

Israelites Settle in Goshen

(Genesis 46-50)

Introduction

We have been learning some wonderful lessons from the life of Joseph. The past few weeks we have been learning the importance of forgiveness. We have learned that even when people treat us badly, God wants us to forgive them, just as God forgives us of our sins.

Today we are going to learn that not only do we need to forgive others when they sin against us, but when we sin against someone, we need to ask for forgiveness. First, we need to ask God to forgive us; then, we need to ask that other person to forgive us. It's not enough to do just one or the other; we must seek the forgiveness of both.

The Bible tells us that when we come to God and confess our sins, He is faithful to forgive us and to cleanse us of our sin (1 John 1:9). The Bible also tells us that when God forgives us, He will never think of that sin again. [Teacher, review the Memory Verse for today.] When you truly know and believe that, you can receive God's forgiveness.

In the same way, when you ask a person you have sinned against to forgive you (and they truly do), we need to receive their forgiveness and move on in our relationship with that person.

Sometimes, when we know we have done something really wrong, it is hard for us to forget. Sometimes I'm so ashamed of myself, that I have a hard time even facing a person I have sinned against. But if they have truly forgiven you, then they will also forget about that past sin. The Bible tells us that love keeps no record of being wronged (1 Cor 13:5b). So, we need to humble ourselves and receive their forgiveness.

[Teacher, be careful not to teach the children that they need to forgive themselves. Only God can forgive sin. Rather, we need to teach the importance of appropriating God's forgiveness. If we truly believe that God does forgive sin and will never hold it against us again, then we can know our relationship with Him is restored. That gives us peace.]

Today we are going to finish the story of Joseph and learn that not only did Joseph forgive his brothers, but his brothers finally received his forgiveness and they lived the rest of their lives together in the land of Goshen in peace.

Opening Prayer

Father, we are so grateful to You that when You forgive us our sins, You forget about them as far as the east is from the west. Today, help us to learn how important it is for us to receive forgiveness both from You and from others so that we can live in peace with everyone. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

"And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins." (Jeremiah 31:34)

Lesson

We've been learning about the children of Israel.

- Why was Joseph in Egypt? (His brothers sold him into slavery.)
- Why did Jacob send his sons to Egypt? (To buy grain.)

Last week we left the story off with Joseph bringing his father and brothers and all their children and animals from Canaan to Egypt.

Genesis 45:17-18

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'This is what you must do: Load your pack animals, and hurry back to the land of Canaan. ¹⁸Then get your father and all of your families, and return here to me. I will give you the very best land in Egypt, and you will eat from the best that the land produces.'"

So, Jacob set out for Egypt with all his possession. The first night, God spoke to Jacob in a vision.

Genesis 46:2-4

*During the night God spoke to him in a vision. “Jacob! Jacob!” he called. “Here I am,” Jacob replied. ³“I am God, the God of your father,” the voice said. “Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for **there I will make your family into a great nation.** ⁴I will go with you down to Egypt, and **I will bring you back again.** You will die in Egypt, but Joseph will be with you to close your eyes.”*

Notice that God promised to make his family into a great nation and to bring him back again to the Promised Land; Jacob knew this move to Egypt was only temporary. God had promised to give the land that we know of today as *Israel* to the descendants of Abraham. And God passed that promise down to Isaac and to Jacob.

So, Jacob and his sons, the children of Israel, packed up everything and moved their families to Egypt.

Genesis 46:6

They also took all their livestock and all the personal belongings they had acquired in the land of Canaan. So Jacob and his entire family went to Egypt—

Joseph could hardly wait to see his father after all these years!

Genesis 46:29

Joseph prepared his chariot and traveled to Goshen to meet his father, Jacob. When Joseph arrived, he embraced his father and wept, holding him for a long time.

What happiness there was when Joseph was finally reunited with his father and all his brothers in the land of Egypt.

17 years later, it was time for Jacob to die and he had a special last request.

Genesis 47:30-31

When I die, please take my body out of Egypt and bury me with my ancestors.” So, Joseph promised, “I will do as you ask.” ³¹“Swear that

you will do it,” Jacob insisted. So, Joseph gave his oath, and Jacob bowed humbly at the head of his bed.

Jacob was asking Joseph not to leave his bones in Egypt; he wanted them to be taken back to the Promised Land to be buried in the family burial place.

Genesis 49:31-33

There Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried. There Isaac and his wife, Rebekah, are buried. And there I buried Leah. ³²It is the plot of land and the cave that my grandfather Abraham bought from the Hittites.” ³³When Jacob had finished this charge to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and joined his ancestors in death.

After Jacob’s death, Joseph took his body back to the land of Canaan and buried him in the family tomb.

Genesis 50:14

After burying Jacob, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to his father’s burial.

When they returned to Egypt, Joseph’s brothers started to worry that Joseph would now finally take his revenge against them for all the mean things they had done to him.

Genesis 50:15-18

But now that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became fearful. “Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him,” they said. ¹⁶So they sent this message to Joseph: “Before your father died, he instructed us ¹⁷to say to you: ‘Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you—for their sin in treating you so cruelly.’ So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin.” When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept. ¹⁸Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. “Look, we are your slaves!” they said.

The brothers were still feeling guilty of their sins against their younger brother. But Joseph did not hold a grudge against his older brothers. He could clearly see God’s hand in sending him ahead to Egypt.

Genesis 50:19-21

But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? ²⁰You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. ²¹No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

Finally, the brothers received Joseph's forgiveness. Now they truly knew that Joseph did not hold a grudge against them. They all lived in peace together for the rest of their lives.

Genesis 50:22

So Joseph and his brothers and their families continued to live in Egypt. Joseph lived to the age of 110.

The children of Israel stayed in the land of Egypt for more than 400 years. But Joseph knew that someday God would take them back to the land He promised Abraham, Isaac, and his father, Jacob.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You for all the wonderful life lessons we have learned from the life of Joseph. Joseph had made his mind up as a young boy to live his life in a way that pleases You. He was kind, thoughtful and helpful. Joseph was also long-suffering. He didn't hold a grudge against the people who did wrong things to him. He never tried to return hurt for hurt. Nor did he ever complain because he trusted that You had a plan and a purpose for his life. Joseph truly believed that You can make all things work together for good. That's why Joseph found it easy to forgive his brothers! Give us a desire to be more like Joseph. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES**CRAFT CORNER****GAME CENTER*****Name that Word***

Make game cards with "Secret Words" from your lesson. Divide the class into two teams. Each team is given 100 points to start with. First team up chooses a representative who is given a Secret Word. That student must try to get someone on his team to guess what the word is without saying the word. (For example, *camel*/ It has humps. It doesn't need much water. It is hairy.) Subtract from each team's score, the number of clues it took to guess the Secret Word.

Secret Words:

Jacob	Camel	Coat of Many Colors
Famine	Slavery	Jail
Pharaoh	Shepherd	Father

Review Questions:

Or, use the following review questions in another game of your choice:

1. Which son did Jacob love the most? (Joseph.)
2. What did Jacob do for Joseph that made his brothers especially jealous of him? (Made him a coat of many colors.)
3. What did Joseph's big brothers want to do to Joseph? (They plotted to kill him but then decided to throw him into a dry well. Finally, they sold him to some Midianite traders who were heading for Egypt.)

4. Name some things that happened to Joseph while he was living in Egypt. (The Midianite traders sold Joseph to Potiphar; Potiphar made him the manager of his whole estate; Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of a terrible sin and he was sent to prison; the prison warden made Joseph the manager of the whole prison; he interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, warning him that after 7 years of plenty there would be 7 years of famine; Pharaoh made Joseph manager over the whole country of Egypt.)
5. What is a famine? (When no crops will grow.)
6. Why did Jacob send his sons to Egypt? (He'd heard that there was food down there.)
7. Who did they meet when they got to Egypt? (Joseph!)
8. Why were they surprised to meet up with Joseph? (His brothers had led Jacob to believe his favorite son had been killed by wild animals.)
9. Why did Joseph tell his brothers not to be upset or angry for selling him into slavery? (Because he could clearly see God's hand in sending him ahead to Egypt.)
10. Why did Jacob know that the family's move to Egypt was only temporary? (Because he believed God's promise to Abraham to give the land of Israel to his descendants.)
11. Why can we trust God even when bad things happen to us? (God can make all things work together for good. He has a plan and a purpose for each of our lives.)
12. Where did Jacob and his family live in Egypt? (Goshen)
13. Why did God place Joseph in a powerful position in Egypt? (So, he could sustain Jacob's family through the long famine.)
14. How should we handle the pain when someone hurts us? (Take it to God. Don't dwell on it.)
15. Why do we sometimes suffer or endure pain in life? (So, God can use us.)

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