

Lesson 48

Joseph Forgives His Brothers

Joseph tested his brothers and forgave them.

Studying God's Word

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 47 Theme Poster. Last week we saw how God took Joseph from the prison to the palace of Pharaoh.

Slide #3

What was the reason that Joseph was brought before Pharaoh? Pharaoh needed someone to interpret his dreams.

Yes. Pharaoh had upsetting dreams, which none of his wise men could interpret. But who worked for Pharaoh and remembered Joseph from the prison? The cupbearer.

What was the meaning of Pharaoh's dreams of the seven cows and seven ears of grain? Seven years of plenty would be followed by seven years of famine.

Refer to the Genesis . Joseph told Pharaoh what his dreams meant and suggested a plan to store grain for the famine. Pharaoh liked Joseph's plan and made him a powerful ruler, second only to himself. Joseph was in charge of collecting and storing grain during the seven good years of farming, and then he was in charge of selling it when the famine started.

Joseph's Brothers Go to Buy Grain

Pass out the [Class Notes \(PDF\)](#) and the [Joseph and His Brothers Skit \(PDF\)](#) to each student.

Slide #4

Refer to the Lesson Theme Posters. Remember that the famine didn't just affect Egypt. The countries around Egypt also didn't have enough food for themselves or their animals. But Egypt was the only country with grain to sell. The Bible tells us that the famine was in Egypt and in Canaan, where Joseph's family lived.

Jacob knew that his family needed grain, so he sent his sons to Egypt. But he didn't let Benjamin go on the journey because he was worried that something bad would happen to him.

Joseph and His Brothers Skit: Part 1

Pass out the [Joseph and His Brothers Skit \(PDF\)](#) to each student. Today we have a two-part skit to act out based on Genesis 42 through 45. Choose volunteers to play the roles in Part 1. Help set up the scene and provide props, if available.

The first part is when Joseph's brothers arrived in Egypt to buy grain. Guess who was in charge of selling grain? Joseph.

That's right! Let's perform Part 1 of the skit to see what happens on their first visit. Have students act out Part 1.

So, Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him and asked to buy grain. Does this remind you of one of Joseph's dreams? His dream at age 17 about his brothers' sheaves of grain bowing to his sheaf.

Joseph's dream came true! His brothers bowed down before him. But this happened more than 20 years after he dreamed it.

Slide #5

Joseph recognized his brothers, but why do you think they didn't recognize him? Allow guesses.

This meeting took place over 20 years after Joseph was sold by his brothers. By this time, Joseph looked and sounded like an Egyptian. He was speaking Egyptian and using an interpreter to talk to his brothers. His clothes and hair looked Egyptian. Plus, Joseph was a powerful ruler and even had an Egyptian name! The brothers probably thought Joseph was a slave somewhere or even dead.

Instead of telling his brothers who he was, Joseph decided to test them to see if they had changed from the angry, jealous men they had been. Joseph did several things to test his brothers.

First, what did Joseph accuse his brothers of being? Spies. He accused them of being spies, looking for a way to attack Egypt. Did Joseph really think they were spies? No, he was testing them.

Next, Joseph put Simeon in prison and told the others to return to Canaan with grain. But, he warned them that they must bring their youngest brother when they came back, or he would know they were lying and would kill them as spies.

Well, things got even worse for the brothers. Not only did they leave Simeon in Egypt, but they also discovered that their money was back in their grain sacks. Joseph had told his servant to secretly put their money back. But now they were afraid that Joseph would think they had stolen the money!

When the brothers got back home and told Jacob everything that had happened, Jacob refused to let them take Benjamin to Egypt to free Simeon.

Slide #6

Let's review what we've learned so far with our [Class Notes \(PDF\)](#). You'll circle the correct bold word to complete each statement. Who will read #1 and tell us how Joseph first tested his brothers? Assign a reader. Spies. Complete #1.

Who will read #2? What did Joseph want the brothers to bring in order to release Simeon from prison? Assign a reader. Benjamin. Complete #2.

Joseph's Brothers Return with Benjamin

Eventually, Jacob and his family ate all the grain the brothers had brought from Egypt. Jacob told his sons to go back and buy some more, but they reminded him that they couldn't go back unless they brought Benjamin. They knew Joseph had the power to kill them or put them in prison, but they were desperate for food. Finally, Judah told Jacob that he would be responsible for Benjamin on the trip. Jacob agreed to let Benjamin go, and he sent gifts and double the money for the brothers to give to Joseph.

When the brothers stood before Joseph again, Joseph was pleased to see Benjamin with them. They had proved they weren't lying, so Joseph told his steward to take them to his house and prepare a meal.

Joseph and His Brothers Skit: Part 2

Let's perform Part 2 of the skit to see what happened next. Choose volunteers to play the roles in Part 2. Set up the scene and provide props, if available. Have students perform Part 2.

Joseph's brothers went to Joseph's house for a meal. This was a big honor, and they were worried about the money they had found in their sacks. But the steward assured them everything was okay. Simeon was brought out of prison, and they ate a meal.

Slide #7

Slide #8

Joseph gave his brothers two tests at the meal. The first was to give Benjamin five times more food than his brothers. Why do you think Joseph did this? He wanted to see if they would be jealous, like they were of him. Right. He was watching to see how they responded to Benjamin receiving special treatment. Then when the brothers left, Joseph had his steward put his silver cup in Benjamin's sack and then accuse him of stealing it. Why did Joseph do this? He wanted to see if his brothers would leave Benjamin or defend him.

Which brother took responsibility for Benjamin and offered to take his place as a servant? Judah.

Joseph's actions were a test of his brothers. He wanted to see if they had changed from the jealous, angry men they were when he was 17. Would they protect Benjamin?

So did the brothers pass the test? How did they act differently with Benjamin than they did with Joseph? They didn't leave Benjamin. They returned to Joseph, and Judah offered to take Benjamin's punishment as a slave.

Do you remember which brother had the idea to sell Joseph as a slave? Judah.

Yes! Judah went from being jealous and hateful to being protective and responsible. Once Joseph saw the change in his brothers, he revealed who he was.

Why were the brothers afraid when Joseph said who he was? They were afraid that Joseph would want revenge for being sold as a slave.

How was Joseph able to forgive his brothers? What did he understand about God? Joseph understood that God was in control of the events in his life. God planned for him to be in Egypt to save his family.

Slide #9

Slide #10

Slide #11

Let's go to our Class Notes (PDF). Who will read #3? Where did Joseph have his brothers taken when they returned with Benjamin? Assign a reader. His house. Complete #3.

Who will read #4 about Benjamin? Assign a reader. Food. Complete #4.

And what was found in Benjamin's sack of grain in #5? Assign a reader. Silver cup. Complete #5.

Who will answer #6 about Judah? Assign a reader. Servant. Complete #6.

And #7? What did Joseph do to his brothers? Assign a reader. Forgave. Complete #7.

Joseph's Family Travels to Egypt

Joseph told his brothers to hurry back to Canaan and tell his father that he was alive. He gave them wagons, donkeys, clothing, silver, and food for the journey. When they told their father that Joseph was not only alive but was also a ruler of Egypt, Jacob was so shocked at the news that he couldn't believe it at first. But he decided that he would go see Joseph.

Jacob and his family packed up everything they had in Canaan and traveled to Egypt. Along the way, Jacob stopped and offered sacrifices to God. And God spoke to Jacob.

Genesis 46:3-4

Slide #12

Let's read what God said to him. Who will read Genesis 46:3-4? Assign a reader.

What did God promise Jacob in these verses? He would make him into a great nation in Egypt. He would go with him to Egypt and bring him back.

God promised that he would go with Jacob and his family to Egypt and eventually bring them back to Canaan. He also promised that Jacob would be with Joseph.

When his family came, Joseph had a tearful reunion with his father. Then Pharaoh gave Joseph's family the land of Goshen to settle in. This land was good for raising animals. Now Joseph had his family close so he could give them food for the remaining years of famine.

Joseph could have used his powerful position to get revenge on his brothers. He could have put them all in prison, killed them, or not sold

them grain. Instead, Joseph chose to forgive them and save his family from the famine.

Genesis 50:19–20

Slide #13

There's a verse at the end of Genesis that explains how Joseph was able to forgive his brothers. Who will read Genesis 50:19–20? Assign a reader. When Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, they meant evil against him. But how did God use their actions for good? God planned all of these events so that Joseph would become a ruler, prepare for the famine, and save many lives.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. What attribute of God means that he is in complete control of everything? Sovereign.

God is sovereign even over the evil actions of men. He can use them for something good! God's plans are perfect.

Slide #14

Let's finish our Class Notes (PDF). Who will read #8? Assign a reader. Goshen. Complete #8.

And #9? What did Joseph understand about God? Assign a reader. Good. Complete #9.

Application

Slide #15

Refer to the Lesson Theme Posters. Joseph's dreams came to pass many years later. His brothers came to Egypt to buy grain and bowed down before him. They didn't recognize Joseph as the brother they sold into slavery. Joseph spoke harshly to them and accused them of being spies. He imprisoned Simeon and told the brothers to return with Benjamin to prove they weren't lying. Jacob didn't want to send Benjamin to Egypt, but Judah took responsibility for him.

On their second trip to Egypt, the brothers were brought to Joseph's house and given a meal. When they left, Joseph had his steward plant his silver cup in Benjamin's sack of grain.

Why did Joseph do this? He wanted to see if his brothers would stand up for Benjamin and protect him, which they hadn't done for him.

Judah stepped up and took responsibility for Benjamin, even offering to take his place as a servant. When Joseph saw this, he told his brothers who he was. At first, they were afraid that Joseph would want revenge for what they'd done to him.

But Joseph forgave them because he understood that God had turned the evil they did to him to good.

What good came from Joseph being sent to Egypt? He became a powerful ruler and saved many people, including his whole family, from the famine.

Joseph got to see his father Jacob and the rest of his family when they came down to Egypt. He settled them in the land of Goshen, and they were saved from starvation.

Joseph chose to forgive his brothers when he could've gotten revenge. None of us have been sold into slavery by our own brothers, but we still get hurt by others. What are some things people have done to you that you've had to forgive? Allow discussion or share your own example.

Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets (PDF) and remind students to practice the memory verse this week.

We live in a sinful, fallen world, so people will sin against us. Others will say and do things that hurt us. But we must forgive just as Joseph did. In fact, Jesus commands us to forgive others because he has forgiven us. When we don't forgive, it can make us bitter. Does anyone know what bitterness is? Allow discussion.

Bitterness is unforgiveness, anger, and hurt. Although we may think we're punishing the person who wronged us when we don't forgive, we are actually hurting ourselves. Bitterness can ruin relationships, keep us from praying, and even make us physically sick! If there is someone you haven't forgiven, take a moment during our prayer time and ask God to help you forgive. Stop going over and over what that person did to hurt you, and give that hurt to God. He will heal that hurt and replace it with love and kindness.

Just as Joseph recognized God's hand even in the bad things that happened to him, we, too, can trust God to work all things together for good—even the bad things that happen to us. Read and discuss Romans 8:28 if there is time.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

Board Game

Teams will answer questions and make their way to the finish on the Game Board.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Game Board (provided in the Teacher Kit)
- Dice, numbered cards, or spinner
- Buttons or other small items as game pieces for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into teams.

Team members will take turns answering the review questions. If they answer correctly, they will roll the dice, spin, or draw a numbered card and move that number of spaces on the Game Board. Follow the directions on the spaces to move ahead, fall back, or switch places with another team. If someone does not know or does not answer correctly, he may ask his teammates for help. Alternate between teams as long as time permits, repeating questions if necessary. The first team to make it all the way to the Finish wins.

Box Toss

Students will answer review questions then toss the beanbag at the holes in the box to gain points for their team.

Materials

- Review Questions
- Medium-sized cardboard box
- Scissors or knife
- Four beanbags
- Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use scissors or a knife to cut two or three holes in the bottom of the box. Make sure they are large enough for a beanbag to easily pass through. Label each hole with a point number: 5, 10, and 15. Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet away from the box.

Divide the class into teams. Have the teams line up behind the line across from the box. Give each team two beanbags. Alternate asking each team a review question. Students who answer correctly will toss the beanbags at the target holes in the box to earn points for their team. If they answer incorrectly, they may toss the beanbags for fun without the points counting. Students will go to the end of the line after tossing the beanbags. Keep score for both teams. Continue play until all questions have been answered correctly and students have all had a chance to toss the beanbags.

Draw Dice

Teams will answer questions and complete a simple drawing to win. Who will finish their drawing first?

Materials

- Review Questions
- One drawing area for each team (paper, white board, etc.)
- Pencils or white board markers
- One die

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil, or divide the white board in half. Draw a mouse on the board as an example.

Ask the first team a question from the lesson. If they answer correctly, have them roll the die.

To begin drawing their mouse, each team must wait until they get a six. They will then draw the mouse's body on their paper or the board. After they have drawn the body, as they give correct answers to the questions, they can continue to draw the other parts of the mouse according to the numbers they roll.



They can draw according to the numbers below:

6 = body

5 = nose

4 = whiskers

3 = eyes

2 = ears

1 = tail

Continue giving each team a turn to answer a question and roll the die. Repeat the questions as necessary. The first team to finish their mouse wins.

You may choose to draw a simple object from the lesson, such as a crown, an open Bible, a fish, etc. Be sure to assign numbers (as above) to each part of the object to be drawn before the game begins.

Four in a Row

Students will answer questions and add a marker for their team onto the grid. Which team will be the first to get four in a row?

Materials

Review Questions
Masking tape
Red and black paper circles or other markers for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections long. Each section should be equal in size. Use eight red circles and eight black circles cut from construction paper or other markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight markers. They will take turns answering the questions. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Goofy Golf

Hit the sock with the noodle? Teams must work together to answer the questions and putt to get a hole-in-one in this crazy golf game!

Materials

Review Questions
Swimming noodles or rolled up newspapers
Rolled up socks
Masking tape
Ten sheets of paper
Markers

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use the markers to number sheets of paper 1–10 (use more or less depending on class size and time). Tape down the sheets of paper around the room in a random pattern to form a golf course. You may want to add chairs as obstacles in the path.

Divide the class into teams. Give each team a rolled up sock and a swimming noodle. Ask the first student a review question from the lesson. If he answers correctly, allow him to use the noodle to drive the rolled up sock toward the first sheet of paper labeled #1. Continue with the next team. Take turns allowing team members to answer questions and continue putting the socks along the course to each hole, continuing from where the last teammate left off. The sock must touch or roll over the sheet of paper to consider it in the hole. The first team to reach the tenth hole wins.

Oh No

Not every roll of the dice will be good for the team. Answer the question, roll the dice, and be prepared to say, "Oh no!"

Materials

Review Questions
Two dice

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into teams. Each team will take turns answering review questions. When a team answers correctly, have them roll the dice to determine their points. If a team does not answer correctly, give the answer and repeat the question later. Keep track of team scores.

Numbers aren't always a winner! If students roll:

2 or 3 that team gives 5 points away to the other team
4 or 5 that team takes 5 points from the other team
6–10 face value
11 subtract 10 points from the team score
12 double the team score

(Note: no team can have less than 0 points.)

Pick a Point

Answer the questions correctly to earn the right to pick a point.

Materials

Review Questions
Small paper strips
Cup or basket

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Write various numbers in increments of 5 or 10 on strips of paper to use as point cards. Put the point cards into the cup or basket. Divide students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a review question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a point card from the cup.

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. Keep track of each team's points. If time allows, repeat the questions!

Toss for It

How many points? Toss for it! Students answer the questions and toss the beanbag to earn points for their team.

Materials

Review Questions

A deck of numbered cards, or numbers and “wild” written on index cards

One beanbag

Masking tape

Two baskets or containers for cards

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Place several rows of numbered cards facedown with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern (make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too). Use the masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

Divide students into teams and have them line up behind the tossing line. Ask the first student a review question. If he gives the correct answer, have him toss the beanbag onto a card. Turn the card over to reveal the points he receives for his team. Face cards or word cards are 10 points each. Wild or Jokers are also 10—plus another turn. All other cards are face value.

Have the student pick up his card and put it in the team’s basket to be counted at the end of the game. Next team’s turn. If a student gives an incorrect answer, he should go to the end of the line. Give the answer and repeat that question later. Continue taking turns until all the questions have been answered. Add more cards to the grid if necessary.

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