

LESSON 26

# Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

GENESIS 45:1 – 46:4



BIBLE TRUTH

BEHIND THE PLANS OF MEN STANDS THE PLAN OF GOD

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. **OPENING REVIEW** . . . . . **5 MIN**  
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. **BIBLE STORY** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Read Genesis 45:1—46:4 from the Scriptures or read story 26, “Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** . . . . . **15 MIN**  
*Repeat for Emphasis*
- 4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** . . . . . **10 MIN**
- 5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
*The Provision of Bread*  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ freshly baked cinnamon bread
  - ✓ pitcher of water
  - ✓ cups
- 6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** . . . . . **5 MIN**
- 7. **ACTIVITY TIME** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
*Coloring Activity*  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ coloring page 26—one copy for each child
- 8. **CLOSING PRAYER** . . . . . **5 MIN**
- 9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
*Who Am I*  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ three masks (not scary)

**TOTAL 80 MIN**

PREPARING TO TEACH

**TEACHING POINTS**

**Joseph reveals who he is to his brothers**—When Joseph tells his brothers who he really is, they are speechless! They already fear being punished or killed. Now they must wonder if Joseph wants to take revenge on them. Instead, Joseph is kind and calls them to draw near. He tries to comfort them, and his tears show that he loves them.

Four times in this passage, Joseph says that God is the One who has directed his life and not the sin of his brothers.

**Joseph reveals that God is the Lord of history**—Instead of bringing judgment against his brothers, Joseph forgives them. As ruler of Egypt, he could have put them in prison for the rest of their lives. Instead, Joseph embraces his brothers and comforts them. Joseph recognizes that God has been working out a plan to save Israel. It was not hard for Joseph to forgive his brothers because his main concern was the plan and purpose of God.

**Joseph completely forgives his brothers**—Pharaoh invites all of Joseph’s family to return to Egypt. So Joseph sends his brothers back to their father and tells them exactly what to say to him.

But Joseph does not have them mention anything about how his brothers betrayed him. From a human point of view, this is the single most important fact in the history of Jacob’s family. But Joseph has so completely forgiven his brothers that it is not even worth mentioning. As a result, all the news that comes to Jacob is good news.

## WHERE IS JESUS?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Matthew 26:47–56; Luke 23:33–43.

Joseph was betrayed, thrown into a pit, and sold into slavery by his own brothers. But Joseph was ready to forgive them completely for what they had done to him.

Joseph had grace from God to forgive his brothers, and this gives us a glance forward to Jesus. Jesus was betrayed by his friend, Judas, deserted by all his disciples, and crucified by his own people. He too extends forgiveness to the very ones who hurt him and to anyone else who repents of their sin.

## THE LESSON

### OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

### BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN

Read Genesis 45:1—46:4 from the Scriptures or read story 26, "Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

### OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 15 MIN

#### Repeat for Emphasis

Play a game of charades with your class. However, the point of the game is the way you present the instructions. You are going to repeat the critical components of the instructions four times. (Joseph repeats four times to his brothers that it is God who is responsible for the events that lead to his position in Egypt.)

1. Each participant in the competition will receive a word (a person, place, or thing) taken from the story of Joseph.
2. The clue giver is not allowed to talk at all in giving the clues to the class.
3. The clue giver should act out the clue in order that the class might guess but can say nothing, not even a sound.
4. The clue giver may encourage the direction of the guessing by nodding their head or signal that the answers are poor by shaking their head no, but at no time may the clue giver speak.
5. The clue giver may use their arms to gesture or their fingers to show numbers but not letters, and he may not say any word at all.

Preliminary questions:

- **What is the most important thing that I said in the instructions?**  
*(The most important thing that you said was the clue giver cannot speak.)*
- **How did you know it was the most important?**  
*(We knew it was the most important because you repeated yourself.)*

Topics for pantomime: Joseph, baker, cupbearer, famine, Pharaoh. Conduct the charades.

Then ask the class the following discussion questions:

- **Does anyone remember the most important instruction and how many times I repeated it?**  
*(The most important instruction was that the clue giver could not speak; it was repeated four times.)*
- **When someone wants us to pay special attention to something, they often repeat the important information. God does this in the story of Joseph. What does Joseph repeat for emphasis to his brothers in Genesis 45:4–10?**  
*(Joseph repeats that it was God who was behind his being sent to Egypt.)*
- **Why do you think God wanted this to be repeated in the Bible? It is very important for us to understand that God is in control of all things.**  
*(God is actively involved with everything that takes place. Nothing happens apart from God's control. God's plan is the salvation of his people through the death of his Son, Jesus. Even the strange events of Joseph's life all work together in God's plan to redeem for himself a people.)*

**TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**The Provision of Bread**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ freshly baked cinnamon bread
- ✓ pitcher of water
- ✓ cups

The object of the exercise is to help the children see how Joseph’s provision of bread (grain) was really God providing for his people. Ultimately, this points to God providing the bread of life—Jesus.

Place the bread on a table where arriving students can see it. (If you have a bread machine and can have the bread timed to bake in the class to fill the room with the aroma, all the better.) Talk to the children about the bread and how good it tastes. Tell them about each ingredient and how the yeast causes the bread to rise and be fluffy, the sugar sweetens it, and the cinnamon and butter give it a wonderful flavor. The object is to create a hunger for the bread in the children.

Make the parallel in class between the children and the Israelites. They were hungry and needed bread. Like the Egyptians, you have plenty to share. Ask them what they are willing to do to get a slice of bread.

Finally, after teasing them a bit, make a bargain. Ask them to look up John 6 verses 5–13, 35, and 48–50. Have them tell you how Joseph was like Jesus in these verses. (These verses point to Jesus as the bread of life. In sending Joseph to Egypt, God uses him to provide grain for his people in the midst of the famine. In sending Jesus to earth, God provides bread to satisfy our spiritual hunger.)

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Coloring Activity**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page 26—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Which person in the picture is Joseph?**
- **Who can remember Joseph’s youngest brother’s name?**  
*(Benjamin)*
- **What do you think Joseph’s brothers thought when they were caught with silver in their sacks?**  
*(They were afraid.)*
- **What do you think Joseph’s brothers thought when Joseph revealed that he was their brother?**  
*(They thought he would be mad at them for throwing him into the pit and selling him into slavery.)*

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Who Am I**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ three masks (not scary)

Invite three adult or teen acquaintances of your students to visit class. Before class, give each one a mask and explain that you want them to come in disguise and tell a portion of Joseph’s story in their own words. The first person can review the story of Joseph’s dreams, and how his brothers didn’t like him, threw him into a pit, and finally sold him as a slave. The second person can tell the story of how Joseph was falsely imprisoned but then after interpreting Pharaoh’s dream was put in charge of Egypt’s grain storage program. Finally, the third person

can tell the story of how Joseph's brothers came to him for food and how Joseph hid his identity from them until the end when he revealed who he was.

Ask the class if they know who your mystery storytellers are with a show of hands for each person. One by one have each storyteller take off his mask to reveal his identity. Object lessons like this will inspire your students to tell their families all about class. The process of retelling the story will further help them to remember the lesson.



