



Joseph, A Hero's Journey- An 8-Week Series

Lesson 7: THE HERO'S RETURN

The **it**



The **it** of the lesson is that ONE THING you say over and over so they understand it. If their parents ask, "What did you learn at church?", you want them to answer with the **it** of your lesson. If YOU ask the kids, "What am I trying to get you to learn/understand?" and they answer with this phrase, you can say, "That's **it!**"

THE **it** THIS WEEK IS: God helps us forgive others.

Story: Joseph reunites with and forgives his brothers.
Scripture: Genesis 42-45



Things you might need for this lesson:

FIND/GATHER/BUY:

- Costume for Whyit (all 8 weeks)
- Cheese and Crackers for Play it
- Pyramid Verse Tool for Hide it
- Joseph Costume for Tell it (First 7 weeks*)
- Handheld Mirror for Teach it

FROM DOWNLOADS:

- Scarabs and Cats Signs for Play it
- Screen and 4D Glasses for Tell it
- Take home tool for parents
- IMAGES and VIDEO for projection

*NOTE: NEXT WEEK, Week 8 drama will have a special appearance by the other Prince of Egypt, Moses.



Whyit (Pronounced Wyatt)

For this series, have Whyit dress up as if he's going to the movies. Have him wearing 3D (or 4D) glasses and carrying a large popcorn bucket and a giant soda (which he could intermittently sip loudly while talking with Leader). For added affect, he could have a large box of Milk Duds hanging out of his shirt or pants pocket.



Each week, Whyit introduces a "Super Star" of the Bible, but it's never Joseph. It is always someone who kinda, sorta, might relate to the story, but he repeatedly gets it wrong. It's a way to illustrate another Bible hero who went through something similar, but the leader always reminds him that in this series, we are learning about Joseph.

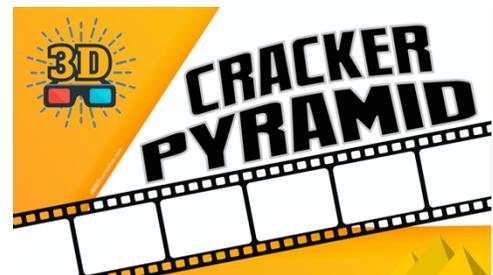
This week Why starts out very excited! "After years away, lost, forgotten, poor, separated from family, and everything looking hopeless and without hope – OK, that's kinda the same thing – but after being in a really bad place, things started to look up for this Bible Hero, because he was finally gonna have some good news!" Leader says to kids, "I think Whyit's finally going to get one right!" Whyit continues, "The prodigal son decided to go home! He said to himself, 'Even my father's servants have it better than me, here feeding pigs! I will go back to him and ask to be a servant in his house!' But his father was watching for him and welcomed him back! The lost son returned!" Leader sheepishly says, "Now, that is a great story that Jesus told, but it's not the story of JOSEPH! The Bible is filled with amazing stories of God's forgiveness, provision, mercy, and grace, and the Prodigal Son is one of the best – but today we will be learning about the day that Joseph finally saw his dream come true!"



The Pyramid Games!

Each week some kids will compete to create a Pyramid! Some will be competitions for individuals, some for team, and a few will involve the entire audience!

PREPARATION: This week the kids compete to build a pyramid out of cheese and crackers! You'll need crackers and cheese spread or squirt cheese



to use as glue to help build pyramids. It is the tallest and best-looking pyramid that will win by audience applause!

PLAYING: This week the kids will compete to create pyramids out of cheese and crackers. Choose at least two teams to compete. If you want, use your Cobras and Cats teams (Boys vs. Girls). Depending on the size of your group, have two teams or more as kids and space allow. Teams of 4-6 should be formed for this creative effort. Give each team a table to work on rather than the floor. Due to the difficulty of the task, they may need extra time. You may want to have the rest of the audience sing a song to help pass some extra time so they can really work on their creation. Remember, the shape of their creation needs to be a pyramid to win!

THE POINT: This took teamwork to win! The family is like a team. They need to work together. Joseph's brothers didn't treat him like a team member; instead, they turned on him. Sometimes our family members can do things to hurt us. Should we get back at them, or forgive them? Today we'll find out what Joseph did when he was reunited with his family.

WATCH it A video that sets it up



PREPARATION: Video included in your Download
The screenshot to the right is also included in your Download to display on screen before playing video.



SUMMARY: Get a Grip!

The short video clip for this lesson features Karl, the Kidologist, doing a short object lesson featuring two shoes – a slipper and a five-finger – who discuss the need to have a good grip to stand firm in the tough times of life! Show this short teaching video to the kids or train a leader to do the talk “live.”

Featured Verses: Psalm 73:2; Ephesians 6:15; Psalm 18:33; Psalm 17:5; James 4:10; Psalm 91:11-13

THE POINT: Joseph hung on during the tough times he went through, and it paid off! As we'll see today, his faithfulness to God was rewarded, and in turn, he was able to be forgiving toward his brothers as well.



Story: Joseph reunites with and forgives his brothers.

Scripture: Genesis 42-45

4D Bible Story Experience!

Experience the Bible like never before in a fully immersive 4D Experience!



See Lesson 1 for an overview of how the 4D concept works.

PRESENTATION: Joseph will wait behind the screen until the kids have been instructed to put on their 4D glasses. (There is a reminder slide in the Every Week folder to use on screen.) Joseph will come out from behind the 4D screen and tell a segment of his story in first-person.

THIS WEEK: Joseph comes out and tells the segment of his story from **Genesis Chapters 42-45**

Bible Story Summary: Joseph quickly reviews the story of his life up to this point and how people were coming to Egypt from near and far to get food. Then one day, he couldn't believe his eyes. He saw his brothers! All but the youngest, Benjamin, were there. Be sure to carefully read chapters 42-45 and be familiar with them in order to tell the story. Joseph explains how he amazingly recognized them, but of course they didn't recognize Joseph – how could they? They would never dream that the brother they had sold as a slave to a caravan all those years ago would be this ruler standing before them. Instead of revealing himself, he decided he needed to test them to see if they had any remorse for what they had done to him. So Joseph accused them all of being spies! They reply that they are not spies, but all sons of one man. There are twelve brothers total, the youngest who is back home with their father, and one who is no more – of course, referring to Joseph, who stands before them! Joseph then explains how they began to speak in their own Hebrew language, not knowing that Joseph could understand, and saying that surely they were being punished by God for what they had done to Joseph! At this point, Joseph had to leave the room because he was overcome with emotion at seeing them, and at hearing this. When he came back into the room, he sent them home, asking them to bring their youngest brother Benjamin next time. Joseph explains to the kids how he had his guards place into their sacks all the money they had paid for the food. When they found the money later that night, they were afraid.

When they returned home, they told their dad how all the money they had spent was returned to them. They also told their father how the ruler wanted Benjamin to come to Egypt with them

when they returned. But their father said he couldn't send Benjamin because he had already lost his youngest, Joseph, and couldn't stand to lose another. But Judah, the eldest, insisted, saying that the ruler had said it was the only way they could get food, and Judah pledged his life to protect Benjamin. So, when they ran out of food, and they prepared to return to Egypt for their second trip, their father had them take double the money to pay for the first trip's food, along with other gifts from their land. When they arrived and Joseph saw them and Benjamin, he invited them to a dinner. They were baffled but agreed. He sat them in order of their age, and they were amazed, wondering how he knew their ages? They explained about the money being in their bags, and Joseph said it was fine, he had put it there. When he saw his youngest brother, again he was so moved with emotion he had to leave the room to cry, then came back to dine with them. When they left, he again had his guards put their money in their sacks with the food, but this time he added a silver cup into Benjamin's sack. Joseph explains to the kids that he was testing his brothers. When they had gotten out of town, he sent his guards to search their bags, and when they found the "stolen" cup they were arrested and brought back. The brothers, of course, said they didn't steal the cup – they hadn't – but Joseph said that Benjamin had to stay behind in prison while the rest when home to their father. But Judah pleaded for Joseph to take him instead of Benjamin, in order to spare his father grief. (Read the passage to get the details of Judah's plea to Joseph.)

When Joseph saw that Judah cared more about their father than his own well-being, that he was willing to take Benjamin's place as a slave rather than bring more pain to his father – because of what they did to him with Joseph – that was when Joseph knew they were truly sorry for what they had done. Not just what was done to Joseph, but to their father when they sold Joseph and told their dad he had died. Finish the story and emphasize the part where he reveals who he was – how terrified the brothers were – but how Joseph says (from chapter 50:19-21 after their father dies, but relevant and likely shared at this time as well), "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And that's exactly what Joseph did. (Exit)

TEACH it The main points about it



The Hero's Return

The biggest and most successful movies feature a hero we can cheer for. If you pay close attention to these epic movies, you'll begin to notice a pattern to them. The hero doesn't just show up and "save the day." There is usually a journey that the hero must go on before they are ready to be the hero we long for in the story. While each story is different, there are some aspects of this journey that appear in almost every hero story.



What an incredible story this has been! Joseph understood that there was a Bigger Story than even his own story. God was up to something even bigger and better than even his own life. Yes, he had a dream that his brothers and family would bow down to him – that’s pretty cool – but he knew that something even more important had happened! God used him to save the lives of millions of people from a famine! His dreams were just a glimpse – a small part of what God was really up to, and Joseph’s Journey all led to that incredible part of history.

That’s why **HISTORY** is also often called **HIS-STORY**, because all of History is “His Story,” or God’s Story!

Review the stages in the Hero’s Journey:

- **The Hero’s Calling** – Some event or person that calls them to some higher purpose for their life.
- **The Hero’s Plight** – Before our hero can save the day, they always have a set back. It can be a villain, but often it is something within them that holds them back that they need to overcome.
- **The Hero’s Test** – Next, our hero usually has to face some kind of test to determine whether he or she is worthy of being the hero we hope they will be. They have to decide if they will be honorable and noble, or if they will cheat or lie or take a short-cut. We cheer when they make the right decision. It makes them worthy of rooting for.
- **The Hero’s Trial** – After our hero passes the test, there is always a trial that causes them to second-guess whether they made the right choice. They have a chance to cheat up, turn around, or quit. If they are to be a hero, they have to pass the trial.
- **The Hero’s Hope** – Finally, things start to look up for the hero. They meet a mentor, or find a map, or make some friends who join them – something happens that shows them that they are on the right path. There may still be a battle ahead, but they know they will win if they press on!
- **The Hero’s Triumph** – We jump out of our seats and cheer when the hero finally wins! Evil is defeated and the hero saves the day. The victory is sweet because of the tests and trials the hero has been through. Without the hard times, the victory wouldn’t be as enjoyable. It is because of the difficulty that we celebrate the triumph.
- **The Hero’s Return** – Often, there were those who doubted the hero at the beginning. They spoke words of doubt or disbelief. We love when they are proven wrong. We want them to see what the hero accomplished and we want hero vindicated!

Forgiveness can be hard, but when you see everything – even bad things – in light of what God is up to, it becomes easier to forgive people. You understand that not only are YOU on a journey and learning and growing and moving forward toward something, but so is everyone else! And they also will go through plights and trials and tests along the way. They will even fail some of those tests and trails, but God is still working on them, just like He is working on you!

READ: Colossians 3:13 *Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.*

You know what makes forgiveness easier? Realizing that you need forgiveness too.

OBJECT LESSON: A Handheld Mirror

Show a mirror. Ask the kids for some examples of sins that people commit against us. They lie. They say mean things. They cheat. They steal. They use mean words. Hold up the mirror in front of yourself and point and say, "You lie!" or "You cheat!" Oops. See, the mirror reminds me that when I want to accuse others, I need to remember that I have done the same things. I **NEED** forgiveness as much as I need to forgive **OTHERS**.

READ: Matthew 6:14 *For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*

OBJECT LESSON: You need a stack of books that you don't mind being dropped. Invite a child to come up; a smaller child is best. Keep handing them books and as you do so, call each one something that you don't want to forgive someone for. "That person was mean to me." (Add a book.) "That person lied to me." (Add a book.) "Another person cut in front of me." (Add a book.) "Another friend talked behind my back." (Add a book.) "My dad was grumpy." (Add a book.) "My mom didn't give me something I wanted." (Add a book.)

Keep adding more books until the child can't hold them all. If they drop a few, it's OK. Keep going until they are struggling. Then, talk about how not forgiving someone doesn't hurt the person you aren't forgiving – they are off doing fine. It's **YOU** that is weighed down by the unforgiveness! When you choose to forgive, the burden is lifted from you. Ask the child how they are feeling. (Tired, straining, etc.) Tell the child to **DROP** all that unforgiveness. Ask them how they feel now. (Relieved, better, lighter, etc.)

Forgiveness is the greatest gift we can give – and not just to others, but to ourselves. Then we are **FREE!**

ACTIVITY: Forgiveness Reflection Time

Take a few minutes to have the children bow their heads, close their eyes, and consider if there is someone they need to forgive.

A few points to make with the children:

- They don't have to deserve forgiveness to be forgiven. We didn't deserve for Jesus to die for us, but he did anyway. (Romans 5:8)
- They don't have to be sorry for us to forgive them.

- Just because we forgive, that doesn't make it OK. If they are doing something wrong repeatedly, we can forgive, but it's OK to tell someone so it will stop.
- Just because we forgive doesn't mean we have to trust them again. If someone has hurt us, it's OK to avoid them so we aren't hurt again.
- Forgiveness doesn't make it right – it says "I'm going to let God make it right"
- Forgiveness is rarely easy, but God can help us to forgive.
- Sometimes we have to forgive again. Maybe even every day.
- You might even have to forgive yourself.
- Remember, God forgives you. Everyday.
- There are no limits to God's forgiveness.
- There is nothing too big or too small that God's can't forgive.
- Even when you forgive, there still might need to be healing. If you need healing, ask for help. Never be embarrassed to ask for help.
- You hear "forgive and forget" a lot. It's OK if you can't forget. Sometimes that takes time. But the first step is to forgive.

Allow some time for kids to think, give the kids some time to pray, and then close in a prayer for forgiveness, perhaps something like this:

Dear Jesus, thank you for forgiving me even when I don't deserve it. I'm so glad you sent Jesus to pay for my sins on the cross so I could be forgiven and become your child. Please help me to forgive others just as you have forgiven me. I want to be like Joseph. Help me to remember that even when people intend things for bad, you can work it out for good – to shape my character and make me a stronger person and better person because of the tests and trials that I have been through. Help me to let go of any unforgiveness that I may be holding on to. I give it all to you so that I can walk free! In Jesus Name, I forgive, as you have forgiven me! – AMEN!

SHOW it An object lesson or activity that illustrates it



ACTIVITY: The Pyramid Puzzle

PREPARATION: Print out the Pyramid Puzzle from your lesson downloads. There is also an image you can put on screen at the end to show the solution. Tape is optional.



PRESENTATION: The Egyptians were known for their pyramids. Each week, your kids will be challenged with a Pyramid Word Scramble that reveals a character quality of Joseph that we can learn from and work to add to our own lives.

For large groups, you can print it extra-large and have two teams compete to complete the puzzle. If you have a small group, you can let all the kids participate by getting into groups of 3-4 kids and providing the puzzles in a zip lock bag, or you may give one to each child if you'd like. It's up to you on how many puzzles you want to prep. Consider printing on card stock so that they are firmer for working with. Optionally, you can print the blank pyramid with the sand and sky for them to do the puzzle on. It's already fairly easy and that would make it even easier, but you can have them tape the pieces to the pyramid before they are done to add some time to the challenge, and if there's a tie you can judge by who did it the neatest.

This week's puzzle reveals the word: **FORGIVING**

Bible Verse to look up and read together: **Matthew 6:14**

NOTE: There is no slide with the verse. The intent is for the kids to look up the verse in their own Bibles and read it.

FIND it Bible verses that help unpack it



Have the children get their Bibles out and race to find these verses.

Encourage all the kids to look up the verses. After a student reads it, put it up on the screen and read it together. Briefly discuss the passage and explain it as it relates to the lesson.



Matthew 6:15

But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Luke 6:37

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

HIDE it

The unit scripture that kids will memorize to hide it in their hearts



This is the THEME VERSE

Challenge the kids to memorize this verse during this series. You may want to have a fun prize or treat for the kids who memorize it!

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Pyramid Verse Tool

This is a longer passage so learning by repetition during your service will be more challenging than most. Therefore, a Pyramid Verse Tool is provided in your downloads that the kids can take home to keep on their desk, kitchen table, or anywhere that will remind them to be working on the verse throughout the series.



LIVE it

The practical life application challenge so the kids can live it this week!



Each week, conclude the lesson with a prayer and practical challenge for the kids. Encourage them to be like Joseph in a way that relates to this week's lesson.

LIVE IT: This week, it's almost a sure thing that someone is going to do something that will make you angry, hurt, or just annoyed. Ask God to help you to not react in a bad way, but to forgive instead.



(If you used the Show it segment)

Ask God to give you the ability to be **FORGIVING** even when it is hard or people don't deserve it. We didn't deserve forgiveness and God gave it to use anyway. When we do the same, we are Living Like Joseph.

TAKE *it* Take home tool to help parents review *it* with their kids



PREPARATION: Included in your download.

The TAKE IT for this series is formatted two per page. Print on regular paper or cardstock. Cut the printed sheets in half diagonally to create triangles/pyramids.

INCLUDED FOR PARENTS:

- **READ IT** - Bible verse of the week
- **LEARN IT** - the it for the week
- **HIDE IT** - theme verse in full to review
- **DISCUSS IT** - discussion questions for parents
- **FIND IT** - verses they can look up
- **LIVE IT** - application from the lesson



LOOKING AHEAD

Here is next week's lesson topic:

Lesson 8: The Hero's Legacy
God keeps his promises.



BONUS IDEAS!



it is always growing and adding NEW IDEAS!

Be sure you are a member of the **Kidology.org Facebook Group** so you don't miss out on **BONUS IDEAS** or **COACHING VIDEOS** that Pastor Karl or Doug often post to help make your Sunday Experience the best it can be! If they get new ideas, they will share them! AND if YOU come up with a great idea for this lesson, you can share it too!

VISIT OR JOIN AT: [Facebook.com/groups/kidologyorg](https://www.facebook.com/groups/kidologyorg)