





Bible Mountain

In this station, we have actually invited Joseph to come and visit your VBS! Have one of your leaders dress up as Joseph from Egypt, as he greets the students and shares with them a story from his life each day. After Joseph shares, the teacher thanks Joseph for sharing, shares a few words, and then leads the students in an activity.

At the end of your time, lead the students in the voting for the day. Hang the voting poster on the wall. Then present the two options for that day, and discuss the issue in a way that does NOT show a right or wrong answer. Have the students think for themselves and vote. They can sign the paper on the wall, or place a sticker.



Day 1

Joseph

Joseph's dreams rebuked (Genesis 37:2-11)

Greetings!

My name is Joseph. It is a pleasure for me to be here with you at your VBS. First, I will tell you a little about myself. God had a great call on my life, and I became an important person. I am from Canaan, which is Israel today. I became a great ruler in Egypt, a fabulous country. People for generations have heard about me.

I would like to tell you my testimony. God did not give me fame the way I expected, and it surprised me.

Let me see, back when I was a young boy...

I remember playing in the yard with my brothers. I remember tending sheep out in the fields, where the grass was green, the sheep were white and gray, and I watched them roam and play.

I have 11 brothers, but none of them liked me very much. This is because our father, Jacob (also called Israel) liked me the most, and he proved it by giving me a special coat of many colors. I loved putting on my special coat, even though it may have hurt my brother's feelings.

When I was only 17 years old, God started to give me special dreams. I knew that God had a special call on my life. How many of you have a special call on your life?

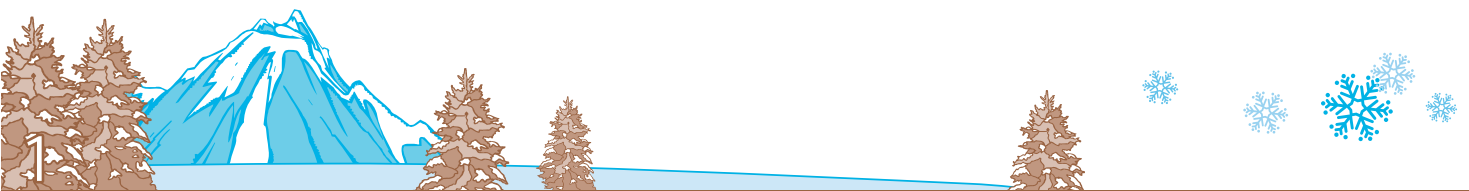
One day I dreamt that I was working in the fields with my brothers when suddenly my bundle of grain stood up tall while the bundles of grain of my brothers all bowed down to mine.

Later, I dreamed that 11 stars as well as the sun and moon all bowed down to my star. My brothers hated me even more with these dreams!

When I shared my dreams with my father and my brothers, my father rebuked me. I hated being in trouble with my father.

Even though I had dreams of being important, I was still a shepherd, with a small job. No one knew who I was. Instead of climbing the mountain, I felt like I was going down the mountain.

In the beginning, God gave me dreams and told me that one day I would be very special. However, my circumstances were the same. I was still a shepherd boy that no one knew anything about.





Teacher

Thank you, Joseph, for visiting us in our VBS!

Joseph, it may have felt strange for you to receive a special call from God, and then your circumstances did not change. However, this is how God works. If God is going to use us to do HUGE things, we must first believe Him despite our circumstances. Even when it looks like we are going nowhere, or going backwards, we must believe God and the calling He has on our life.

Joseph, you believed God, even when your father rebuked you for telling about your dreams.

We must take our eyes off ourselves and what is happening. We need to put our eyes on God. Children, will you believe God despite your circumstances as Joseph did?

Activity

Have the students lie down, as if they were in a peaceful pasture looking up at the stars. To make it more fun, put glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling of your classroom, then turn off the light so they can see the stars. (If you have an evening VBS, they can lie down outside, and look up at the real stars.) While they are lying there, ask the students to dream of all the HUGE things God can and will do with their lives.

Ahead of time, prepare a secret dream box. Ask the students to write down a dream they have, fold it, and put it into the dream box.



EXTRA

Before starting the VBS today, lead a devotional with your teachers, allowing them also to put their dreams into the secret dream box.



Voting

Gather the students around the voting chart and introduce the question and the choices. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting their opinion. You can also use stickers for voting if you choose. Try not to show them a correct answer.

- A. Joseph did the right thing when he told his family about his dreams so they could give God glory when it happened.
- B. Joseph should have kept his mouth shut, knowing that his dreams could hurt the feelings of his family.



Day 2

Joseph

Joseph is mistreated (Genesis 37:12-35)

Greetings!

My name is Joseph, and it is a pleasure for me to return to your VBS today. I told you that I became very important. I was the vizier of Egypt, which would be like a prime minister. There my name was Zaphenath-Paaneah, but you can call me Joseph. (Gen 41:45) I was surprised that back when I was 17 years old, God promised me big things, and then my whole world fell apart! God did not give me advancement the way I expected.

Let me see, back when I was a young boy...

I remember clearly the dreams God gave me. They were so real, as if they were really happening. However, after I told my family about my dreams, my brothers hated me so much. They wanted to get rid of me.

One day when I went out to the fields to meet my brothers, they grabbed me and threw me into the bottom of a dry well. I am not exactly sure, but I think my brothers were thinking of killing me that day! They saw a caravan of merchants on their way down to Egypt. They pulled me out of that well, and sold me as a slave! I could hardly believe they would do that to their own brother!

They told our father that I was dead, and brought him my special coat of many colors with bloodstains on it. My father did not start searching for me, as I am sure he would have done.

I felt very alone as a slave, without my family and no one who loved me. I could not speak the language, and I had no idea how to escape. In the beginning, God gave me dreams and told me that one day I would be very special. However, now my circumstances were much worse. I was a slave in a foreign country, and had no idea who I was anymore.

Teacher

Thank you Joseph for visiting with us again at our VBS!

Joseph, it may have felt strange for you to receive a special call from God, and then have your circumstances get much worse!

However, this is how God works. If God is going to use us to do HUGE things, we must trust Him when things get very difficult. God will allow all kinds of difficulties in our lives in order to train us. Even when it looks like we are going backwards, we must trust God and the calling He has on our life.

Joseph, you trusted in God, even when you were sold into slavery.

We must take our eyes off our own lives even when we are in difficult circumstances. We need to put our eyes on God. Children, will you trust God with your life?

Activity

Prepare ahead of time a large wooden cross to have in front of the classroom. Have a sticky note ready for each student. After talking about trusting God with their lives, pass out the sticky notes. Have the students write on the note what they will trust God for. The first and most important thing will be to trust God with our life. If a student is giving their life to God today, for the first time or as a re-dedication, ask them to write, "My life" on the note, and put it on the cross.

If they are already Christians, tell them to pray and ask God what they need to dedicate to Him today. Tell them to write that item on the note, and place it on the cross.



Voting

Gather the students around the voting chart and introduce the question and the choices. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting their opinion. You can also use stickers for voting if you choose. Try not to show them a correct answer.

- A. The fall into a well wasn't fun, but leaving his boring job of leading sheep around and traveling to a foreign country could be fun so he wasn't very mad at his brothers.
- B. Joe should have taken martial arts classes so he could show his brothers who is the boss and prevented that well thing from ever happening.
- C. When Joseph was offered the rope to get out of the well, he should have known his brothers were up to some trouble and refused to come out. He should have pretended to be dead.

EXTRA

Before starting the VBS today, have a devotional with your teachers, allowing them also to put sticky notes on the cross.



Day 3 Joseph

Joseph serves in Potiphar's house (Genesis 37:36, 39:1-6)

Greetings!

Remember me, Joseph! It is great to be back to your VBS!

Children, do you remember what happened to me last time? My own brothers sold me into slavery! I knew that they did not like me, and we fought a lot, but that is normal in all families. However, I did not expect them to sell me to the Midianites!

The Midianites brought me down to Egypt, and they sold me to Potiphar, one of the king's officials, and the captain of the guard!

I had to work and serve my master. However, God had favor with me and helped me. It would be easy to have a bad attitude, but I decided to serve my master to the best of my ability.

I knew God had bigger plans for me. Even though I was stuck in Potiphar's house, I chose to pick up a broom and serve. I did whatever my master asked of me; no task was too small.

Children, do you remember my dreams? I was the one who dreamed that the stars in the sky were all bowing down to me. I really did not feel like I was climbing towards the dreams God had given me. Honestly, I felt like I was going backwards.

After a while, my master noticed me, and promoted me to be his personal attendant. I was still a slave, but I had many responsibilities. It felt like God was blessing me, even though He allowed me to become a slave and to be brought to a foreign country!

Teacher

Thank you Joseph for visiting with us again for our VBS!

Joseph, it may have felt strange for you to receive a special call from God, and then find yourself in a foreign country as a slave!

However, this is how God works. If God is going to use us to do HUGE things, we must serve Him even in the very small things. God watches us to see if we are willing to work and serve others. He will be training us for larger things as we serve others. Even when it looks like we are going backwards, we must serve God wherever we find ourselves, because that IS the way forward.

Joseph, you served God, even when you were a slave. Did you feel lost in the crowd? Did you feel like no one knew who you were and the potential God had on your life? (Joseph responds, "Yes.")

We must take our eyes off the top of the mountain, and be willing to pick up a broom and start sweeping. We need to serve God in the little things. Children, will you serve God with your life?

Activity

Play the game "charades" with your students as time allows.

Instructions for game:

1. Choose a player to start the game.
2. He should choose one of the ways to serve from the list or draw out a piece of paper with one written on it.
3. The player then pantomimes the word, or dramatizes doing the service.
4. The first person to guess correctly wins a point. (Team or person with the most points wins.)



List of ideas for pantomiming serving God:

- pick up trash
- sweep the floor
- wash dishes
- pick up clothes
- sing in a choir
- mop the floor
- assist a pastor
- teach a kindergarten class
- be the last in line
- invite others to church
- greet others at door
- put clean dishes away

Voting

Gather the students around the voting chart and introduce the question and the choices. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting their opinion. You can also use stickers for voting if you choose. Try not to show them a correct answer.

- A. Joseph was right to work as a humble servant and do any job Potiphar gave him.
B. Joseph should have pretended to be very important, and explained to Potiphar about what huge plans God had for his life. He could have gotten the important job if he'd done the job interview right.



Day 4

Joseph

Greetings boys and girls!

We left off last time with me as a slave in the captain of the guard's house. Well that did not last forever because his wife falsely accused me, and I was thrown into jail!

Jail was not fun. However, I kept myself busy because the prison warden entrusted me to run things. Sure, it was fun to be responsible for everything inside the prison. However, that is not the dream God had given me when I was a boy! I never dreamed that someday I would be prison warden, in charge of everything, but stuck inside the jail.

No way! I wanted out.

Time passed, and everyone forgot about me.

Then one-day two men were thrown into jail with me who were attendants to the king! The king's cupbearer and the baker were in jail. I knew that maybe this was my chance to get out. God would take care of me, and help them to see that it was all a huge mistake. God had big plans for my life, and certainly I should not still be in jail!

Both men had dreams one night, and I helped them by interpreting their dreams. The cupbearer's dream meant that in 3 days he would be restored to the palace. However, the bakers' dream meant that in 3 days he would have his head chopped off!

Of course, I asked the king's cupbearer to remember me when he returned to the palace.

I told him how I had done nothing wrong, but was torn from my country, and found myself here in this prison. It was all completely unfair, and I wanted out.

Nevertheless, time passed again, and everyone forgot me.

The cupbearer was returned to the palace, just as I predicted, but he did not remember to tell the king about me. Two more years passed, and I was still stuck in that prison. I was forgotten.

Honestly, boys and girls, it was difficult to be in prison when I knew God had big plans for my life. I had to wait and keep my hope in God. I just waited, and hoped God would someday free me and fulfill the dreams he had given me.

Teacher

Thank you Joseph for being with us this whole VBS!

Joseph, it may have felt strange for you to receive a special call from God, and then find yourself totally forgotten and stuck in jail!

However, this is how God works. If God is going to use us to do HUGE things, we must hope in God, even when we feel lost, trapped, and forgotten. God will be watching us to see if we can wait and hope in Him. Even when we feel forgotten and left behind, we must hope and trust in God, because that IS the way forward. Joseph, you hoped in God, even when you were in prison. Did you feel lost in the crowd?

Did you feel like no one knew who you were and the potential God had on your life? (Joseph responds, "Yes.")

We must take our eyes off the top of the mountain, and be willing to wait for God's timing. We need to serve God in the little things while we wait and hope in God. Children, will you hope in God during those times that you feel invisible and forgotten?

Activity

Have the students create a small paper object to place into a "river" and watch it float downstream. This activity is to remind us that God has his timing, and we can hope in Him. We will trust God with our dreams, and let them float down the river while we wait on Him.

The students can make all types of paper boats to float down the water, depending on their age group. (See pictures for various ideas) Place a small swimming pool in the classroom to represent the river. You can also lay down blue fabric to pretend it is the river.



Voting

Gather the students around the voting chart and introduce the question and the choices. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting their opinion. You can also use stickers for voting if you choose. Try not to show them a correct answer.

- A. Joseph should have found a way to get in contact with the king's cupbearer, like get his phone number or send him a note with a guard. He would have gotten out sooner if he had tried harder.
- B. Joseph was right to be patient and keep working at any job he was assigned and wait, knowing that someday God was going to work it out and fulfill those dreams he had as a teenager.





Day 5

Joseph

Greetings boy and girls!

It is nice to be back with you on the last day of your VBS. Are you having fun? I know that I am!

Ever since God gave me those dreams of the stars and wheat bowing down to me, I had experienced nothing but trouble and pain. Even as I tried to be faithful to God and to my masters, new difficulties would arise. I wondered, "Why did God give me those dreams in the first place? Why would God give me a huge dream of a future blessing for me when I was only 17 years old, but then wait years to fulfill it?"

Then one day, when I was 30 years old, it happened! Blessing finally came to me!

Can you figure out how many years I went down instead of climbing up? I was 17 years old when God gave me the dreams, and 30 years old when they were fulfilled. (13 years)

Then on one warm afternoon, I was in prison and in charge of many things, but not allowed to leave; when suddenly someone arrived asking for me!

Pharaoh had received a couple of dreams from God, and no one could explain them to him. In his dreams, there were 7 lean cows and 7 fat ones, as well as 7 good heads of grain and 7 worthless ones. The cupbearer remembered me, and mentioned me to Pharaoh. He brought me out of jail, and I was presented to him after I bathed and changed my clothes. God gave me the meaning of his dreams and I told Pharaoh that there would be 7 years of abundance in Egypt, followed by 7 years of famine. Boys and girls, you are not going to believe what happened! Pharaoh put me in charge!

My pain was over.

I soon had a beautiful wife, a wonderful home, and was in charge of all Egypt. I could never have imagined this blessing on my life. I spent the 7 good years gathering grain and saving it up for later. Then the famine hit, and it was very difficult for many countries. People traveled everywhere to find food, and we were the only ones with grain available.

You are not going to believe this, but my own brothers traveled miles and miles to come to Egypt for food. The fateful day arrived, and there they were bowing down before me. I was the most important leader in all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh, and there were my brothers, kneeling before me!

My dreams were fulfilled finally, and it only took 20 years! Those 13 years of feeling as though I was going backwards were very difficult. I thank God for using me to save all those lives during the famine, and I thank God for bringing me back together with my family.

Teacher

Boys and girls, please give a warm hand of applause to Joseph, for his willingness to come to our VBS this week, and to share from his heart.

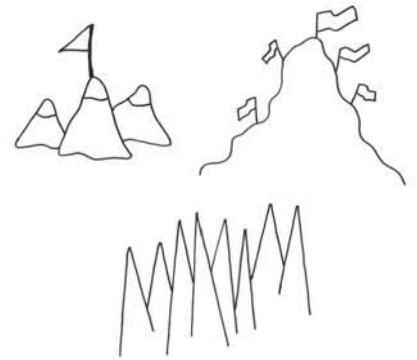
You and I have big dreams, just as Joseph did. However, we never expect them to take 20 years to be fulfilled! We can trust God, and know that one day He will fulfill our dreams, and maybe even give us more. This is what makes God's destinations without limits! If we are willing, He will continue to pull us up, draw us onward, as we learn and grow. The whole time, our achievements will be to bless others, just as Joseph's dreams were to keep the whole country from having no food.

Thank you Joseph for visiting with us this week!



Activity

In today's activity the students will create fun little flags to place on the mountain's summit. Prepare a mountain poster, with lots of space on the summit. Ask the students to create small triangular flags. It is not necessary to have the posts for the flags, since they will be taping the flags on the paper. The students can say a prayer of thanks, or shout "thank you God!" as they place their flag on the summit.



Voting

Gather the students around the voting chart and introduce the question and the choices. Each child will sign the chart in the section for their age group, selecting their opinion. You can also use stickers for voting if you choose. Try not to show them a correct answer.

- A. Joseph should have forced his brothers to regret their past actions and bow to him like in his dreams. He had a chance to get even with them and he should have taken it to see how much they liked it.
- B. Joseph did the right thing to tell Pharaoh the meaning of his dreams, prepare the nation for the coming drought, and allow foreign people to buy wheat from him, saving them from starvation.

