

# Lesson 8

## underlying VALUE

Patience

## HOT teaching tip

### Keeping it relevant

The Old Testament mega theme of God's People is one which may run the risk of being simply nice stories from a long time ago. It is important that as you tell these stories you engage the children. For example use before and after questions, i.e. How would you have felt if you were Joseph? (E.g. sad, mad etc). Also relate the lessons from the stories to the children's lives, e.g. God is with us through good and bad times, he is there when others make bad choices that hurt us. God doesn't stop people from making bad choices like Joseph's brothers, but he will be with us loving us when we are hurting and he has a bigger plan for our good.

# Teacher's Notes

## Life Isn't Easy

Genesis 37

### the **BIG** idea

God plans for families to love and care for each other, but it doesn't always work out that way.

### lesson **AIM**

To tell the exciting first episode in the story of Joseph.

### learning **OUTCOME**

The children will be able to:

- Explorers** talk about Joseph's family.
- Adventurers** discuss Joseph's early life.
- Navigators** recall some important events to indicate how life wasn't easy for Joseph and his brothers.
- Voyagers** recognise that different relationships can be very complicated and make life hard.

### **INSIDE** the story

Joseph lived over 1500 years before Jesus in a community very different from that of most children today. However even 3500 years ago the issues of favouritism, jealousy, competition, blended families, deception and cover up affected parents and children, just as they do now.

Joseph had been born when his father Jacob was old, and of all Jacob's children (by 4 different mothers - don't explain) Joseph was his favourite. The coat he was given by his father was a constant reminder to his brothers that they were loved and valued less than Joseph, who was seventeen years old at the time.

When Joseph had dreams that pointed to his brothers and his parents serving him in the future (Genesis 37:6-9), he couldn't keep it to himself and told his family, which made his relationship with his brothers even worse.

When Joseph went to check up on his brothers when they were far from home they mocked and grabbed him, intending to kill him, but the oldest suggested they throw him into a dry well instead, which they did. It so happened that some foreign traders came by at that time. Seizing the opportunity they decided to sell Joseph as a slave. That way he'd be put in his place and they'd get some money as well. The deal was done and Joseph was taken away. They concocted an elaborate scheme whereby they killed a goat, dipped Joseph's coat in the blood, (This detail is for you - not the children, especially younger ones) and took the coat to their father, leaving Jacob to draw the conclusion that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal.

That's where this lesson ends, summarising that life is not easy - with Joseph a slave in a foreign land, the brothers sharing the horrible secret of what they'd done and deceiving their elderly father, a distraught Jacob believing he would never get over it and God apparently letting it all happen. In the midst of all the doom and gloom, only God knew the big picture and was working to bring good out of the mess this family had caused (Romans 8:28). Without even knowing it, all were being tested for their patience and trust in God, which in time will be revealed.

As you leave the story at this point, encourage the children that in difficult situations it helps to know that God is still working things out as they wait to see what will happen. This too will require patience. Practise telling the story aloud before the lesson so you're very familiar with it and can be fluent and dramatic.