

D23. Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 29:31-30:24; Genesis 37:3-36

Learning Objectives

1. The children will explore Joseph's family and what happened between him and his brothers.
2. The children will recall that Joseph was sold by his brothers because of jealousy.
3. The children will recognize that families are blessing from God and that we are to do our best to love one another.

Memory Verse: *"He gave a blessing to Abram."*

--Genesis 14:19 (NIRV)

Getting Started

Choose One

All Ages

Homework Share

Share the homework from the children. Talk about their families, and what makes them special. Help them to realize that each family is different, and that's "ok". (Use their family information to complete the "family tree" activity later in this lesson.)

Circle Time:

As the children arrive have them sit in a circle, and toss a ball (or rolled up sock or a bean bag, etc.) to the children. The child with the object will give an answer to one of the following questions:

1. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
2. Do you like to play with each other?
3. What would you do if your brother or sister needed help?
4. Do you always get along with your brothers or sisters?
5. Do you ever tell on each other?

Tell the children that in today's story we learn more about Joseph and his family. He had 11 brothers and one sister. Let's find out how they felt about each other.

NOTE: Please use your best judgment with your class as to whether they will be able to understand this activity or if they will have hurt feelings.

Illustrate jealousy in class by making one student the "star" student for the day. Say that they can sit wherever they want, even on the floor. They can answer without raising their hands. And they get a candy bar at the end of the class. Do this for a few minutes (not the whole class!) then talk about how the students felt. How did you feel towards that one student? Is it fair to treat one person that special? Discuss the word "jealousy" and what it means.

Grades 3-5Hangman – “Joseph Style”:

Play a round of hangman with the students, using the words in this order: Jacob, brothers, twelve, coat, Joseph, and jealousy. Discuss how each word relates to our story today.

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions**Message:*****Families are blessings from God. Love one another.***

Recall/review the lessons regarding Abraham. God promised that Abraham’s descendants (his children and their children and so on) would someday form a great nation. Now God started to fulfill that promise through Jacob. In our last lesson, we learned that Jacob married Leah and Rachel. At first, Leah could have children and Rachel could not. But in time, Rachel was also able to have children. Altogether, Jacob had 12 sons. Their names were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph and Benjamin. The descendants of these 12 sons would later become the 12 tribes of Israel. They would become powerful tribes, or groups, under the great nation of Israel, just like God had promised.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did God promise to Abraham? *(That he would be the father of a great nation, his descendants would be a great nation.)*
2. How did God fulfill his promise to Abraham? *(Abraham had a son Isaac, Isaac had a son Jacob, and Jacob had 12 sons.)*
3. What kinds of promises has God made in the bible that we know about? *(Abraham, Noah and the flood, etc.)*
4. What promise has God made to us? *(That he will send His son Jesus for us so that we may have eternal life.)*

Lesson/Discussion:

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. Joseph had been born to him when he was old. Jacob made him a beautiful robe.

Joseph’s brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them. So they hated Joseph. They couldn’t even speak one kind word to him.

Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. He said to them, “Listen to the dream I had. We were tying up bundles of grain out in the field. Suddenly my bundle rose and stood up straight. Your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it.”

His brothers said to him, “Do you plan to be king over us? Will you really rule over us?” So they hated him even more because of his dream. They didn’t like what he had said.

Then Joseph had another dream. He told it to his brothers. “Listen,” he said. “I had another dream. This time the sun and moon and 11 stars were bowing down to me.”

He told his father as well as his brothers. Then his father objected. He said, “What about this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers really do that? Will we really come and bow down to the ground in front of you?”

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions – *Continued*

His brothers were jealous of him. But his father kept the matter in mind.

Joseph Is Sold by His Brothers

Joseph's brothers had gone to take care of their father's flocks near Shechem. Jacob said to Joseph, "As you know, your brothers are taking care of the flocks near Shechem. Come. I'm going to send you to them."

"All right," Joseph replied.

So Jacob said to him, "Go to your brothers. See how they are doing. Also see how the flocks are doing. Then come back and tell me." So he sent him away from the Hebron Valley.

Joseph arrived at Shechem. A man found him wandering around in the fields. He asked Joseph, "What are you looking for?"

He replied, "I'm looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are taking care of their flocks?"

"They've moved on from here," the man answered. "I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'"

So Joseph went to look for his brothers. He found them near Dothan. But they saw him a long way off. Before he reached them, they made plans to kill him.

"Here comes that dreamer!" they said to one another. "Come. Let's kill him. Let's throw him into one of these empty wells. Let's say that a wild animal ate him up. Then we'll see whether his dreams will come true."

Reuben heard them. He tried to save Joseph from them. "Let's not take his life," he said. "Let's not spill any blood. Throw him into this empty well here in the desert. But don't harm him yourselves."

Reuben said that to save Joseph from them. He was hoping he could take him back to his father.

When Joseph came to his brothers, he was wearing his beautiful robe. They took it away from him. And they threw him into the well. The well was empty. There wasn't any water in it. Then they sat down to eat their meal. As they did, they saw some Ishmaelite traders coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, lotion and myrrh. They were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother and try to cover up what we've done? Come. Let's sell him to these traders. Let's not harm him ourselves. After all, he's our brother. He's our own flesh and blood." Judah's brothers agreed with him.

The traders from Midian came by. Joseph's brothers pulled him up out of the well. They sold him to the Ishmaelite traders for eight ounces of silver. Then the traders took him to Egypt.

Later, Reuben came back to the empty well. He saw that Joseph wasn't there. He was so upset that he tore his clothes. He went back to his brothers and said, "The boy isn't there! Now what should I do?"

Then they got Joseph's beautiful robe. They killed a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. They took it back to their father. They said, "We found this. Take a look at it. See if it's your son's robe."

Jacob recognized it. He said, "It's my son's robe! A wild animal has eaten him up. Joseph must have been torn to pieces."

Jacob tore his clothes. He put on black clothes. Then he sobbed over his son for many days. All of Jacob's other sons and daughters came to comfort him. But they weren't able to. He said, "I'll be full of sorrow when I go down into the grave to be with my son." So Joseph's father sobbed over him.

But the traders from Midian sold Joseph to Potiphar in Egypt. Potiphar was one of Pharaoh's officials. He was the captain of the palace guard.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did Jacob feel about his son, Joseph? (*He loved Joseph more than any of his brothers. He even gave him a special coat.*)
2. How did Joseph's brothers feel about him? (*They were jealous and hated him, and could not even speak nicely to him.*)

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions - Continued

3. What were Joseph's dreams about? *(12 stalks of wheat, with 11 bowing down to 1; the sun, moon and 11 stars bowing down to Joseph. Note: help the children to see the similarities from Joseph's dream to his life.)*
4. What did Joseph's brothers think the dreams meant? *(They thought that it meant Joseph was going to rule over all of them, and they did not like that!)*
5. What did the brothers decide to do? *(At first they were going to kill him, but then they threw him in a well, and sold him to be a slave. Discuss together what being a slave means...they may know from school and learning about Abraham Lincoln.)*
6. What motivated the brothers' actions? What caused them to do the things they did to Joseph? *(Jealousy – discuss what the word means. Ask the children to give you examples.)*
7. What happens when we are jealous? *(We may want what the other person has, we get angry, and we probably treat that person badly.)*
8. Talk about the 9th and 10th commandments with the children, explaining the word "covet" to mean want. These 2 commandments address jealousy and how we don't want to be. Use your pinwheel folders.

Application to Real Life

Enjoy a healthy snack together as you continue the discussion:

In today's lesson we talked about Jacob's family. Even though his family had problems God still cared about all of them and what happened to them. He forgave them for the wrong things they did and used them to do good things. Just like Jacob's family, our families aren't perfect either. Sometimes we get along GREAT, and sometimes we argue or fight and we may even have bad feelings towards each other. But God is forgiving and can use those experiences to teach us how to better love each other. Every family looks a little different, but all families are wonderful blessings from God, because the people that make up our families love us very much. Let the children share what one thing (do they think) makes their family special.

Talk about how we are all a part of the family of God too! We want to love our brothers and sisters too, and accept each other even if we are different. Our family of God is special. How can we share our love for God's family with each other? Talk together and come up with some ideas. Celebrate together how blessed we all are to have people in our lives that love us so much. Review the memory verse and message statement.

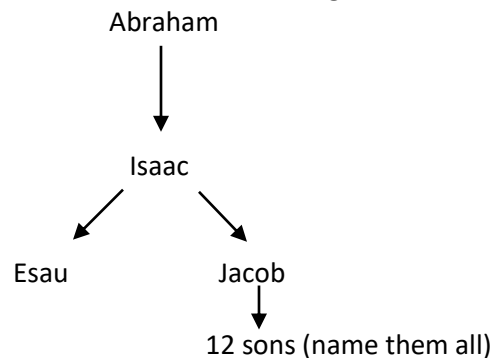
Memory Work Fun

5 minutes

1. Recite the memory verse.
2. Practice finding the memory verse and/or Bible text in the Bible!
3. Play a game to review a commandment – pass/toss a bean bag or stuffed animal – whoever gets it says the next word. How fast can you go?

All Ages**Abraham's Family Tree Chart:**

With the students, draw a chart so that they can see the progression of the relationships from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the 12 sons. Review with each name their story briefly, and how God was with them and provided for them in each case. You may choose to put the names on note cards and have the students help you put them in the correct order from top to bottom. The chart should look something like this:



Remind the children that every family is different by asking them if their family looks like this one. Help them to understand that all families are special blessings from God. Review the message statement.

Make Joseph's Coat

Using a brown grocery bag, turn it inside out. Cut out holes for the arms and head, and slit the front to make a vest or "coat". Decorate the coats by coloring or painting them. (If you are painting, make sure you have paint smocks or old shirts to cover the children's clothes.)

Song: "Joseph's Coat of Many Colors"

See: www.daniellesplace.com → Login → Search in the upper right hand corner: "Joseph Coat" → Click on "Joseph – A Very Colorful Story" → Scroll down to the song

Grades K-2**Art Time**

Let the students help you illustrate Joseph's dreams on large paper. Draw the 12 stalks of wheat, with 11 bowing down to the one. Then draw the sun, moon and 11 stars bowing down to Joseph. Discuss what they think these might mean, and why Joseph had these dreams. What do you think God was trying to show Joseph? (We will find out in later lessons.)

"Joseph – A Very Colorful Story" review sheet

See: www.daniellesplace.com → Login → Search in the upper right hand corner: "Joseph Coat" → Click on "Joseph – A Very Colorful Story" → Scroll down to the activity #2

This review sheet uses colors to help the children remember the story. Print enough copies (one for each child) before class. Work on it together.

Memory Verse Game

Cut out star shapes and write the memory verse on the stars using one word per star. You will need enough stars per child so that each word written on a separate star, and the Bible text on its own star. Spread the stars out on the floor and have the children sit on the floor around them. Take turns going around the circle letting each child pick a star. He must pick up the stars in order starting with the first word. If a child doesn't pick up the correct star the first time, he turns the star back over and tries again next time. Once he picks up the word "He", he will then try to find the word "gave" and so on. The child that picks up all the stars in order first wins. You can then have the child glue the stars onto a strip of paper to take home.

(SEE ATTACHED for Star patterns – NOTE: using different color stars for each word helps children who cannot read to be able to better play the memory game. Also, remember to write the Memory Verse on the Easel/Board so that they can compare their "word" to the one on the board that they are looking for.)

Grades 3-5**"Promises" Discussion and Bible Time:**

Discuss with the children what a promise is. What kinds of promises have you made? Why is it important to keep a promise? What happens when we don't keep a promise? Who always keeps His promises? (God!)

Talk about the promise God has made to all of us. Look in the Bible at the following verses:

John 3:17 (NIRV)

*"God did not **send** his **Son** into the world to judge the world. He sent his **Son** to save the world through him.*

Zechariah 2:11 (NIRV)

"People of Zion, shout and be glad! I am coming to live among you," announces the Lord.

Zechariah 9:9 (NIRV)

"City of Zion, be full of joy! People of Jerusalem, shout! See, your king comes to you. He always does what is right. He has the power to save..."

Matthew 26:64 (NIRV)

"Yes. It is just as you say," Jesus replied. "But here is what I say to all of you. In days to come, you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One. You will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven."

John 11:25 (NIRV)

"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even if he dies."

As the children read the verses, discuss what that promise will look like. We don't know when Jesus will come, or how, but we believe and know He will come, because God promised us. He always keeps His promises.

Rainbow Coffee Filter Coat

Make a coat of many colors like Joseph using a coffee filter and markers (markers should not be the washable kind!). Use the markers to make a design with many colors, but avoid the center part. When you are finished, lay the coffee filters (one at a time) on a stack of paper towels and squirt the filters with water (from a spray bottle). The colors will run together and form a tie-died effect. Allow the filters to dry. After the filters dry, gather them at the top with a rubber band to make a head. Draw a face on the gathered part using a permanent marker

Joseph's coat was given in love by his father, but it caused his brothers to be jealous and hate him. Not everything in life is fair, and we want to do our best to not hurt other people's feelings. Give the rainbow coat you made to a family member or friend. Let the person you are giving it to know how special they are.

Activity Ideas - Continued

Choose One

"Be Grateful for What you Have"

Review the following commandments with the children:

- *You shall not covet your neighbor's house.*
- *You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is your neighbor's.*

Why do you think Joseph's brothers were so jealous? They were angry because their father loved Joseph more. They coveted his love. When we are not happy with what we have, we can get angry or jealous. Make a list of all the things that you are blessed to have. Share lists and realize that while some people may have different things, we don't want to be jealous. We are happy for one another, and for our own blessings. Encourage the children to be grateful and thank our heavenly father for the blessings that He has given to them.

Journal

Optional

Grades K-2

Draw a picture of what it means to love your neighbor as yourself. Do you think it is hard to love your neighbor? Why or why not? Write about it.

Grades 3-5

Has God ever helped you just like He helped Joseph? Write about what happened and how God was able to help you in your life.

Write down the last commandment that Jesus said was the most important: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." What does that mean exactly? What do you think? Write about it. Then draw a picture to show an example.

Homework Ideas

- Read the lesson titled **Joseph and Potiphar** (Genesis 39:1-23).
- Learn the memory verse: *"It is God who arms me with strength."*
--Psalms 18:32 (NKJ)
- Work on memorizing commandment #_____.
- Color the **Joseph and Potiphar** coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- Use old magazines to cut out (or draw) pictures and make a collage of all the things that can make you stronger (both your body and your soul). Bring your collage in to share.

Other Resources

<http://children.cccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 3 → “The Sons of Jacob”

<http://children.cccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 3 → “Joseph is Sold by His Brothers”

www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Puzzles → “Joseph’s Jealous Brothers”



Name: _____

Joseph and Potiphar



"It is God who arms me with strength."
--Psalms 18:32 (NKJ)

Take Home Page: D23. Joseph and His Brothers

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that **families are a blessing from God and that we should love one another**. The children explored Joseph's family and what happened between him and his brothers. They also talked about what happened when Joseph's brothers became jealous of him.

Help me learn my memory verse...

"He gave a blessing to Abram."

--Genesis 14:19 (NIRV)

Ask me...

1. Tell me about Joseph's family.
2. What happened when Joseph's brothers became jealous?
3. How can we show love to everyone in our family?

Live Your Faith...

Think of things you could do for each member of your family that would show them how much you love them. Help your child to especially do this for siblings (and/or cousins). Remind your child that families are a blessing from God and that He wants us to love one another.
