

UNIT VERSE

You are the only God.
You created the earth and
everything on it.
Nehemiah 9:6

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS**LEADER BIBLE STUDY****CONTEXT AND COMMENTARY FOR PERSONAL STUDY AND PREPARATION**

(For age-appropriate language, use the Bible story on the following pages.)

LIFE POINT

God planned for
people to show love.

**LEVEL OF
BIBLICAL
LEARNING**

God wants family
members to love and
help one another.

**SCRIPTURE
REFERENCE**

Genesis 37; 42:1-8,25-26;
43:1-2,15-17; 45:1-14;
46:28-34; 50:15-21

WEEKLY VERSE

Be kind and loving.
Ephesians 4:32

Joseph came from an incredibly dysfunctional family. His father, Jacob, had multiple wives, and these women bore him many children through a rivalry filled with spite and insecurities (Genesis 29:31-35; Genesis 30:1-24; Genesis 35:16-20). Because Jacob loved one wife more than the others, he also loved certain children more than the others. Joseph was the favored child, which caused resentment and anger among his brothers. All of these factors eventually led to them selling Joseph into slavery when they got the chance.

Dysfunctional, indeed.

Many years later, after Joseph had risen to power in Egypt, he came face to face with his brothers, the people who had completely destroyed the life he knew, and he had a choice to make. Would he forgive or get his revenge?

When someone in your family hurts or injures you, you face the same decision. It is tempting to dwell on various ways you can make that person pay for how he hurt you - the silent treatment, spread lies about him, share his dirty secrets. The options are endless for getting revenge! But is this the way of Jesus?

The apostle Peter taught Christians to respond differently. He implored Christians to be loving and compassionate, and to not repay "back evil for evil or insult for insult" (1 Peter 3:9). Peter calls us to follow the way of Jesus. Jesus never paid evil back with evil, nor did He ever take revenge on those who hurt or disappointed Him. Peter knew this firsthand after Jesus forgave him for denying that he even knew Him (Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19).

Jesus wants to forgive people when they repent and turn back from their wrong behavior. Do you?

Joseph forgave his brothers. Jesus offers forgiveness to everyone. Are you willing to forgive your family members? As you pray this week, thank God for the family He gave you. Ask Him to fill you with a desire to forgive quickly when your family members sin against you.



TELL THE STORY

JOSEPH LOVED HIS BROTHERS

-Based on Genesis 37; 41:29-57; 42-43; 45; 46:28-34; 50:15-21

Jacob had 12 sons. He made a special robe for his son Joseph. Joseph's brothers were unkind to Joseph because their father did special things for him. Joseph's brothers sold him to men traveling to Egypt. Many years later, Joseph lived in the king's palace and was in charge of Egypt.

When Jacob and his other sons were running out of food, Jacob told his sons, "I have heard there is grain in Egypt. Go and buy some for us." Jacob sent 10 of his sons to buy food.

Joseph's brothers arrived in Egypt and went to see Joseph to buy some grain. Joseph was so happy to see his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

Joseph said to them, "I am Joseph, your brother. Is my father still alive?" Joseph's brothers were surprised and afraid to see Joseph. The brothers remembered that they had been mean to Joseph. They wondered what Joseph would do to them now that he was a leader in Egypt.

Joseph told his brothers, "Do not be worried or afraid. God helped me in Egypt. He sent me here so I can help my family. Go and get our father, Jacob. Move all the family here so I can take care of you."

Jacob, all of Joseph's brothers, and all of their families moved to Egypt.

Joseph told his brothers, "I forgive you. God planned for me to come to Egypt. I'll take care of you and your children."

- **Review the Bible story.** Invite a child to choose a color: blue, orange, purple, or green. Ask the corresponding review question. Assist them in answering the questions if needed.
- **Learn the Life Point.** Display the following motions as you say the Life Point: "God (point up) planned for people (point to others) to show love (cross hands over your heart)." Repeat the Life Point and motions together.
- **Learn the Bible verse.** Open the Bible to the verse strip. Read Ephesians 4:32. Invite the children to repeat the verse. Lead them to name different ways they can be kind to their families and others around them.
- **Wrap it up and pray.** Show the "Joseph Loved His Brothers" video. Lead the kids in a prayer, asking God to help us love our families.



BIBLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

ART

Provide a piece of stiff white paper with a large heart outline. Set out cups of grain, such as oatmeal, along with spoons and glue. Invite preschoolers to decorate the heart with grain. As they work say, “God wants family members to love and help one another. Joseph loved his brothers. (Child’s name) can love your family too!”

BLOCKS

Invite preschoolers to build a palace for Pharaoh using cardboard and plastic cups. As they work together, say, “Joseph worked for Pharaoh (king), who lived in a palace. Joseph’s brothers traveled to Egypt to buy food and see him. God had a plan for Joseph to help his family! God has a plan for (Child’s name).”

HOMELIVING

Set up a cash register with play coins and food. As preschoolers buy and sell food, say, “There was a famine (not a lot of food) in Egypt. People needed to buy food for their families. Joseph’s brothers traveled to Egypt to buy food and found Joseph in charge! God had a plan to help Joseph’s family. God has a plan for your family, too.”

NATURE

Fill a sensory tub with rice, corn, or oats. Allow preschoolers to scoop, fill, dump, and transport the grain with dump trucks. Say, “Joseph’s brothers were not kind to him. Joseph chose to be kind anyway. God wants families to forgive each other. Thank you, God, for my family.”

PUZZLES & MANIPULATIVES

Make a clothesline in your classroom. Place clothing items or colorful cloth on the clothes line with clothespins. Say, “Joseph’s dad, Israel, gave him a special coat. This made his brother sad, and they did not want to talk to him. Joseph forgave his brothers. God wants families to help and forgive each other.”