

Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

Genesis 42



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 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."

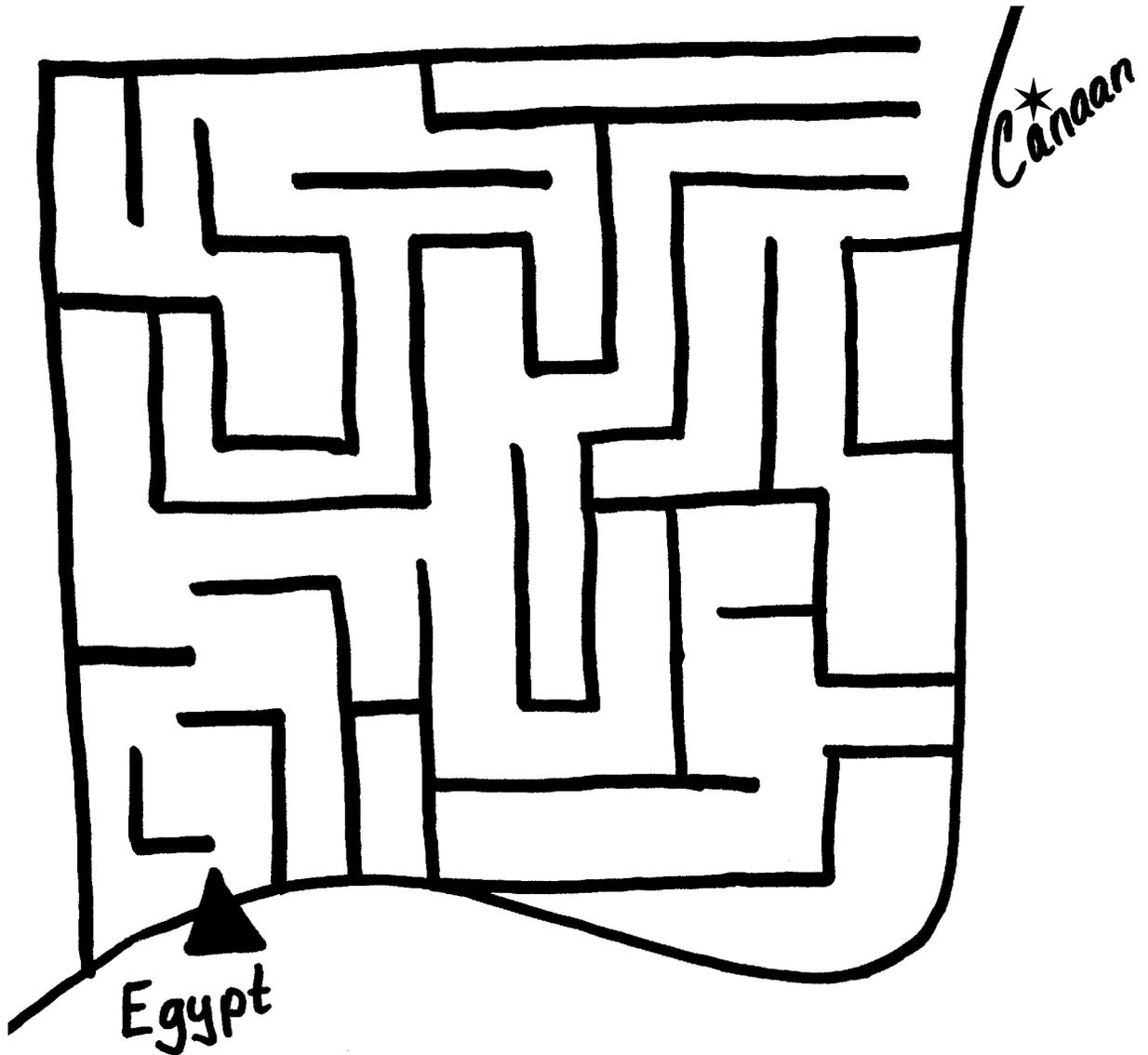
Then Reuben said, "Trust me. I will bring Benjamin back to you or you can kill my two sons."

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.