

## Joseph Makes Himself Known

### Genesis 45

4



**Aim** What did Joseph show by his kindness to his brothers?



**Truth** Joseph showed that he had forgiven his brothers.

*Application:* God wants us to forgive others when they sin against us.

*Response:* We willingly forgive others when they sin against us.

*Lesson Summary:* After Judah volunteered to be a slave in Benjamin's place, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers. He told them that God had wanted him in Egypt to save them from starvation and asked them to bring their families there. He then hugged and kissed his brothers and gave them assurances of his forgiveness.



**Ephesians 4:32**  
**\* The Fifth Commandment**  
 (with explanation)  
**\* The Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer**  
**Hymn 490:3**



**famine**—a time when there is a great shortage of food

**possessions**—things a person owns



See Franzmann, *Bible History Commentary: Old Testament*, pages 200–203; The People's Bible: Jeske, *Genesis*, pages 364–370.



Dear Lord, thank you for all the love and forgiveness you've shown me. Teach me to show Christian love and forgiveness to all my students, even when I feel tired, frustrated, or impatient. Let such love and forgiveness also overflow to the children's homes and lives. Amen.

### Looking Back at Lesson 3

#### The Second Journey of Joseph's Brothers

Genesis 43,44

*Aim:* How did Joseph's brothers show that they had changed?

*Truth:* Joseph's brothers showed love for their father and for Benjamin.

*Application:* God wants us also to show love for others.

*Response:* We show love for others out of love for God.

*Lesson Summary:* When Jacob instructed his sons to return to Egypt, Judah reminded his father that Benjamin must come along and personally guaranteed Benjamin's safety. In Egypt, Joseph continued to test his brothers, who showed love, rather than jealousy, toward Benjamin.

*Memory Treasures:* 1 John 4:8; \*The Fifth Commandment (with explanation)

## Alternate Lesson Plan



*Sing:* Sing “Love in Christ Is Strong and Living” (hymn 490), which describes Christian love as forgiving.

*Pray:* Dear forgiving Lord, you showed your love by suffering and dying on the cross for our forgiveness. Fill us with your love, and help us show love to others. Amen.



Ask the children what happened in Lesson 3. *[Joseph’s brothers went back to Egypt to buy more food, and this time they took Benjamin along. Joseph once again tested his brothers, this time by putting his silver cup into Benjamin’s sack and then accusing him of stealing it. Joseph told his brothers that Benjamin would be his slave and the rest could go home. But instead of leaving Benjamin behind, Judah offered to stay as a slave in Benjamin’s place.]*

Point out that Judah showed kindness to his brother. Ask the children to name ways they could show kindness to their brothers and sisters. *[By saying nice things to them, playing with them, helping them with chores, etc.]*



Today you will hear how Joseph showed kindness to his brothers. Listen carefully to learn **what Joseph showed by his kindness to his brothers.**



## WORSHIP

*Sing:* Ask the children to open their hymnals to the song “O Lord, Our Lord” (pages 28,29) and find the words that talk about God forgiving our sins. (“You take away our sin . . . you make us pure and holy in your sight. You did not spare your only Son, but gave him up for us all . . . you washed us from our sins in your own blood.”) Then sing the song to praise God for the gift of forgiveness.

*Pray:* Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son to take away our sins. Jesus, thank you for washing our sins away with your own blood. Holy Spirit, thank you for the gift of faith in Jesus as our Savior. Amen.



Tell the children to imagine that each class in their school is working on a huge poster to cheer on the basketball team. The school is offering a prize to the class with the best poster, and your class’ poster is so good that it looks like you will win. But during recess some kids from another class use markers to scribble all over your poster and ruin it. Ask what the children’s sinful natures would make them want to do. *[Get even, ruin the other class’ poster, etc.]*

Write “revenge” on the board, and ask if anyone knows what it means. Underline the word *even* within the word *revenge* to show that getting revenge means “getting even” with someone for something bad that person did to you. Remind the children that Joseph’s older brothers had sold him as a slave. Ask what Joseph, as a powerful ruler, might have been tempted to do to get revenge on them. *[Refuse to give them food, put them into prison, make them slaves, etc.]*



## Aim

Today we’ll learn that instead of getting revenge, Joseph showed kindness to his brothers. Listen carefully to learn **what Joseph showed by his kindness to his brothers.**



**Note:** Remember there are **To Do at Home** activity options in a separate file on the Teacher’s Guide CD.



Tell the children that as you tell the story, they should raise their hands whenever they hear an example of Joseph's being kind to his brothers. (Examples of Joseph's kindness to his brothers are in italics.)

**Joseph's brothers** had come to **Egypt** for a **second time**. As Judah and the rest of his brothers **stood before him**, **Joseph could see** that they had **changed greatly**. Twenty years ago **Judah had convinced** the others to **sell Joseph as a slave** to the traveling merchants. **Now** he had **offered to become a slave** for the rest of his life in order **to save Benjamin**.

**Joseph** couldn't hold back his feelings any longer. He **had to tell** his brothers **who he was**. "Have **everyone else leave** the room!" he cried out. His Egyptian **servants** quickly **left**. Once **Joseph** was **alone with his brothers**, **tears of joy** ran down his cheeks. "**I am Joseph!**" he told them. "Is my **father still living?**"

But his **brothers** were so **terrified** that they couldn't answer him. "**What will he do to us?**" they thought.

**Joseph saw** how they **felt**. "Brothers," he said, "**come close** to me." Then he went on, "Yes, **I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold** into Egypt! *Now don't be afraid. And don't be angry with yourselves.* You see, **God sent me** here to Egypt **for a reason**. He **made me** a powerful **ruler**. He **wanted me** here **to save your lives** during this great famine. This was all **part of his plan**."

"Now **hurry back to my father. Tell him** how **God has made me a ruler** with great power in Egypt. Then **bring him and your families** to Egypt. *I will give you one of the best parts of the country to live in—the land of Goshen. I will make sure you have everything you need,* for there are **still five years of famine** coming. Now hurry and bring my father to me."

*Then Joseph threw his arms around Benjamin and kissed him. He did the same with all his brothers.* After that, the **brothers** were **no longer afraid**, and Joseph and his brothers **talked** with one another for a long time.

**Pharaoh heard** the good news about Joseph's brothers. He was **happy for Joseph** and told him, "**Tell your brothers** that I want them **to live in Egypt** and that **we'll share** with them the very **best things** we have."

So *Joseph gave his brothers carts and wagons* they could **use to move** their families and all their possessions from Canaan to Egypt. *He also gave them expensive presents* and sent along some **gifts for his father** as well. **As they left** for Canaan, Joseph **told** his brothers, "**Don't argue** on the way!"

**Note: You'll need to use the story in the adjacent column.**



Sketch stick figures of Joseph and his 11 brothers on the board. Then have

children modify the drawing while you tell the story, as follows:

When you tell about . . .

. . . Joseph's tears of joy, add tears to Joseph's face.

. . . the brothers being terrified, draw frightened faces on them.

. . . Joseph reassuring his brothers, draw a happy face on Joseph.

. . . the brothers no longer feeling afraid, make their faces happy.

. . . the carts and gifts Joseph gave his brothers, draw those.

. . . the brothers giving Jacob the news, draw Jacob, first looking sad, then happy.



Have groups of children stand and read together today's lesson from Genesis 45

as follows: Children who . . .

. . . have a family member named Joe or Joseph, read verses 1-3.

. . . have brothers, read verses 4-7.

... have moved to a different home, read verses 8-11.

... know someone named Ben or Benjamin, read verses 12-15.

... have pets, read verses 16-20.

... have ever been told “Don’t argue” or “Don’t fight” read verses 21-24.

... have their sins forgiven by God (all children), read verses 25-28.



Prepare a large poster board heart by writing “FORGIVENESS” in

large letters across the middle of it. Then cut the heart into four pieces like a puzzle. (See diagram.) On each piece, print one of the following:

- “I am Joseph! Don’t be afraid!”
- “Bring your families to Egypt.”
- hugs, kisses
- presents



Attach a magnetic strip to the back of each piece.

**Jacob was shocked** when his sons returned and told him, “**Joseph is alive!** He is the **ruler** of all Egypt!” **At first** he **refused to believe** it. But **when** his **sons told him everything** that Joseph had said and **showed him** all the **wagons** Joseph had sent to bring them back to Egypt, **Jacob knew** that what they said was **true**. “I’m convinced!” Jacob said. “My son **Joseph** is still **alive! I will go and see him** before I die.”



## discuss

You will need three “IOUs,” each saying one of the following sentences:

- I owe you \$10.
- God, I owe you payment for one trillion sins.
- I owe you for one sin.

**Ask** How did the brothers show that they had changed? [*They did not show jealousy toward Benjamin, they were all willing to be slaves, and Judah offered to be a slave in Benjamin’s place.*]

**Say** When Joseph told his brothers, “I am Joseph,” they were terrified.

**Ask** Why were they terrified? [*They didn’t expect Joseph to be alive, and now they were afraid that he’d use his power to get even with them.*]

**Say** Joseph told his brothers not to be afraid or angry with themselves, because God had sent him to Egypt in order to save them. Joseph knew that God had made his brothers’ sinful actions work for good.

**Ask** How did Joseph now feel about his brothers and their sin against him? [*He didn’t want to get even with his brothers; instead, he forgave them.*]

**Say** Joseph spoke forgivingly to his brothers. God wanted Joseph to assure his brothers that their sins were forgiven.

**Ask** What does God want us also to know? [*God wants us to know that he has forgiven our sins for Jesus’ sake—because Jesus lived a sinless life and then suffered and died for us.*]

**Say** An IOU is a piece of paper that shows a debt—what you owe to someone. For example, if you borrowed \$10 from me, you could write “IOU \$10.”

**Do** Display the first IOU.

**Say** But if I would rip up that piece of paper and throw it away, then you wouldn’t owe me anything.

**Do** Rip up the IOU.

**Say** Now imagine what an IOU for our sins against God might look like. Of course, we do so many sins that we could never count them all. And there's no way we can even begin to pay God for our sins! But we can imagine what a huge debt we would owe to God for our sins.

**Do** Display the second IOU.

**Ask** But what does God do with all these sins? [*God forgives those many sins and forgets about them.*]

**Do** Give a child the second IOU, and ask him to show what God does with our debt of sin. The child should rip up the IOU.

**Say** Joseph instructed his brothers to bring their father and families to Egypt so that Joseph could give them the best part of the country, the land of Goshen, to live in and give them everything they would need.

**Ask** What does this show about Joseph's feelings toward his family? [*He loved them and wanted to take care of them.*]

Why was it especially important that Jacob's family be kept from starving to death? [*The Savior would come from Jacob's family.*]

**Say** Joseph then hugged and kissed Benjamin and all his brothers.

**Ask** What could the brothers tell by Joseph's actions? [*He had forgiven them.*]

**Say** Joseph's brothers had sinned against him, yet he loved and forgave them. Now imagine that someone sins against you. This is what that IOU might look like.

**Do** Display the third IOU.

**Say** Since God has forgiven your huge debt of sin, show me what he wants you to do with the sins that others commit against you.

**Do** Hand the third IOU to a volunteer, who should rip it up.

**Say** Yes, God wants us to put those sins out of our minds and act as if they never happened. Sometimes that's not easy to do.

**Ask** Where can we find the strength to forgive others, even when it's hard? [*We can ask God for help. He will give us the strength to forgive others.*]

**Ask** What else did Joseph give his brothers? [*Carts, wagons, and expensive presents.*]

What did this kindness also show? [*Joseph loved his brothers and had forgiven them.*]

**Ask** What are some ways that Joseph showed kindness to his brothers in today's lesson? [*He told them not to be afraid, invited them to bring their families to Egypt, gave them hugs and kisses, and gave them presents.*]

**Do** As the children give each answer, display its corresponding puzzle piece, attaching the pieces to a magnetic board to form a heart shape. Then point out that the puzzle spells a word.

**Ask** What was Joseph's heart full of? [*Forgiveness for his brothers.*] When someone trips you on your way to the water fountain or tells lies about you, what does your sinful nature want you to do? [*Get even with that person or do something worse to him or her.*]

**Say** The Bible shows us what God wants us to do.

**Do** Have the children read the Ephesians 4:32 memory treasure together.

**Ask** What does God want us to do when others sin against us? [*Be kind to them and forgive them.*]

**Say** This is not always easy to do.

**Ask** But what reminder does God give us? [*He has forgiven us.*]

**Do** Ask for as many volunteers as can stand at the board at one time. Give each child a marker or chalk, and show them how to make tally marks. Then tell the children that when you say go, they should make tally marks to show how many times they think they have sinned against God. Say go, and allow about two minutes for the children to make as many tallies as they can. Then have them return to their seats.

**Say** We can't draw enough tally marks to show all the sins we've committed in our lives—there are too many! Yet God has forgiven our many sins because Jesus suffered and died for us.

**Do** Ask a child to erase all the tally marks on the board.

**Ask** When we remember that God, for Jesus' sake, has forgiven us more sins than we can even count, what do we want to do when someone sins against us? *[Forgive that person.]*

**Say** God wants us to thank him for his gift of forgiveness by forgiving others.



**Write the following words on the board:**  
"forgave, hugged, Goshen, carts, gifts."

**Say** Please use the words on the board in sentences to tell me some ways Joseph showed kindness to his brothers. *[Joseph forgave his brothers. Joseph hugged and kissed them. Joseph*

**Say** As his brothers left for home, Joseph told them not to argue on the way.

**Ask** What might the brothers have been tempted to argue about? *[Who was to blame for selling Joseph into slavery.]*

**Do** Ask the children to react to this situation: Jess was sorry for stealing from his friend Tyrone. After Jess apologized, Tyrone said, "I'll forgive him, but I can never be friends with him again." Lead the children to understand that true Christian love forgives completely. Think of how God forgives us day after day! He washes our sins away and looks at us as if we haven't sinned at all. Now he wants us to forgive a person who sins against us so completely that we put the sin out of our minds and truly think of that person as a friend again.

**CLOSE** Write the following on the board:

**Revenge**  **Forgiveness**

**Say** When someone sins against us, there are two opposite ways in which we can respond. We can get revenge on that person, or we can offer that person forgiveness.

**Do** Ask the children to point to the word that shows the choice the devil wants us to make. *[Revenge.]* Then ask them to point to the word that shows the choice God wants us to make. *[Forgiveness.]*

**Ask** What did Joseph show by his kindness to his brothers? *[Joseph showed that he had forgiven his brothers.]*

What does God want us to do when others sin against us? *[God wants us to forgive others when they sin against us.]*

**Say** Let's willingly forgive others when they sin against us.

**Do** *Pray:* Dear heavenly Father, thank you for the forgiveness that you have given us through our Savior. Fill our hearts with love so that we forgive all those who sin against us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.



## Ephesians 4:32

### \*The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

We keep this commandment when we show love and forgiveness to others.

### \*The Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

In this portion of the Lord's Prayer, we pray that God would forgive our sins as we forgive others.

### Hymn 490:3\*

Love in Christ abides forever,  
Fainting not when ills attend;  
Love, forgiving and forgiven,  
Shall endure until life's end.

told them that they could live in Goshen. Joseph gave them carts, wagons, and gifts.]

**Ask** What did Joseph show by his kindness to his brothers? [Joseph showed that he had forgiven his brothers.] What does God want us to do when others sin against us? [God wants us to forgive others when they sin against us.]

**Say** Let's willingly forgive others when they sin against us.

**Do** Close by singing "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive" (hymn 493:1,3). Point out that this hymn is based on the Fifth Petition memory treasure.

## OPTIONAL

## mid- week Lesson

- Begin by singing "Chief of Sinners Though I Be" (hymn 385). This hymn reminds us that God forgives our sins.
- Tell the children that you would like each of them to think of someone who has done something unkind to them. After giving them a moment to do so, ask the children to take the next minute or two to pray silently for help to forgive and show kindness to that person.
- Use **Activity 1** under **Lesson Activities** to review the story.
- Use **Activity 2** to have the children role-play forgiving others.

## Lesson Activities

### 1. Review

#### Write in Code

*Purpose:* To review the lesson while writing and reading coded messages.

*Procedure:* Give the children duplicates of **Copy Master 1**, and have them write messages in code. For their messages, encourage them to use statements about what happened in the lesson or about the lesson's application. (Examples: Joseph told his brothers who he was. Joseph forgave his brothers. God wants us to forgive.) Let them exchange messages with a friend and decode one another's sentences, then share their messages with the class. Also encourage them to make coded messages to take home for family members to solve.

### 2. Application

#### Words of Forgiveness


*Purpose:* To help the children become more comfortable speaking words of forgiveness to others.

*Procedure:* Model for the children one person forgiving another. Have a volunteer come up to you and apologize for a pretend sin. She might say something like "Mrs. Barnett, I'm sorry I cheated on my spelling test." Then you can answer, "I forgive you, Janice." Then have the children work in pairs. One child should apologize for a pretend sin, while the other assures the offender of forgiveness. Have the children switch roles and repeat the activity. Remind them to speak such words of forgiveness whenever they are offered real-life apologies from others.

### 3. Music

#### "My Sins Have Been 4-given"

*Purpose:* To keep a steady beat while singing a song about forgiveness.

*Procedure:* Teach the children to sing "My Sins Have Been 4-given"  (**Copy Master 2**). Once they can sing the song well, divide the class into three groups, and teach them to beat the rhythm as follows:

Group 1: Pat desks or hand drums on the first beat of each measure.

Group 2: Clap hands or tap rhythm sticks on each beat (two beats per measure).

Group 3: Pat knees or shake maracas on each half-beat (four half-beats per measure).

Once each group can keep the beat on its own, try singing the song with the CD. Have Group 1 play along with the first stanza. Add Group 2 for the second stanza, and add Group 3 for the third stanza, until all three groups can keep their rhythms going at the same time.

### 4. Art

#### Joseph Mural

*Purpose:* To review the story of Joseph by creating a mural.

*Procedure:* Divide the class into about five groups. Give each group a sheet of poster board on which you have written, near the top, a sentence about Joseph's life, such as the following:

- Joseph's brothers hated him and sold him.
- Joseph worked as a slave and was put into prison.
- Joseph helped Pharaoh and became ruler of Egypt.
- Joseph's brothers came to him to buy grain.
- Joseph forgave his brothers.

Ask each group to read their sentence and draw a picture to illustrate that part of Joseph's life. Then hang the completed pictures together in order in a hallway to create a large mural of Joseph's life.



## 5. Review and Apply

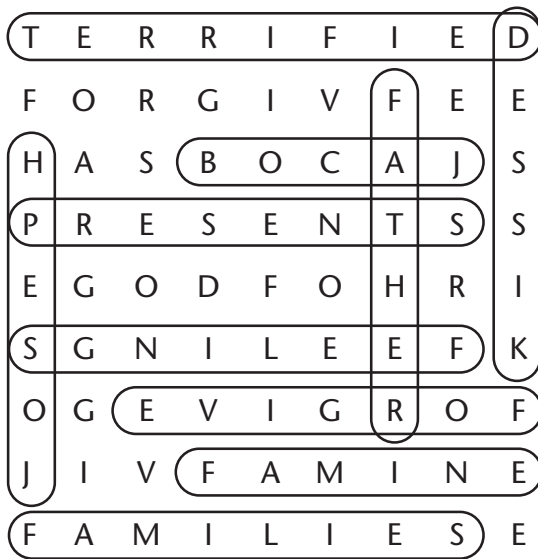
### Joseph Forgives

*Purpose:* To complete a paragraph summarizing the lesson and to reinforce the lesson application.

*Procedure:* Have each child complete **Copy Master 3**. The answers are as follows:

1. feelings, 2. father, 3. terrified, 4. famine,
5. families, 6. kissed, 7. presents, 8. Joseph,
9. Jacob, 10. forgive

Word search solution:



Hidden message: FORGIVE AS GOD FORGIVES. (The final letter is provided on the copy master.)

## Who, What, and Why? (Challenge)

*Purpose:* To review the lesson and have the children find Bible passages that teach about forgiveness.

*Procedure:* Have each child complete **Copy Master 4**. The answers are as follows:

Part One: (Wording will vary.) 1. his brothers, selling him as a slave; 2. me/us, all our sins, Jesus died for us; 3. Answers will vary.

Part Two: The following references should be colored: Psalm 79:9; Matthew 6:14; Luke 11:4; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13.

## 6. Other Ideas

### Plan a Devotion

*Purpose:* To have each child plan a family devotion.

*Procedure:* Give each child a duplicate of **Copy Master 5**. Encourage everyone to use one of today's memory treasures to write a devotion about forgiveness. (The copy master can be used in the future for other topics.) Ask the children to take their devotions home and use them with their families.

### Bible Study

**Copy Masters 6.1-6.4** contain an age-appropriate, theme-related Bible study. The Bible studies are from the original Christ-Light (© 1998) and use the 1984 edition of the New International Version Bible translation.