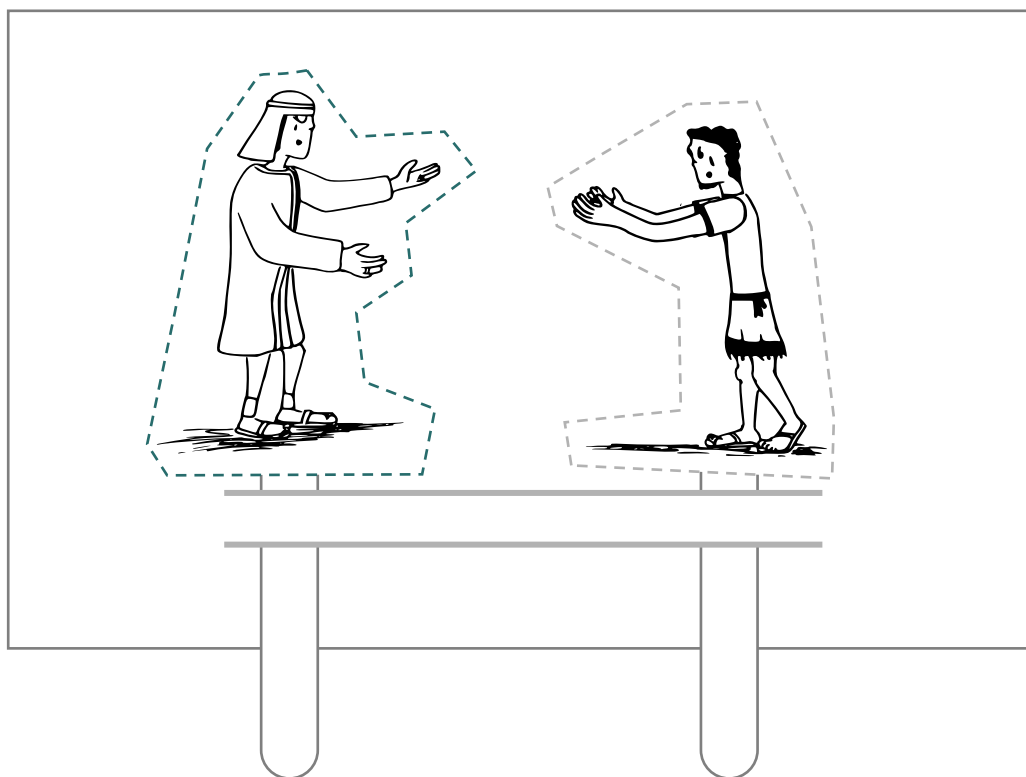
PRAYER

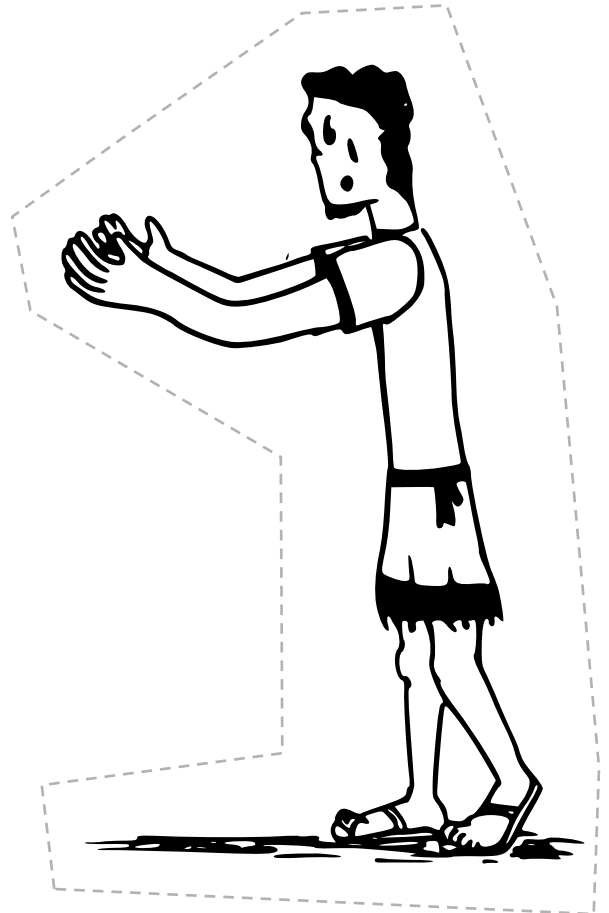
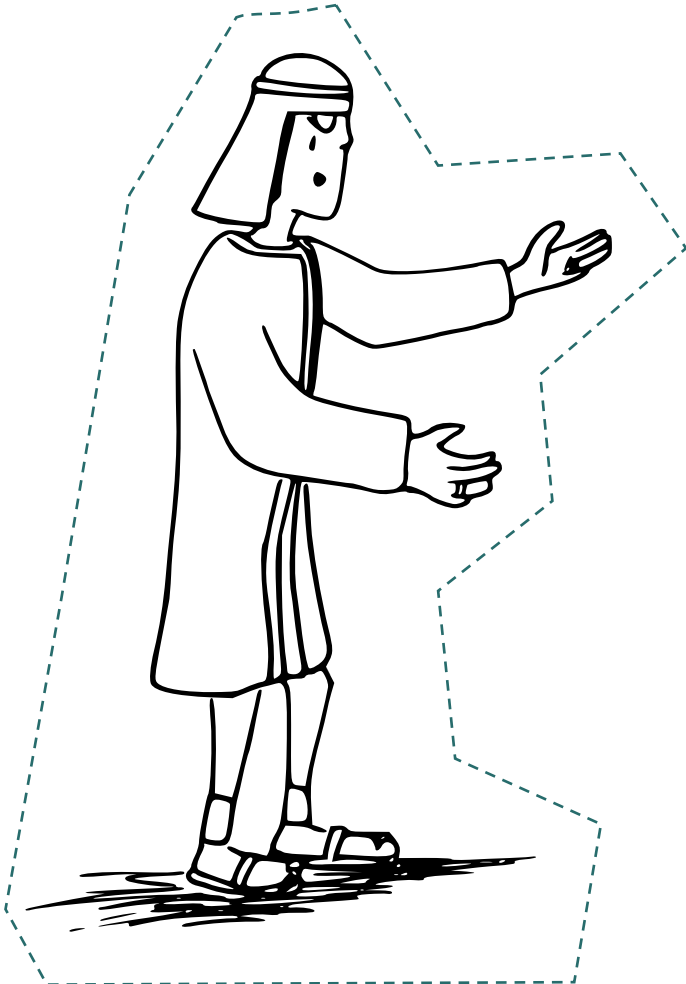
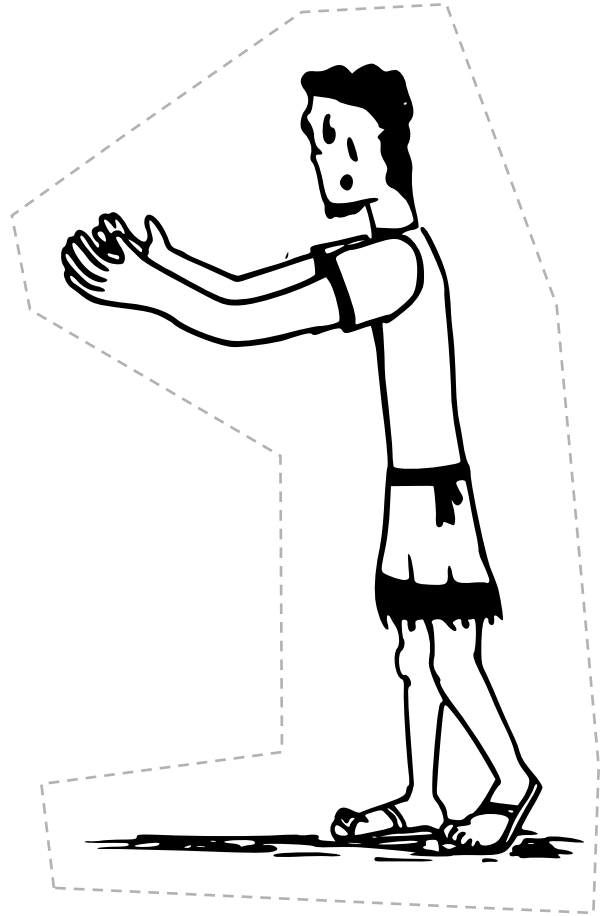
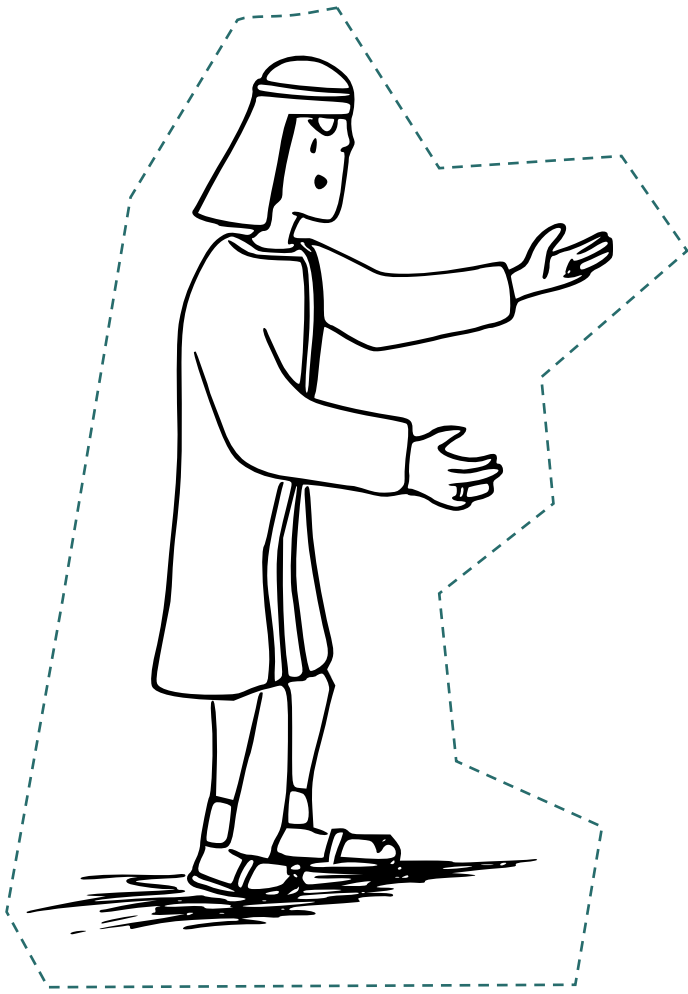
Let's thank Jesus for dying for us, rising from the dead for us and forgiving us. You could do it as a repeat-after-me prayer or go around the circle and invite the children to say thank you to God.

CRAFT: REUNITED

You will need: card A4, print out of Joseph and Benjamin, scissors, pens, lollipop sticks, tape

Draw a palace on the card background and colour in Joseph and Benjamin. Cut them out and stick them to lollipop sticks. Cut 2 parallel lines into the card that the lollipop sticks can be slotted into so that you can make Joseph and Benjamin run towards each other.





5-9 years

EXPLORE THE STORY

You will need: sculpting toy like playdough /plasticine and/or construction toy like duplo/lego

Set out playdough in one tray and duplo on another spread out enough in the room so that the kids can have space to think and build.

Ask the children to choose either the duplo or playdough to create a scene from the story. For example, they might want to make a feast, a palace, a cup, a bag of food, you could get a farm toy out to play with etc.

As they are building, talk to them about the story. You might want to ask some of these questions:

1. How did God use what happened to Joseph for good?
2. How is Jesus dying on the cross good news for us?