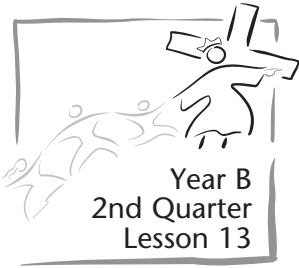


LESSON



Joseph Forgives His Brothers

GRACE God knows us and cares for us.

References

Genesis 42:1-9; 45:1-15; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 224-240.

Memory Verse

"Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Colossians 3:13, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that because God loves us, He forgives us when we do wrong.

Feel that they are forgiven.

Respond by asking God to help them forgive those who have been unkind to them.

The Message



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

Getting Ready to Teach

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Joseph is the most important ruler in the country next to the king. When a famine comes, his brothers travel to Egypt to buy food. They have to ask Joseph for food. He knows who they are, but they don't recognize him. After some time he tells them who he is, and they are afraid. But Joseph forgives them for trying to kill him so many years be-

fore. He reminds them that God's plan for his life helped save their lives during the terrible famine.

This is a lesson about grace.

Forgiveness is a gracious gift from God. He is patient with us and will forgive us when we are truly sorry for doing something wrong. He is always ready to forgive us just as Joseph forgave his

THIRTEEN

Program Outline			
LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Making A-mends</i> B. <i>Jesus Lightens Our Load</i>	small Styrofoam cups or plates, scissors, paper bags, tape paper or plastic bags, stones, picture of Jesus
* Prayer and Praise *	up to 10	See page 133. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story	suitcase, paper or cloth bags, clothes, box of food items
		Bible Study	Bible
		Memory Verse	Bible
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Forgiveness Is a Gift</i>	various pictures or objects (see activity), gift-wrapped box, <i>Little Voices Praise Him</i> songbook
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>God's Gift to You</i>	gift box pattern (see p. 149), paper, crayons (optional), pink cellophane (optional), wrapping paper (optional), ribbon or bows (optional), scissors (optional), glue sticks or tape (optional)

brothers. We can forgive others too.

Teacher Enrichment

"The life of Joseph illustrates the life of Christ" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 239).

"And Joseph's patience and meekness under injustice and oppression, his ready forgiveness and noble benevolence toward his unnatural brothers, represent the Savior's uncomplaining endurance of the malice and abuse of wicked men,

and His forgiveness, not only of His murderers, but of all who have come to Him confessing their sins and seeking pardon" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 240).

Do you forgive as freely as Joseph and Jesus did? Does your life reflect the life of Jesus?

Room Decorations

Use the outdoor scenery from Lesson 1 and continue to use the "throne room."

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

A. Making A-mends

In advance, cut the Styrofoam cups or plates into three or four pieces and put them in a paper bag. Prepare a bag for every two children. Have the children find a friend to work with and give each pair a bag. Ask them to use the tape to put the cup or plate back together again.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Was it easy or hard to mend the cup or plate? Does it look exactly like it did before it was broken? When a person does something wrong, they often feel bad inside. Mending is like saying "I'm sorry." It's a way of making broken friendships whole again.**

Remember Joseph's brothers? They had sold him as a slave many years before. In today's lesson Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to get food. We'll find out how Joseph treated them. Today's message is:

You Need:

- ☐ small Styrofoam cups or plates
- ☐ scissors
- ☐ paper bags
- ☐ cellophane tape



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

(From Linda Prenzlou and Ilene Allinger Candreva, *More Faith-Building With Preschoolers* [St. Louis, Mo: Concordia Publishing House, 1999], p. 59.)

B. Jesus Lightens Our Load

You Need:

- ☐ paper or plastic bags
- ☐ stones
- ☐ picture of Jesus

Have an adult prepare three stations with stones or other heavy items. Place a picture of Jesus at a fourth station. Give each child a bag. Say: **I'm going to tell you about some things that might make you angry. Each time, you will go to one of our helpers and they will put a stone in your sack.**

Someone hides your favorite toy.

Your little brother knocks down the tower of blocks you just finished.

Your mother scolds you for something your little sister did.

Your friend says you can't play in his yard anymore.

Someone spills milk all over the picture you just made.

Say: **If we don't forgive people who are unkind to us, it's like carrying a heavy load. Our bad feelings weigh us down and make us feel angry. One way to feel better is to tell Jesus and ask Him to help you forgive them and to forgive you for being angry. When we forgive others or ask for their forgiveness, it's like letting go of a heavy load. Come now and put your heavy bags by Jesus' picture. Give your feelings to Jesus, and He will help you be happy again.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you feel when you do something wrong? Does it make you feel bad inside? How do you feel after you ask for forgiveness? Do you feel better? When does Jesus forgive us?** (when we are really sorry and ask Him to) **Jesus forgives us because He loves us. Because of that we can forgive others, and that feels really good too. Today's message is:**



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

PRAYER AND PRAISE



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Forgiveness Is a Gift" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 75)

"I'm Forgiven" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 76)

"Jesus Smiles and Forgives" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 77)

"God Is So Good" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 88)

Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

Offering

Say: **Let's say thank You to God by giving our offering.**

Prayer

Ask God to help us forgive as Jesus forgives.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- ☐ suitcase
- ☐ clothes
- ☐ small paper bag for each child
- ☐ rice, corn, or other grains

Read or tell the story.

Ten men were preparing to go on a very long, long trip. They were all brothers. They actually had one more brother who wasn't going with them. Imagine 10 brothers: one, two, three . . . *[Ask the children to count to 10 with you. Show them the fingers on your two hands.]* And they had to go far, far away to Egypt.

What do you do when you get ready to go on a trip? *[Pack clothes, etc.]* Can you help me pack these bags? *[Have the children help you pack the suitcase with clothes. Give each child a small paper bag to carry as you walk.]*

When everything was ready, they kissed their wives goodbye, hugged their children, and said goodbye to their father. *[Have the children wave goodbye while they start walking with you.]* They got on their donkeys and started the long trip to Egypt. They weren't going on vacation. They were in a hurry to get to Egypt because they needed to buy food. Where they lived there was almost no food left. It hadn't rained in a long time, and plants couldn't grow. They needed a lot of food to feed their large families.

The 10 brothers traveled a long, long way. Let's pick up our suitcase and travel as these brothers did. *[Walk around the room or down the hallway and come back to the room. While you walk ask the children:]* Do you remember who had so many brothers? *[Joseph]* And where was Joseph? *[in Egypt]*

Finally the brothers got to Egypt. They wanted to buy food, so they hurried to the office of the government official who was in charge of the grain. That person was Joseph! His brothers hadn't

seen Joseph in many years. He had grown up. Now he dressed and talked like an Egyptian. He had an Egyptian name. And the brothers had no idea who he was. But Joseph knew who they were.

The brothers bowed down before Joseph, and when they did, Joseph remembered his dreams. Do you remember his dreams from when he was a young boy? Many years ago he had dreamed that his brothers' sheaves of grain had bowed down to his one sheaf of grain. And he had dreamed that the sun, moon, and 11 stars had bowed down to him. Do you remember that his brothers hadn't liked his dreams? But his dreams had come true! Do you know how to bow? *[Show the children how to bow.]* They were showing respect by bowing, but they didn't know it was Joseph they were bowing to.

Joseph's brothers bought the food they needed for their families. Now their bags were full of food. *[Put some grain in each child's small paper bag.]* They went home to Canaan without knowing who Joseph was.

A while later, when they had eaten all the food they had bought in Egypt, they returned to buy some more. This time all 11 of the brothers went. Again they saw Joseph, but they still didn't know he was their brother. The brothers bowed before Joseph again *[bow]*. Joseph asked them many questions. He took them to his house. The 11 brothers were a little worried. Why was an important Egyptian official treating them so nicely? And then Joseph said, "Servants! Wait outside! I want to be alone with these men."

Joseph knew it was time to tell his brothers who he was. And when all the servants went outside, Joseph said to his

brothers, "I'm Joseph. I'm your brother. Is my father still alive?"

The brothers couldn't believe it. Joseph? Now they were more than worried. They were scared. They moved back, away from Joseph. *[Have the children step backward.]* Can you guess why? Yes, they had been very mean to Joseph. They had sold him to be a slave! And now they thought Joseph would want to get even with them.

But Joseph said, "Come close to me." *[Have the children move closer to you.]* And he said again very gently, "I'm your brother Joseph, the one you sold to be a slave in Egypt. But don't worry. God was really the one who sent me here. He sent me here to save people's lives. God sent me here to save your lives, because there are still more years of hunger."

His brothers were so surprised! Joseph hugged all of his brothers, starting with his younger brother Benjamin *[hug all the children]*. Joseph was so happy he cried. His 10 brothers were very sorry for what they had done to Joseph. They were glad that Joseph had forgiven them.

Joseph told them to bring their father and their families to Egypt so they would have food for everyone. He promised them some land where they could live and work. He asked them to tell his father that he was still alive. Joseph gave them gifts to take home. *[Give the children clothes and more grain to put in their bags.]* But even though I'm sure they were happy with all these gifts, I think the thing that made them even happier was knowing that Joseph had forgiven them.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you think Joseph's brothers remembered Joseph's dreams? Do you remember the dreams? What were they? How did Joseph show that he had forgiven his brothers? Why do you think Joseph forgave**

them for the awful things they had done to him? How do you think Joseph felt when he forgave his brothers? How do you think they felt? How do you feel when you forgive or are forgiven?

Say: **Joseph forgave his brothers because he loved God and wanted to be like Him. And God always forgives us when we are sorry for doing wrong. Do you want to be like God and Joseph? Do you remember our message? Let's say it together:**



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

Bible Study

Open your Bible to Genesis 42:1-9; 45:1-15 and say: **This is where our Bible story is found in God's Word, the Bible.** Read selected verses, paraphrasing as necessary.

You Need:

☐ Bible

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did Joseph's father send his brothers to Egypt? How many went on the first trip? Why did they go back a second time? What did they think when Joseph told them who he was? What were they afraid of? What did Joseph tell them? Where did they go to live?**

Did Joseph forgive his brothers? What do you think about forgiving others? Who was Joseph like when he forgave his brothers? Who are you like when you forgive people who are unkind to you? Remember . . .



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

You Need:

- ☐ Bible

Turn to Colossians 3:13 and say: **This is where we find our memory verse in God's Word, the Bible.** Read the verse aloud.

"Forgive as the Lord forgave you."
Then teach the memory verse as follows:



Forgive

Place left fingers over right palmward and move them out as if wiping your palm.



as the Lord

Point upward.



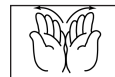
forgave

Same motion for *forgive*.



you.

Point to other person.



Colossians 3:13

Palms together, then open.

3

Applying the Lesson

Forgiveness Is a Gift

You Need:

- ☐ various pictures or objects
- ☐ gift-wrapped box
- ☐ *Little Voices Praise Him* songbook

In advance, place inside the gift-wrapped box pictures or objects representing things people should ask forgiveness for (breaking something, losing your temper, not sharing, fighting/hitting, disobeying parent, stealing, being unkind or teasing another child, being jealous, etc.).

Allow responses as you ask:

When should you ask for forgiveness? (When you do something wrong.) **What does**

it mean to forgive? (to stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for the bad things they did to you.)

Say: **Forgiveness is a gift from God. When we ask Jesus to forgive us, He's giving us a gift. When you forgive someone else, it's like giving that person a gift.**

Ask for volunteers to come and take one picture out of the gift box and tell the class what the person in the picture is doing and should ask forgiveness for.

Debriefing

Allow responses as you ask: **Aren't you glad that God forgives us? What do you want to say to God for being so good to us?** (Thank You, God is so good, I love God a lot, etc.) **And what do we need to do also?** (Forgive others.) **Is it always easy to forgive others? What if they've done something really mean to us?**

Remember Joseph? His brothers were really bad, and Joseph still forgave them. I'm sure God helped him do that. God can help you forgive others too. Let's sing a song about forgiveness being a gift from God. Sing "Forgiveness Is a Gift" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 75). Repeat it several times. **Let's say our message again:**



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

4

Sharing the Lesson

God's Gift to You

You Need:

- ☐ gift box pattern (see p. 149)
- ☐ paper
- ☐ crayons (optional)
- ☐ pink cellophane (optional)
- ☐ wrapping paper (optional)
- ☐ ribbon or bows (optional)
- ☐ scissors (optional)
- ☐ glue sticks or tape (optional)

In advance, prepare a copy of the gift box pattern (see p. 149) for each child. Then do one of two things:

1. Have the children use only pink crayons to draw (or have an adult help them write) on the gift box, in the squares, something they are sorry they have done and for which they want to be forgiven.

Then give them each four squares of pink cellophane cut to fit over the gift box squares and have them see that what they drew or wrote is no

longer visible through the cellophane. Explain that when they ask God for forgiveness, He erases and wipes away their sins just as this pink cellophane covered the sins.

2. Have the children either color their gift boxes with crayons or decorate them

by gluing on precut pieces of colorful wrapping paper and a ribbon or bow.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How do you feel when someone forgives you? How do you feel when you forgive someone else? What do you think about knowing that God forgives and forgets what we did wrong? When God forgives us, it is like a gift.**

Say: **You can take your gift box home and give it to someone you haven't been nice to and ask them to forgive you. Remember to say you were wrong and why, and then ask for forgiveness.**

Or give it to someone who has been mean to you. Ask God to help you forgive them or be nice to them. Give them the gift box picture and tell them about Joseph forgiving his brothers. Remind them that God forgives us because He loves us.

Let's say our message again:



We can forgive others because God forgives us.

Closing

During prayer ask God to help the children to remember that they can always ask Him to forgive them for anything for which they are truly sorry. And help them to always forgive others with love too.

STUDENT LESSON

Joseph Forgives His Brothers

References

Genesis 42:1-9; 45:1-15;
Patriarchs and
Prophets, pp. 224-240

Memory Verse

"Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Colossians 3:13, NIV).

The Message

We can
forgive others
because God
forgives us.

Has anyone done something really, really mean to you? Did you forgive them? Was it easy to do? Joseph's brothers had done something really, really mean to him. God helped Joseph not to be angry at his brothers. God helped Joseph to forgive them.

Joseph looked at the 11 men standing uncomfortably before him. The men were strangers to the other people in the palace. Just strangers who had journeyed to Egypt to buy food during the famine. But Joseph knew exactly who the men were. They were his brothers! The brothers he had thought he would never see again.

Joseph's mind flooded with memories. He remembered how his 10 older brothers had treated him. He remembered the horrible day they had pushed him into the big hole in the ground—and then pulled him out and sold him to be a slave in Egypt.

It was time to tell his brothers that the man they were standing in front of—the man who looked like an Egyptian prince and ruled all of Egypt, second only to the king—was really their very own brother Joseph.

"Go!" Joseph said to his servants. "Wait outside."

Soon only his brothers were left in the room with Joseph. Tears began to stream down Joseph's face. "I am Joseph!" he exclaimed. "I am your brother! Is my father still alive?" he cried.

The brothers' mouths dropped open. Could this very important ruler of Egypt really be their brother? Suddenly they

were afraid! What would Joseph do to them? They had been so mean to him! They had sold him to be a slave!

"Come closer to me," Joseph said. He knew his brothers were frightened.

"I am your brother Joseph. You sold me to be a slave in Egypt. But don't be worried," he said kindly. "God is really the one who sent me here. He sent me here to save your lives during this famine."

"Go home quickly!" he said. "Tell my father that I am ruler over all Egypt—second only to the king. Bring him here.

And your children and your grandchildren. You will live near me, and I will take care of you during the years of hunger."

Then Joseph and his brothers talked for a long, long time. Joseph told his brothers over and over that he forgave them for what they had done. And Joseph had lots of questions about his family.

Reuben sighed a big sigh. He felt good. He felt forgiven.

Reuben looked around at his other brothers. He listened as they interrupted each other to tell Joseph happy stories about their children. Reuben knew his brothers felt forgiven too. They would bring their father and their families to Egypt. And Joseph would finally see his father again.



Do and Say

Sabbath

Each day this week, read the lesson story together and review the memory verse.

Forgive Open right hand with palm facing up. Place left fingers over right hand and move outward as if wiping palm.

as the Lord Point upward.

forgave Same motion for *forgive*.

you. Point to other person.

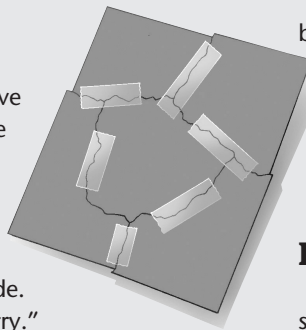
Colossians 3:13 . . . Palms together, then open.

Sunday

Have your child find a big rock and pick it up. Ask: Could you carry it all day? When we don't forgive others, it's like we are carrying a big rock. Our bad feelings weigh us down. Now put the rock down. When we forgive others, it's like letting go of a heavy load.

Monday

Tear a piece of paper into five parts. Ask your child to tape the paper back together. Ask: Does it look exactly as it did before it was torn apart? When a person does something wrong, they often feel bad inside. Mending is like saying, "I'm sorry."



Tuesday

Encourage your child to share the gift box made

in Sabbath School that represents the gift of forgiveness that God gives us. Have them tell how Joseph forgave his brothers.

Tell your child about a time that you had to ask for forgiveness.



Wednesday

Ask you child: Do you think Jesus smiles when you forgive others?

Encourage your child to ask Jesus to forgive them of any naughty thing they did today and thank Him for always forgiving them.

Thursday

Talk to your child about the bad things that Joseph's brothers did to him. While you do this, rub your hands and your child's hands on newspaper. Look at your dirty hands. Then wash each other's hands. Explain that washing your hands is like the way God forgives us and washes our sin away.

Friday

Let your child be Joseph as you act out the Bible story with your family.

Sing "God Is So Good" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 88) and make the last line say: "He forgives me too."

Help your child ask Jesus to help him or her always to be willing to forgive others as Joseph did.