

January 12, 2020

Morning Overview

Lesson: *Patriarchs: Joseph and His Family*

Lesson Objective:

Revenge. This may come to mind when we've been wronged and we have the thought, or even the chance, to exact our own justice to the wrongdoer. However, in our story today Joseph, one who has been completely wronged by his brothers, is confronted with this very opportunity. But rather than doing such, he shows compassion to his family. The Bible tells us that justice is for God to give out, and Joseph might have remembered the promise given, "Those who bless you, I will bless. Those who curse you, I will curse." Joseph chose to demonstrate mercy instead of revenge. Our lesson points to another Joseph, one who would not exact justice for the wrongdoers, but would bear the punishment for His brothers. Jesus shows us mercy as wrongdoers, and Jesus, just like Joseph, welcomes us with joy into His family.

This week we wrap up the life of Joseph as well as our time in the book of Genesis. Joseph and his family finally reunite, and in this sweet story we see the life of Jacob revived for a little while. This week's story sets the stage for the book of Exodus and the life of Moses which we will begin next week.

Teaching Points:

- God is faithful and never changes. God keeps His promises.
- God is sovereign (or in control).
- Man is sinful.
- God is kind and merciful.
- God is everywhere all the time.
- God is all knowing.

Scripture: Genesis 42-45:24; Genesis 45:25-47:12

Story: *Vos Child's Story Bible*, Pages 46-56; *Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 49-53, *Jesus Storybook Bible*, 76-83; *The Beginner's Gospel Story Bible*, Pages 38-43; *The Beginner's Bible*, Pages 78-91

Scripture Memory for January: Exodus 20:2 (ESV)

I am the Lord your God (*point index finger upwards toward the sky*)

who brought you out of (*reach down to ground like you are scooping or grabbing something*)

the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (*wrap hand around opposite wrist like a handcuff*)

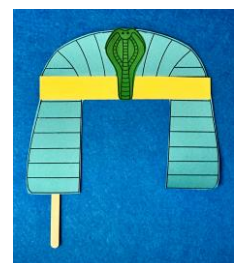
Craft: Joseph – Before and After

Supplies: 3's/4's/5's – 2 Cardstock headdress pieces (front and back), yellow strip, craft stick, tape, crayons/markers/dot markers. 4's/5's – Brown strip, snake cutout

Instructions:

- 3's
1. Use dot markers to color striped headdress.
 2. Glue yellow strip across headdress.
 4. Glue back of striped headdress to grey headdress.

- 4's/5's
1. Glue yellow strip to front of striped headdress.
 2. Glue snake on top of yellow strip.
 3. Glue brown strip to plain headdress.
 4. Attach craft stick to back of headdress.
 5. Glue backs of headdresses together.



If child has already done craft first hour, have them work on a coloring sheet

Story

Review

Last week we left off with Pharaoh having strange dreams. Dreams about cows and heads of grain. Pharaoh was worried and bothered by his dreams – he did not know what they meant! Many people tried to help Pharaoh, but only one person could tell him what the dreams meant.

Once Joseph heard Pharaoh's dreams, he quickly revealed what they meant. There will be seven years of plenty in Egypt. Plenty of food and things to eat, but after the seven years of plenty are up, there will be seven years of famine. That means there will not be a lot of food to eat. Upon hearing Joseph's explanation, Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of food and planning for all of Egypt. This was a very, very important job.

God helped Joseph to come up with a plan. The people in Egypt were to bring all their extra food to Joseph and he would store it very carefully. Then, when there were no crops growing and no more food during the years of famine, the people in Egypt could use the extra food that had been stored away.

Joseph Recognizes His Brothers

The seven years of plenty came and went. Joseph worked hard to make sure there was plenty of food put away for the seven years of famine, and now that time had come. There was no rain, and with no rain there were no crops in the field. No crops in the field meant there was no more food for the Egyptians. Egyptians would come from all over to get their food. Even people from other countries would come to buy food from Joseph in Egypt. Not only had it not rained for a while in Egypt, but it had not rained in lots of other places. So, there was no food anywhere! People from everywhere were very hungry. But they had heard about Egypt and the storehouses filled with grain, so different people made their way to Egypt to buy food to eat. One very special group of people that made their way to Egypt to buy food were Joseph's brothers from back in Canaan.

They made their way to Egypt and came before Joseph to ask to buy some food. But they did not recognize him. A lot had happened to Joseph. Unlike his brothers, Joseph looked very different than he had 20 years prior. Now he looked and acted like an Egyptian. He didn't have a beard. His face was clean-shaven. He didn't wear clothes like the farmers in Canaan. Instead he had a beautiful fine white linen robe on with a big gold necklace and on his finger was the king's signet ring. And there he sat on the throne!

Joseph looked at his brothers and thought, "I wonder if they are as mean as they used to be? I wonder if they are sorry that they treated me as poorly as they did so long ago." God had helped Joseph forgive his brothers, but he decided to find out if his brothers had changed or if they were the same mean men they were long ago.

Meeting Joseph

Joseph's brothers came before him and bowed down to honor him. They did that to show respect for Joseph's position. They didn't know they were bowing down to their brother Joseph. This was just like the dream Joseph had where the sun, moon, and stars bowed down to him.

Joseph was about to see if his brothers had changed. Joseph stood up, pointed his finger at his brothers, and shouted, "I think all of you are enemies of Egypt! I think you've come here to Egypt with a plan to hurt us!" The Bible says the brothers were so frightened. "Oh no! We are 12 brothers, shepherds, and the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father and one is no more. He did not come with us." Joseph said to them, "It's just as I thought, you are spies! If you are not spying, and you are who you say, one of you must stay here in Egypt in prison while the others go home and bring your youngest brother back to Egypt. Then I will know that you're telling the truth. Take food and go!"

The brothers were not really spying, and they did not mean any harm, but Joseph wanted to see if they had changed. He also wanted to see his younger brother, Benjamin. This caused the brothers to think. They were remembering how they had treated Joseph a long time ago, and they started talking about it to each other in their own language. The brothers did not know it, but Joseph could understand them. He spoke the same language as they did. The Bible says when he heard them talk about him, Joseph turned away so they could not see him cry.

Returning to Canaan

The nine brothers left Egypt with sacks full of food to take back home. Simeon, one of the brothers, stayed behind in prison as Joseph had said. As they traveled back, one of the brothers discovered the money they used to buy the food was in their sacks. Joseph had commanded his servants to put the money back in their sacks. But the brothers were very afraid. When the brothers made it back to Canaan and told Israel, their father, what happened, he became very sad. With Simeon in prison and now Benjamin having to go to Egypt, Israel became worried.

Israel said to his sons, "Joseph is gone. Now Simeon is gone. I will not let you take Benjamin to Egypt!" But as time passed and their food ran out, Israel knew he had no other choice but to let his sons return to Egypt. Maybe the governor, the person in charge of the food, would be kind. So once again, the brothers started off for Egypt, but this time Benjamin went with them. They filled their sacks with gifts and silver to give the governor.

A Second Meeting with Joseph

The brothers arrived in Egypt and went straight to buy more grain and food. When Joseph saw his brothers coming with Benjamin, as he had told them to do, he told a servant to take them to his house and prepare a big dinner. At first the brothers were afraid, but the servant told them not to be afraid and he gave them water to wash their dirty feet and even food for their donkeys.

When Joseph came home, the brothers bowed down again before him and gave him the gifts they had brought from Canaan. The brothers still did not know that he was Joseph. Joseph asked, "How is your father? Is he still alive?" "Yes," the brothers answered. Joseph saw his younger brother, Benjamin. "Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?" Joseph asked. When the brothers told Joseph that it was Benjamin, he hurried out of the room and went to his bedroom. There Joseph cried.

Joseph washed his face after crying and came back to the room. "Serve the food," he told the servants. The servants told each brother where to sit. But it was kind of strange; the brothers noticed that they had been placed at the table from the oldest brother to the youngest. Each of them wondered, "How did anyone know who was the oldest, and who came next?" They still did not realize that Joseph knew. But it still was not time for Joseph to tell them who he was. He still was not certain they had changed.

Joseph's Cup

After the meal, Joseph had his servants fill all their sacks with food. Then, when the brothers weren't looking, Joseph put his own silver cup inside Benjamin's bag. He closed the bag so no one would know it was there. The brothers were ready to go home. As they left, Joseph's guards stopped them and said one of them had taken Joseph's cup! The brothers were sure they were not thieves. Everyone opened their sacks and inside Benjamin's sack was Joseph's cup. Benjamin did not steal it, but it was there! All the brothers were afraid of what would happen to Benjamin and returned with him to Joseph's palace.

When they arrived, Joseph said to them, "The man who has my cup will stay here and be my slave. All the rest of you can return home." Now Joseph knew Benjamin had not taken the cup. This was a test to see if his brothers had changed. Would the brothers just leave Benjamin and go home? Or would they help him? "Please, sir," Judah, one of the brothers said, "if Benjamin does not come home with us, our father will surely die. He's very old and he loves his youngest son so much. I will stay here with you and be your slave. I will stay in the place of Benjamin, but please let him go home to our father."

“I Am Joseph”

Now Joseph knew that his brothers had changed. They had shown that they cared about their father and each other. Joseph told his servants to leave the room. Then Joseph started to cry loudly as he said, “I am Joseph! I am your brother!” The brothers were shocked, then they became afraid. “What would Joseph do with them? Would he punish them for throwing him in the pit and selling him as a slave?” they wondered. “Come, close to me. Don’t be afraid. I will not hurt you. Do not be angry with yourselves for selling me. It was really God who sent me to Egypt. Hurry home and tell my father that I am alive. Then come back with him and live in Egypt where I can care for you.” Joseph had the donkeys and carts loaded with food and gifts for his brothers to take back to Canaan.

As the sons arrived home, they announced to their father that Joseph was alive. Israel could hardly believe it. Israel, his sons, their families, and servants packed up all their things to go to Egypt. The Bible tells us there were seventy people in Israel’s family. Before they left, Israel wanted to be sure that God wanted him to go to Egypt. Israel prayed to God, and God answered his prayer: “I am God. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you.” God was going to keep His promises to Israel, as He had done with Abraham and Isaac. Once they arrived near to Egypt, Israel and his family settled in a place called Goshen. Joseph heard that his father and family were in Goshen; he went out to meet them. The Bible tells us Joseph and Israel hugged for a very long time and cried many tears of joy. Israel did not think he would see his son again, but he was very much alive. Israel and his family lived in the land of Goshen and grew very large. Israel and his family worshipped God there for a very long time.

Questions for Review with Younger Children

Have the kids answer “Yes” if it is true, or “no” with the correct answer if it is false.

- Joseph told Pharaoh what his dreams meant. (Yes)
- Pharaoh sent Joseph back to prison. (No! He put him in a very important position.)
- Joseph made sure plenty of food was stored for the 7 years of famine (Yes)
- Joseph’s sisters came to Egypt to buy food. (No! His brothers.)
- Joseph’s brothers recognized him immediately. (No! They did not recognize him.)
- Joseph accused his brothers of being spies. (Yes)
- Joseph made one of the brothers stay behind until they came back. (Yes)
- The brothers did not bring back Benjamin with them. (No! They did.)
- Joseph put a toy in Benjamin’s sack. (No! He put a silver cup.)
- Joseph never told his brothers he was Joseph. (No! He did tell them.)
- Joseph told his brothers to go get their father and families and come to Egypt. (Yes)
- Joseph’s father could not come to Egypt because his wheelchair broke. (No! He came to Egypt.)
- Joseph’s family lived in the land of Goshen. (Yes)
- God was faithful to Joseph, Israel, and their whole family. (Yes)