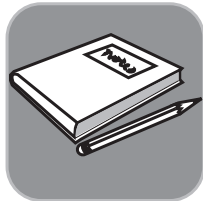


## WEEK 1

### *Hated By His Brothers*

#### **Preparation:**

Read Genesis 37:1 - 36 using the Bible study notes to help you.



In returning to Canaan, Jacob had faced the anger of Laban (Genesis 31:26) and the fear of revenge by his brother Esau, but through all this he was aware of God's presence in his life (Genesis 31:5-7). God was protecting and blessing him, fulfilling the promises he had made to Abraham (Genesis 12:7; 35:9-12).

In the years following his return to Canaan, Jacob moved around from Succoth to Shechem to Bethel, etc. Rachel died giving birth to the last of his twelve sons, Benjamin (Genesis 35:18) and Jacob and Esau came together again at the deathbed of Isaac (Genesis 35:29). Family relationships within Jacob's household were strained. Joseph was becoming an increasing irritant to his brothers, doing nothing to play down the favouritism his father showed towards him. He probably saw it as his duty to report the slothful service of his four half brothers to his father (Genesis 37:2), but his action only increased their resentment.

The brothers appear to be morally undisciplined, immature and cynical (see also Genesis 35:22), whereas Joseph is portrayed as being spiritually aware yet needing to learn humility and wisdom in the ways of the world. Jacob had learned nothing from his own early experience of favouritism. Yet, through

#### **Lesson Aim:**

To discover what happens when family relationships go wrong.

this situation of a family in crisis, God was to forge a nation set apart for his own purposes, in fulfilment of his promise to Abraham.

37:2 Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob but the first-born of Rachel, the wife Jacob had loved (35:24). Joseph's brothers, the sons of the 2 maidservants, were probably sensitive about their position, bearing in mind what had happened to Ishmael, the son of Sarah's maidservant Hagar (Genesis 21:19-21).

37:3 A tunic with long sleeves indicated the status of the wearer. He was not expected to do manual work - the long sleeves would have got in the way. It was a sign that Joseph, the first-born of the favoured wife, was Jacob's heir, even though he was younger than 10 of his brothers.

37:4 Favouritism led to jealousy and hatred.

37:10 Jacob took offence, not knowing that Joseph's dominion over him would operate within the context of the family's sojourn in Egypt and would not involve any usurping of his patriarchal authority.

37:10 'Your mother' - Rachel was already dead (35:19), so this probably referred to Leah.

37:11 Jacob's experience of God had taught him to allow for God's hand in affairs and for his



right choice among men. See also Mary's response in Luke 2:51.

37:12 Shechem was approximately one day's journey from Hebron.

37:15-17 Joseph was concerned about proper obedience. His brothers were not where they should have been, so he could have returned home and reported to his father. Instead he looked for them.

37:18-20 Hatred led to attempted murder.

37:21 Reuben was the eldest son and thus responsible for his brother's welfare.

37:25 Ishmaelites were the descendants of Ishmael. The term is interchangeable with Midianites in this context (v.28). The Midianites were also descended from Abraham (25:1-6). They inhabited desert areas east of the River Jordan and were traders.

37:28 Twenty pieces of silver was the going rate for a slave.

37:29 Reuben was absent while this was going on.

37:31-32 The lie is implied, even though it is not spoken.

37:34 Sackcloth was made from goats' hair and was very irritant. It was worn as a sign of mourning.

37:35 Jacob's reaction showed how disjointed family relationships had become; all his other children were no comfort compared to the loss of his beloved son, Joseph.

At the end of the story discuss with the children the problems that occurred in Joseph's family - how favouritism led to envy, anger, hatred, getting rid of Joseph. Even though Joseph had contributed to his problems the punishment meted out by his brothers was wrong.

Teach the memory verse. Ask the children if they think Joseph would have believed that God had heard him. Point out that God always keeps his word. (The older children may remember other Bible characters who discovered that, e.g. Abraham). So even when God does not appear to have heard us, we can be confident that he has. Next week we will see how God helped Joseph.

For a large group use pictures or flannelgraph. You need Jacob, the 10 older brothers, Benjamin, 1 sister, some sheep, the 2 dreams.

Visual aids



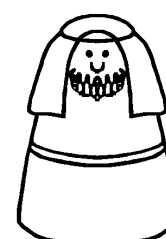
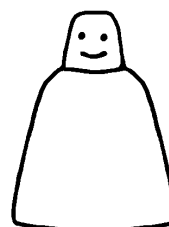
For a smaller group use models with a pit to drop Joseph into. Either glue pictures onto card with a flat base and back support (see diagram) or make yoghurt pot people. An ice-cream container makes a good pit.



For yoghurt pot people you need yoghurt pots or plastic drinking cups, egg cartons, scraps of material, wool, rubber bands, cotton wool, sellotape, glue, pens. Cut the head from an egg carton and sellotape onto a yoghurt pot or plastic cup. Draw on a face. Dress with a piece of material secured round the middle with wool or a rubber band. Tuck the bottom edge of the material inside the bottom of the pot. Attach the head-dress in similar fashion to the robe. Glue on cotton wool as a beard if required.

This is the first lesson in the series on Joseph. Start by asking the children who has any brothers or sisters. Ask them how many brothers and sisters they have. See who has the most. Today's true story from the Bible is about a boy with 11 brothers and 1 sister. His name was Joseph and he was 17 years old. That's the same age as ..... (specify someone they know). Ask the children if they would like as many brothers and sisters as that. Ask them if they always get on with their brothers/sisters. What happens when the brother/sister annoys them? Today we will find out what happened to Joseph when he annoyed his brothers.

Lesson Plan



### 3-9s

Photocopy page 9 on paper and page 10 on card for each child.

Prior to the lesson make up the story box according to the instructions on the page. Cut out the 4 pictures and place in an envelope for each child. The children colour the pictures and glue them round the box in the order of the story.

#### Activities



### 5-7s

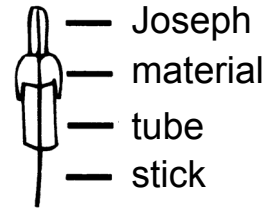
Make a model of Joseph in the pit. Each child requires page 11 photocopied on card, 1 cardboard tube approximately 11 cm long, 1 garden stick approximately 30 cm long, and a piece of material 20 x 15 cm. Also required are sellotape, glue, a needle and thread.

Prior to the lesson cut out the figure of Joseph and the memory verse rectangle from page 11. Using a needle and thread, gather up one long edge of the piece of material.

#### Instructions

1. Colour Joseph and fold in half.
2. Glue the 2 sides of Joseph together with the garden stick in the middle. The top of the garden stick is at the top of Joseph's head.
3. Take the piece of material, gather up the prepared edge and tie tightly around Joseph's ankles.

4. Place the stick through the middle of the cardboard tube with Joseph at the top. Using sellotape fix the lower edge of the material around the **top** of the cardboard tube (see diagram).



5. Glue the memory verse around the outside of the tube.
6. Joseph can be pulled into the pit and pushed out again.

### 7-9s

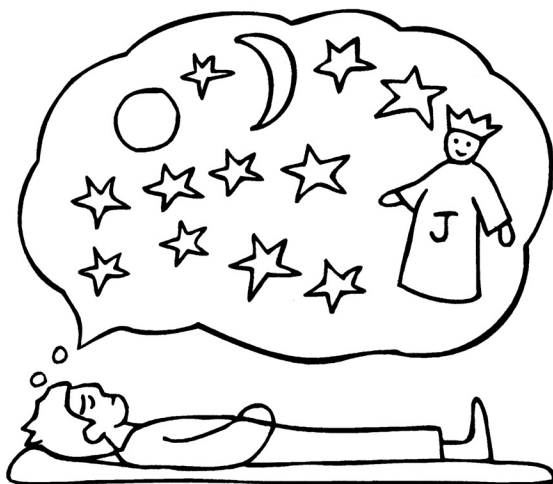
Photocopy page 12 for each child. Do the puzzle as a group, then discuss the question at the bottom of the page.



Joseph was Jacob's favourite son.



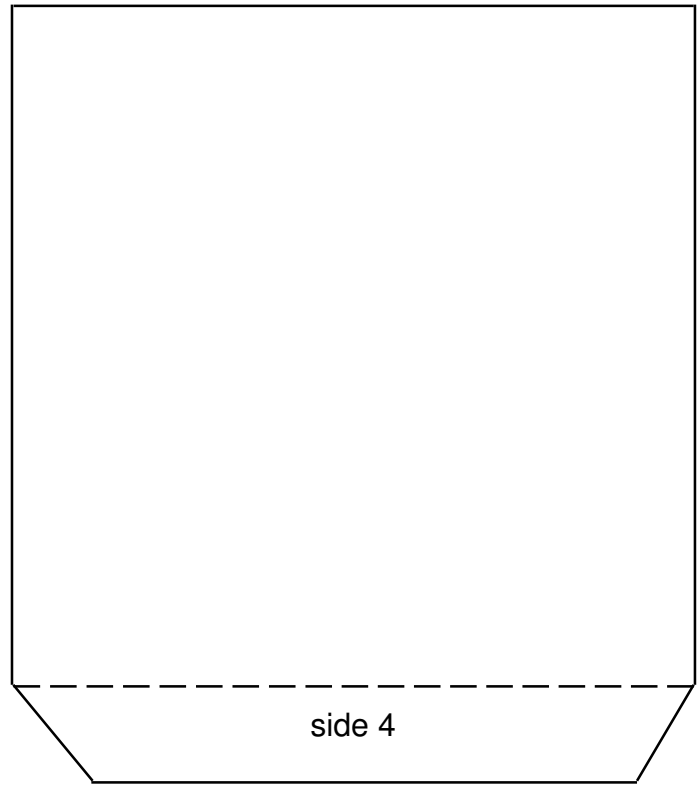
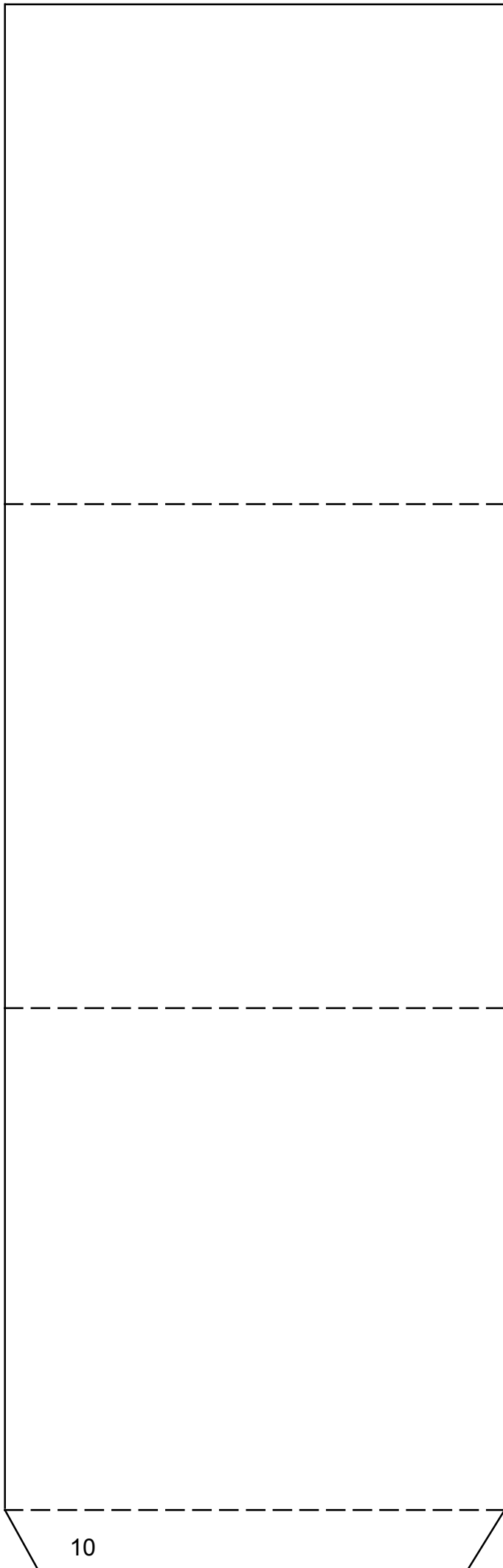
Joseph's 10 brothers hated him.



Joseph dreamed that his father, mother and 11 brothers would bow down to him.

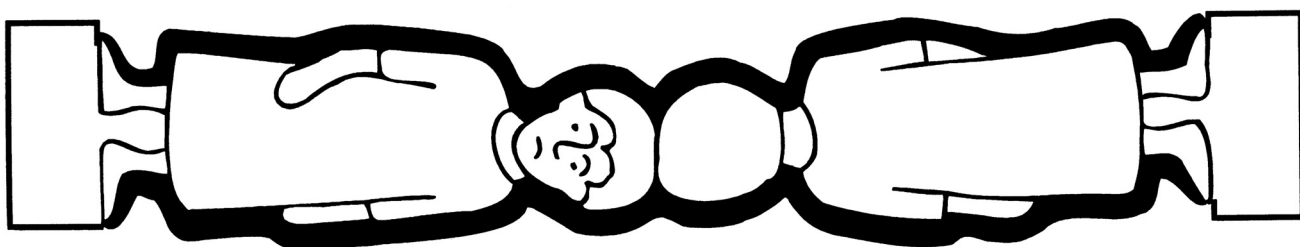


Joseph's 10 brothers put him in a pit, then sold him as a slave.



1. Cut out, score and fold along dotted lines.
2. Glue side 4 to the remaining 3 sides.
3. Glue the top flaps inside the sides to make a box open at the bottom.














**The Lord will  
hear when I call  
to him.  
Psalm 4:3**



















The Lord will hear  
when I call to him.





Psalm 4:3





Use the following code to work out your memory verse.





												
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m





												
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z


		





			



			




			






			



4:3

Think of situations where  
favouritism can occur.

How does favouritism affect the  
way people get on together?

