



## **February Theme:**

**God restores all things (because of His great love)!**

## **Monthly Memory Verse:**

“Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.”

- **Proverbs 23:18** (ESV)

## **Monthly Challenge Verse:**

“...aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.”

- **2 Corinthians 13:11** (ESV)

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**February 26<sup>th</sup> | Life Application:**  
**God restores life where there is despair.**

**Parents:** This week, we are learning that **God restores life where there is despair**. After listening to the sermon, take some time during the week to have great conversations with your kids. Read **pages 113-114** together in *The Action Bible*, and use **Genesis 45** in your Bible for reference.

1. **What caused Joseph to finally believe that his brothers had changed and that he could trust them?** (See Judah's words in **Genesis 44:30-34**. Judah knew it would kill his father if he lost another son and he offered to take Benjamin's place so that Benjamin could go home. He offered himself as a substitute for Benjamin.)

**Important for your family to know:** Joseph needed to know that his brothers had repented for what they had done, and so he tested them again and again. The final proof was that there was a true transformation of their lives, that they had changed. It is the same with us- when we need to forgive someone, we can do that. But to reconcile and have a relationship with them, we need to know that they have changed and that they will not hurt us in the same way again.

2. See **Genesis 45:1-3**. **Why did Joseph react this way when he heard Judah offer to replace Benjamin?** (He could not control himself and he cried with happiness, sending everyone but his brothers out of the room so that he could tell them who he was.) **How did the brothers react?** (They were afraid because of what they had done to Joseph.)
3. Grace is a gift of favor and mercy to those who don't deserve it. **How did Joseph show grace to his brothers?** (See **verses 4,5**. He told his brothers not to be distressed because it was God, and not their actions, that had brought him to Egypt, in order that he could save His people, the Jews. Joseph's brothers were not only forgiven, but they could be reconciled and have a relationship with him again! Joseph kissed and wept, first Benjamin, and then all of his brothers!)
4. **What else did Joseph do for his family?** See **verses 18-23**.
  - When Pharaoh heard of Joseph's family being there, he told Joseph to have the family come to Egypt and live well in the land. He did this because of his great esteem for Joseph and all he had done.
  - Joseph sent his brothers back to their home to get his father and the rest of the family – probably 70 in all – and they brought everything they had with them.
  - He sent food, carts, donkeys, silver, and clothes in abundance.
  - He made sure that they had the best land to live on, in Goshen, the perfect place to raise sheep, for they were shepherds.

5. Read **verse 13**. Joseph told his brothers to say something to his father. **What did he want his father to know?** (*That he had earned great honor in Egypt.*) **Why do you think this was important to Joseph?** (*He wanted his father to be proud of him.*)
6. **Read the last verse in the chapter.** As they left, Joseph had a strange warning for them: he could have been joking, or he could have been serious, or both. **What was it?** (*“Don’t quarrel along the way!”*) **Why do you think he said that?** (*They had argued before, and he knew they might do so again. He wanted them to have unity among themselves.*)

### **Family Challenge:**

Read **Romans 8:28**. *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*

**Ask: “Did God work all that had happened to Joseph together for his good? How?”**

Get a large poster board and have markers available. Talk about the events in Joseph’s life that led to his brothers coming to Egypt for food for their family and their people.

**Say: “God has a plan, even when we don’t see it.”**

Think about this and make a “storyboard” together. Draw the different scenes (Stick figures are fine – younger kids can join in!) leading up to the brothers going to Egypt and Joseph seeing them again:

- Jacob dreamed his brothers would bow before him. This angered his brothers, so much so that they sold him into slavery.
- Jacob went to Egypt, and gained the favor of Potiphar because of his hard work, but was sent to prison when he was falsely accused.
- In prison, he again gained favor for working hard and leading well. Then he was able to interpret the dreams of the Pharaoh’s baker and cup-bearer.
- This led to the cup-bearer remembering him to the Pharaoh two years later, where he interpreted the Pharaoh’s dreams and told him of the seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. And then he was put in charge of making sure that plenty was set aside during the time of feasting so that Egypt would be prepared for the years of famine.
- Finally, everything was in place for the brothers to come to Egypt and bow before him to ask for food!
- Joseph tested his brothers to see if they had repented of their sins and if their lives had changed since then. He was finally able to forgive them and also reconcile with them! And, to reunite with his father and brother Benjamin.

Do you ever wonder how God works in our lives? What if Joseph had not gone to Egypt? Would his family and the Jewish people have starved if he had stayed with his father? Could all of this be

a coincidence – for all of these things to happen so that Joseph would be reunited with his family and ultimately for God’s people to be saved by Joseph? Could this be God’s way of being sure, by saving them, that Jesus came to earth to die for our sins? **Discuss “God’s Providence.”** Can we trust God to know all things and to have a plan? Can this give us faith and hope in our own lives?

Think of a time when you believe God was showing Providence in your life. **Discuss together.**

**Prayer:**

*Dear God, You are amazing. You knew that the Jewish people would need food to survive, and You put Your plan into place so that they would be saved, and so that Jesus could come to earth to live among us and die for our sins. Thank You for loving us so much that You have a plan for our lives, even when we can't see it. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*