



elev8

life on another level

Student Workbook

YEAR 1

God's People

Joseph

**– Doing the Right Thing
can be Costly**

Bible Readings

Genesis 37

Genesis 39 to 41



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this week you will be able to:

- Locate the theme of “following God’s way” in the Bible.
- Express the theme or story in your own way.
- Apply your learning from the story to your own family and community.

Notes from Bible Reading

Scripture A word or phrase that stood out to me:

Observation What is happening in this Bible reading?

Application Something that I learned about who I am or how I should live :

Prayer What I would like to say to God, ask of God, or what I think God is saying to me:

Key Question What does the story of Joseph tell you about following God’s way?

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Engage

Go around the group and share one thing for each heading that has happened since you last met:

- Plus – What has been good or enjoyable?
- Minus – What has been difficult or painful?
- Interesting – What has been unusual or thought provoking?

In friendships, there are times when our friends need us to stand up for them. Share a time with the group when you've stood up for a friend in need. Or, share about a time when you've been needing support from a friend and got it. What was that like?

Five fast facts about Joseph:

1. Earlier in Genesis, God renames Jacob to Israel. In this story the names of Jacob and Israel are interchangeable, but it is the same person.
2. Bilhah and Zilpah are women, the mothers of Joseph and his eleven brothers. During this era, polygamy, or multiple wives, was commonplace.
3. Jacob/Israel's twelve son's names are; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin. Each of these sons was known as a different tribe of Israel. When they entered Canaan after the exodus from Egyptian oppression, each of the tribes was

allocated land separately (except Levi, who's tribe was responsible for priestly duties and thus were scattered amongst the various tribal groups)

4. Joseph and his brothers die prior to the enslavement of the Hebrew people in Egypt, but their tribes remain and continue to increase their population.
5. Cupbearers were very important people within the ancient monarchs; they tasted the food and wine prior to the king's consumption to ensure that it wasn't poisoned.

Explore – Locate

- *What stood out to you in the Bible readings this week?*
- *What did you find meaningful or significant?*
- *Is there anything that you didn't understand or found confusing?*
- *Any questions or comments you may have?*

Read together: Genesis 39:1-23

Our story today centres on Joseph, the youngest son of Jacob (or Israel). Joseph's brothers disliked him. They believed that Jacob loved Joseph more than them, so in a moment of rage, they sold their brother off to foreign travellers.

Joseph was taken to the land of Egypt, where he was a servant to an Egyptian official, Potiphar. Day by day, Joseph fulfilled his tasks so successfully and reliably, that Potiphar put him in charge of his whole household; a notable task for a foreign slave. In all Joseph did, God's presence was with him.

However, Joseph's talent, wisdom, and good looks caught the eye of Potiphar's wife and she made several advances towards Joseph. Time and time again, Joseph refused, reminding her that he'd be charged with the responsibility of the entire household and couldn't possibly slap his master in the face by sleeping with Potiphar's wife. The fleeing Joseph leaves behind his cloak, and Potiphar's wife turns the

(continued...)

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Explore – Locate *(...continued)*

tables by deceiving her husband into thinking that it was Joseph who was instigating the sexual advances. As a result, Joseph is thrown into prison.

This story raises questions for us today about ethics, morality, and what it means to simply do the right thing. Joseph continued to resist the attempts of Potiphar's wife, and was blameless and yet was still jailed. It serves as a reminder to us that sometimes doing the right thing will be costly, and we can't always be guaranteed of being rewarded for doing what is ethical.

And yet, that is what God desires for us as his followers.

Explore – Express

Our world is full of ethical issues that are quite challenging and often have many different perspectives that could be considered "right" or "responsible positions".

As a group brainstorm some of the ethical issues that you're aware of that people are facing today. Can you identify the different sides of the arguments? What could the responsible thing to do be? Where does God fit into your discussions?

What do you believe God thinks about these issues? Some of the issues you raise may be very complex, so don't be afraid to allow them to sit in tension of uncertainty.

Explore – Integrate

How do you think Joseph felt when he was thrown in jail? Can you think of some reasons why he did not mount a defence against the allegations made by Potiphar's wife? How would you have responded if you were Joseph?

Can you think of any situations today when people are imprisoned for doing what is ethically right?

Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to do the right thing by someone, knowing that it may cause friction or conflict between you and another person?

What other questions do you have about this story of Joseph?

Extend

Discuss with your group the challenges you are tackling. Use the time to ask for any help you might need or to work together on any shared projects that you have.

Questions that may be helpful include:

- What challenges are you working on at the moment?
- Do you need any support or assistance?
- Are there any challenges that you have completed that we need to recognise and celebrate?
- Are there any new challenges that you want to work on?

Encourage

Tell another student in your group something you value or appreciate about them.

Share one thing you would like to pray for and pray for one another.

Recite this together as a final prayer for today:

Loving God,

Sometimes the choices we make in life are not clear-cut and can sometimes lead us into places of pain, trouble, and fear.

We pray that you would continue to give us the strength to choose what is right, the wisdom to realise what is best for each situation, and the grace to forgive those people who have wronged us, in the same way that we seek their forgiveness when we wrong them.

Grant us patience to seek your wisdom in the choices that we face each day.

Amen