

# BACKGROUND

## Making Connections

After God's promise to Abram for an uncountable number of descendants (Genesis 15) God promised Hagar (Sarah's maid servant, pregnant by Abram) a future for her son, Ishmael. God promised Abram (renamed Abraham) would be a father of nations. Male children were to be circumcised as a sign of this covenant. God promised Abraham and Sarah a son and fulfilled that promise in the birth of Isaac. Abraham kept his promise to follow God when he was later asked to sacrifice his promised son Isaac. Instead, God kept the promise of continuing Abraham's family line by providing a sacrificial lamb. As God promised, Abraham's family grew. Family members broke promises to each other, but God kept God's promises. Abraham's son Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob. Today we see that Jacob's son Joseph, Abraham's great-grandson, was promised a role in the nation's future.

## Story Summary:

### *Joseph and His Brothers*

Joseph's brothers were jealous of Jacob's love for him. God gave Joseph a dream about the future, and that dream upset Joseph's brothers even more. In the dream, Joseph was in charge over his brothers. Joseph's brothers decided to kill him. They would tell their father, Jacob, that a wild beast had attacked and eaten Joseph. Joseph's brother Reuben did not agree with this plan. When Reuben was not watching, the other brothers sold Joseph to some Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt to be a slave. Years later, Joseph worked for Pharaoh and was in charge of the land and supplies. During a famine, his brothers needed food and came to him as servants. Joseph forgave his brothers for the evil they did to him. They may have planned evil, but God worked that evil into something good for Joseph and for a nation.

## The Point

**Even when we hurt each other, God can turn our work towards good.** That does not give us the freedom to harm each other, but it offers hope to those who suffer harm. It offers hope to us when we realize the acts of injustice we have committed. Although it may take time for that "good" to be experienced, God's hand of love can exchange evil intent for a greater purpose.

## Bible Nuts & Bolts:

### *Old Testament Divisions*

The Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) is a collection of books organized by type of literature more so than by chronology. The Pentateuch, or Torah, tells of beginnings, promises, and law (Genesis through Deuteronomy). The Histories (Joshua through Esther) tell of a nation's struggle to keep its covenant with God. The Poetry books, or Wisdom Literature (Job through Song of Solomon), hold wise counsel, praise, and longing for God. The remaining books are the Prophets (Isaiah through Malachi). The Prophets contain messages from God that guided people through hard times, warned people to return to God, and proclaimed the hope of the coming Messiah.

## Spiritual Practice: Fellowship

Acts of fellowship are any actions that build love and caring relationships. Fellowship is not always easy to maintain, as we see in Joseph's story today. Even in the family of God there are quarrels, jealousies, and divisions. When we experience conflict, we can offer God's love, with God's help, to restore fellowship. Is there anyone you can reach out to today to help keep the fellowship?



Sunday, September 22, 2024

# JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34; 50:15-21



**Key Verse:**

“Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good.”  
Genesis 50:20

**The Point:**

Even when we hurt each other, God can turn our work towards good.

**Making Connections:**

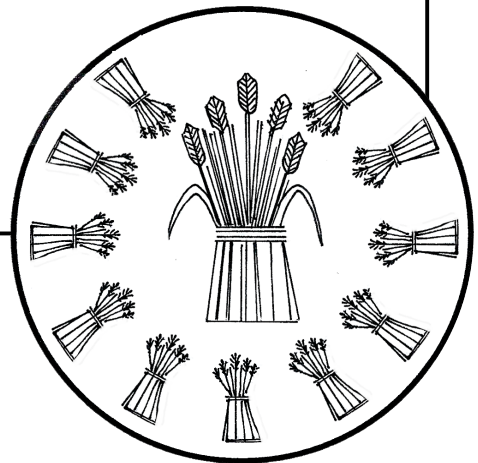
Promises Made, Promises Broken

**Bible Nuts & Bolts:**

Old Testament Divisions

**Spiritual Practice:**

Fellowship



# Joseph and His Brothers

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph — a beautiful robe. Genesis 37:3 (NLT)

Based on Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 (NIV)



Genesis 37

H O N B O S I L V E R D D R C  
R O P G L A O T M F K M B A W  
W H G I D C Y M L R A O X A T  
J O S E P H G B D D C T C L S  
P O P Z Z D W H N A S C H D T  
I Q E N M R A A J N M A F E U  
P B R G S G L W E M E N L F R  
C O R S Y N R R M E R A O O F  
B R N O A P D A B O C A C D D  
M J B L T L T O Z P H N K S Y  
L O H D I H R D G E A B S K R  
O B W H J F E E O S N P H I F  
V C C K T T H R N O T A D L T  
E Q S Q A U H O S T S M L L X  
D O O H Z E S B D J Y H A Z O

LAND  
HATED  
SONS  
EGYPT

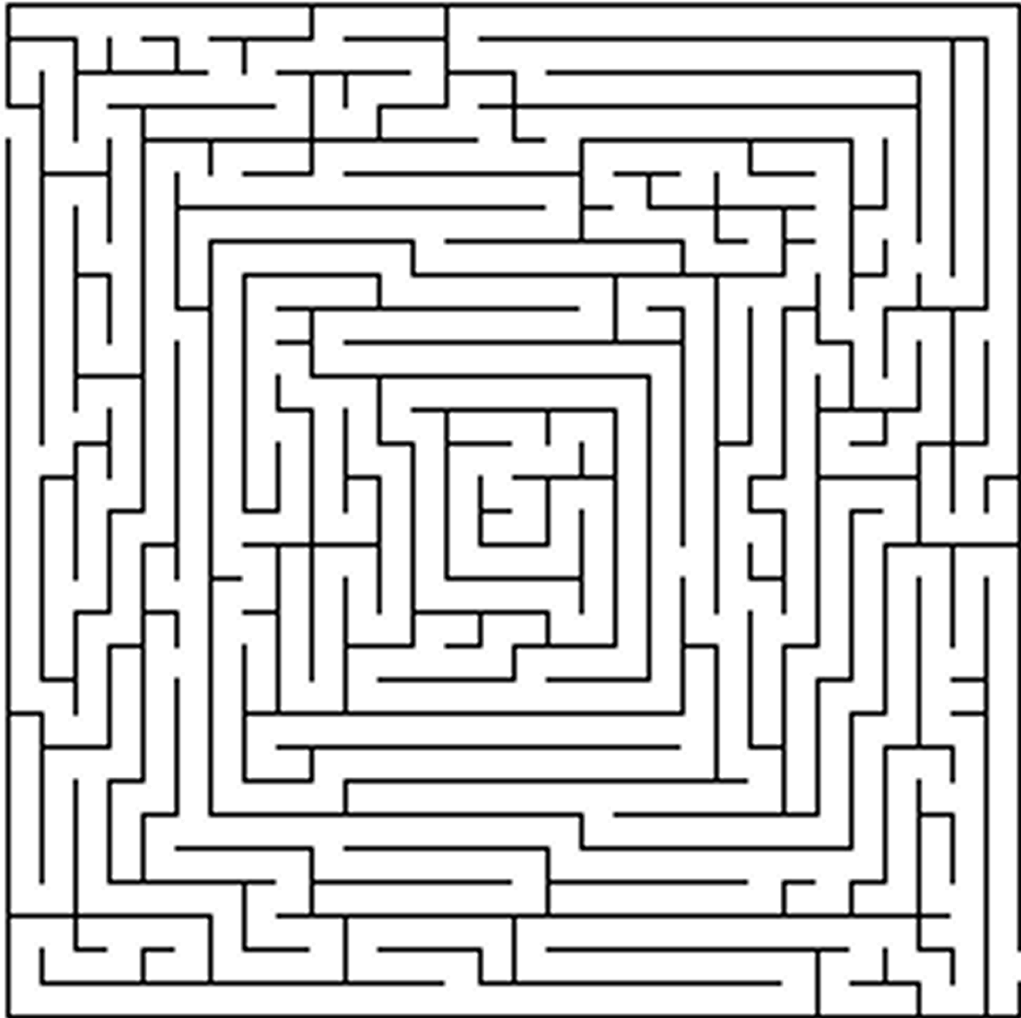
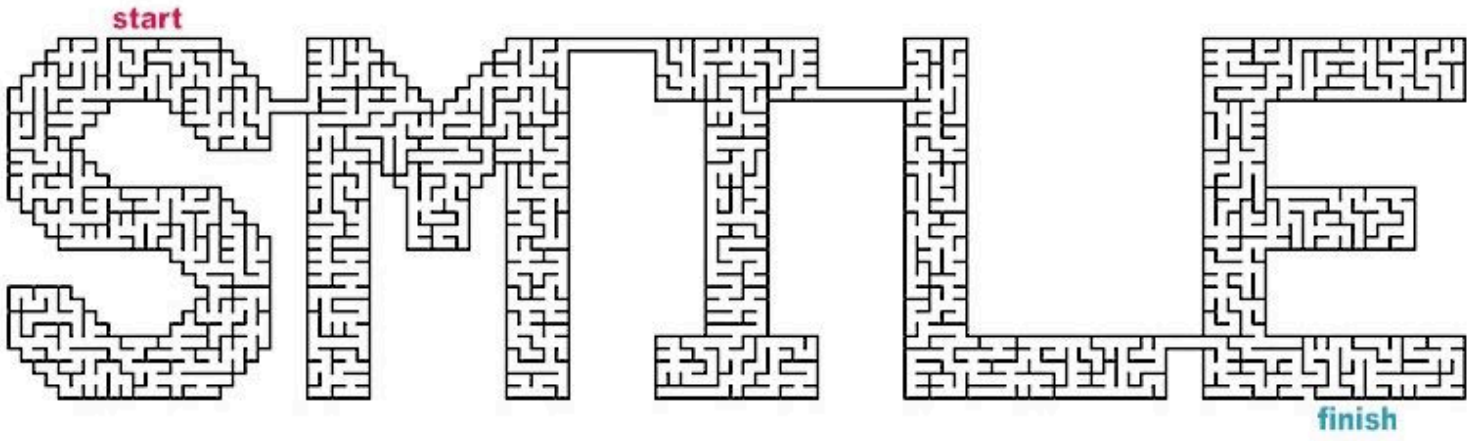
MERCHANTS  
GRAZE  
JACOB  
KILL

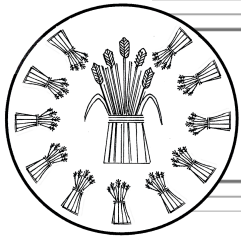
LOVED  
OLD  
BROTHERS  
FLOCKS

JOSEPH  
BORN  
SILVER  
FATHER

CANAAN  
ROBE  
CHILDREN  
SOLD







# THE STORY @ HOME

**KIDS  
3RD-6TH**

**NL**

**Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story**  
Narrative Lectionary, Year 3 (2024-2025)

**Lesson #3-3**  
Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34; 50:15-21

## LAST WEEK

God promises Abram (Abraham), that he and his wife Sarai (Sarah) will have many descendants, even though they are old and have no children (Genesis 15:1-6).

## THIS WEEK

Despite many difficulties, God keeps Abram's great grandson Joseph safe and keeps the promise God made to Abram, too. (Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34; 50:15-20).

## STORY SUMMARY

### Joseph and His Brothers

Joseph's brothers were jealous because their father, Jacob, loved Joseph the most. Joseph's brothers hated him so much that they decided to kill him. But instead the brothers sold Joseph to some traders, who took him to Egypt to be a slave. Years later, Joseph worked for Pharaoh and was in charge of the land and food. During a famine, his brothers needed food and came to Egypt. Joseph forgave his brothers for the evil they did to him.

## PRACTICE: FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship is not always easy. Even in the church there are fights and hurt feelings. With God's help, we can forgive and restore fellowship. Joseph's brothers betrayed him, but there was forgiveness and restored fellowship in the end. As a family, bake cookies (or make cards) for someone in your congregation to reach beyond differences and build fellowship.

## NEXT WEEK

Jacob's descendants stay in Egypt, but become slaves. God rescues the Israelites to take them to the land that God promised to Abraham. This story is celebrated in Passover (Exodus 12:1-13; 13:1-8).

## THE POINT

Even when we hurt each other, God can turn our work towards good.

## BIBLE NUTS & BOLTS

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### Family Discussions

Use the questions below or other questions you think of to discuss today's Scripture reading (listed above) with your family.

- ✝ What does this passage tell you about God's strength?
- ✝ What does this passage tell you about humanity's weakness?
- ✝ What does this passage tell you about the importance of following God?

### Family Devotions

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? How should we respond?

#### Sunday—Read Genesis 37:3-8, 17b-22, 26-34; 50:15-21

Joseph's brothers were jealous because they knew God was going to make Joseph their leader. Serve a favorite treat to one family member while the others watch that person eat it. How can we be gracious and not give in to jealousy? (Later, give the rest a treat.)

#### Monday—Read Exodus 1:8-22

The Egyptians treated the Israelites like slaves. They were very hard on them while they worked. Do chores while one family member keeps saying things like "hurry up," "move faster," or "do that over." Imagine being treated like that all day long. Thank God for freedom.

#### Tuesday—Read Exodus 2:1-10

To keep her baby alive, the mother put baby Moses in a basket by the riverbank. Pharaoh's daughter allowed the mother to nurse her baby. Look through the children's baby pictures if you have them. Share what you went through the first time you left your baby to go to work or elsewhere.

#### Wednesday—Read Exodus 3:1-12

God appeared to Moses in a burning bush. God told Moses he was going to be the one to lead the people out of Egypt. Where we meet God is holy ground. Take off your shoes. Take turns talking to God, telling of your love for God.

#### Thursday—Read Exodus 4:1-17

Moses was afraid he could not do what God asked of him. God gave Moses miraculous power to help him lead the Israelites. Help each other do things like reaching for something, lifting something, making a bed, etc.

#### Friday—Read Exodus 7:14-17; 8:5-6, 16-17, 20-21; 9:1-3, 7

God sent plagues to Egypt to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelites. Identify the five plagues in the reading. Use the counting numbers to remember and repeat them in order. After each one, say "Let my people go!" (i.e. "One: Water to blood, let my people go!" "Two: Frogs," etc.).

#### Saturday—Read Exodus 9:8-9, 22-23; 10:1-2, 22-24; 11:9-10

God sent more plagues. Identify the five additional plagues in the reading. Use the counting numbers, beginning with six, to remember and repeat them in order. After each one, say "Let my people go!" (i.e. "Six: Boils, let my people go!" etc.) Extra: Can you count out all ten plagues?