

Dreams Deferred

Genesis 37:3-11,18-28

Week 2	Joseph and His Jealous Brothers
Story Opening	Share a time when you expected something good and you were disappointed, even angry, when it didn't happen (e.g. you expected to get something you really wanted for Christmas or your birthday and you didn't get it; you expected to make the team but you got cut; you expected a friend to come over but they were busy or got sick; etc.)
Background	Last week, we talked about how sin entered the world through Adam and Eve and has been with us ever since. After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they had to leave the perfect Garden. Over time, their family grew and they had children. Their children got married and they had children, who got married and had children. Eventually there was a man named Jacob who had a large family with 12 sons. One son was named Joseph, and he was Jacob's favorite son.
Telling the Story	<p>Read Genesis 37:3-11 below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What dreams did Joseph have? • Why did his brothers hate him? • Were they right in feeling like they did towards him? Why or why not? Keep in mind that the dreams were not Joseph's own dreams, but dreams given to him by God. • Were Joseph's brothers jealous and angry with Joseph, or with God? • Do we ever get angry with God because we don't like what He is doing? <p>One day, Joseph's brothers were tending to their father's flocks near Shechem. Jacob sent Joseph to check on them and see how they were doing. When Joseph got to Shechem, he learned that his brothers had gone on to Dothan, which lay along a major trade route to Egypt. Let's see what happens next.</p> <p>Read Genesis 37:18-28 below.</p> <p>Joseph was led to expect a wonderful future because of the dreams God gave him, but instead he was met with jealousy and hatred by his brothers who sold him into slavery. How disappointed and confused he must have been!</p>
Retelling the Story	Booklet: Have your children fold and cut a piece of paper to create their own booklet (see directions below), then have them write or draw the different segments of the story in their booklet so they can retell it to others. As they're working on the booklet, talk about the following questions:

Discovery & Response Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did Joseph’s brothers’ actions surprise you? Why or why not? • What could you relate to in the story? • As believers, we may have the expectation, based on God’s promises, that our lives are going to be wonderful and problem-free. When life has problems and struggles, do we begin to doubt God and his promises? • Do you think Joseph ever questioned God’s promises to him through his dreams when he was in the well or on his way to Egypt? • How might Joseph have remained strong in his faith in God’s promise when he was on his way to Egypt? How can we stay strong in our faith when we go through times that seem contrary to what God has promised us? • Is this the end of the story? Do you think God’s promises to Joseph through his dreams are going to come true? • What does Joseph need to do? Keep trusting God to fulfill his promises.
Response	<p>Sometimes when we’re in the middle of a story, we have no idea why God is allowing things to happen that seem unfair and bad. Sometimes we forget that there is still more to the story of our lives and that we have to be patient, trusting God to fulfill his promises in his time.</p> <p>Give your children a chance to respond to what they learned today by playing a song in the background and letting them write up their responses on index cards or in a journal. Have them consider the questions: What did I learn today about God? About myself? What would I like to tell God right now? What is the Holy Spirit speaking to me?</p>
Coloring Page	<p>See attached coloring page for an additional activity.</p>

Story: Genesis 37:3-11 (ESV)

Now Israel [*another name for Jacob*] loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. He said to them, “Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.” His brothers said to him, “Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, “Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?” And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

Genesis 37:18-28 (ESV)

They [Joseph’s brothers] saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.”

But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”— that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.

So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it. Then they sat down to eat.

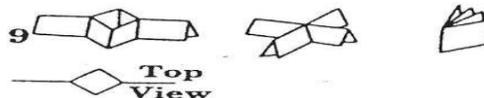
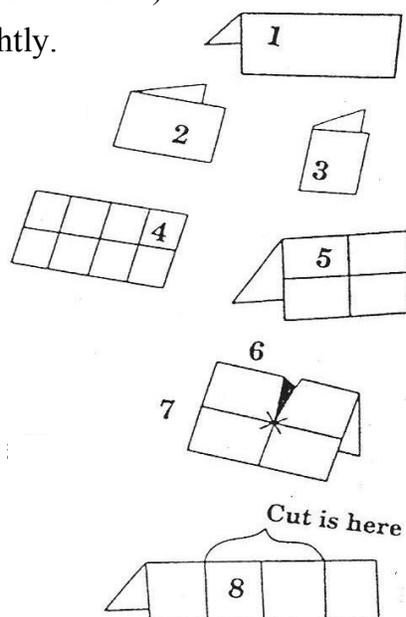
And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him. Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

How to Make Blank Books for Writing

Here's a great technique for creating a blank book. Work with your child to make these folded little books. Once children master the fold-a-book technique, they will eagerly use it to create blank books (any size) for their own writing and illustrating purposes.

Fold-A-Book Instructions

1. Fold a rectangular sheet of paper in half lengthwise. (We sometimes call this the "hot dog" or **horizontal** fold.)
2. Fold in half again, as for book. Crease tightly.
3. Fold in half again. Crease tightly.
4. Unfold the sheet – hold it **vertically** (up and down)
5. Fold in half width-wise. (The "hamburger" fold.)
6. Cut along the center crease from the folded edge to the X.
7. Open the sheet again.
8. Return to the original lengthwise fold (as in #1).
9. Push the end sections together, and it will fold itself into the child-size Little Book. Four sections are formed.



Cut-And-Staple Book Instructions

A sheet (or sheets) of paper are cut in half or thirds and stapled to form an 8, 12, or 16- page child-size Little Book.

