

Bible Story 8: JOSEPH: GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS LIFE

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 37:1-5,12-14,23-36; 39:1-23; 40:1-4,8; 41:1-4,8-16,28-43, 46-49,54-57; 42:1-8; 45:3-5; 47:1,27; 50:19-22

MEMORY VERSE: 1 PETER 5:7

BIBLE STORY:

Isaac was Abraham and Sarah's son. Isaac married Rebekah and they had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. God changed the name of Jacob to Israel. Jacob had twelve children, and the eleventh son was Joseph. God took care of him.

Jacob (Israel) was already old when his son Joseph was born. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he reported to his father things that his brothers were doing wrong. Jacob gave Joseph a beautiful, colorful robe, loving him more than his other sons. The brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more, so they hated Joseph and were rude when they spoke to him.

One day, the father told Joseph to go see how his brothers were doing and bring back news about them. Joseph left and went looking for his brothers. His brothers saw Joseph coming from a distance and began making plans to kill him. When Joseph arrived, they took off his robe and put him in a dry, empty well. Soon afterwards they saw an Ismaelite caravan that was going to Egypt. So they decided to sell their brother as a slave instead of killing him. Afterwards they killed a kid goat and with the blood they stained Joseph's robe. When they took it to their father, he thought Joseph had been killed by an animal. He wept for his son.

Where was Joseph? He had been taken to Egypt, where he was sold as a slave to Potiphar, captain of the guard, an Egyptian official to Pharaoh (the king). God was with Joseph and blessed him in everything that he did. Joseph had the great responsibility of taking care of the house and everything that belonged to Potiphar. One day the wife of Potiphar lied about Joseph, and as a result he was put in prison where the king's prisoners were held. God was still with Joseph while he was in prison. He received the great responsibility of taking care of all the other prisoners. While there he

interpreted the dreams of two prisoners, chief cupbearer and chief baker who had served the king. Everything that Joseph said happened; the cupbearer returned to the palace and the chief baker was hanged.

After two years, Pharaoh (the king) had two dreams that nobody could interpret. The chief cupbearer remembered Joseph, and he told the king about Joseph's interpreting dreams. Then the king sent for him. Joseph told the king that he would interpret his dreams with the help of God. He said that the dreams meant that Egypt would have seven years with plentiful crops and food, but immediately afterwards it would have seven years of severe drought with much hunger. He advised Pharaoh to choose a discerning, wise man to lead the country, collecting and storing crops during the seven good years. Afterwards this food could be sold and used during the seven years of drought. The king chose Joseph to be in charge of this task. Joseph was thirty years old when he became second-in-command of Egypt.

Joseph saved the people of Egypt during a terrible drought because food had been stored during the seven prosperous years. During the time of famine, his brothers arrived in Egypt to buy food. They spoke to Joseph, but did not recognize him. Joseph helped them. Eventually Joseph told them who he was. They asked Joseph for forgiveness, and he forgave them. Joseph invited his whole family to live in Egypt, protecting and saving their lives during the severe drought. Once again he was reunited with his father, Jacob. How happy they were!

Joseph told his family that God was always with him in every problem that he faced, giving him abilities to overcome these difficulties.

LIFE LESSONS:

1. Joseph was sold by his brothers to strangers, and later put in prison because he was wrongly accused. But God was with Joseph during all of the problems that he faced. Finally, God gave him victory. Pray and ask God for his help. God will be with you, helping you face and overcome any difficulty that happens in your life. He will give you victory!
2. Joseph worked hard at each difficult task that he was given. He always trusted God to be with him and take care of him. God loves you. Work hard at each task that you are given. Also trust God to be close to you, giving you strength, courage, comfort and ability to face and overcome the situation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Did Jacob love one son more than the others? Who? What did he give his favorite son?
2. Do you know a parent who loves one child more than another? Is this right? Why?
3. Why did the brothers sell their brother Joseph? Was it right to do this? Why?
4. Have you ever been treated wrongly? What happened?
5. How can you avoid or stop someone from mistreating you? When should you resist and flee or fight back? Why? When should you let it pass without doing anything at that time? Why?
6. Besides God, who can you ask for help if you are being mistreated?
7. What did Joseph do in Portiphar’s home in Egypt? Who was with Joseph? Why was Joseph put in prison? What happened when he was in prison? Who was with Joseph?
8. How can God help you face problems when someone is mistreating you?
9. The brothers asked Joseph to forgive them for the things they had done wrong to him. Did Joseph forgive his brothers for treating him wrongly? What did he do? (*Emphasize that he forgave them but did not allow them to continue to mistreat him.*)
10. Should you forgive someone who has mistreated you? Why would this be difficult to do? Why should you do it? If you forgive that person, should you allow him to continue to mistreat you? Why not?

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRESENTATION:

- Show pictures of people facing difficult situations. Talk about the problems and difficulties that they face. Examples: people that are blind or deaf; entering in a new community, job, school or church; mistreated by a family member, friend, co-worker or boss; severe illness or accident; children without a mother and/or father; war victims; etc.
- Share that there is a Bible story about a person who faced many problems, but God was always with him, taking care of him.
- Tell the Bible story.

FINGER PRINTS:

- Finger print each person present. Let each one keep their own finger prints in a safe place in case it is ever needed. (Contact your police department. Some police officers will come and do this.)

TELEPHONE:

- Share the importance of each one knowing his complete name, address (street, city and state) and phone number in case of becoming lost or having an emergency. Know emergency numbers and how to make long distance calls within and out of state. Using a play phone, let younger children practice dialing their phone number and making a collect call (from their own city, another town and from another state).

GUEST SPEAKER:

- Option 1: Invite a blind, deaf or crippled person to come and talk, explaining his/her situation and ways that you can help him/her.
- Option 2: Invite a police officer or counselor:
 - (1) Share ways that youth and adults can protect themselves and get help against abuse, kidnapping, bullying, etc.
 - (2) Share ways on how children can get help if when lost in a store or shopping mall; protect themselves and get help against kidnapping, molesters, abuse, bullying, etc. Do not frighten children, but be informative. Keep the discussion on the age level of those present.

MISSION ACTIVITY: “REACHING CHILDREN”

- Reach out and help children in need:
 - Option 1: Volunteer at an orphanage.**
 - Give time to help and be with children at an orphanage.
 - Give gift(s) to one or more children for their birthdays, Christmas, etc.
 - Invite one or more children to come to your home for a visit and meal (such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.).
 - Option 2: Be a friend to a child.**
 - Be a special friend to children of a one-parent home. While the parent goes shopping, etc., watch the children and do special activities with the children.

DAILY BIBLE READING - Genesis 37:1-5;12-14,23-36; 39:1-23; 40:1-4,8; 41:1-4,8-16,28-43,46-49,54-57; 42:1-8; 45:3-5; 47:1,27; 50:19-22

1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
Genesis 37:1-5	Genesis 37:12-14, 23-36	Genesis 39:1-20	Gn. 39:21-23; 40:1-4,8; 41:1-4,8-13	Genesis 41:14-16,28-43, 46-49,54-57	Genesis 42:1-8; 45:3-5	Genesis 47:1,27; 50:19-22