



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work
so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource
and how to use it as a launch pad for your
engagement with children and families, please
use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: Genesis 37: 1 – 11

Theme: We are all God's favourite

Contents:

Introduction	1
Together	2
Experience	3
Explore	4
Express	6
Handouts	10

Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning?

This passage takes us into a very real and raw family story. Joseph is clearly his father Jacob's favourite, and everyone knows it. His beautiful coat is a visible sign of that favouritism, and it stirs up deep emotions among his brothers. Jealousy, resentment, hurt, rivalry – these are emotions many families have faced in one way or another. It reminds us that the Bible doesn't shy away from showing us the complexity and dysfunction that can exist within families.

Let's acknowledge something important: favourites do exist in families and groups. Sometimes it's about personality, birth order, shared interests, or simply who's easiest to get along with. But it's also true that God does not have favourites (Romans 2:11). God's love and grace are offered equally to each person.

Being a "favourite" can mean different things. For Joseph, it brought both privilege and pain. He had a gift, the ability to dream and discern, which made him stand out even more. In life, some people seem to find things easier or receive more affirmation, and others notice. It shapes how they're perceived, and how they experience belonging.

This is a good moment for self-reflection as leaders. Are there "favourites" in our own groups? People we naturally gravitate to, listen to more, or give more opportunities to? How does that

affect the wider group dynamic? Are there favourites within the church, those always chosen to read or to be on the welcome team?

God models something very different. God's love is not limited to a few; it is lavish and wide. Jacob may have favoured Joseph, but God's plan was for the whole family, for the 12 sons to become the 12 tribes of Israel. What began as a story of favouritism became a story of grace, redemption, and purpose.

This connects closely with our work on emotions. Favouritism can stir up jealousy, insecurity, pride, or hurt. If those feelings come up during discussion, that's okay – they're part of the story, if you want to dig deeper into this, please see the sessions for September 2025.

This topic can surface personal disclosures, particularly if participants have painful family experiences. Please respond with care, follow safeguarding guidelines, and seek appropriate support if anything is shared.

As we journey through Joseph's story, let's keep in view both the reality of human favourites and the truth of God's impartial love. God's grace reaches each person equally. Where Jacob's favouritism divided the family, God's plan united a nation.

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better,

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN

(Two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

**Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.
Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.
Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
Adventuring together with you wherever we may go.
Amen**

Active game – Stuck in the Mud

This is a game that many will already know, but this week's version has a twist based on the Bible passage.

Choose a group member to be 'on'. The rest of the group can run around the space, but if they are caught by the person who is 'on', they must stand still with their hands by their sides. They can only become un-stuck if another player bows down to them – like the sheaves of wheat in the story. If the whole group are caught, start the game again with a different person chosen to be 'on'.

You may choose to stop the game after an agreed amount of time, to allow more than one person the chance to be 'on' during the game.

Quieter game – Tommy

You will need:

- a plate
- bags or lidded pots
- a variety of sweets (be mindful of allergies)

Place 10-12 assorted sweets on a plate, ask one person to turn their back/face the wall etc. Then, in silence, those remaining select one sweet. They call that sweet Tommy (you could call it Joseph to link more with the theme). The person with their back turned now selects sweets off the plate, placing them in a bag or container, until they touch the chosen sweet. When the chosen sweet is touched the group shout TOMMY/JOSEPH! No more sweets can be taken from the plate. Everyone has a go.

Discuss which sweets are the most favourite. Did they pick from the plate the sweet they liked most first? Did the group know the person's favourite sweet. If so, did that affect which sweet they selected to be Tommy/Joseph?

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

For this story we recommend using the New International Version

<https://bit.ly/Genesis37NIV>

Where can I find the story online?

Under fives: Joseph by Saddleback Kids

<https://youtu.be/VnlqKPlZQzI?si=GvPl2FARejnzUm0X>

Five to elevens: Joseph's coat and his brothers by the Show must go on

<https://youtu.be/xp4Fym1KImY?si=nJzbcGRpoL2JSrK3>

Songs to support the story

Under fives: Big Family of God (Makaton Version) by Nick and Becky Drake

Worship for Everyone, Count Everyone in

<https://youtu.be/wq7pj6OB8nU?si=uiNnn327vxFPhLlg>

Five to elevens: I'm special by Graham Kendrick

<https://youtu.be/KrtoGQevWTM?si=VQMbNxCoET0jTGDQ>

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme**Gingerbread people**

You will need:

- large gingerbread men
- icing and edible decorations and sweets
- paper plates

What you do:

Invite the group to have fun decorating a gingerbread person. They can be as creative as they want. Make them all different.

Once the gingerbreads are completed, place them all in the centre of the table and gather round to have a look at them all. Encourage the group to get excited about the different tasty treats.

Ask the following questions, encouraging debate in the group, but keep it snappy and brief. Be careful to ensure no one feels bad about their creation.

I wonder if anyone would like to tell us about their gingerbread.

They are all fabulous, we all like different ones for different reasons; its all about perspective and the things you like.

For example, Ask, If you liked colour, which would be your favourite? (the group will choose the most colourful)

If you liked gingerbread, which would be your favourite? (they might choose the least decorated)

If you didn't have a sweet tooth, which would be your favourite? (perhaps the one with less sweets on)

I wonder which one is your favourite, and why.

We all have favourites. It's about perspective, the way we see things and what matters to us most.

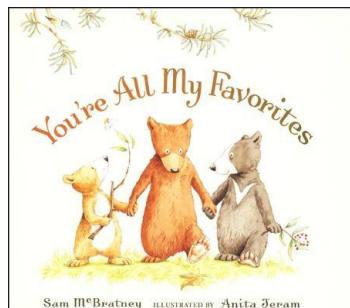
The Bible tells us Joseph was his dad's favourite and why. Sometimes in our families we can think there are favourites; but God doesn't have any favourites.

God's perspective is that we are all equal and we are all made by God.

Go on to enjoy some activities and response. Don't forget to eat your gingerbread.

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



You're All My Favourites by Sam McBratney 2007: Walker Books
Read by Dori's Stories

<https://youtu.be/IA8zgjgQpcM?si=beprt435ttqeO0NJ>

The baby bears in the story compare themselves with their siblings; each thinks the other bears must be their mum and dad's favourites... BUT... they are all favourites!

- Why do you think the baby bears were worried?
- Is it difficult if you feel you are different to other people in your family?
- If you have a brother or sister, what do you like best about them? What do you like best about your best friend?

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- What does the word "favourite" mean to you? What is your favourite toy? Why?
- I wonder how the rest of the family viewed this situation.
- If God was the one who gave Joseph his gift of prophecy, what would God be thinking about this situation?
- Do we know the names of the other brothers?

Wondering reflect on the theme

- I wonder how you would have handled the situation.
- I wonder where you see favouritism in your life. How do you deal with it?
- I wonder if God has favourites.

What's in the box (for under fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, “What’s in the box/bag? What’s in the box/bag? Let’s see, let’s see, what’s in the box/bag” (to the tune of The Farmer’s in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week’s box could include:

- Family photos and a picture of Joseph and his family – look at these photos, they are of families. They are all different but are all families. Today we are talking about a big family, Joseph and his brothers. Let’s count how many there are.
- Marmite and jam – we all have favourites. I wonder which one is yours, marmite or jam?
- A range of small toys (Lego figures, Playmobil figure, doll, car, football) I wonder if you have a favourite toy. What is it?
- Mirror – look and see who God’s favourite is. It’s you and you and you.
- Hearts – here are some hearts. Can you place one of the hearts in your favourite place in church?
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it’s always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story, or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (eg stones, felt, twigs etc)

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity – Weaving

You will need:

- lots of different coloured ribbons cut into 10 inch lengths
- Sellotape

This prayer activity could be used with anything which allows for weaving such as a wire fence. Otherwise this can be done on a table. Tape down a few different coloured ribbons as shown in the photo.

Choose colours which are either favourites or represent favourite things, such as blue for the sky or brown for chocolate. Weave them in and out of the set ribbons. While weaving, silently tell God about favourite things. This is also a good time to invite the children to tell God about any feelings of favouritism that are happening in their life.



Spoken prayer

God, our loving parent,

Thank you for loving us,

even when we yell, and squabble, and fall out with each other.

Thank you for loving us,
when we smile, and laugh, and enjoy sharing.

Thank you for loving us,
even when we say mean things, and need to say sorry.

Thank you that you love us!
Thank you that we are all your favourites! **Amen**

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

See craft in explore section

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

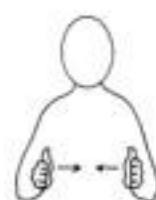
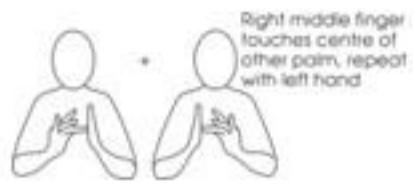
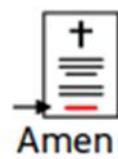
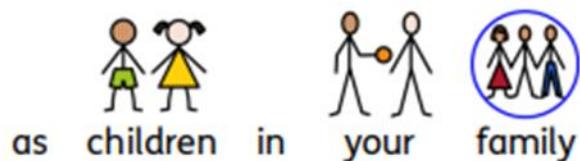
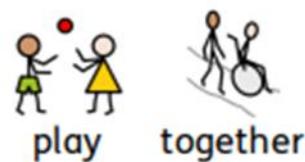
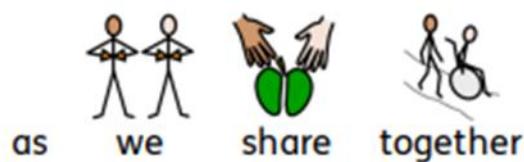
What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them when they have ever felt seen by God or another?
- We all have a favourite place we like to go to, a favourite thing we like to do, a favourite film, book or food. This is an opportunity to try something new – how does it feel to step away from favourites? How did it feel to try something new? You may find yourself enjoying something you had previously thought you wouldn't.

We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **Joseph's family** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing
sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**
Why not have a look at next week's resource on **God's big family**






The Lord's Prayer




Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.





Thy kingdom come, thy will be done






on earth as it is in heaven.



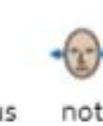



Give us this day our daily bread

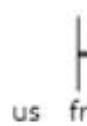





and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us





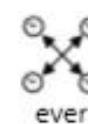
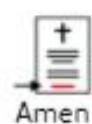

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil



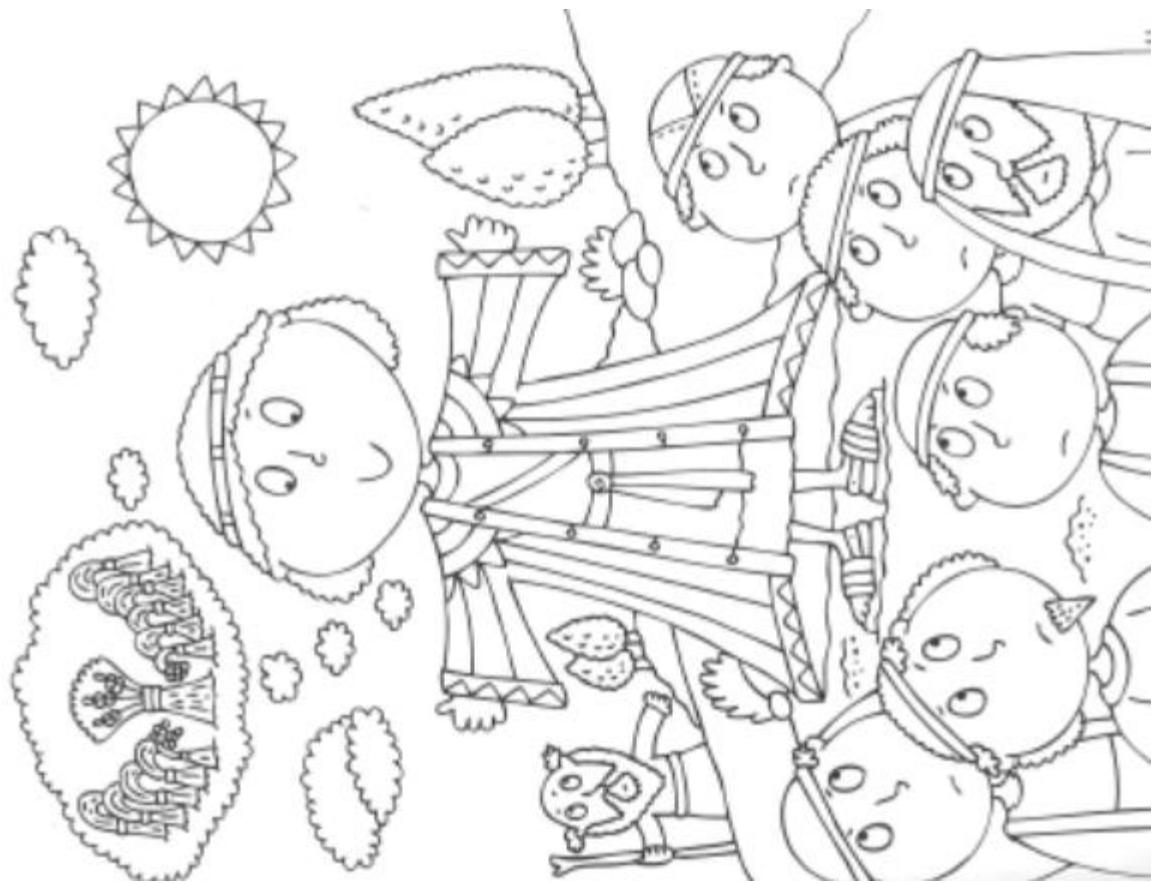




For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

For ever and ever. Amen



Taken from My Bible story colouring book by Zonderkidz Copyright © 2017 by Zondervan. Used by permission of HarperCollins Christian Publishing. www.harpercollinschristian.com

