This month we are learning about God's forgiveness and what it means for us. We do many things that go against God's will and plan for us, and we should always confess those sins and ask for his forgiveness. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and turn away from our sins, God forgives us and cleanses us so that we are no longer guilty in his sight.

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BIBLE STORIES

Start

Reading

Here

End

Reading

Here

Read Ephesians 1:3–14 to learn about Jesus' sacrifice and why it means that we are forgiven and free.

1 I, Paul, am writing this letter. I am an apostle of Christ Jesus just as God planned.

I am sending this letter to you, God's holy people in Ephesus. Because you belong to Christ Jesus, you are faithful.

² May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Praise God for His Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Those blessings come from the heavenly world. They belong to us because we belong to Christ. ⁴God chose us to belong to Christ before the world was created. He chose us to be holy and without blame in his eyes. He loved us. ⁵So he decided long ago to adopt us. He adopted us as his children with all the rights children have. He did it because of what Jesus Christ has done. It pleased God to do it. ⁶All those things bring praise to his glorious grace. God freely gave



Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians from prison. Although he is in prison, Paul isn't sad or discouraged. He is filled with hope and joy. He tells everyone that he meets about Jesus. Paul knows that God is with him, and that God will take care of him.

us his grace because of the One he loves. ⁷We have been set free because of what Christ has done. Because he bled and died our sins have been forgiven. We have been set free because God's grace is so rich. ⁸He poured his grace on us. By giving us great wisdom and understanding, ⁹he showed us the mystery of his plan. It was in keeping with what he wanted to do. It was what he had planned through Christ. ¹⁰It will all come about when history has been completed. God will then bring together all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

¹¹We were also chosen to belong to him. God decided to choose us long ago in keeping with his plan. He works out everything to fit his plan and purpose. ¹²We were the first to put our hope in Christ. We were chosen to bring praise to his glory. ¹³You also became believers in Christ. That happened when you heard the message of truth. It was the good news about how you could be saved. When you believed, he stamped you with an official mark. That official mark is the Holy Spirit that he promised. ¹⁴The Spirit marks us as God's own. We can now be sure that someday we will receive all that God has promised. That will happen after God sets all his people completely free. All these things will bring praise to his glory.

Paul Prays and Gives Thank

¹⁵I have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus. I have also heard about your love for all God's people. That is why ¹⁶I have not stopped thanking God for you. I always remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is the glorious Father. I keep asking him to give you the wisdom and understanding that come from the Holy Spirit. I want you to know God better. ¹⁸I pray that you may understand more clearly. Then you will know the hope God has chosen you to receive. You will know that what God will give his holy people is rich and glorious. ¹⁹And you will know God's great power. It can't be compared with anything else. His power works for us who believe. It is the same mighty strength ²⁰ God showed. He showed this when he raised Christ from the dead. God seated him at his right hand in his heavenly kingdom. ²¹There Christ sits far above all who rule and have authority. He also sits far above all powers and kings. He

1654 | EPHESIANS 1:

Ephesians 1:15–23; 3:14–21

There are two prayers in Ephesians.

- In Ephesians 1:15–23, Paul prays that the Ephesians will get to know the Lord even better. He also prays that they will know God's great power working in them.
- In Ephesians 3:14–19, Paul prays that they will receive the power of the Holy Spirit. He prays that they may know how much Jesus loves them. He ends his prayer by praising God. Read verses 20–21.

CONTENT PULLED FROM NIRV SEEK AND EXPLORE HOLY BIBLE, ISBN 9780310763536

BIBLE STORIES

Start

Reading

Here

NIrV

Read the story of the lost sheep in Matthew 18:10-14 and learn about how God feels when we sin or walk away from him. Also, try doing the activity in the **Live It** feature, *God's Not Mad at Me*.



CONTENT PULLED FROM THE NIRV ADVENTURE BIBLE FOR EARLY READERS, ISBN 9780310727422

BIBLE STORIES

Read this story about Joseph and how he forgave his brothers for how they treated him.



Joseph had a dream. He told it to his prothers. He said, "Listen to the dream I had. We were tying up grain in the field. Suddenly my bundle stood up straight. Your bundles bowed down to it." His brothers said, "Do you plan to be our king? Will you really rule over us?" So they hated him because of his dream. CONTENT PULLED FROM READ WITH ME BIBLE, ISBN 9780310920083

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Then Joseph had another dream. "Listen," he said. "I had another dream. This time the sun and moon and 11 stars were bowing down to me." He told his father as well as his brothers. His father objected, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers really come and bow down to the ground in front of you?" His brothers were jealous of him. But his father kept the matter in mind. CONTENT PULLED FROM READ WITH ME BIBLE, ISBN 9780310920083

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Joseph's brothers had gone to take care of their father's flocks near Shechem. Jacob said to Joseph, "Go to your brothers. See how they are doing. See how the flocks are." So

But they saw him a long way off. Before he reached them, they made plans to kill him. "Here comes that dreamer!" they said. "Let's kill him. Let's say that a wild animal ate him up."



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Some traders came by. Joseph's brothers sold him to the traders. The traders took him to Egypt. Then the brothers got Joseph's beautiful robe. They killed a goat and dipped the robe in the blood.

They took it back to their father. They said, "We found this. Take a look at it." Jacob recognized it. He said, "It's my son's robe! A wild animal has eaten him up." Jacob sobbed over his son for many days.



CONTENT PULLED FROM READ WITH ME BIBLE, ISBN 9780310920083

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Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt Genesis 42; 45; 47

People were very hungry all over the world. Jacob found out that there was grain in Egypt. He said to his sons, "There's grain in Egypt. Go there. Buy some. Then we'll live and not die." So ten of Joseph's brothers went to Egypt.



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NIVE

Joseph couldn't control himself anymore. He cried out, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers weren't able to answer him. They were too afraid of him. Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me. I am your brother Joseph. I'm the one you sold into Egypt. Don't be angry with yourselves because you sold me here. God sent me ahead of you to save many lives." CONTENT PULLED FROM READ WITH ME BIBLE, ISBN 9780310920083

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DEVOTIONALS

This devotional teaches us about how Joseph forgave his brothers even though he suffered because of their actions.



CONTENT PULLED FROM NIrV SUPER HEROES HOLY BIBLE, ISBN 9780310744375

This devotional reminds us to forgive others because God loves us.



CONTENT PULLED FROM TINY TRUTHS, WONDER & WISDOM, ISBN 9780310769545



CONTENT PULLED FROM TINY TRUTHS, WONDER & WISDOM, ISBN 9780310769545

Read Luke 23:34-43 in your Bible and then see how this devotional teaches us why we should forgive others even when they hurt us.

1294

LUKE 23

went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁵³ Joseph took it down and wrapped it in linen cloth. Then he placed it in a tomb cut in the rock. No one had ever been buried there. ⁵⁴ It was Preparation Day. The Sabbath day was about to begin.

⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph. They saw the tomb and how Jesus' body was placed in it. ⁵⁶ Then they went home. There they prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath day in order to obey the Law. **24** It was very early in the morning on the first day of the week. The women took the spices they had prepared. Then they went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from it. ³ When they entered the tomb, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ They were wondering about this. Suddenly two men in clothes as bright as lightning stood beside them. ⁵ The women were terrified. They bowed down

Jesus Rises From the Dead



Jesus said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

TODRY'S BIBLE RERDING: Luke 23:34-43 FIGHT BRCK WITH FORGIVENESS

Your best friend talks about you behind your back. You get angry and say bad things about her. Pretty soon you're fighting. You hate each other. And you're not friends anymore.

Sometimes people hurt you. You want to fight back. You want to get even.

But that's not the best way. Fighting leads to more fighting. Hate leads to more hate. It's a nasty circle.

People hurt Jesus. They whipped him and spit on him. Finally, they killed him. But he never fought back. He forgave them.

Forgiveness takes time. First you have to feel hurt. And you have to pray to God to help you forgive.

But forgiveness heals friendships. Forgiving your friend is better than getting even.



🔲 I have read this devotion.

For your next reading, turn to page 1296. If you want to read more, see Matthew 6:14–15 on page 1179 and Matthew 18:21–22 on page 1198.

CONTENT PULLED FROM NIrV KIDS' DEVOTIONAL BIBLE, ISBN 9780310744450

These coloring pages tell Joseph's story of forgiveness.

Week 2

Joseph and the Colorful Robe

Joseph was a young man. He was 17 years old. Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. Israel made him a beautiful robe. Joseph's brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them. So they hated Joseph. They couldn't even speak one kind word to him.

Joseph had a dream. When he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. He said to them, "Listen to the dream I had. We were tying up bundles of grain out in the field. Suddenly my bundle stood up straight. Your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it."

His brothers said to him, "Do you plan to be king over us? Will you really rule over us?" So they hated him even more because of his dream.





CONTENT PULLED FROM <u>MY BIBLE STORY COLORING BOOK</u>, ISBN 9780310761068

18

Joseph's brothers had gone to take care of their father's flocks. Joseph went to look for his brothers. But they saw him a long way off. Before he reached them, they made plans to kill him.

"Here comes that dreamer!" they said to one another. "Come. Let's kill him. Let's throw him into one of these empty wells. Let's say that a wild animal ate him up. Then we'll see whether his dreams will come true."



CONTENT PULLED FROM MY BIBLE STORY COLORING BOOK, ISBN 9780310761068

When Joseph came to his brothers, he was wearing his beautiful robe. They took it away from him. And they threw him into the well.

They saw some Ishmaelite traders coming from Gilead.

Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain if we kill our brother? Let's sell him to these traders." Judah's brothers agreed with him.



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The traders sold Joseph to Potiphar in Egypt. Potiphar put Joseph in prison. While Joseph was there, the LORD was with him. He gave Joseph success in everything he did.

When years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream. In his dream, he was standing by the Nile River. Seven cows came up out of the river. They looked healthy and fat. After them, seven other cows came. They looked ugly and skinny. The ugly, skinny cows ate up the seven cows that looked healthy and fat. Then Pharaoh woke up.

In the morning no one could tell him what they meant. So Pharaoh sent for Joseph. He was quickly brought out of the prison. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream. No one can tell me what it means. But I've heard that when you hear a dream you can explain it."

"I can't do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh. "But God will give Pharaoh the answer he wants."

Joseph said, "Seven years with plenty of food are coming to Egypt.



CONTENT PULLED FROM MY BIBLE STORY COLORING BOOK, ISBN 9780310761068

But seven years when there won't be enough food will follow them. "So Pharaoh should look for a wise man. He should put him in charge of Egypt. They should collect all the extra food of the ൝ good years that are coming. It will be needed during the seven years when there isn't enough food." Pharaoh said to Joseph, "God has made all this known to you. No one is as wise as you m are. You will be in charge of my palace." ഹ ົດ 0 0 0

Joseph's brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain there. There wasn't enough food in the land of Canaan. Joseph was the governor of the land. He was the one who sold grain to all its people. When Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!" But his brothers were afraid of him.

Joseph said, "Come close to me." So they did. Then he said, "I am your brother Joseph. I'm the one you sold into Egypt. But don't be upset. God sent me ahead of you to save many lives."



CONTENT PULLED FROM MY BIBLE STORY COLORING BOOK, ISBN 9780310761068

Joseph kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that, his brothers talked with him.

The news reached Pharaoh's palace that Joseph's brothers had come. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'Load your animals. Return to the land of Canaan. Bring your father and your families back to me. I'll give you the best land in Egypt. You can enjoy all the good things in the land.'"



CONTENT PULLED FROM <u>MY BIBLE STORY COLORING BOOK</u>, ISBN 9780310761068

Jeremiah was a prophet who was sent to warn God's people to turn away from their sin and to ask for forgiveness. This section includes a devotional and activities to remind us of Jeremiah's message to repent and seek God's forgiveness so that we can strengthen our relationship with him.

Week 21, Day 1 V Read About It

God must punish our sin but still wants a relationship with us.

God's people weren't listening to him or obeying him. So, God sent the prophet Jeremiah to plead with his people to listen to him. But they acted like they didn't want anything to do with God! This made God very, very sad. He loved his people. He had shown them how to have the best life possible. But they just didn't want to listen to him anymore. So, God had to punish his people. He sent Jeremiah to tell them the bad news. God was going to bring the Babylonians to attack his people. God's people were going to be taken away to a different land. Life was going to be hard for them.

Jeremiah told them that it didn't have to be that way! There was still time for them to come back to God. But they *still* didn't listen to Jeremiah! They didn't think God would punish their sin. So, they left God no choice. He sent the Babylonians against them. The Babylonians won the battle over them and took them to a land far away.

Did a parent or teacher ever tell you not to do something because it was wrong? Did you refuse to listen to them? How did things turn out?





Week 21, Day 2 Think About It

The prophet Jeremiah talks a lot about our relationship with God. But most of the time he uses a different word than "relationship." This other word means an *official* relationship. It is a relationship that is very, very important to God. See if you can discover that word by unscrambling the letters below.

TOVCNEAN

Did you solve the puzzle? If not, here's a hint for you. The word is found four times in Jeremiah 31:31–33.



ANSWER KEY COVENANT

CONTENT PULLED FROM SEEK AND EXPLORE DEVOTIONS FOR KIDS, ISBN 9780310760344

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Week 21, Day 3 Finding Jesus in Jeremiah

God knew that people would always have a hard time doing what is right. So, God sent the prophet Jeremiah to make a promise to his people. God promised he would provide a perfect human being who would always do what was right. And all the right things that perfect person did would count for everyone who believed in him. That way, God could have that relationship with us that he always wanted. This was really good news!

God sent his own Son, Jesus, to be that perfect person! Jesus always did what was right. And all the right things he did count for everyone who believes in him. Everyone who believes in Jesus can be sure God loves them. In fact, God considers everyone who believes in Jesus to be a member of his family. He calls them his children. That's what the apostle John says in his gospel. Here is what John 1:12 says about Jesus. "Some people did accept him and did believe in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God."

Have you asked Jesus to forgive your sins? Have you asked Jesus to make you a member of his family? If you have, write about when and how that happened.

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Week 21, Day 5 Pray About It

Dear God,

Thank you for loving me so much that you sent your own Son to save me. He gives me a relationship with you that can never be broken! You have forgiven my sins because I trust in Jesus. I am so happy you have made me your child! Help me forgive myself and other people the way you have forgiven me. Help me to love you as much as you love me. Then I'll have the wonderful life that you want for me. I ask you for these things because I believe in Jesus. Amen.

God forgives you! But that doesn't mean you don't have to do some work when you've done something wrong. Keep the chart below handy for the next time you do something wrong. Follow the steps to make things right again. Remember, it's just as important to forgive others as it is to ask for forgiveness.



NIrVE

Week 21, Day 6 Do Something About It

Jeremiah tells us about the special relationship God wants with us. Jesus makes that special relationship with God possible. But we still have to be careful to not let anything come between us and God. Our sins come between us and God. In the space below draw or glue pictures of things that represent your sins. Maybe you could find a photo of people talking together to represent gossip. Or find a picture of money to represent wanting something too much. When you are done, write JESUS across your pictures. This will show you that Jesus keeps those things from separating you from God!



CONTENT PULLED FROM SEEK AND EXPLORE DEVOTIONS FOR KIDS, ISBN 9780310760344

This activity helps us understand how God washes away our sins through Jesus. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and confess our sins, God cleanses our hearts so that we can be with him forever.

CLEAN AS A PENNY

STUFF YOU NEED:

- Dirty pennies
- Small container
- Spoon
- Vinegar (1/2 cup)
- Salt (tablespoon)
- Strainer
- Large bowl

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Mix ½ cup vinegar with a tablespoon of salt in a small container. Stir until the salt is dissolved.
- 2. Give your child a few dirty pennies.
- 3. Have them place the penny in the vinegar solution. As they put the penny in the solution, encourage them to think about a couple of things they have done wrong over the last week. (i.e. said something mean to another person, disobeyed their parents, fought with a sibling or friend, etc.)
- 4. After all of the pennies are in the vinegar solution, wait five minutes.
- 5. Then pour the solution through a strainer into a large bowl and rinse with clean water.
- 6. Let your child keep their clean penny to remember the lesson. (If you are doing this with more than one child, mark the pennies with a different color per child using a permanent marker before putting them into the vinegar solution.)
- 7. Talk about how God's forgiveness makes our hearts clean.

This activity reminds us that we must rely on God in order for us to be forgiven and cleansed of our sins.

SPOT SCRUBBERS

STUFF YOU NEED:

- Washable or dry-erase markers
- Tub of water (or the bathroom sink)
- Soap
- Disinfectant wipes
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. Share that sometimes when we sin, we try to get rid of the problem ourselves. But what we really need is God to make us clean.
- 2. Have children use markers to write or draw on their palms. They can write something that represents a sin, or they can just make a spot.
- 3. Have them try three different methods of cleaning the spot and see which one works best: soap and water, disinfectant wipe, or scrubbing with toothpaste and brush (the abrasive in the toothpaste helps clean).
- 4. Once they are done cleaning their hands, have the following discussion:
 - a. Tell me about a time you were sorry. What happened?
 - b. Why do you think God wants us to be sorry when we do something wrong?
 - c. Tell them that no matter how sorry we are, we're going to mess up again. every time we mess up, God is ready to forgive us again.

This crossword puzzle reminds us of what happened to Joseph and how he forgave his brothers.



Can you figure out the crossword puzzle?

ACROSS

- One of Pharaoh's officials, named _____, bought Joseph when he arrived in Egypt (Gensis 37).
- During the seven years when there were good crops, Joseph stored ______ in the cities (Genesis 41).
- 5. Joseph's brothers bought some grain in Egypt and carried it home in _____ (Genesis 42).
- 7. Joseph's father gave him an ornate _____ (Genesis 37).
- Pharaoh's second dream was about heads of _____, seven good ones and seven withered ones (Genesis 41).
- Joseph was wrongly accused of a crime and put into ______ (Genesis 39).
- 14. The ruler of Egypt, who was called _____, had two dreams that troubled him (Genesis 41).
- 15. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge and had him ride in a chariot (Genesis 41).
- Pharaoh's first dream was about _____, seven fat ones and seven skinny ones (Genesis 41).
- Joseph's ______ were jealous of him and hated him (Genesis 37).

DOWN

- 1. The man who was a_____ dreamed of a vine and some grapes (Genesis 40).
- Joseph forgave his brothers and told them, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for _____" (Genesis 50).
- 4. Joseph said that the dreams meant there was going to be a _____ (Genesis 41).
- 6. When the famine came, Joseph opened the _____ and sold grain to the people (Genesis 41).
- 8. The silver cup was found in the sack that belonged to _____ (Genesis 44).
- 9. The people who bought Joseph from his brothers took him to _____ (Genesis 37).
- The man who was a _____ dreamed of some birds eating bread (Genesis 40).
- Joseph was sold by his brothers for twenty pieces of ______ (Genesis 37).
- When Joseph went to see his brothers, they threw him in a ______ (Genesis 37).
- Joseph said he couldn't tell what Pharaoh's dreams meant, but ______ would (Genesis 41).

CONTENT PULLED FROM ADVENTURE BIBLE ACTIVITIES AT ADVENTUREBIBLE.COM

Answer key for crossword puzzle.

JOSEPH

Answer key



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