

Family Worship Guide

Week 15

Read

Genesis 37

- **Questions**

1. The chapter we just read is the start of an incredible true story. We meet this young man Joseph. He is the son of Jacob, the grandson of Isaac, and the great-grandson of Abraham. The story begins with a big problem. What is that problem according to Genesis 37:3?

Israel (remember that this is the new name that God gave to Jacob) loved Joseph more than his other sons. He was his favorite.

2. Can you think of other times in the book of Genesis that we have seen the sin of favoritism in a family? What happens to families when people play favorites?

Perhaps the most dramatic example is with Jacob and Esau. Esau was his father's "favorite" and Jacob was his mother's "favorite." Favoritism destroys relationships. It hurts everyone in the family very deeply.

3. Joseph had two dreams. What did he dream and what did he do about it?

He dreamed that his brothers would one day bow at his feet and serve him. It seems that Joseph acted like a brat and bragged about his dreams. Even his father rebuked him.

4. His brothers were furious with Joseph. What did they plan to do to him?

Their anger had boiled up to the point of violence. They made plans to kill him. This is not the first time in the Bible we have seen anger between siblings move toward murder: Cain and Abel; Jacob and Esau; Now Joseph and his brothers.

5. Anger destroys relationships between brothers and sisters, and can even lead to violence. Is there anger in your heart today toward one of your siblings or toward another member of your family? If so, can we ask forgiveness from one another right now so that God can set us free from our anger?

6. God moved in the heart's of Reuben and Judah to try and save Joseph's life. In the end, the brothers sold him into slavery. They went home and lied to their father about what had happened. Would you say that God saved Joseph or God abandoned Joseph? Why?

Joseph's brothers planned on killing Joseph, but God had other plans. God provided a way of escape for him, in spite of his brothers' sins. Joseph did not want to be sold into slavery, but God was leading him to a special mission and purpose.

7. Can you think of a time that God allowed something hard or painful to happen to you because God was leading you into an important mission or purpose?

Praise

Praise God for giving us:

Himself

Grace and Mercy

Salvation

Our family

Our church family

What has God done in our family this week that we can give him praise?

Pray

Use the ACTS model (Example below.)

- ADORATION – "He keeps His promises."
- CONFESSION – "Confess times when we have not obeyed"
- THANKSGIVING – "How has God been faithful to your family?"
- SUPPLICATION – "God encourages us to bring all of our needs and burdens to Him."
- Pray that we will live obediently to God's Word.
- Pray for your neighbors by name! Pray that God will bless them!

Memorize

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." - **Genesis 50:20**

Digging Deeper

(Optional activities)

Kids Fun

Supplies needed: A board, hammer, and nails.

Family worship begins with construction! I am going to need everyone's help here. Bring out the board, the hammer, and the nails. **In just a minute, I am going to ask each person to hammer one nail into this board. You don't need to hammer it in very far, just so that it sticks in there. But before we do that, I want to tell you what these things represent. The board represents another person. So the board can be one of your siblings, a**

friend, or maybe even mom or dad. The hammer represents anger. Raise your hand if you have ever felt anger at someone? What are some of the things that we do when we are angry?

Listen as different family members share what they do when they are angry. This is a good opportunity for you to tell a true story about a time that you allowed your anger to get the best of you.

One of the things we often do when we are angry is use our words to hurt someone else. We yell. We talk back. We use harsh and disrespectful tones. We might even swear. The nails that we have here represent the angry words that we sometimes use. Here is where I need your help. Let's all take a turn and hammer a nail into the piece of wood. Help smaller children as needed. **When we use our anger to hurt each other, it is like putting a nail into someone. Our anger doesn't hurt their body, but it does hurt their heart! What can we do if we hurt someone with our words? Is there any way to take it back?** Yes, we can admit what we did, say it was wrong, and ask forgiveness. **Because God has forgiven us, we can forgive each other. We can "take out" the nails - the angry, mean things that we say. In fact, let's all do that now.** Give each person a chance to remove his or her nail from the wood. Help little ones as needed.

Thank God that we can forgive each other! But look at the wood. What do you see? There are still holes there. God can "patch" those holes up over time, but the lesson that I want you to learn tonight, and we will see it in our Bible reading today, is that God wants each of us to do our part to keep anger out of our home.

For Teens

1. Genesis 37 is filled with the destruction of "generational patterns." Joseph's brothers seek to murder him, just like their uncle Esau wanted to do to their father Jacob. The brothers lie to their father Jacob. Jacob lied to his father Isaac. What does this tell us about the nature of sin?

Sin infects entire families. Sinful patterns are passed down generationally. When one generation sins, the next generation is damaged and infected by that sin.

2. Can you identify any generational patterns in your family? List some positive character traits that have been passed down through the generations of your family. Then discuss or list some sins and negative character traits that are spread through your family.

Parents, humbly take the lead in this. Talk openly about sinful patterns in your parents that replicated in your life.

3. If you identify sinful patterns in your family tree, take time together and pray against those sins. Ask God to apply the grace and power of the cross to those generational patterns so that they might be broken and not infect your generation and the future generations of your family.