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Father's Favorite

Key References: Genesis 37:1-11; *Patriarchs and Prophets,* chap. 19, pp. 208-212; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 2, pp. 40-46; Our Beliefs, nos. 23, 7, 14















power**text**

"Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17).

power**point**

We treat each member of God's family with kindness and respect.

Do you have any brothers or sisters? How well do you get along with each other? What happens at your house when family members disagree or are treated unfairly?

The hot sun was beating down on the flock of sheep as they grazed lazily on the plains. Some days Joseph found it exciting and fun to tend the sheep. But there were days he didn't like to be out in the fields at all. He didn't get along very well with his older brothers. They were often cruel, or unkind. Joseph usually discussed these things with his father.

Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. Joseph was the son of his favorite wife, Rachel, and it had been many years before she had given him a child. So Jacob loved Joseph a lot. One bright, early morning Joseph was called to go before his father.

I wonder what he wants, Joseph thought. He felt a little anxious, a little excited.

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 46.

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Sunday

READ Read 1 Peter 2:17 and this week's story, "Father's Favorite."

DRAW Imagine and draw Joseph's coat.

LEARN Write the power text, 1 Peter 2:17, on your picture and begin to learn it.

PRAY Thank God for family.

Monday

READ Read 1 Timothy 5:21.

THINK Has there ever been a time in your life when someone favored someone else over you? How did it feel? Have you ever favored one person over another? How do you think that person felt?

WRITE Record your answers in your Bible study journal.

PRAY Ask God to help you love and respect each member of your family.

Tuesday

READ Read Genesis 37:3, 4.

THINK In your opinion, why did Jacob favor Joseph above the other brothers in the family?

TALK Interview four or five people about favoritism in the family.

PRAY Thank God that His grace is for everyone, equally.

"Joseph, I have something special for you," Jacob stated as he showed Joseph a package covered with a fine piece of cloth.

"What is it, Father?" Joseph tried not to show much emotion as he watched his father carefully unwrap the package.

"Oh!" Joseph was stunned for a minute. "This is for me?" His voice cracked as he reached out and lightly touched the bright, expensive looking coat. "I've never seen anything like it. Why me?"

"Never mind," Jacob smiled indulgently as he held up the coat for Joseph to try on. "I want to give it to you. You're my oldest son by my darling Rachel," Jacob tried to explain.

"Thank you, Father." Joseph looked down at himself in the new coat. "It's really expensive looking. I've never seen colors like this." Joseph hugged his father. He could tell his father was glad that he liked it.

That evening when his brothers returned from their work on the hills, they were met by their teenage brother dressed like a ruler of some kind. They frowned. They talked among themselves. What did Joseph do to deserve that? He did nothing compared to the hard work they did. It was obvious the coat was to be worn for display, not for working in the fields. It was most unfair. Weren't they the ones who worked hard? They should be treated more fairly by their father.

Several days went by. The older brothers were still upset about the coat, but it had quit being their main topic of conversation. Then one morning Joseph met them with another topic to ruin their day. "I've got something strange to tell you all," Joseph stated.

What now? his brothers thought, trying to ignore him.

"I had an unusual dream last night," Joseph continued. "While we were all binding the sheaves in the field, my sheaf suddenly stood straight up. Immediately, all of your sheaves came and bowed before my sheaf. What do you think that means?" Joseph asked, reaching for another piece of bread.

"Bow down before you?" they exploded. Joseph had gotten their attention. "Who do you think you are?



5

Wednesday

READ Read Genesis 37:7, 9 carefully.

COMPARE How are the two dreams different?

THINK When did God reveal His will to you?

WRITE Record the experience in your Bible study journal. Include a thank-You note to God.

PRAY Ask God to help you nurture positive relationships.

Thursday

READ Read the story in Genesis 37:1-11.

CREATE Write a poem, skit, or song about being respectful and fair with others.

SHARE Perform what you have written for your family.

PRAY Ask God to help you love and respect other people.

Friday

READ Read Acts 7:9.

WRITE Imagine yourself as one of Joseph's brothers. Compose a letter in your Bible study journal as though you were writing to your father Jacob. Tell him how you feel when he shows favoritism to Joseph, almost ignoring you and the other brothers.

PRAY If you are having similar problems, pray for God's guidance and then talk about the letter with your family.

Should we pay respect to you, our younger brother?" Joseph's brothers sneered. They went off to the day's work hating Joseph even more than before. But before long Joseph had another dream to share with his family. This time he decided to tell it to his father as well.

"You probably won't believe me, but I had another dream last night," Joseph explained.

"So what's new this time, Dreamer?" his brothers taunted. Between his fancy new coat and his grand dreams, he was really annoying them.

"Well, in this second dream the sun and the moon and 11 stars all bowed before me."

"What do you mean, Son?" Jacob asked anxiously. "Are you saying that your mother and I and all your brothers are going to bow before you? Aren't you being a little arrogant?"

The comments that the brothers made were a little less gentle. "What a dreamer!" "Arrogant, self-centered brat." "What nerve!" "Just wait till he hears about the dream I'm about to have!" They all got up and went to their own tents in disgust.

After this, Joseph's brothers hated him even more. They envied him for being the favorite son of their father, and they couldn't stand seeing him put on that fancy coat. The sight of it made them blind with anger.

But Jacob quietly thought about what Joseph had revealed to them. *Can it be that God is trying to tell Joseph about his future? Can it be that God is revealing His plan to me and my family?* Jacob kept all these things in his heart. He didn't understand them now, but he would watch God's plan unfold for the entire family.



PUZZLE
5

RESPECT ONE ANOTHER

"My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism" (James 2:1).

Instructions: God asks us to respect one another by not showing favoritism. Find out whether God shows favoritism by decoding the coded Bible verse below. An example is done for you so you can see the pattern.

Example:
Sometimes r**e**actions ev**e**ntually **s**tart a**p**plying fr**o**sty rio**t**s **r**emaining p**u**ffed wo**n**ders.

Decodes **to:** See Spot run

CODED **BIBLE VERSE:**
From doing marketing guides, copywriters endeavor dressing not keeping hamsters napping to acting some threats from midweek fasting; tasters invariably reconsider gumdrops unsociable collected accomplishable reappraised advertisements.