

family time

Leader Manual

Groups
EGYPT
Joseph's Journey
from prison to palace





FAMILY TIME

Leader Manual



Loveland, Colorado
group.com/vbs

Group resources really work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's:



Relational

Person-to-person interaction enhances spiritual growth and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What we experience through action and discussion sticks with us up to 9 times longer than what we simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of ministry is to equip people to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Lifelong

Experiences transform the heart, moving faith beyond the walls of church and into everyday life for years to come.



Group's Holy Land Adventure®

Group: Joseph's Journey From Prison to Palace

Family Time Leader Manual

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Credits

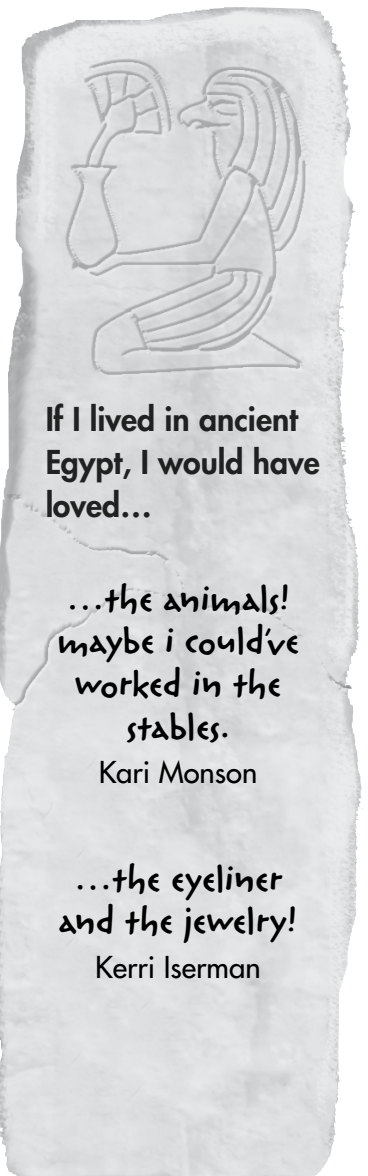
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If I lived in ancient Egypt, I would have loved...





...the animals!
maybe i could've
worked in the
stables.

Kari Monson

...the eyeliner
and the jewelry!

Kerri Iserman

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Groups EGYPT™

You'll reinforce Bible learning in a big way because the daily Bible Point is carefully integrated into each activity. That's why each center is so important to the overall learning experience.

Bible Point, Story & Verse

Family Time (small group time)



Day 1

Bible point: God gives us hope.

Bible story: Joseph interprets dreams in prison.
(Genesis 40:1-23)

Bible verse: " 'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord. 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.' " (Jeremiah 29:11)



Inflate a ball to explore how hope fills their hearts.



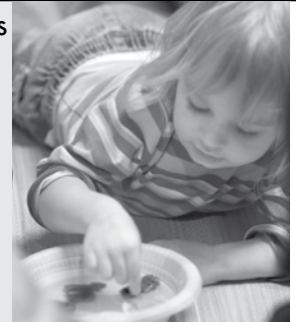
Day 2

Bible point: God gives us special abilities.

Bible story: Pharaoh puts Joseph in charge.
(Genesis 41:1-40)

Bible verse: "In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well."
(Romans 12:6)

Watch colorful capsules transform into cute critters...just like their special gifts "bloom"!



Day 3

Bible point: God gives us wisdom.

Bible story: Joseph leads Egypt through famine.
(Genesis 41:41-42:5)

Bible verse: "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you."
(James 1:5)



Rely on a friend's wisdom to guide them through a maze.



Day 4

Bible point: God gives us forgiveness.

Bible story: Joseph forgives his brothers.
(Genesis 42:6-45:15)

Bible verse: "But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and rich in unfailing love."
(Nehemiah 9:17)

Compare God's forgiveness to an ink stain that vanishes!



Day 5

Bible point: God gives us a family.

Bible story: Joseph settles his family in Egypt.
(Genesis 45:16-47:27)

Bible verse: "For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus."
(Galatians 3:26)



Connect paper people to explore how they're part of God's family.

Explore the entire program at a glance. Refer to the chart to see how each center's activities supplement other activities to make the story of Joseph come to life at your church!

Joseph's Journey

Pyramid Playground

Marketplace Shops



Meet Joseph in prison, and use a flickery light to explore how God gave Joseph hope.



Wrap up a few crazy mummy games.



Visit a variety of shops every day:

Barbershop & Salon

Get a surprise as they find Joseph living in the palace.



"Hunt" with lassos and hula hoops, and catch a few watermelon "fish."



Toy Shop

Brickmaking



Learn about Joseph's important job, and see how God has given him wisdom.



Relay a wet sponge, untangle a web of arms, and follow the Pharaoh.



Embalmer's Workshop

Jewelry Shop

Meet with an upset Joseph, and explore what anger and forgiveness feel like.



Tag a toe and tug of war...goofy, giggly, low-tech games!



Operation Kid-to-Kid™ Tent



Hieroglyphic Artist's Shop

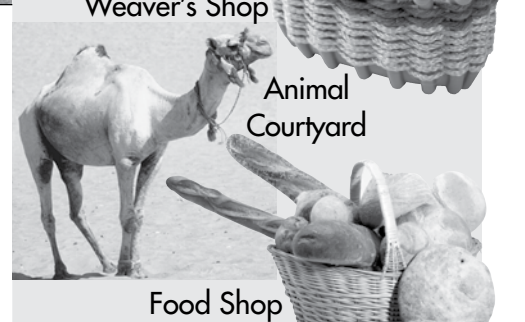
Basket Weaver's Shop



Celebrate with Joseph as he anticipates his family's journey to Egypt.



Travel like ancient Egyptians on foot, on water, and in carts.



Animal Courtyard

Food Shop

SAMPLE

Daily Schedule and Announcements

day 1

Bible Point: God gives us hope.



Time	Group A Families:	Group B Families:	Group C Families:	Group D Families:
	AMARNA	per-bastet	GIZA	Sais
	ZOAN	medinet el-fayum	asyut	pithom
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
9:00-9:15	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
9:20-9:35	Family Time	Family Time	Family Time	Family Time
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
9:40-9:55	Joseph	Pyramid Playground	Visit Marketplace	
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
10:00-10:15	Pyramid Playground	Joseph		
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
10:20-10:35	Visit Marketplace		Joseph	Pyramid Playground
			<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>	
10:40-10:55			Pyramid Playground	Joseph
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
11:00-11:15	Family Time	Family Time	Family Time	Family Time
<i>Allow 5 minutes to travel to the next station.</i>				
11:20-11:35	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration	Celebration

today's announcements:



Welcome to Egypt!

We're glad you're a part of this exciting Holy Land Adventure! As a Family Leader, you'll direct a group of up to 10 children and adults (your Egyptian Family) through experiences that have an authentic, traditional Bible-times feel. As Egyptian Families explore the culture of ancient Egypt, you'll guide them in activities and discussions that help them connect Bible truths to real life. You'll build lasting relationships with kids and adults as you bring God's Word to life in new and powerful ways.



What's a Family Leader?

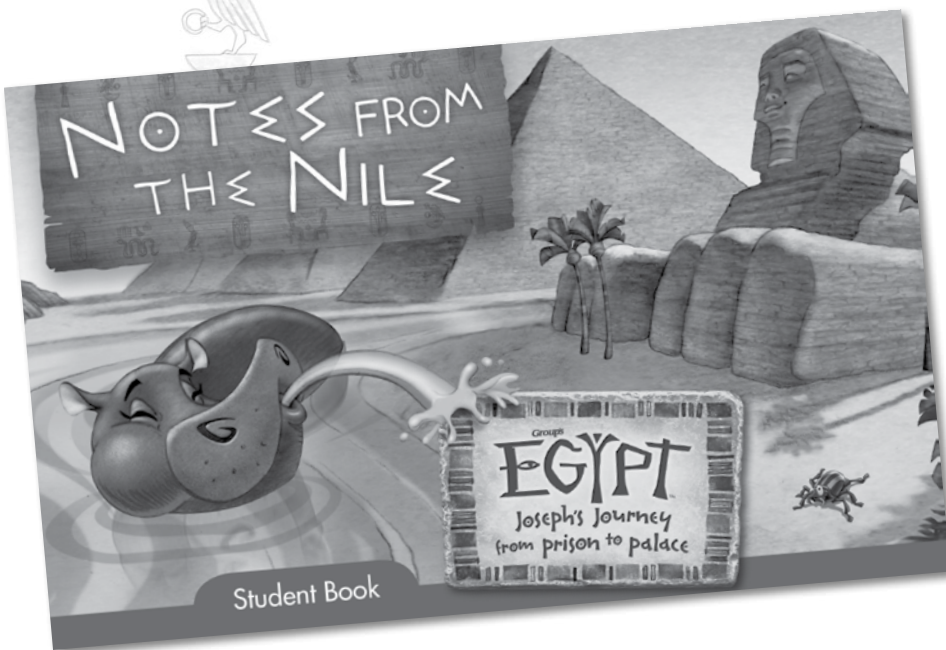
Family Leaders are the heart and soul of your Egypt VBS. The time children and adults spend with their Egyptian Families will be the most memorable, life-changing, and thought-provoking time of the entire program! While you don't have to plan or prepare materials, this leader manual contains the information you need to have a successful Family Time and helps you feel ready for a great Holy Land Adventure. Your leadership is a vital element to the success of this program. Here are a few tips to get you started.

A Family Leader is a friend and a helper who

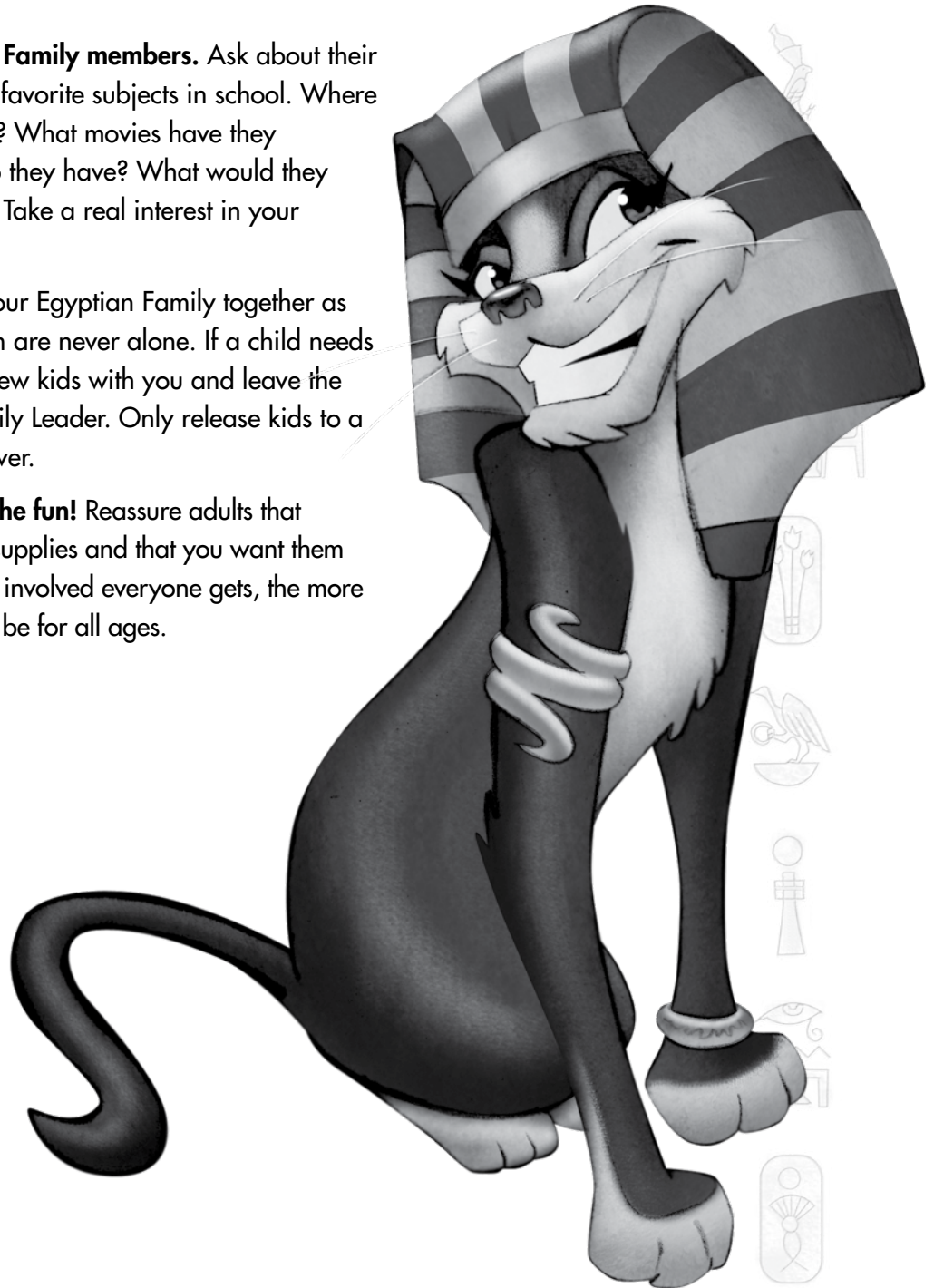
- ✓ draws others into discussions as much as possible,
- ✓ offers choices and asks questions,
- ✓ encourages Family members,
- ✓ participates in all of the Holy Land Adventure activities with their Egyptian Family, and
- ✓ helps and encourages other staff members.

- **Attend scheduled staff training.** Your Egypt Director will set up training for all staff who will serve. Plan to attend this important meeting so you can get the big picture of how your role fits into this exciting and unique program.
- **Familiarize yourself with this manual.** Read each day's Bible background, Scripture, and activities. That way you'll be prepared to give your Family members accurate information and not have to refer to the instructions as you're leading each activity.

- **Use your Bible.** It's important for Family members to see you looking up passages and reading them directly from God's Word to help them connect their experiences to Scripture. It's a good idea to mark each day's Bible passages ahead of time so you can turn to them quickly.
- **Check out the Notes From the Nile Student Book.** Each day Family members (kids *and* adults) will get a page from Notes From the Nile. The student book helps connect what everyone learns in ancient Egypt to everyday life.



- **Listen to the music ahead of time.** While you won't be leading the singing during the opening and closing Celebration times, it's a good idea to be familiar with the music so you can sing along with ease.
- **Smile!** Be a friendly face that Egyptian Family members look forward to seeing. It's likely that you'll have Family members who are new to your church, so be sure to welcome everyone with friendliness and warmth.
- **Call each person by name.** This is one of the easiest ways to affirm and encourage the people in your Family. Make sure each member feels valued and welcomed.
- **Get to know your Egyptian Family members.** Ask about their families, hobbies, and kids' favorite subjects in school. Where have they been on vacation? What movies have they recently seen? What pets do they have? What would they pack on a trip to the moon? Take a real interest in your Family members' lives.
- **Keep children safe.** Keep your Egyptian Family together as much as possible so children are never alone. If a child needs to use the restroom, take a few kids with you and leave the rest with your Assistant Family Leader. Only release kids to a parent or authorized caregiver.
- **Encourage adults to join in the fun!** Reassure adults that shopkeepers have plenty of supplies and that you want them to participate, too. The more involved everyone gets, the more meaningful the program will be for all ages.



Remember that you are the voice of truth!

Throughout the week, your Egyptian Family members will learn that Joseph believed in the one true God, but the ancient Egyptians believed in a large number of gods. The Marketplace shopkeepers, helpers, Pyramid Playground Leader, and Joseph's guard play the roles of ancient Egyptians who believe in many, many gods (and some other *strange* ideas).

- Keep drawing your Family members back to the truth of what we believe by saying things like "Let's always be ready to share our belief in our one true God." Or "You know what? Joseph isn't the only one in ancient Egypt who believes in the one true God. We do too!"
- As you lead your Family in conversation during Family Time, use child-friendly language to point out the differences between what Egyptians believed about the afterlife and what is taught by the Bible.
- Lead your Family members in sharing with shopkeepers the things you believe about God.
- Encourage your Family members to invite Marketplace shopkeepers and others they meet to join them in the opening and closing Celebrations. Their Egyptian "guests" can learn about our *one true God* and join in worshipping and praising him!



What's an Egyptian Family?

An Egyptian Family is a group of up to 10 people led by a Family Leader (that's you) and an Assistant Family Leader. Each small-group Egyptian Family has a Family name, based on ancient Egyptian city names.

Families give children a taste of ancient Egyptian culture, as well as a warm and welcoming group of friends to hang out with! Plus, the colored Banduras (which coordinate with the Family name posters) help you easily identify who is with which group and where different Families are during your Egypt VBS. The Egyptian Family Names Poster Pack includes the following names:



Amarna



Medinet el-Fayum



Per-Bastet



Zoan



Pithom



Rosetta



Memphis



Sais



Asyut



Giza

If your VBS has more than 100 participants, your Director might form "Households." For example, in the Family of Amarna, you might have the Households of Elephantine, Aswan, and Edfu. These Households would all wear the same color Bandura (as the Family of Amarna) and would be part of the larger Family of Amarna.



field test findings

Your VBS Director will make sure Families contain no more than 10 members and (ideally) two Family Leaders. Through field testing and customer feedback, we've discovered that smaller groups are more manageable and maximize important relationship-building time. We've also discovered it's best when Family Leaders can attend VBS every day and avoid having to get substitutes. Consistent leadership helps Family members get to know each other throughout the week!





Costuming and Supplies

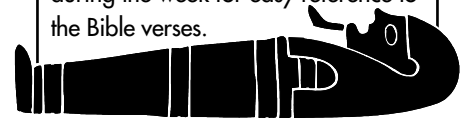
Your Egypt Director will coordinate collecting costumes and supplies. However, you can join in the fun by helping to create your own Egyptian-style costume:

- Find a long white shift-style dress or robe, or make one using the simple patterns on the *Egypt Clip Art & Resources* CD.
- Visit the Barbershop & Salon in the Marketplace and get authentic-looking Egyptian makeup.
- Make a jeweled collar from the Jewelry Shop.
- Wear any other jewelry you can round up (rings, armbands, earrings, ankle bracelets, headbands)—all Egyptians loved their ornamentation!

Your Director will also provide a basket with the Egyptian Family items you need each day, “home base” mats or blankets where your Family will gather, and your Family name poster.

Mummy Musings

You may want to keep one set of Bible Memory Makers with you during the week for easy reference to the Bible verses.



Supply Basket Checklist

Each day your basket will need to be stocked with the following:

- pencil or pen for writing Family members' names and making notes
- marker for writing names on name badges and writing on God Sighting Stones
- Egyptian Family Banduras™* (1 per Family member, including you)
- coin pouches* (1 per Family member)
- silver coins* (3 per Family member)
- the daily schedule showing the order your Family will rotate through the activities (you will get a new one each day)
- Bible for a handy reference
- bookmark to mark each day's Scripture passage
- Family Time Teaching Kit*
- God Sighting Stones* (beginning on Day 2)
- Glue Dots* or masking tape to attach Stone to the pyramid on wall
- Notes From the Nile Student Books* (1 per Family member—even adults)
- Bible Memory Makers®* (1 set per Family member—even adults)
- name badges* (optional)

*available from Group Publishing or your Group VBS supplier

Here's What You'll Do

Before Participants Arrive...

Plan to arrive *at least* 20 minutes early on the first day of the program. When you get there:

- Let the Director know you're there. He or she might have specific instructions or hold a Family Leader meeting.
- Find your Egyptian Family "home base" (mats or blankets where you'll gather for Family Time), and locate your basket of supplies. Check through your supply basket and be sure it has been stocked (or restocked) with all the necessary supplies for that day.
- Make sure your Family name poster is taped to the wall next to your mats.
- Get a list of your Egyptian Family members from the registrar or Director. (This list may change as participants arrive, since some will not have preregistered, so be flexible!)
- Look over your daily schedule to see what's in store for your Egyptian Family today and find out which lettered group you'll travel with.
- Sit near your home base, and welcome participants as they arrive.

When Participants Arrive...

Opening Celebration (15 minutes)

After participants register or sign in each day, they'll join you at your home base.

- Introduce yourself as your Family members gather, and as everyone arrives, be sure they know each other's names. Introduce any newcomers to the group. Help each Family member feel welcome.
- Help everyone put on their colorful Banduras. Tell them this designated color represents their Egyptian Family for the week.
- When the Celebration Leader begins, gather with other participants for opening singing and worship.
- Participate in singing and getting to know everyone.
- When the opening Celebration time is finished, lead your Egyptian Family back to your home base. Prepare your Family members for their trip to ancient Egypt!





Opening Family Time (15 minutes)

Each day you'll have 15 minutes at the beginning of the day designated as Family Time. This is where Egyptian Family members get to know each other as they discuss what life must have been like in ancient Egypt. If you have extra time, take a few minutes to work on your Family cheer. Families will love sharing these later in the week. When you hear the timekeeper's signal, you will know it's time to move to the next activity on your daily schedule.

Joseph (15 minutes)

- Lead Families to Joseph's area, and wait outside for the guard to allow you to go in.
- Sit with your Egyptian Family, and encourage everyone to listen and participate.
- Visit with Joseph and learn that although Joseph's brothers intended to harm him, God intended it all for good.



Pyramid Playground (15 minutes)

- Lead your Family to the Pyramid Playground area, and wait for the Pyramid Playground Leader to begin.
- Follow the Pyramid Playground Leader's instructions, and encourage everyone to listen.
- Help younger children with activities, if necessary.
- Participate in the activities wholeheartedly. Your participation will speak volumes to your Egyptian Family!



Marketplace Time (30 minutes)

Each day Egyptian Families will have 30 minutes to explore the shops in the Marketplace. Here, participants can become apprentices at things like designing jewelry, making bricks, and weaving baskets. They can enjoy ancient Egyptian delicacies such as fruit, nuts, veggies, bread, and honey. In the Marketplace, Families get to interact with characters such as barbers, hieroglyphic artists, and embalmers!

- Before heading into the Marketplace, divide your Family into two groups for “exploring.” One group will stay with you, and the other will go with the Assistant Family Leader. Let Family members work together to determine which shops they’ll visit each day.
- In the Marketplace shops, encourage everyone to listen carefully to the shopkeepers. Ask questions about how projects or tasks might be done in ancient Egypt.
- Assist young children with any projects they choose to do. *Families will have 30 minutes, so encourage them to take their time and work at a comfortable pace.*
- Once Family members are working on their own, feel free to become an apprentice yourself! Keep an eye on kids who might need a hand with a certain element of a project. And encourage adults to participate and create their own projects, too.



field test findings

Each day, every Family member will have three silver coins to spend in the Marketplace. At our field test, we discovered that this helped kids pace themselves and not rush through all the crafts in a couple of days. Plus, kids liked having the grown-up feeling of spending money!



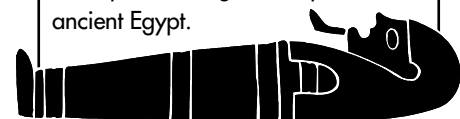
Closing Family Time (15 minutes)

Before the closing Celebration, you’ll gather with your Egyptian Family at your home base. During this time, Family members will connect what they’ve learned in Egypt to real life through simple object lessons, discussions, and experiences. Follow each day’s outline in the Family Time section of this manual.

- Distribute the day’s page from the Notes From the Nile Student Book. Encourage participants to watch for God when they go home. The list in the student book is just suggestions. Kids and adults love finding their own amazing God Sightings.

mummy musings

The shops in the Marketplace will be open all week. If your group goes to a shop only to discover it’s full, remind them that they can go another day. Families should have the opportunity to visit each shop at some point during their experience in ancient Egypt.





- Distribute a Bible Memory Maker each day. Bible Memory Makers are “stones,” each with the day’s Bible verse printed on it. Participants will put their Bible Memory Makers in the sculpted paper sarcophagus they make in the Embalmer’s Workshop. At the end of the week, they can take these home as lasting keepsakes, reminding them of their time in Egypt.
- Gather Banduras, coin pouches, and leftover silver coins that were not spent in the Marketplace, so you can use them the next day.
- Give the leftover silver coins to the Director, who will redistribute three coins for each coin pouch every day.

- When you hear the timekeeper’s signal, you will know it’s time to lead your Family members to the closing Celebration. Join them in a closing time of singing and worship.

Mummy Musings

Be sure to distribute the Bible Memory Makers in the special way outlined in this manual. Family members will not only walk away with a keepsake but also have a lasting memory of a meaningful affirmation or blessing.

Closing Celebration (15 minutes)

You’ll end each day by joining all the other Egyptian Families for a short Celebration.

- Lead your Family to the Celebration area.
- Participate in singing or other activities as directed by the Celebration Leader.
- Keep your Family together until parents or caregivers come for kids. *Do not* let kids wander off on their own! Remember, you’re responsible for their safety.
- Let Family members know you’re looking forward to seeing them tomorrow.
- Be sure participants take home their Marketplace projects and each day’s page from Notes From the Nile.



What Do I Do If...?

- **What do I do if my Family won't stay together between activities?** Work with your Family members to develop special routes and fun ways to travel between stations. Pretend to be Egyptian guards marching in a line, galloping donkeys in a desert caravan, or even a bunch of grapes clustered together! Be creative, and challenge kids and adults to think of new (and cooperative) ways to move from place to place. It's good to discuss with your Family on the first day that "Family togetherness" is important during your time in Egypt.
- **What do I do if older kids are unhappy being grouped with mixed ages?** Highlight older kids' helping roles by telling younger kids, "[Name of older child] is really good at that. Why don't you ask him [or her] to help you?" Older kids will enjoy being respected and looked up to, and younger children won't demand so much of your attention. Plus, older kids learn just as much—or even more—when they help lead younger children during activities. And younger children will thrive on the special friendships they build with older kids! Besides, when you call each group a Family, there's less of an expectation that kids will be with kids of their own ages.
- **What do I do if a Family member won't participate in discussion?** Ask follow-up questions to draw out shy or reluctant Family members. Use phrases such as "What do you mean by that?" or "That sounds interesting! Tell me more."

Accept the answers kids and adults give. Encourage participation by challenging Family members to offer as many different answers as they can think of. If participants offer answers that seem off base or contrary to your church's teaching, take time to follow up with them between activities or after your time in ancient Egypt. If you're not comfortable discussing their questions or concerns, refer them to your Egypt Director or pastor.

If Family members don't respond to your encouragement, don't force them to participate. You may have introspective people in your group who need time to think quietly about the things you're discussing.

- **What do I do if a Family member is too talkative or too active?** To ensure that each person has a turn to share, try going around the circle and giving each member 30 seconds to share a response. Or occasionally ask children and adults to respond with one-word answers. You can even call on people by their birthdays, such as "I'd like anyone with a wintertime birthday to answer this one."
- **What do I do if someone asks me a question I can't answer?** Many families who come to Egypt have never been to church before, so you can expect lots of questions as you help kids and adults learn about God.

field test findings

We were delighted at how easily kids and adults joined together to form one large Egyptian Family. Our Family Leaders found that the dynamics were better in groups that had a larger age span than in those Families made up of kids in a similar age group. Also, having mixed-age groups diminished discipline problems!





If someone asks you a question you can't answer, don't be afraid to admit you don't know. Say something such as "That's a good question. Maybe our church's pastor would know the answer. Why don't we ask our pastor later today?"



- **What do I do if my Family finishes an activity early?**

- Make up an affirming Family cheer that everyone can shout during the opening and closing Celebrations. (This was very popular at our field test!)
- See who can make the silliest face.
- Try to name Marketplace items that start with each letter of the alphabet (apple, blanket, collar, and so on).
- Think of fun ways to affirm and thank each shopkeeper, such as giving them high fives or a round of applause.
- Identify Shopkeepers or other staff members your Family can invite to the closing Celebration.



Operation Kid-to-Kid™

Comfort in the Cold

For two decades, Operation Kid-to-Kid has given kids at Group VBS programs the opportunity to join in service efforts that span the globe—cozy blankets for South America, cuddly Prayer Bears for Africa, and clean water for India.

For 2025, we're turning our attention a little closer to home.

Across North America, countless struggling families lack the most basic needs—warm clothes, socks, and blankets. As temperatures dip in the fall and winter, too many children walk to school in threadbare clothing. They shiver through recess or even in class. Bare heads miss the comfort of a warm stocking cap. Numb fingers and toes ache for cozy mittens or socks.

These are *our* neighbors. People in our city, state, community. This problem isn't across the ocean—it's right in our backyard.

That's why this summer we're mobilizing millions of kids at Group VBS programs like yours to reach out and offer comfort in the cold to kids right here in North America. Through Operation Kid-to-Kid, your kids can help provide necessities such as warm clothing and blankets!



Here's How!

Each Egyptian Family will be able to visit the Operation Kid-to-Kid Tent in the Marketplace and learn more about this close-to-home mission project. In the Operation Kid-to-Kid Tent, each participant will learn about Operation Kid-to-Kid, and see where they can drop off their donations during the week. Through partnership between Group Publishing and World Vision, a modest \$5 donation can make a big difference for kids in cold climates. In this station, families may also have the chance to help craft a fleece blanket that your church can donate to a charitable organization right in your community!

Remind kids that *many* other churches all over the country are joining together for this project. We trust that God takes every penny donated to Operation Kid-to-Kid and multiplies it to help those in need.

Just think, when your VBS families participate, you'll join other VBS programs, and together you could contribute *hundreds of thousands* of dollars to help provide warm clothes and blankets right here in North America! Operation Kid-to-Kid is a practical, meaningful way to demonstrate God's love through giving and service. (For more information about the impact of Operation Kid-to-Kid, check out ok2k.org.)



God Sightings®

It's easy to read incredible, true stories in the Bible and quietly wonder why God doesn't do those things today. But God *is* active in our everyday lives—we just have to learn to look. At Egypt, Families will be encouraged to look for evidence of God in things like

- a sunset,
- a rainstorm,
- a laugh,
- a kind word,
- a tasty snack.

We call those things God Sightings, and yes, even *preschoolers* can make them part of life. It's faith-building...and easy.

God Sighting Stones

In ancient Egypt, people built things like pyramids as monuments or memorials to their kings. We serve the one true God—the one true King! With God Sightings, the Egyptian Families will create a visual tribute or monument to God, as a reminder of all the ways he's active in our lives.

At the end of Day 1, the Celebration Leader will explain that God Sightings are evidence of the one true God—all around us every day! He or she will challenge kids and adults to start looking for things that God has done or made, or to practice sharing God's love and *being* a God Sighting.

Beginning on Day 2, after the Celebration Leader dismisses Egyptian Families to head to Family Time, Families will spend about five minutes sharing God Sightings they've discovered in the previous day. Family Leaders will write the God Sightings on the God Sighting Stone, using single words or short phrases.

field fest findings

Every year, part of our field test includes testing the idea of God Sightings. It's always amazing to see how kids "get" this cool concept. Kids *couldn't* stop talking about God Sightings. Parents shared that their kids—preschoolers to middle schoolers—pointed out God Sightings for *months* after VBS. It was amazing!



field test findings

We've discovered that the God Sighting ideas given on each day's student book page are a good launching point, giving younger children an idea of what a God Sighting might be. After a day or so, kids get it and may not need these prompts. While kids aren't limited to the God Sightings on the list, younger children will appreciate the additional examples of God Sightings.



Then one Family member will take the God Sighting Stone and tape it to the pyramid shape on a wall in the Celebration area. They'll begin to "build" a monument to the one true God. This is such a cool (and often tear-inducing) tribute to God's power and grace in our lives.



DAY 1

Bible Point:

 **God gives us hope.**

Bible Story:

Joseph interprets dreams in prison. (Genesis 40:1-23)

Bible Verse:

**“For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord.
‘They are plans for good and not for disaster,
to give you a future and a hope.’”** (Jeremiah 29:11)

Joseph lived a life filled with dramatic highs and disheartening lows. The favored son of Jacob, Joseph sported an elaborate robe and had prophetic dreams. These dreams, however, made him hugely unpopular with his already-jealous brothers. Filled with hatred, Joseph’s brothers threw him in a well, then sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelite traders who were headed to Egypt.

As a slave in Egypt, Joseph gained favor and prosperity with his master...for a while. Then he was wrongly accused and shipped off to Pharaoh’s prison. Even in the hopeless depths of an Egyptian prison, things started looking up for Joseph. The warden put Joseph in charge, and “the Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed” (Genesis 39:23). When two prisoners had strange dreams, Joseph offered to tell them what the dreams meant. All he asked was this: “Please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place.” The man whose dream foretold great success *did* get out of prison and gain favor with Pharaoh. But he promptly forgot about Joseph. For two long years, Joseph sat in the same prison cell, forgotten.

Has it ever felt like you’re always facing a new disappointment, setback, or failure? Others get ahead, and you’re still sitting in the Egyptian prison. There’s hope, my friend! God is pouring out blessings daily. He’s *promised* us “a future and a hope.” And while you may not succeed in all you do, you can rely on a faithful God who loves you more than you can imagine. Today, help the kids and adults at your VBS realize that no matter how despairing life seems, we have the promise of hope from our Heavenly Father.

Did You Know...

Joseph is the first prisoner mentioned in the Bible.



Day 1 Opening Family Time

1. Welcome Egyptian Family members.

Gather your Family on your home base blanket, and introduce yourself (if you haven't already). Make sure each Family member has a name badge and a colorful Bandura from registration. Say: **Our Banduras will represent our Egyptian Family for the week. Every time you see a Bandura this color, you'll see one of our Egyptian Family members!** Point to the Family name poster, and tell kids and adults their Egyptian Family name for the week. (See the information on this manual's back cover that tells about your Family name.)



for day 1 you'll need...

- map (see page 25)
- Day 1 schedule
- Bible marked at Jeremiah 29:11
- Inflatable Ball (in the Family Time Teaching Kit)
- Day 1 Bible Memory Makers® (1 per Family member)
- Day 1 Notes From the Nile pages (1 per Family member)



2. Where's Egypt?

Say: **All week, we'll pretend to go back into Bible times and be a Family in ancient—very old—Egypt!** Show everyone the map. Point to your town, and then point to Egypt. **Egypt is a desert land in northeast Africa. It is very, very, very, very hot there!**

Before we go on our incredible adventure, let's get to know each other. Let's take turns saying our names and telling about the warmest place we've ever visited. Start by telling about the warmest place *you* ever visited.




map of egypt



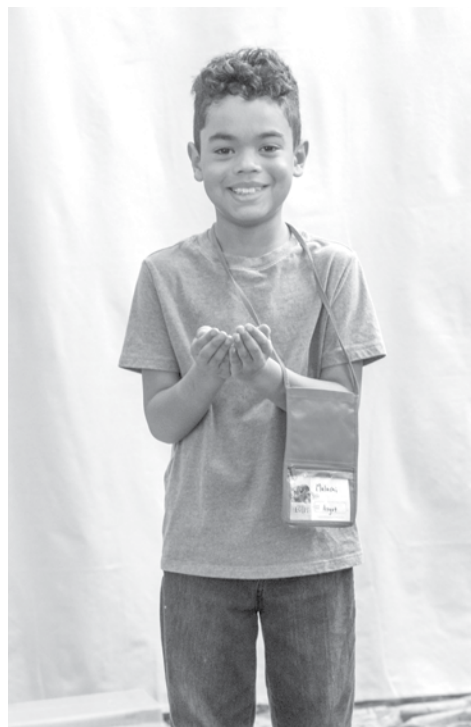
3. Teach today's Bible verse.

Say: **This week we'll visit with Joseph. His brothers were jealous of him, and they sold him to be a slave in Egypt. Joseph may have been the only one in Egypt who believed in the one true God. Everyone else believed in lots and lots of gods.**

Open the Bible to Genesis and show everyone. Say: **Joseph's story happened toward the beginning of the Bible. It was a long, long time before Jesus walked on earth.**

Turn to Jeremiah 29:11, and say: **Today's Bible verse is found in Jeremiah 29:11. God tells us: "For I know the plans I have for you... to give you a future and a hope." That Bible verse means that  God gives us hope. "Hope" is not like a birthday wish. "Hope" is like encouragement—things that help us feel better. We sang a song in our opening Celebration about hope. When we sang "The Lord's Plans," we sang today's Bible Verse! God makes good come from bad times. We can always have hope because our one true God loves each one of us so much.**

Teach Family members these actions to help them remember the Bible verse: Have everyone hold their hands like an open book for "For I know the plans I have for you." Have everyone give a thumbs-up sign for "to give you a future and a hope."



"For I know the plans I have for you..."



"...to give you a future and a hope."

4. Get ready to caravan!

Bring out the schedule and say: **Today we'll play Bible-times games, eat Bible-times food, and visit Joseph in Pharaoh's prison. We'll find out that God can make good come from bad.** Tell your Family members where you will be going first today. The shopkeepers, Joseph, and the Pyramid Playground Leader will repeat their activities several times each day with a different group of Families each time.

Say: **When we go to another country, their money is different from ours. Since we'll be going to Egypt, we'll need some Egyptian coins to spend. We'll get to spend this money when we visit the shops in Egypt today.** Give each Family member a coin pouch with three coins.

5. Give Family members a "mission" to accomplish in the Marketplace.

Say: **Pretty soon we will hear a signal (tell Family members what to listen for) to tell us that the Marketplace is open. When it's our turn to visit the shops in the Marketplace, let's look for someone who might need hope. Let's encourage the person with a smile, hug, or handshake.**

When you hear the timekeeper's signal, say: **Now, onward to Egypt!**



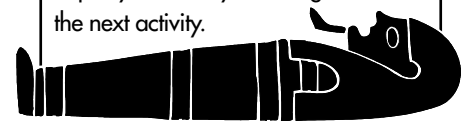
field test findings

We gave Egyptian Families a mission to accomplish in the Marketplace each day. This gave everyone the opportunity to play their role and kept much of the conversation focused on the day's theme. It also gave participants a way to share their faith in our one true God!



mission findings

When it's time for your Family to go into the Marketplace, form two smaller groups (you can take one group, while the Assistant Family Leader takes the other), and go to the shops you chose to visit. Remind Family members to stick together with their adult leader. It's easier to help your kids interact with the shopkeepers and much easier to pull your Family back together for the next activity.



Day 1 Closing Family Time

1. Circle up and review.

Gather in a circle on the home base blanket. Talk about the day's events. Ask:

- **We just spent one day in ancient Egypt! What do you think it *really* would have been like to live back then?** (Fun; scary; lonely; I'd miss my TV.)



2. Bring out the uninflated ball.

Say: **Today we learned about Joseph, who was in prison. Joseph's brothers did a terrible thing and sold him to be a slave in Egypt. When that first happened, Joseph must have felt sad and hopeless.** Bring out the uninflated ball. Hold it up, then say: **This flat ball looks sad and hopeless to me!** Ask:

- **When was a time you felt hopeless?**

You go first—hold the uninflated ball, and share a hopeless time such as when an elderly parent was sick. Then pass the ball around the circle. As each person holds it, he or she will share a hopeless time. Family members might share: "When my homework is hard," "When my family had to move," "When my best friend didn't want to be my friend anymore," "When my parents got divorced," and so on.

After everyone has shared, hold the flat ball and ask:

- **When you feel hopeless, what makes you feel better?** (Prayers; friends coming over; parents giving hugs.)



Say: **When we feel hopeless, all of these things make us feel better.** Repeat some of the things Family members said. **But you know what? 🦅 God gives us hope.** God gives us caring friends. God gives us loving parents. God gives us his Word—the Bible. We learned today that Joseph’s hope grew bigger and bigger because Joseph knew God was with him. God can make good come from bad.

Tell Family members that you’ll name three or four of the things they mentioned earlier that make them feel hopeless. After each thing you name, have everyone shout 🦅 **God gives us hope**, as you inflate the ball with a puff of air.

Once the ball is inflated, say: 🦅 **God gives us hope. When bad things happen, our hope can grow bigger and bigger. We know God makes good come from bad.** Gently roll the ball on the floor to a person, and say: [Name], **God gives you hope.** Then that person will gently roll it on the floor to another, and say: “[Name], God gives you hope.” Continue until everyone is affirmed. Hold the ball and say: **We’ve just encouraged everyone in our Family! God can use us to bring hope to others.** Put the ball out of the way.

3. Bring out the Day 1 Bible Memory Makers®.

Say: **Each day in ancient Egypt, we’ll get a Bible Memory Maker to help us remember what we learned. Today’s Bible Memory Maker is a hawk.** Hold up the Hawk Bible Memory Maker. **Hawks spread their wings and fly! Sometimes when we’re filled with hope, we feel like we can fly!** Read the day’s Bible verse on it (Jeremiah 29:11): **“For I know the plans I have for you...to give you a future and a hope.”** This Bible verse means that 🦅 **God gives us hope.**




Go around the circle, give each person a Bible Memory Maker, and say: [Name], **God gives you a future and a hope.** After each of the Family members receives the affirmation, have them “spread their wings,” and place their arms on the shoulders of the people on either side of them. Once family members have each received a Bible Memory Maker and are linked in a circle, say a prayer. Thank God for giving each person a future and a hope.

field test findings

We’ve discovered that it’s incredibly powerful for each Family member to hear his or her name in an encouraging, affirming way. Take the time to make this activity an experience of God’s warmth and love.



4. Distribute the Day 1 Notes From the Nile pages.

Say: Isn't it wonderful that  God gives us hope? When we see the awesome things God has done for us, we feel hopeful! All week long we're going to keep our eyes open and watch for ways we see God active in our lives—those are called God Sightings. A God Sighting might be a hug, a hawk, a beautiful sunset, or a person being kind to you. You'll be like detectives, looking for clues or evidence of God! Ask:

- Where do you think you might see God after you leave ancient Egypt?

You share an idea first, such as hearing a child say a nighttime prayer. Explain that the page from Notes From the Nile gives examples of where everyone might look for evidence of God. After everyone shares an idea, say: **We'll talk about our God Sightings when we meet again tomorrow. I can't wait to hear how—and where—you see God. In fact, you are God Sightings to me! Your smiles have made me happy. I've enjoyed my first day in ancient Egypt with you!**



5. Pray, and prepare for the closing Celebration.

When you hear the timekeeper's signal, wrap up your Family Time.

- Say a prayer asking God to help Family members share God's hope and love with others.
- Collect everyone's Banduras, coin pouches and leftover coins, and the Day 1 Bible Memory Makers, and put them in the basket. If your Family members have already visited the Embalmer's Workshop and have their sculpted paper sarcophagus, they can put their Bible Memory Maker in that and leave it in the basket, too.
- Have participants leave their Day 1 Notes From the Nile page and craft projects from the Marketplace on the home base blanket until after the Celebration time. Make sure everyone comes back to the home base blanket to get those before leaving.

myummy musings

If you finish early, you could roll the ball around the circle again. Let each person catch the ball and then share what he or she thinks will happen to Joseph tomorrow in ancient Egypt.



congratulations!

You're about to become
a child's best friend.



This leader manual will show you how!

You're a Family Leader in the Egypt VBS...so what do you do—and how do you do it?

As a Family (small group) Leader, you don't have to plan or prepare materials—but you *are* the heart of your Egypt VBS. The time children spend with your Egyptian Family will be the most memorable, friendship-building, and life-changing of the entire program.

No one knows exactly how ancient Egyptians pronounced words (or even how they spelled them) because their written language didn't include any vowels! But here are our best suggestions:



amarna

(pronounced "a-MAR-na")

Pharaoh Akhenaten built Amarna along the Nile in middle Egypt, in honor of the sun god Aten.



Per-Bastet

(pronounced "pair BAH-stet")

Also called Bubastis, Per-Bastet means "Domain of Bastet," the cat goddess.



pithom

(pronounced "PIE-thom")

The city of Pithom is mentioned in the Bible as one of the cities built by the Israelites for the Egyptian Pharaoh. Located in Lower Egypt, the main discoveries here were a number of large honey-combed chambers, which most likely served as granaries (grain storehouses) for the Egyptian army.



memphis

(pronounced "MEM-fis")

Memphis was an ancient capital of the Old Kingdom of Egypt. The name "Memphis" is the Greek version of the Egyptian name of Pepi I's pyramid, Men-nefer, meaning "beautiful monument."



asyut

(pronounced "ahs-YOOT")

Asyut is a very old city and the largest town in upper Egypt. Archaeologists excavating the chambers of nearby rocks have found mummies of wolves. According to legend, an invading army was defeated with the aid of herds of wolves.



medinet el-fayum

(pronounced "med-i-net el-FIE-yoom")

Medinet el-Fayum is a city located in an oasis west of the Nile valley. The Greeks called the city Crocodilopolis because people worshipped the fake god Sobek there. Priests fed the crocodiles meat and honey cakes and decked them out with gold ornaments!



zaan

(pronounced "ZOE-uhn")

Zaan, later called Tanis, was the capital of the Hyksos rulers, or "shepherd kings." Some monuments have been found at the site that lead scholars to consider that its plain was the "land of Rameses" (Genesis 47:11; Exodus 12:37) where the Hebrews moved during Joseph's time.



rosetta

(pronounced "roe-SET-a")

Rosetta is most associated with the finding of the Rosetta Stone in 1799, a stone that was instrumental in deciphering ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. However, its strategic location on the Rosetta arm of the Nile and the Mediterranean coast made it a very important site for military bases from ancient times.



sais

(pronounced "SAY-iss")

Sais, known as Zau in ancient Egyptian and today as Sa el-Hagar, is located in Egypt's delta. The city is known from the very beginning of Egyptian history from wooden labels associated with King Aha. (Isn't that a great name?) The goddess Neith, initially a goddess of war, later became associated with funeral wrappings. Murals often show her standing with Isis guarding the funeral bier of the pharaoh.



giza

(pronounced "GEE-za")

The town of Giza is now a suburb of the metropolis of Cairo and is located right on the banks of the Nile in Lower Egypt. There is also a plateau called Giza which is the site of some of the most impressive monuments in the world, including the Great Sphinx, a huge statue with a lion's body and a man's head.

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