

# Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

Genesis 42



*Introduction: We have been talking about Joseph. Who is Joseph? What do you remember about him? How many brothers did he have? Did they like him? What did they do to Joseph? What happened to Joseph? Who took care of Joseph through all of these bad things? What did Joseph end up doing in Egypt? (How did God use Joseph?)*

*Read/tell story with voice animation. Interject questions to check for understanding. This story lends itself easily to play form. Help the children to act out the scene. Let them perform it once or twice on their own.*



## The Story

Jacob heard there was food in Egypt, so he sent his ten oldest sons there to buy food. When the ten brothers got to Egypt, they came to the governor of the land and bowed down before him. This ruler was their brother Joseph, but they didn't know who he was. He knew them and spoke to them in an angry way.

"Who are you, and where do you come from?" asked Joseph.

"We come from the land of Canaan," said the brothers.

"You are spies!" said Joseph.

The brothers said, "No, my lord, we have come to buy food. We are brothers. We are honest men. We are not spies."

But Joseph said, "No. You are spies! You have come to see if you can take over our land."

"We are twelve brothers that live in Canaan with our father. Our youngest brother is at home and one brother is gone."

Joseph again said, "You are spies! You shall not leave until your youngest brother comes here." So he put them into prison for three days. There they sat and thought about all the things happening to them.

On the third day, Joseph said to them, "If you are honest men, let one brother stay in prison, and you return to your land with the food. But bring your youngest brother back to me to prove you aren't lying."

Then they said to each other, "We are guilty. Long ago we heard our brother Joseph plead with us to save him, and we didn't listen. Now we are paying for it."

Reuben said, "Didn't I tell you to leave him alone? You didn't listen. Now we are being punished."

Joseph listened to them talk. He saw they were sorry for what they had done to him. Then Joseph had his servants tie up Simeon, while his brothers watched, and lead Simeon away to prison.

Joseph told his servants to fill the brothers' sacks with food and put their money back inside the sacks. On their way home, one of the brothers opened a sack of grain to feed the donkeys, and he found his money. Then they were all afraid.

"What is happening? What is God doing to us?" they asked.

When they got home, they told their father Jacob everything that had happened. As they emptied their sacks of food, they found money in each sack.

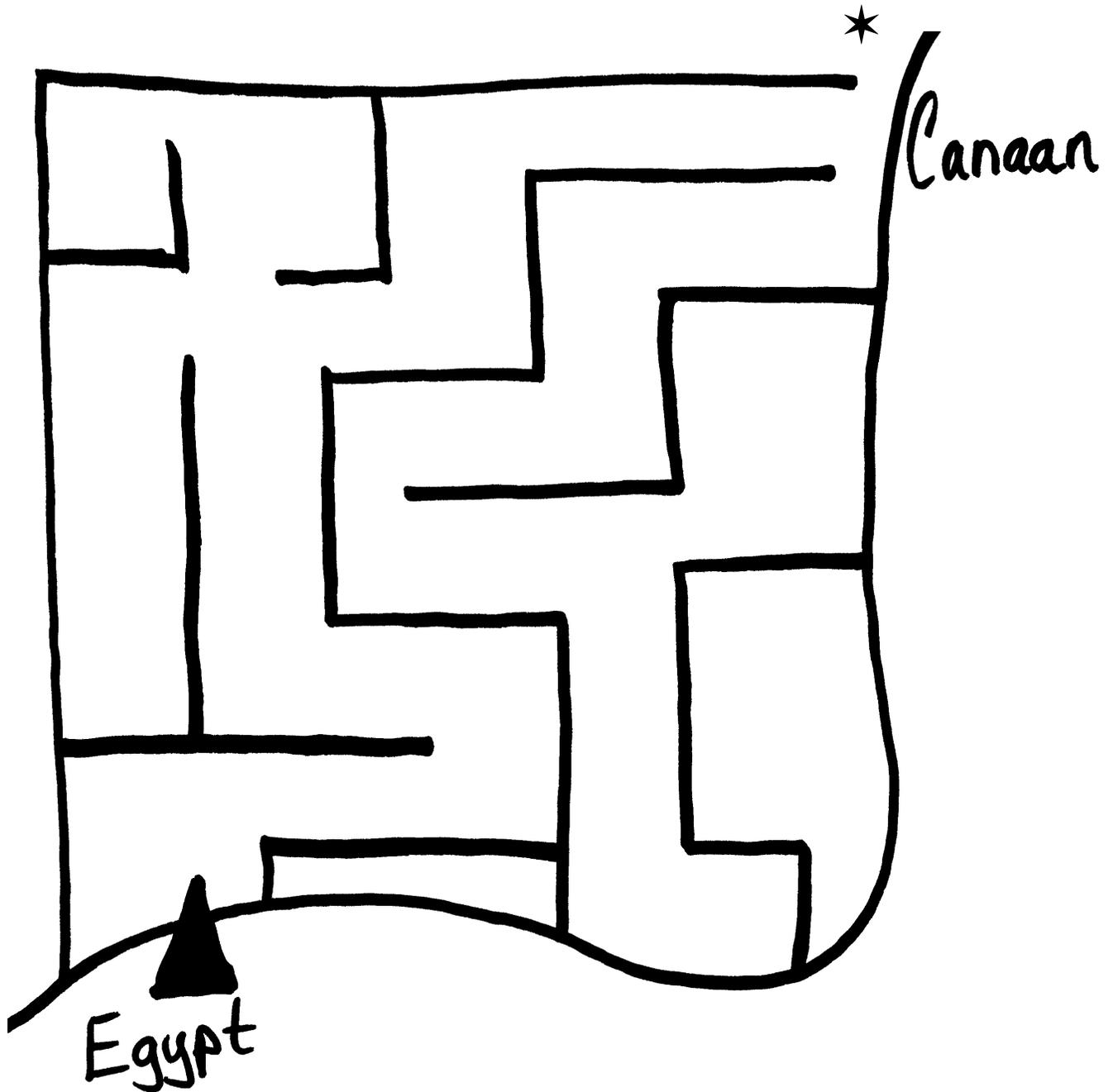
Jacob said, "You have taken Joseph from me, and now Simeon is gone, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me. Everything bad is happening to me."

Then Reuben said, "Trust me. I will bring Benjamin back to you or you can kill my two sons."

And Jacob said, "No. Joseph is dead. If anything would happen to Benjamin, I would die of sadness."

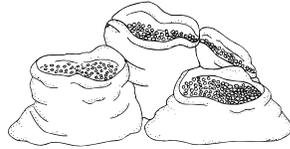
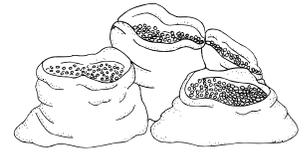
*The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.*

**Activity One** - Start at Canaan and follow the maze to get the brothers to Egypt.



*The chastening or disciplining we receive from our Lord is a part of the unconditional love, forgiveness and long-suffering of our God toward us.*

## Activity Two - Draw a line to match the two like pictures.



## Passage

Hebrews 12:6 - For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

## Hymn - TLH 416, v. 1

Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways  
To keep His statutes still!  
Oh, that my God would grant me grace  
To know and do His will!

## Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, When I run away from You by sinning, come and bring me back to You. When You discipline me, help me to remember that You are doing this to show me my sin. It is because You love me and want me to be with You. Be with me always for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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"Who are you, and where do you come from?" asked Joseph.

"We come from the land of Canaan," said the brothers.

"You are spies!" said Joseph.

The brothers said, "No, my lord, we have come to buy food. We are brothers. We are honest men. We are not spies."

But Joseph said, "No. You are spies! You have come to see if you can take over our land."

"We are 12 brothers that live in Canaan with our father. Our youngest brother is at home and one brother is gone."

Joseph again said, "You are spies! You shall not leave until your youngest brother comes here." So he put them into prison for three days. There they sat and thought about all the things happening to them.

On the third day, Joseph said to them, "If you are honest men, let one brother stay in prison, and you return to your land with the food. But bring your youngest brother back to me to prove you aren't lying."

Then they said to each other, "We are guilty. Long ago we heard our brother Joseph plead with us to save him, and we didn't listen. Now we are

paying for it."

Reuben said, "Didn't I tell you to leave him alone? You didn't listen. Now we are being punished."

Joseph listened to them talk. He saw they were sorry for what they had done to him. Then Joseph had his servants tie up Simeon, while his brothers watched, and lead Simeon away to prison.

Joseph told his servants to fill the brothers' sacks with food and put their money back inside the sacks. On their way home, one of the brothers opened a sack of grain to feed the donkeys, and found his money. Then they were all afraid.

"What is happening? What is God doing to us?" they asked.

When they got home, they told their father Jacob everything that had happened. As they emptied their sacks of food, they found money in each sack.

Jacob said, "You have taken Joseph from me, and now Simeon is gone, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me. Everything bad is happening to me."

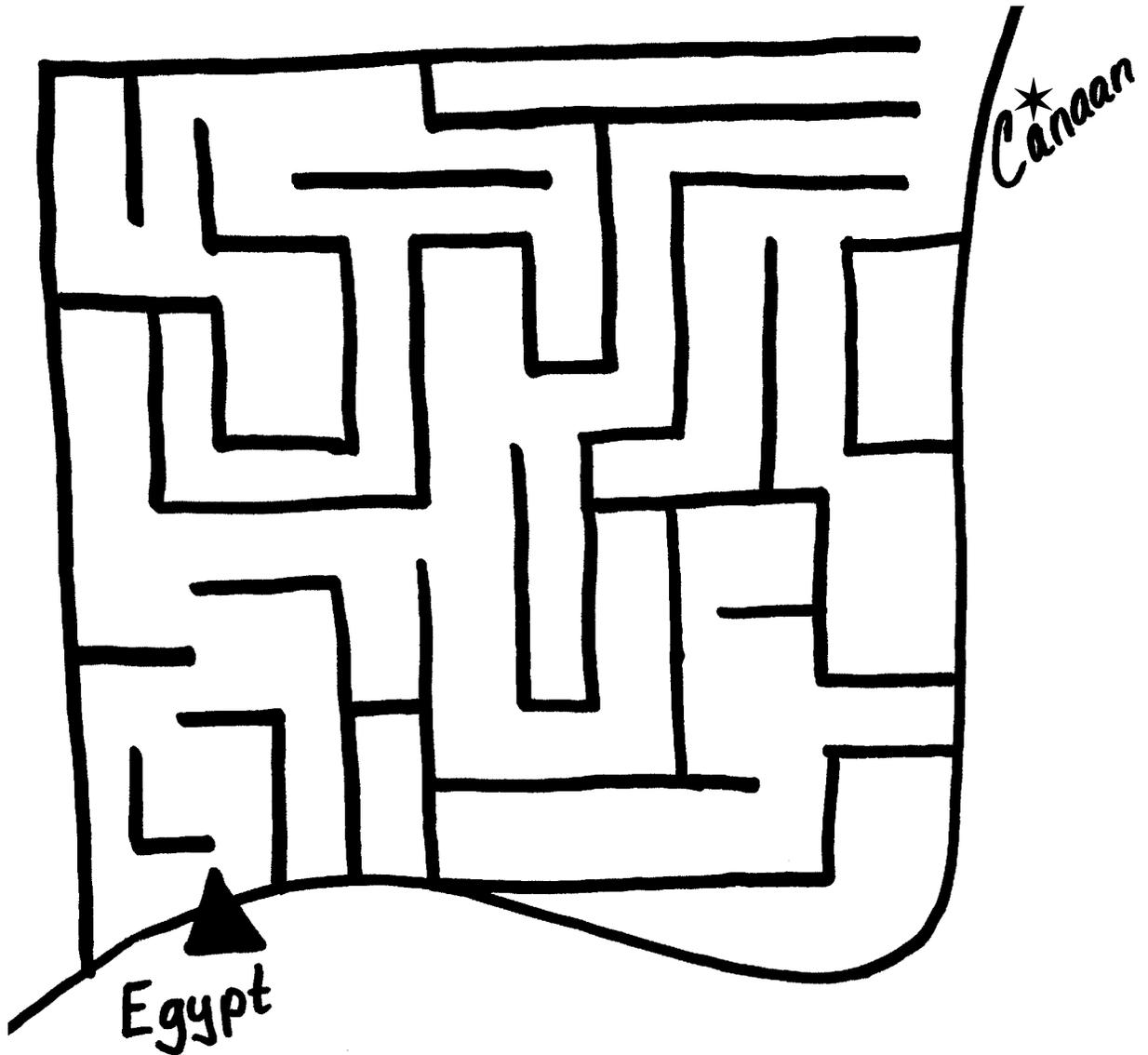
Then Reuben said, "Trust me. I will bring Benjamin back to you or you can kill my two sons."

And Jacob said, "No. Joseph is dead. If anything, would happen to Benjamin, I would die of sadness."

***The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.***

**Activity One** - Start at Canaan and follow the maze to get the brothers to Egypt.

Help the brothers find their way to Egypt.



*The chastening or disciplining we receive from our Lord is a part of the unconditional love, forgiveness and long-suffering of our God toward us.*

**Activity Two** - Talk about these questions.

1. Why didn't Joseph tell his brothers who he was?
2. Why did he act like he was angry with them?

3. Why did Joseph throw all of the brothers into prison for three days?
4. What do you think the brothers thought about while they were in prison?
5. How did the brothers feel about their sin of hating Joseph?
6. What made them feel that way?
7. Do bad things ever happen to you?
8. Do you ever get into trouble at home?
9. Do you get punished or disciplined somehow? Why?
10. Do your parents do this because they hate you? Why do they do it?
11. What are they trying to show you?

*In this same way God disciplines us. He wants us to know what is right so that we are sorry for our sins and we repent.*

## Passage

Hebrews 12:6 - For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

## Hymn - TLH 416, v. 1, 4

Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways  
To keep His statutes still!  
Oh, that my God would grant me grace  
To know and do His will!

Make me to walk in Thy commands —  
'Tis a delightful road —  
Nor let my head or heart or hands  
Offend against my God.

## Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, When I run away from You by sinning, come and bring me back to You. When You discipline me, help me to remember that You are doing this to show me my sin. It is because You love me and want me to be with You. Be with me always for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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Have you ever been punished for doing something wrong?

We all have.

Why do our parents discipline us?

Why does God discipline us?

## Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You for bringing us together to learn about You in this class today. Please lead us to understand through this Bible lesson why You discipline us as You disciplined the brothers of Joseph. Amen.



## The Story

There was a great famine in the land of Canaan. Jacob heard there was grain in Egypt, so he told his sons, "Go down to that place and buy for us there that we may live and not die." So Joseph's ten brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain. Jacob would not send Benjamin, however, "lest some calamity befall him".

Now at that time, Joseph was the governor of Egypt. He was the one who sold the grain to all who came to buy it. So Joseph's brothers came and bowed their faces to the earth before him. Joseph recognized them, but they didn't know him. He spoke roughly to them, "Where do you come from?"

They answered, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."

Joseph remembered the dreams he had had. He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the effects of the famine!" The brothers protested that they were only there to buy food, but Joseph accused them again of being spies.

They pleaded, "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more."

Again Joseph said they were spies. Finally he said, "In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!" Joseph put them all in prison for three days.

On the third day, he told them he would let all but one brother get food and return to Canaan. One would be kept in prison until the youngest brother was brought back as proof that they were telling the truth. They all started talking about the situation in front of



Joseph. They were upset because they remembered what they had done to Joseph years before; now they felt they were being punished for sinning against him. Although Joseph had spoken to them in Egyptian through an interpreter, he understood their language and heard every word. He felt so sorrowful over their distress that he had to turn away from them and weep. When he returned, he bound Simeon and took him away.

Then Joseph commanded that all their sacks be filled with grain. He told his servants to put their money back in the sacks as well as provisions for their journey. The brothers then loaded their donkeys with the grain and left.

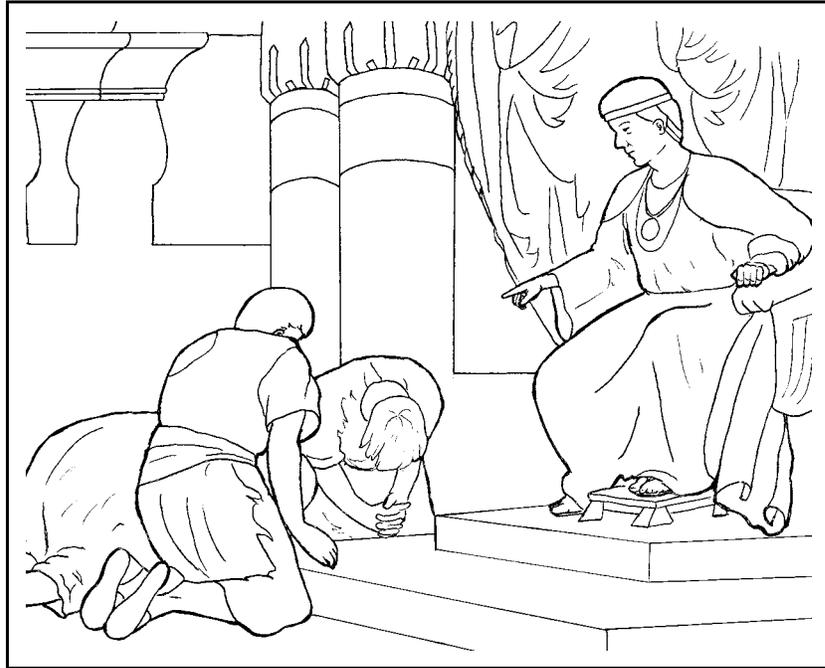
Along the way, one of the brothers opened his sack to feed his donkey. He was surprised and afraid when he saw the money back in his sack. He told his brothers all about it, and they too were terrified. It looked like they had stolen the grain!

They traveled back to Canaan, where they immediately told their father Jacob all that had happened to them. When each brother emptied out his sack, the money came tumbling out with the grain.

Jacob was very upset. "You have bereaved me," he said, "Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."

Reuben made a promise to his father. "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."

But Jacob refused, saying, "If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."



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**Outer Aim - The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.**

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## What the Story Tells Us -Write (T) rue or (F)alse for each statement.

1. \_\_\_\_ Jacob told his sons to go down to Egypt to buy grain.
2. \_\_\_\_ All of his sons went together to Egypt.
3. \_\_\_\_ When Joseph saw his brothers again, he embraced them.
4. \_\_\_\_ Joseph accused them of being spies.
5. \_\_\_\_ Joseph wanted them to bring the youngest brother to Egypt.
6. \_\_\_\_ The brothers were thrown into prison for a week.
7. \_\_\_\_ Joseph was chastening his brothers because he hated them.
8. \_\_\_\_ Joseph commanded that each sack of grain should also contain money.
9. \_\_\_\_ The brothers were happy to see their money again.
10. \_\_\_\_ Jacob was afraid something would happen to Benjamin.

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**Inner Aim - The chastening or disciplining we receive from our Lord is a part of the unconditional love, forgiveness and long-suffering of our God toward us.**

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## What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss these questions.

1. Why didn't Joseph's brothers recognize him?
2. The brothers were held in prison for 3 days. If Joseph loved them, why did he do this to them?
3. After the brothers remembered what they had done to their brother, Joseph, they were truly sorry for their sin. Why did Joseph weep when he heard them discussing it?
4. Jacob had good reason for not allowing Benjamin to go to Egypt, but he was also sinning. How?

## Passages - Look up the following Bible verses and fill in the blanks.

Psalms 94:12 Blessed is the man whom You \_\_\_\_\_, O LORD, and \_\_\_\_\_ out of Your \_\_\_\_\_.

Hebrews 12:6 For whom the LORD \_\_\_\_\_ He \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ every son whom He \_\_\_\_\_.

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love, I \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore be \_\_\_\_\_ and repent.

## Hymn - TLH #342 v. 1, 5

Chief of sinners though I be,  
Jesus shed His blood for me;  
Died that I might live on high,  
Lived that I might never die.  
As the branch is to the vine,  
I am His, and He is mine.

O my Savior, help afford  
By Thy Spirit and Thy Word!  
When my wayward heart would stray,  
Keep me in the narrow way;  
Grace in time of need supply  
While I live and when I die.

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, in this Bible truth You have shown me how much I am loved by my Father in heaven. You have shown me that when I am disciplined by my heavenly Father it is done out of love. Help me to accept this discipline and repent of all my sins knowing that in Jesus I have forgiveness. Help me to remember at all times that no matter what I have done wrong, God the Father has freely forgiven me of all my sins for Jesus' sake. Grant me an extra measure of Your Holy Spirit to turn me from my sinful ways to follow You. In Jesus' name I ask this. Amen.

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Think (privately) of a time you were in trouble for doing something sinful.) Yours was probably not a pleasant situation --but it's very important that correction takes place. Sin can separate us from God. Sin is dangerous to our souls. Our sin must be pointed out so we can repent and have it removed through forgiveness.

This process of correction doesn't usually *feel* good – but we should realize how good this is for our spiritual health.

It is an act of love when God protects our souls from sin. In today's Bible reading you will hear of God using Joseph to help his brothers see their sins and seek forgiveness!



### Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, Thank You for bringing us together to learn about You in this class today. Please lead us to understand through this Bible lesson why You discipline us as You disciplined the brothers of Joseph. Amen.

### The Story - Genesis 42

When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" {2} And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die."

{3} So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. {4} But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "Lest some calamity befall him." {5} And the sons of Israel went to buy grain among those who journeyed, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

{6} Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. {7} Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he

acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, "Where do you come from?"

And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."

{8} So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. {9} Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!"

{10} And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.

{11} "We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."

{12} But he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."

{13} And they said, "Your servants are



twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more."

{14} But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!' {15} "In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.

{16} "Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!" {17} So he put them all together in prison three days.

{18} Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: {19} "If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. {20} "And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so.

{21} Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us."

{22} And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us." {23} But they did not know that Joseph understood them, for he spoke to them through an interpreter.

{24} And he turned himself away from them and wept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

{25} Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them. {26} So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there.

{27} But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the

encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack. {28} So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!"

Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?"

{29} Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: {30} "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. {31} "But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. {32} 'We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.'

{33} "Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. {34} 'And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'"

{35} Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. {36} And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."

{37} Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."

{38} But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."



## What God's Word Tells Us - Discuss these questions.

1. If Joseph had simply revealed himself to his brothers what may have remained?
2. Discuss different ways in which you have been corrected in an attempt to identify your sin and move you toward godly repentance.
3. Discuss these sayings from God's Little Instruction Book Volumes I, II, & III. "Too many parents are not on spanking terms with their children." Basis – Proverbs 13:24  
  
"Whenever a man is ready to uncover his sins, God is always ready to cover them."  
Basis – Proverbs 28:13
4. Discuss how radiation treatment of cancer can actually kills cells and makes people sick...but gets rid of the life threatening cancer. Discuss how this is like our inner aim.
5. Discuss how in muscle building the muscle cells are actually damaged before they come back stronger than they were before lifting weights. Discuss how this might be like our inner aim.

## Hymn - TLH #342 v. 1, 5

Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed His blood for me;  
Died that I might live on high, lived that I might never die.  
As the branch is to the vine, I am His, and He is mine.

O my Savior, help afford by Thy Spirit and Thy Word!  
When my wayward heart would stray, keep me in the narrow way;  
Grace in time of need supply while I live and when I die.

**Passages** - Concordance Activity - Search for passages that emphasize the Lord chastises those He loves. Search for passages that emphasize chastisement as a good thing. List your passages below in the correct column.

The Lord Chastises Those He Loves

Chastisement is a Good Thing

**Prayer ACTivity** - Write a group prayer that reiterates main lessons of the day. This acrostic approach can help you remember how to build a prayer. **ACTS**

A (Acknowledge who you are praying to along with a characteristic)

C (Confess)

T (Thank)

S (Supplicate – ask)



## STORY

8/18/04

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## TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father, I understand and believe that whom the Lord loves He chastens. Grant to me the faith and the strength to accept the discipline You give to me and to understand that it is given out of love for me and my spiritual welfare. Thankful for the forgiveness You have given to me, strengthen me that I might bring needed discipline to the lives of the young people You have placed under my care, and that I might do so with love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## VOCABULARY

*calamity*: an event that brings terrible loss, lasting distress, or severe affliction; a disaster:

*famine*: a time when there is not enough food.

*interpreter*: one who translates orally from one language into another.

*provisions*: food and other material goods necessary to sustain life.

*bereaved*: suffering the loss of a loved one

## OUTER AIM

The Lord disciplined Joseph's brothers to change their hearts and correct their sinful behavior.

## INNER AIM

As the Lord chastened or disciplined Joseph's brothers, so the Lord also chastens or disciplines us because of His love for us. This chastening or discipline we receive from our Lord is a part of the unconditional love, forgiveness, and longsuffering of our God toward us. The Lord disciplines us because He loves us.

## BACKGROUND

This story represents the first step in God's chastening of the ten brothers who had treated Joseph so shamefully. Joseph's actions toward his brothers were not done out of hate but love. Joseph, a God-fearing man, was deeply concerned for the spiritual welfare of his brothers. Joseph's acceptance of what God had allowed to come into his life, together with his loving forgiveness toward his brothers, serves as a model for all who would follow.

## Verses 1-14

Because there was a great famine in the land, Jacob determined to send his sons to Egypt to buy grain. He did not, however, send Benjamin. Jacob continued to imitate his own father's shameless favoritism. As he had once showed favoritism to Joseph, so also now did he favor Benjamin.

Joseph recognized his brothers, but his brothers did not recognize Joseph. There are several possible explanation for this. 1) Joseph did not look the same, he would have changed much in the twenty or more difficult years that had passed. 2) His brothers never expected to find Joseph occupying such a position of authority. 3) While the Israelites were bearded people, the Egyptians were clean-shaven, often used makeup, and had dramatically different hairstyles and head coverings. 4) Joseph spoke harshly to them in a foreign language. 5) The brothers probably believed that Joseph was dead. Joseph had no doubt wondered often during the past 20 years just when the dreams of his youth would be fulfilled (Cf. Genesis 37:1-11). He recognized their fulfillment immediately when his brothers bowed down to him; yet, in great love, for a time he resisted the temptation to reveal himself and point out the fulfillment of his dreams.

What might at first seem like harsh behavior is, in fact, God using Joseph to chasten or discipline his brothers to bring them to repentance. The first part of this chastening was Joseph's feigned anger with the brothers. The brothers were naturally puzzled and probably quite fearful when Joseph did not accept their explanation that they had come to buy food. Why did this Egyptian ruler single *them* out when there were surely many other strangers doing just what they were doing? The pleading of the brothers was to no avail. How fitting a chastisement! Joseph had pleaded with his brothers to spare his life many years ago, and was rejected, so now the pleading of his brothers is rejected.

### **Verses 14-24**

The brothers were to be tested. They would not be allowed to leave Egypt until the younger brother Benjamin was brought to him. Note the wisdom of Joseph's actions. He wanted to see Benjamin, his only full brother, but he arranged to see him through means that appeared wise and normal to the ten brothers. Joseph was demanding that they prove their whole story by verifying one small part. If they could produce Benjamin, their entire story would be validated.

The brothers were unjustly thrown into prison for three days. Later they would certainly learn that they had likely been held in the same prison where Joseph suffered for several years. Joseph was giving them time to contemplate their sin.

Joseph left them in prison only three days because he did not want his father's large household to suffer from hunger. He would send the brothers back with the exception of Simeon, who would remain as a hostage or prisoner to ensure the brothers return. The others would carry the muchneeded food back to his father's household.

Why Simeon, the second oldest, was chosen is not known, although we have no record of Simeon ever objecting to the harsh treatment of Joseph - as did the oldest brother, Reuben.

That this chastening awoke the consciences of the brothers was made clear when they confessed to each other their guilt regarding Joseph. They remembered how Joseph had pleaded and how they had shown no mercy. Because of their sin long ago, now they were suffering. They came to realize that what they had done to Joseph was no different from murder in the eyes of God.

Once Joseph realized that his brothers were truly sorry for their sin, he wept. His long heartache was finally at an end. He was allowed to see the fruit of God's work in his life. We are hereby reminded that our sins can have far-reaching consequences. Sins don't simply go away. Time does not heal sins, Christ does. How important for us to understand that we daily sin much and are in constant need of forgiveness. We also see here the longsuffering of our merciful and gracious God. He still loved the ten brothers and wanted them brought to repentance. What comfort there is in this fact for each of us. Our Lord loves us and chastens us because He is not willing that any should perish.

### **Verses 25-38**

See here again the loving wisdom of God at work through Joseph. He sent provisions for his brothers so they would have no need to look in their sacks until well on their journey. By returning their money to their sacks, Joseph was seeking to create in them the same sense of helplessness he must have once felt. Again, revenge was not his motive, but a loving concern for their souls. The brothers needed to learn that they did not control their destinies. God did. When life seems unfair, the only course of action is to trust our merciful God.

Reuben tries to put his father at ease and demonstrate his full devotion by offering his two sons as a pledge. It seems obvious to us that, should Jacob lose his son Benjamin, killing two of his own grandchildren could never

give him any comfort. Jacob refused to let Benjamin go, in effect, sentencing Simeon to death. Apparently selfish even in his old age, Jacob was in effect sentencing his whole family to death rather than face the possible loss of Benjamin and the resulting grief he would suffer.

We see here the temporal effects of sin in the lives of Joseph's brothers. What they had done twenty years or so earlier is now causing them great grief. We need to be reminded of this fact as well. The consequences of our sin can be devastating not only in the present but also in the distant future. Yet the Lord is merciful and gracious, we see His mercy in this chastening or disciplining of the brothers. Through these events, the Lord would bring them to repentance and forgiveness. We are once again reminded of what our Lord tells us; "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28) While we leave Jacob and his sons for now in a state of bitter anguish, the Lord in His grace will turn these events into a most joyful blessing.

### **STUDENT PRAYER**

Dear Jesus, in this Bible truth you have shown me how much I am loved by my Father in heaven. You have shown me that when I am disciplined by my heavenly Father it is done out of love. Help me to accept this discipline and repent of all my sins knowing that in Jesus I have forgiveness. Help me to remember at all times that no matter what I have done wrong, God the Father has freely forgiven me of all my sins for Jesus' sake. Grant me an extra measure of Your Holy Spirit to turn me from my sinful ways to follow You. In Jesus' name I ask this. Amen.

### **PRESENTATION**

The account is probably too long to read. You may prefer to tell this Bible truth in your own words using the written account as your guide. Emphasize that sin does not right itself with the passage of time. God in His wisdom used the famine as an opportunity to discipline Joseph's brothers to bring them to the knowledge and repentance of their sin.

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### **Additional Teacher's Aids**

#### **Introduction** (Guide listening of story)

(Teacher could come up with an example from his/her life when the Lord brought them blessing through and event the seemed unpleasant at the time.)

Explain to the students some things that are good for us – don't always feel that way at first. Discipline is a prime example of this.

(Ask the students to think (privately) of a time they were in trouble for doing something sinful.)

Yours was probably not a pleasant situation – but it's very important the correction takes place. Sin can separate us from God. Sin is dangerous to our souls. Our sin must be pointed out so we can repent and have it removed through forgiveness.

This process of correction doesn't usually *feel* good – but we should realize how good this is for our spiritual health.

It is an act of love when God protects our souls from sin. In today's Bible reading you will hear of God using Joseph to help his brothers see their sins and seek forgiveness!

## Answer the Questions

1. List three events from Genesis 42 that helped Joseph's brothers recognize their sins.

### **(Possible Answers:**

1. Treated unfairly as they had treated Joseph, selling him into slavery.
2. Their lives threaten as they had put Joseph's in danger.
3. Simeon bound as Joseph was into slavery.
4. Money being return filled them with fear, as it would look as though they didn't pay for the grain.
5. Brothers pleaded for mercy...like Joseph had.
6. The fact they were to bring the youngest, their father's favorite and endanger his life would certainly remind them of their sin of betraying and hating Joseph.)

2. Quote evidence from Scripture that the brothers recognize their guilt and are being led toward repentance. Be sure to include a reference as well as key words from the passage/s.

(Genesis 42:21,22)

21 Then they said to one another, "**We are truly guilty concerning our brother**, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us."22 And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us.")

### Discuss

1. If Joseph had simply revealed himself to his brothers what may have remained? (Perhaps they would've feared Joseph and not had godly fear repentance from their guilt.)
2. Discuss different ways in which you have been corrected in an attempt to identify your sin and move you toward godly repentance. (Spanking, grounding, bible passages, lecture, jail, removing privileges...)
3. Discuss these sayings from God's Little Instruction Book Volumes I, II, & III.  
"Too many parents are not on spanking terms with their children."  
Basis – Proverbs 13:24  
"Whenever a man is ready to uncover his sins, God is always ready to cover them."  
Basis – Proverbs 28:13
4. Discuss how radiation treatment of cancer can actually kills cells and makes people sick...but gets rid of the life threatening cancer. Discuss how this is like our inner aim. (The treatment feels bad, damages cells...but saves lives.)
5. Discuss how in muscle building the muscle cells are actually damaged before they come back stronger than they were before lifting weights. Discuss how this might be like our inner aim. (Cells are damaged; it hurts; yet we are stronger because of it.)

### Concordance Activity

Search for passages that emphasize the Lord chastises those He loves. Search for passages that emphasize chastisement as a good thing.

### **Proverbs 3:11,12**

My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction;<sup>12</sup> For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son *in whom* he delights.

### **Titus 1:13**

This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,

### **Hebrews 12:10,11**

For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness.<sup>11</sup> Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

### **Proverbs 13:24**

He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

### **Proverbs 19:18**

Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction.

### **Proverbs 22:15**

Foolishness *is* bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

## **APPLICATIONS**

1. As was the case with Joseph's brothers, our Lord does not give up on us. His love and patience toward us is abundantly evident.
2. It seems that people in our day have a very relaxed attitude toward sin. Emphasize to your students that sin is a terrible destroyer. This is evident in the Bible truth laid out before us. The sin of Joseph's brothers had farreaching effects. Their sin had not only destroyed the relationship between Joseph and his brothers, their sin had separated them from their Father in heaven. Our Lord in this Bible story leads us once again to understand the terrible consequences of sin. It doesn't just go away. If left unchecked it will destroy individuals, families, and most importantly our relationship with God and our salvation.
3. Our Lord demonstrates His love for all mankind in His chastening efforts to lead Joseph's brothers to repentance. The promised Messiah was to be born from this family, specifically from the tribe of Judah. In preserving this family, God was working to preserve all mankind.
4. God's grace is at the forefront of this Bible story. If God had not cared about Joseph's brothers He would not have chastened them. God disciplines us out of love. Our Lord may allow things to come upon us in this life to lead us to repentance, and to strengthen the faith He has created in us. God's disciplining of us is a blessing. God shows His love through his chastising. Parents are called upon to do the same. It has been said that one of the greatest forms of child abuse is lack of discipline. Parents are commanded by God to offer this same loving correction to the children God has entrusted to their care. You might also use this section to teach the students about true repentance, and the difference between confession and repentance. A man might confess a transgression without ever repenting of it. Godly sorrow over sin is more than sorrow over getting caught. True repentance involves a faithful turning *away* from sin and turning *to* God for forgiveness. Use Judas and Peter to contrast the difference between being sorry and confessing sin (Judas) and true repentance (Peter).

## **PASSAGES**

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

### Lower

Psalms 94:12 - *Blessed is the man whom You instruct, O LORD, And teach out of Your law,*

Hebrews 12:6 - *For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.*

Revelation 3:19 - *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

### Middle any of the above and...

Proverbs 13:24 - *He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.*

### Upper any of the above and...

Proverbs 19:18 - *Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction.*

## **HYMN CHOICES**

“Jesus Sinners Doth Receive” (TLH #324:1-2)

“Chief Of Sinners Though I Be” (TLH #342:1 & 5)