

Finally Forgiven

Genesis 42-45:15; Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 224-231

Note to Parents: Be sure the children understand that forgiveness should not be forced. They should not say “I forgive you” unless they mean it. Be patient. Be available to encourage them. And help them pray for divine help.

Has anyone you love ever done something that has caused you pain, or hurt your feelings? Was it easy to forgive them? Why? Let’s find out how Joseph treated his brothers after they caused him a lot of pain.

Many people were cruel to Joseph. His brothers had sold him into slavery. Potiphar sent him to prison. But God blessed him. In fact, Pharaoh put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.

Just as Joseph had predicted, Egypt had plenty of food for seven years. Each year Joseph carefully stored the extra grain. He knew that a terrible famine was coming. When the dry years came, Joseph had plenty of grain to sell to the starving people.

One day ten men arrived from a foreign land to buy food. They bowed before Joseph, and as they stood up, he recognized his ten older brothers! He had not seen them since they had sold him into slavery many years before.

Joseph wanted to be sure they were different now. So he decided to test them. “You’re all spies,” he said. “You have come to see how strong we are!”

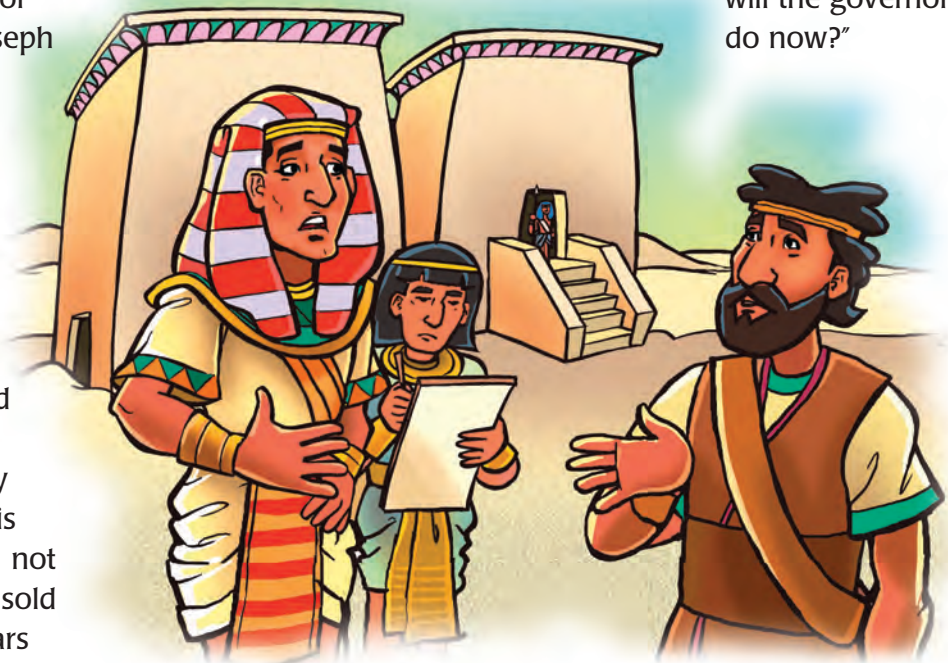
“Oh, no, sir, we are not,” his brothers replied. “We have come to buy food for our families. We are all the sons of one man. There were 12 of us. One is still at home and one is dead.”

But Joseph wasn’t dead.

“Bring your other brother back to me, or I will know you are spies!” Joseph commanded. “Your brother, Simeon, will stay here in prison while you are gone.”

The worried brothers began their journey home. On the way one of them opened his sack and found money. “What is this?” he called to the others. “The money I paid for this grain is

in my sack! What will the governor do now?”



The Message

God helps me to forgive those in my family who hurt me.

Memory Verse

“‘Forgive, and you will be forgiven’ ”

(Luke 6:37, NIV).



When the brothers reached home, they told their father what had happened. “We must take Benjamin back with us,” they pleaded. “It is the only way to prove that we are not spies. And we need to get Simeon back from Egypt.”

“No! Never!” their father responded. “Joseph is lost to me. I cannot lose another son!”

A few months later, the brothers went to their father again. “Our children will starve!” they pleaded. “We have no more food. We must go back to Egypt!”

Their father didn’t want to let Benjamin go. But he knew they needed food, and they needed it soon. He finally agreed, and the brothers went back to Egypt.

When Joseph saw his brother, Benjamin, he rushed to his private room to cry. But Joseph had one more test for his brothers. Were they still jealous? Would they be eager to get rid of

Benjamin? “Fill their sacks,” he told his steward. “And put my silver cup in Benjamin’s sack.”

Soon, the brothers were ready to go home. Joseph’s steward did as Joseph said, and the brothers started on their way.

A few miles from the palace, Joseph’s steward stopped the caravan. He searched the men’s sacks and found Joseph’s cup. “Benjamin must return with me to the governor,” he declared.

The brothers were worried. *How can this be happening? they wondered. What will the governor do? We can’t leave Benjamin here! What will we tell our father?*

“Your brother must stay here,” Joseph declared. “He will become my slave.”

Joseph’s brother, Judah, begged that Benjamin be released. “I cannot go back to my father without Benjamin,” he said. “Please, let me stay in his place.”

Joseph could hide no more. He broke into tears and told his brothers who he really was. He told them about Potiphar’s house and the years in prison. He described Pharaoh’s dreams. And told how he had come to be the second most powerful man in Egypt. “It was not you who sent me here,” he said, forgiving his brothers. “It was God.”

God was with Joseph. God truly wants to be with us too. Just ask Him.

S A B B A T H

DO Take a walk with your family. Look for plants that are dry and dead. Why do plants die? Lack of rain causes famines. Ask an adult for an empty can or jar. Put it in the ground so the top of the can and the ground is level. Next time it rains, measure how much rain fell. Thank God for rain.

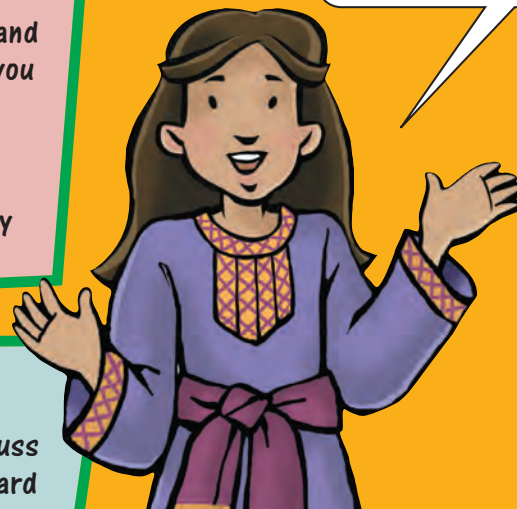
READ Read your Bible story together. Then read Luke 6:37.

S U N D A Y

READ Read and discuss Genesis 42:1-20 during family worship. Draw a picture of Joseph's ten brothers bowing before him in Egypt. Put it in your *Story of Joseph* book.

DO Make construction paper shapes. Write one memory verse word on each. Tape each shape to a different length of yarn or string. Then tape the yarn or string to a coat hanger. Hang the mobile in your room and say your memory verse. Thank God for forgiveness.

Joseph never said one word to scold his brothers for the way they had treated him.



M O N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss Genesis 43:1-17, 26-34. Why was Joseph kind and forgiving to his brothers? Make a list of things you can do when others are unkind to you. Practice them today.

DO Look at your mobile and say your memory verse. Do you need to forgive someone?

T U E S D A Y

READ During family worship, read and discuss Genesis 44:1-13. Draw a picture of Joseph's steward finding Joseph's silver cup. Add it to your *Story of Joseph* book. Why was the cup in Benjamin's sack?

DO If you did not make a "silver cup" in Sabbath School, cover a paper cup with aluminum foil. "Engrave" the word *forgiveness* on it by writing on the foil with a pencil. Think of someone you should forgive. Engrave that person's name on the other side. Ask God to help you give the cup to that person and pray for them.

W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE With your family, read Genesis 44:14-34. Why was Joseph sure that his brothers had changed?

DO Read Luke 23:33, 34. Who else forgave people who were very cruel to Him? Can you do that?

DO Make up a tune for your memory verse and sing it. Ask God to help you to be forgiving.

THURSDAY

READ For worship, read and discuss Genesis 45:1-15.

DO On a piece of paper write a hurt someone has done to you. Ask an adult to help you burn the paper, then blow the ashes away. How is this like God's forgiveness?

DO Say your memory verse together. Why do you think that God wants you to know this verse?

FRIDAY

TELL At worship time, use your *Story of Joseph* book to tell your lesson story. Then read Colossians 3:13 together. Ask each family member to think of something for which they need forgiveness. Then think of someone they will forgive. Say the memory verse together.

SING Sing "The Family of God" before prayer (*Sing for Joy*, No. 139).

Finally
Forgiven

PUZZLE

Directions: To discover an important message, cross out every other letter beginning with the second letter of each word.

