

Title: Joseph and his brothers.

Passage: Gen. 37: 2-36, 42:1-45:28

Primary Lesson

Introduction:

(Pretending to talk on a cell phone) “Can you believe what she did to me? All she ever does is say mean things. She hits me and then I get in trouble...that’s just not fair! And, to make it worse, my mom told me to forgive her! Why won’t anyone understand?” Boys and girls, think about a time in your life when somebody did something mean that you. How did you respond? Our lesson today is about a man who responded the right way in a bad situation. The story is found in the first book of the Bible, in Genesis 37-42.

Instruction:

The Bible says in verse 3, “Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age (that means he was the youngest son): and he made him a coat of many colors.” The coat his father made him was very special to Joseph. Has your mom or dad ever given you a gift?

The Bible says in verse 4 “When his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. 5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.” Joseph’s brother’s thought that their father Jacob liked Joseph more than them, and that made them very angry.

“And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. 17 And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them...”

“Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

When Joseph came to his brothers, they took off Joseph’s coat of many colors. “...They took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.”

Later, “... they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and... a company of Ishmeelites came...with their camels...going... down to Egypt. Come, and let us sell him... And his

brethren were content. ...They ...lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.” The brothers’ father was sad because he thought that Joseph was dead! If the story ended there, it would be very sad!

The brothers and their father were running out of food, so their father sent them to a place called Egypt to get some. Even though Joseph had been sold a long time earlier by his brothers, God was using him in Egypt to be a great ruler.

When the brothers got to Egypt, they went right to a man to ask for food...But the person they went to was Joseph! The brothers could not recognize who he was. Joseph looked very different. Joseph told his brothers that it was him, and that he still loved them. Joseph forgave his brothers and invited them and his father to come live with him in Egypt.

Conclusion:

Joseph was not treated very nicely at all. His brothers did awful things to him! We learned that even though his brothers hated him, hurt him, and even tried to sell him, Joseph responded by loving them in return. Sometimes people hurt us and are not sorry at all, but if we want to do what God wants, we will still forgive them any way. God sent His only Son Jesus to die for all the bad things we did, and take our punishment. If we choose to accept Jesus, He says we can go to Heaven someday.

Just like Joseph’s brother deserved to be punished, and Joseph loved him, God loved us, regardless of what we have done. Once we accept His forgiveness, we will always be saved from punishment in a place called hell.

After we are saved, we should want to do what makes God happy. You have the chance, even today before you leave, to make a choice that you will forgive just as Jesus has forgiven you...even when it is tough. Will you make that choice?