

JOSEPH HELPS HIS FAMILY

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Genesis 41:39-41, 46-49, 57; 42:5; 45:3-28

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To teach children that family members must take care of one another.

MEMORY VERSE

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another” (John 13:34, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

God was with Joseph when Joseph was a slave in the house of Potiphar. God helped Joseph when he became governor of Egypt. Pharaoh appointed Joseph governor when he was thirty years old, and Joseph became the second most important person in that country. God used the Egyptian Pharaoh to give Joseph authority. Thus, Joseph could help his family and many people during the critical time of a severe drought.

The dreams Joseph had when he was young had come true. He was the governor and his brothers were to bow down to show honor to him.

God keeps his promises to provide what his children need.

Joseph discovered that God could use him to help others. He was able to forgive his brothers and helped them, as well as many other people.

Joseph took his whole family to live in Egypt. Pharaoh gave them the best land and treated them as special guests.

Joseph and his father had deep love and respect for each other.

Ephesians 6:1-4 reminds us of the importance of love and respect in our families. In some of today's societies, the family institution has been quickly collapsing. Values have been abandoned and there seems no longer to be any interest in restoring

family union and love. The models have changed, and now the children do not seem to need the instruction and care of the parents. Parents, on the other hand, divorce and remarry easily. This is disrupting many families and exposing children and parents to severe emotional instability.

This is why it is important for preschoolers to learn that God has a different perspective for us. He wants families to love, respect, and learn to forgive one another.

Use the example of Joseph to teach your children the importance of cultivating love, respect, and forgiveness within the family.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Joseph shared his food

Prepare some drinks and cookies or other snack foods for the children. Sing a song of praise, and ask them to sit down to hear the Bible story.

Tell them: "The lesson is about how Joseph cared for his family in Egypt. One of the ways he helped was to provide food for them. Joseph loved his family and therefore provided food for them. I brought some food for you. As you enjoy this snack, remember that God loves you and wants family members to take care of each other."

TEACH THE LESSON

A trip to Egypt

Ask the group: "What would you need to do to get ready for a trip to a place faraway? What would you take with you on the trip?" (Let the children respond.) "In this Bible story, Joseph's brothers need to travel to the country of Egypt. Have we learned about anyone else who lived in Egypt? (Let the children respond.) Let's find out what happened to Joseph and his brothers."

Have your Bible in a visible place, and say to the children: Today we will make a trip to Egypt! Do you know where that country is? (Allow them to respond). Egypt is a very distant country in Africa. Joseph and his family lived there. Let us imagine that we went with Joseph's family to Egypt. Have the children go with you as you move around the meeting area pretending you are walking a long way. In the end, tell them to sit down and listen to the story of how that biblical character helped his family have food.

Food for Joseph's family

When Joseph was a young boy he had a dream that told Joseph something that would happen to him in the future. God gave Joseph also the ability to understand what other people's dreams meant.

When Joseph went in Egypt, he worked hard. God was with Joseph and helped him. When the king of Egypt had a strange dream, Joseph told the king what the dream meant. Joseph said that God was telling him there would be a time when there would be no food (a famine) in Egypt and other countries.

God helped Joseph, letting him know that there would be a time when there would be no food in Egypt or in the nearby regions. Joseph told this to the king of Egypt, and the king replied: "You are in charge of all this country, do what you think is right."

Joseph was already an adult man; he was thirty years old. He was a very important person in that country. He was in charge of all the food. Only the Pharaoh had more power than him. However, Joseph had not seen his family for a long time and that made him sad.

For seven years there was lots of food. Joseph built big storehouses to keep extra food. The food storage bins became full. After these seven years, it stopped raining and crops failed. People began to run out of food, and they asked Pharaoh to sell them food. Joseph sold what he had stored, and in this way the country made a lot of money. Soon people came from other regions to buy food, because they had no food left. Joseph's family needed food like the others, so his brothers traveled to Egypt. They had not seen Joseph for many years, and they did not even know if he was alive.

When they saw him, they did not recognize him; but he recognized them.

"I am Joseph!" he cried to them. "Is my father alive?"

His brothers were surprised. The second most powerful ruler of all of Egypt was their younger brother! "God sent me here," said Joseph. "He wanted me to take care of the Egyptian people, and take care of my family too. That is why I stored all this food."

The brothers returned home with a lot of food that Joseph had given them. When they arrived, they told Jacob that his beloved son was alive. The whole family traveled to Egypt to live there. Pharaoh gave them the best land for a place to live. Now Joseph

was happy to be close to his family.

At the end of the story, place a small amount of cereal or grains (corn, rice, or beans) in the children's bags. Explain that Joseph stored much grain to feed people during the drought.

CONNECT THE LESSON

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Pass the ball

Help the children to form a circle. Pass a ball around the circle. As each child receives the ball, the class will say one word of the sentence. When a child says the last word and reference for the verse, start passing the ball in the opposite direction. Review the verse several times.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask the children if they have any prayer requests for their families. Pray for these requests. Then tell the children you will give them an opportunity to thank God for the members of their family. They can pray for one person or many persons in their family. If a child hesitates to pray, do not force them. You could suggest, "Thank You, God, for my mother." If they still hesitate, go on to the next child.

Encourage

Suggest that the children find ways to help members of their family this week. Joseph was kind and forgiving to his brothers. Encourage the children to be kind and forgiving this week. Remind the children that they have a church family also who loves and cares for them.

Invite

Invite the children to return to the next session to learn more about Joseph and his father. If you did the "Let's help" activity, send the paper home with the children and ask them to remember to bring it back for the next session.