

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES

A Team of Brothers

YE4F · Student Workbook

Intermediate · Year 2: Creation

Christian Educational Ministries — a faithful digital edition of the printed program

A Romantic Encounter

MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 24:1-66

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

2 Corinthians 6:14-16

Ephesians 5:22-33

Ephesians 5:25

Hebrews 13:1-4

WORDS TO KNOW

CANAANITE - A tribe that inhabited the land west of the Jordan.

THE LESSON

In a few years you will probably start dating. Have you ever wondered who you'll ask out for your first date? Dating sometimes, but not always, leads to marriage. Dating may be the most common method used in today's world to find a husband or wife. But is dating the best or only way to find a person to fall in love with and marry? If not, what other options are there?

The Internet has changed the way many people find their life's mate. These services have increased dramatically over the past years. Psychologists are hired to design matchmaking surveys for love.com services. Questionnaires are worded in such a way as to improve the applicants' chances of finding a lasting relationship. The goal of these services is to make a match made in heaven. But this method may not be your cup of tea. So are there other ways to find the perfect mate? What matchmaking techniques should you use to improve your chances that divorce will never happen in your marriage? There's a Romantic Encounter in the Bible where the method used for selecting a perfect mate really worked for Isaac.

Abraham was old and Isaac was still single. He was the heir apparent, and his single status was of great concern to Abraham since God promised to make of Isaac many nations. For that to happen, Isaac needed a wife. But not just any girl was good enough for Isaac. If Isaac married a local girl she would be a Canaanite who served false gods. This was totally unacceptable to

Abraham. He wanted to ensure that the girl Isaac married was of his own people whose religion was the same - a girl who served the one and only true God.

One day Abraham called for his faithful and trustworthy chief servant. This servant was probably one of the men who went up to the mountain with Abraham when God told him to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham asked his servant to swear that he wouldn't find a Canaanite wife for Isaac. He instructed the servant to go to his country, where his people lived, and to find and bring back a wife for Isaac. The servant had some misgivings and asked Abraham what he was to do if the woman wouldn't come back with him. Abraham assured the servant that if the woman he found for Isaac wouldn't come back with him, he would be released from this vow.

So the servant took ten of the master's camels, loaded them down with jewels, fine clothing, and gifts to attract Isaac's bride-to-be. He knew well that he couldn't do this job without God's help. Selecting the correct mate for life is so important that God should always be included in such decisions. So when he got to Abraham's country he prayed for God's guidance. "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. See, I am standing beside the spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. May it be that when I say to a girl, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink, and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too' - let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master."

While the servant was still praying, a very beautiful virgin girl named Rebekah walked by with a water jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and walked by again. "Please give me a little water from your jar," Abraham's servant asked.

"Drink, my lord," she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink. This young lady was not only beautiful, she was gracious, mannerly, and did more than was required of her. Then she did such a neat thing. She asked if she could water the servant's camels. How do you think the servant felt when God answered his prayer. He must have thought that was really cool and said, "By all means, please water our animals." So she drew enough water for all of the servant's camels. Camels can go for long periods of time without drinking, but when they do drink, they consume a lot of water. What Rebekah did for this servant required a lot of work.

Abraham's servant was overwhelmed with Rebekah's graciousness and how God had so completely answered his prayer. He bowed down and worshiped God again in prayer, thanking Him for leading him to the house of Abraham's relatives.

Rebekah's family rolled out the red carpet for Abraham's servants. They prepared a room for them to spend the night and a meal for them to eat. The servant's mission wasn't accomplished, and he couldn't eat until it was. He told the family why he had come and how God had blessed Abraham so abundantly. He related the entire story of what he was there to do and how Rebekah

was an answer to his prayer. Then he asked Rebekah's father if he would allow her to go home with him and his entourage to marry Isaac. The father agreed for Rebekah to go. Again, the servant was so moved with gratitude that he bowed down to the ground and worshiped God.

The servant gave Rebekah gold, silver, and beautiful clothes. The next morning the servant was ready to return to his master and to take Rebekah with him. When this entourage neared home again, Isaac came to meet them. Rebekah covered her face with a veil and got off the camel. Isaac took her into his mother's tent and she became his wife, and he loved her very much. What a beautiful Romantic Encounter!

STUDENT PRAYER

Loving Father,

Thank you for the beautiful story of how Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for his son Isaac. Help me to always remember how gracious and kind Rebekah was and to follow this example.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

Monday - Ephesians 5:22-23

Tuesday - Ephesians 5:24-29

Wednesday - Ephesians 5:30-33

Thursday - 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Friday - 1 Corinthians 13:8-13

Saturday - Hebrews 13:1-4

Activity

1. On a scale of one to five, with five being the best, rate the following?

A. I prefer the way Isaac found a wife to our dating game today.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

B. I prefer the way people today find a mate through dating than like Isaac did.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

C. I would prefer to use one of the Online matchmaking services to find my mate for life.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

D. I feel the way people today find a mate through dating is less likely for the marriage to end in divorce.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

E. Rebekah had the characteristics I would want in a wife or husband.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

F. I feel it is important that the person I marry have the same religious faith that I have.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

G. Praying for God's direction in helping me find the person I will marry is important to me.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

2. Turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 13 and read it. List six loving characteristics Rebekah showed.

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

F. _____



Consider the Options

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 62:5 "But I stand silently before the Lord, waiting for him to rescue me. For salvation comes from him alone" (TLB).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 25:20-34

Genesis 27:1-46

Exodus 20:16-17

Psalm 62:5

Matthew 6:19-21

Luke 12:16-21

Hebrews 12:16-17

WORDS TO KNOW

BIRTHRIGHT - right, privilege, or possession to which a person is entitled by birth

BLESSING - to invoke divine care for; to confer prosperity or happiness upon

THE LESSON

Isaac and Rebekah had been married for about 20 years and still didn't have children they wanted. So Isaac Considered the Options. He prayed fervently to God, and Rebekah became pregnant, with not just one child, but with twins. Before Rebekah's boys were ever born, they started fighting so hard in her womb she thought she couldn't endure it. Ultrasound hadn't been invented. So Rebekah asked God what in the world was going on inside her. He told her that she was carrying two sons who would become two rival nations. One of these nations would be stronger than the other, and the oldest would serve the younger.

The first boy was born covered with so much red hair that he looked like he was wearing a fur coat. So his parents called him Esau. Then the other twin boy was born with his hand on Esau's heel. So he was called Jacob, which means "Grabber."

Isaac's favorite son was Esau who grew up loving to hunt. Rebekah's favorite son was Jacob who hung out around the house and helped his mother with household chores. One day Jacob was cooking stew and Esau came home hungry and exhausted from hunting. He asked his brother, Jacob, for a bowl of his stew. Jacob Considered the Options and took advantage of Esau's

hunger. Being the rival brother that he was, he offered to trade him a bowl of stew for Esau's birthright. The birthright gave the oldest son an advantage - at his father's death he inherited more of what his father owned.

Esau failed to rightly Consider the Options and completely lost sight of what having this birthright meant to him. Rather than seeing its value, he despised it. He was hungry and he wanted to eat NOW! "When a man is dying of starvation, what good is his birthright?" Esau asked Jacob. Jacob recognized the significance of getting this birthright. So he asked Esau to make a vow to God that Jacob could have it. Esau made the vow and the birthright was Jacob's from then on.

But this wasn't all there was to this story. Isaac, the twins' father, was getting old and was half-blind. He wanted to pass on a blessing to the twins. So he called Esau and told him to go kill a deer and cook it just the way he liked it. "Then I will give you the blessing that belongs to you as my firstborn son," Isaac told him.

Rebekah overheard this conversation and Considered the Options. Remember, Jacob was her favorite son, and she wanted him to have this blessing. So she devised a plan to deceive her husband, Isaac. She told Jacob to kill two goats from their flock and she would cook them in Isaac's favorite way. After she cooked the goats, Jacob was to take some to his father to eat and then receive the blessing Isaac had promised Esau. Jacob knew it would be difficult to deceive his father, because Esau was such a hairy lad. He was taking a chance that he would receive a curse rather than a blessing if Isaac decided to touch him. Rebekah reassured him that she would take any curse that came his way. She had Jacob put on Esau's best clothes and a pair of hairy animal skin gloves. Jacob was ready to carry the food to his father and receive the blessing.

Isaac may have been half-blind, but he was smart enough to realize that everything didn't add up. He couldn't image how Esau could have killed, dressed, and cooked a deer so rapidly. He also realized it was Jacob's, not Esau's voice! But when he asked to feel his hands, the hairy gloves convinced Isaac that this was indeed Esau. So Isaac went ahead giving this blessing to Jacob. "May God always give you plenty of rain for your crops, and good harvest of grain, and new wine. May many nations be your slaves. Be the master of your brothers. May all your relatives bow low before you. Cursed are all who curse you, and blessed are all who bless you" (Genesis 27:28,29 TLB). These were not just mere words. This carried a divine blessing that could not be reversed.

Esau came in and learned that Isaac had given the blessing to his younger brother. That meant that Jacob would be Esau's master. Esau realized that even though Isaac had been tricked, the blessing would now go to Jacob along with the birthright. Esau Considered the Options and wept. He asked his dad for a blessing, and this is what Isaac gave him. "Yours will be no life of ease and luxury, but you shall hew your way with your sword. For a time you will serve your

brother, but you will finally shake loose from him and be free" (Genesis 27:40). Esau didn't like his options and he hated Jacob for receiving the greater blessing.

Did Jacob do the right thing in deceiving Isaac? No! This was a wrong option, the same as Esau selling his birthright for a bowl of soup. Rebekah and Jacob took matters into their own hands. However, it was in God's plan that Esau serve Jacob. Remember, before the twins were ever born, God told Rebekah that the oldest would serve the younger. Because Rebekah and Jacob did not wait on God to take care of this situation, there was unnecessary hostility between these two brothers. This blessing would follow down through the ages for generations to come. And the hostility has also continued unnecessarily down through the ages.

We should always remember: God is in charge and knows what is best. He will work things out for your good. Always Consider Your Options and make the right choice!

STUDENT PRAYER

Thank you, Great God, for showing me that you have a plan and that I should wait on you rather than taking matters in my own hands. Esau didn't value the birthright you gave him. This was a very important gift. Help me always to be thankful for what you give me and do your will.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Matthew 6:19-21

Monday - Luke 12:16-21

Tuesday - Exodus 20:16-17

Wednesday - Genesis 25:21-24

Thursday - Genesis 25:24-26

Friday - Genesis 25:27-34

Saturday - Hebrews 12:16-17

Activity

CHOICES, CHOICES

In today's lesson, Esau had a choice to make about his birthright. Rebekah and Jacob had a choice to make, would they wait on God, or would they take matters into their own hands. Every day God gives you choices to make. On the lines below write out what you will do when God gives you these choices to make.

1. You have a test and haven't read your lesson, will you look at the person's paper in front of you to get the answers, or what will you do?

2. You see a CD in a store that you would really like to have, but you've spent your allowance and don't have the money to buy it. Will you shoplift to have it, or what will you do?

3. You want to go to the movie, but you've run out of your allowance and your Dad won't give you the money to go. You know where your mother's purse is with money in it. Will you steal from your Mom, or what will you do?

4. There is a movie your friend wants you to go to with him or her. You know it's "R" rated. When you ask your Mom if you can go and she asks how it is rated, will you lie to her, or what will you do?

5. You were sent to the principal's office today for using bad language. What will you tell your Mom and Dad?



Prosperity Promise

MEMORY VERSE

Malachi 3:10 "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so that there will be food enough in my Temple; if you do, I will open up the windows of heaven for you and pour out a blessing so great you won't have room enough to take it in!" (TLB).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 28:1-22

Deuteronomy 8:10-18

Job 22:23-27

Psalm 78:23-24

Isaiah 45:6-7

Malachi 3:6-12

Malachi 3:10

3 John 1-11

WORDS TO KNOW

INHERIT- to come into possession of or receive as a right

OPPRESSIVE - Unreasonably burdensome or severe

OFFSPRING - the progeny of an animal or plant: child

THE LESSON

Do you ever fight with your siblings? Have you ever fought over who would inherit your Mom's and Dad's house when they die. Probably not. But inheriting a house and land could mean a lot of money in your bank account when they are sold. People in the Bible knew the importance of inheriting houses, land, and other earthly stuff their parents owned. Esau learned the value of what he was giving up too late, but he decided it was worth fighting over. So sibling rivalry continued.

Esau hated Jacob because Jacob had traded Esau out of his birthright. But that was not all. He also got the blessing through deceit that Isaac thought he was giving to Esau. Everything Jacob would be receiving was extremely valuable to him and his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all of his descendants down to this day. It wasn't just a small package of stuff. What Jacob and his descendants were getting was worth a lot!

When Esau fully realized the result of Jacob getting the birthright and the blessings, he was fighting mad! He even planned to kill Jacob after Isaac, his father died. Rebekah wanted to do everything she could to prevent this from happening. So she told Jacob to flee to his Uncle Laban's place in Haran and stay there until Esau forgot about what Jacob had done.

Before Jacob left, Isaac his father, blessed him yet another time. He told him not to marry a Canaanite girl. These were the same instructions that Abraham, Isaac's father, had given him. The Canaanites didn't worship the true God. They were idol worshipers.

So Jacob left Beersheba and started out for Haran where his Uncle Laban lived. Jacob had walked a long way and was tired. About sunset he decided to pitch camp. There were no clean sheets and soft pillows. He didn't even have sleeping bag to bed down in. So he found a rock that would work as a pillow - well, at least a support for his head. After falling asleep, he had a dream in which he saw a staircase that reached from earth to heaven. Angels of God were going up and down the staircase.

Jacob saw the Lord standing at the top of this staircase. He said, "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham, and of your father Isaac. The ground you are lying on is yours! I will give it to you and to your descendants. For you will have descendants as many as dust! They will cover the land from east to west and from north to south; and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. What's more, I am with you, and will protect you wherever you go, and will bring you back safely to this land; I will be with you constantly until I have finished giving you all I am promising" (Genesis 28:13-15 TLB).

If you were camping away out from any other human being and had a dream like this, how would you feel? Would it scare you out of your wits seeing this dramatic display of angels walking a staircase from earth to heaven? Would you have believed that this was the Lord speaking to you? Let's see Jacob's reaction when he awakened.

Jacob was in absolute terror! He said, "God lives here! I've stumbled into his home! This is the awesome entrance to heaven!" This certainly wasn't a night that left Jacob wanting to sleep in late the next morning. He got up early and placed that rock he used for a pillow upright as a memorial of worship of God. Then he poured olive oil on it. Olive oil was used throughout the Bible for dedicating something, or anointing kings or people.

This was an awesome dream! The Lord said He would protect Jacob wherever he went. Now isn't that worth a lot? He said that He would bring him back safely to this land. He also said that He would constantly be with Jacob until He had finished giving him everything that He had promised. This included a promise of so many offspring spread from one end of the earth to the other that they would be as dust. "All of the nations of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants."

What nations help when there is drought, famine, or an oppressive government? The United States and Great Britain were there to free the Iraqis from Saddam Hussein's oppressive dictatorship. Doing all of these things provides an enormous blessing to other nations.

Then Jacob made a vow to God. He promised that if God would watch over him on the trip to Haran, give him food and clothes to wear, and return him safely back home, he would give God a tenth of everything God would give him. Are you willing to say with Jacob that you will give God a tenth of everything He gives you? God gives us everything we have. Giving Him back one dollar out of every ten He gives us is the least we can do. You can't out give God. Remember what your memory verse says?

STUDENT PRAYER

Thank you, Father, for giving me everything I have and for fulfilling your promises to Jacob's and his descendants. It is such a small thing for me to return only ten percent of what you give me to you. Help me to always be faithful in tithing and giving to you.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Malachi 3:6-12

Monday- Psalm 78:23-24

Tuesday - Job 22:23-27

Wednesday - 3 John 1-11

Thursday - Isaiah 45:6-7

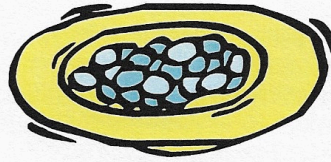
Friday - Genesis 28:13-15

Saturday - Deuteronomy 8:10-18

Activity

Make your own acrostic using the word tithe. Here is an example:

- T** - Thank God for all He gives you.
I - It should come from the heart.
T - Ten percent of all your increase,
H - Has to be His part.
E - Each time He promises to bless you.



T- _____
I- _____
T- _____
H- _____
E- _____

Circle the following words found in your lesson and in the Word Search below:

INHERIT	HARAN	MEMORIAL	ROCK
TITHE	LABAN	OFFSPRING	PROTECT
JACOB	STAIRCASE	BLESSED	DUST
ESAU	DESCENDANTS		

A	G	N	J	L	T	S	O	U	W	T
I	N	H	E	R	I	T	P	A	Q	K
L	X	A	S	Z	T	A	D	O	B	H
A	S	R	A	V	H	I	M	F	P	O
B	W	A	U	K	E	R	E	F	R	Y
A	Q	N	D	R	K	C	M	S	O	F
N	J	A	C	O	B	A	O	P	T	A
R	B	L	P	C	G	S	R	R	E	I
B	L	E	S	K	F	E	I	I	C	K
D	E	S	C	E	N	D	A	N	T	S
U	S	D	J	G	Z	B	L	G	W	Q
S	S	P	F	T	D	U	V	N	K	L
T	E	V	H	U	Y	R	W	E	I	M
J	D	F	D	R	S	A	C	O	H	B

Second Effort

MEMORY VERSE

Philippians 3:14 "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 28:1-4

Genesis 29:1-28

Proverbs 12:21-24

Proverbs 15:14-23

Proverbs 24:30-34

Ecclesiastes 4:4-6

Ecclesiastes 9:4-10

Ecclesiastes 10:6-20

Philippians 3:14

WORDS TO KNOW

SAGA - a long detailed account

DETER - to turn aside, discourage, or prevent from happening

THE LESSON

Athletes know that few games are won without giving it their Second Effort. Even though they may be dead-dog tired and ready to give up, they know they must push even harder to get that win they want. We've already seen how Jacob was this type of person. He managed to get not only Esau's birthright, but he also got the blessing that Isaac intended to be Esau's.

The saga continued with Jacob going to his uncle Laban's to find the right wife. Down the dusty path from where he was, he could see shepherds and three flocks of sheep lying beside an open field waiting to be watered. There was a heavy stone covering the mouth of the well. The stone was kept over the mouth of the well until all of the sheep were there and ready to drink. Jacob walked over to the shepherds and found out that they lived in Haran. It was only natural for Jacob to wonder if these shepherds knew his Uncle Laban. So he asked them. They said that they did and that Laban was well and prosperous.

About that time Laban's beautiful daughter, Rachel, walked up with her sheep. She was a shepherdess. Jacob went over to the well and rolled away the stone and watered his uncle's flock. He was so happy to see Rachel that he kissed her and then started crying. He explained that her Aunt Rebekah was his mother; they were cousins. Rachel wanted her father to hear this good news, so she ran to get Laban.

With kind relatives and this beautiful, shapely cousin around, Jacob decided to stay and work for Laban without pay. But as time went on, Laban told Jacob that just because he was a relative, he didn't have to work without pay. So they began to negotiate a wage for Jacob. Jacob was in love with Rachel and wanted to marry her someday. So he said to Laban, "I'll work for you seven years if you will give me Rachel to be my wife." Laban thought that was a fair enough bargain and agreed to it. But Laban had another daughter. Her name was Leah and she happened to be older than Rachel. Leah had lovely eyes, but Rachel was shapely and a real beauty.

Jacob's seven years of working for Laban was up, and it was time for the wedding. He was so much in love with Rachel that the time had just flown. Laban threw a big party and invited all of the neighbors. His daughter was getting married and it was time to celebrate!

However, Laban was more concerned about marrying off his oldest daughter than keeping his word. The party was dying down and it was time to take Rachel into Jacob's tent as his wife. But Laban tricked Jacob. While it was dark he took Leah, instead of Rachel, into Jacob's tent. Jacob thought he had married Rachel and didn't realize what he was doing. So he slept with Leah. When he woke up the next morning he saw that Leah was in his bed and not Rachel, the woman he loved so dearly. To say the least, Jacob was not happy with Laban. He never intended to marry Leah. He had worked seven years for Rachel according to their agreement, and now Laban tricked him. So he went to Laban and asked what in the world did he mean by sending Leah to his tent in the dark so he would sleep with her.

Laban explained to Jacob that it wasn't their custom to marry off a younger daughter ahead of her older sister. Now this was a fine time to tell Jacob this. He had an agreement with Laban that he would work for Rachel for seven years. Why didn't he tell Jacob that he was going to give him a different wife at the end of the seven years?

Laban was not only deceitful, but pretty smooth with carrying his plan through. He asked Jacob to wait until the bridal week was over and then "you can have Rachel too - if you promise to work for me another seven years!"

Have you ever had someone play a really dirty trick on you? What if you thought you had married the most beautiful, shapely girl in the world and woke up the morning after your wedding to realize that you had slept with her sister? How would you feel? Would you keep her as your wife, or would you claim that you were defrauded and kick her out?

Jacob saw that he was trapped. Laban had tricked him out of the woman he loved, but that would not deter him. Jacob was much like his mother, Rebekah - a goal-oriented individual. If it was something he knew was worth working for, he was willing to pay the price. Jacob knew what he wanted and was willing to do what it took to marry Rachel, the woman he loved so much. Having Rachel to be his wife would take a Second Effort - seven more years of working for Laban. But Rachel was worth it. And he was willing to do it. So Jacob worked seven more years for Rachel.

What is it that you really want in life? Do you want to finish school at the top of your graduating class? Do you want to go to college, but your family can't afford to send you? Do you want a successful, happy, and lasting marriage? None of these things will happen without giving it that Second Effort. There'll be times when you have to work twice as hard, like Jacob did. But few things in life are easy. The really good things in life will require that Second Effort. And the best thing of all - making it into God's Kingdom - will require that Second Effort as well.

STUDENT PRAYER

Great God and Father,
You have such enormous blessings ahead of me. Satan and my peers will often be there to deter me from getting them. I'm willing to give you my Second Effort, but I'll need your help each step of the way. Thank you for being with me.
In Jesus' name I pray.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Genesis 28:1-4

Monday- Ecclesiastes 10:6-20

Tuesday - Ecclesiastes 4:4-6

Wednesday - Ecclesiastes 9:4-10

Thursday - Proverbs 12:21-24

Friday - Proverbs 15:14-23

Saturday - Proverbs 24:30-34

Activity

Write a short answer to the questions below.

1. What would you do if a friend or relative tricked you into working seven years for something you really wanted and then reneged on his word?

2. What do you think were some of the consequences Laban suffered for deceiving and tricking Jacob?

3. List five good character traits that Jacob showed when he was tricked and deceived.



4. What kinds of blessings did Jacob receive from God?

5. Which people could Jacob give thanks to for the blessings he received?

It's Worth the Effort

MEMORY VERSE

Ecclesiastes 9:10 "No matter what you do, work at it with all your might. Remember, you are going to your grave. And there isn't any work or planning or knowledge or wisdom there" (NIrV).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 29:1-35

Genesis 30:1-43

Genesis 31:1-55

Genesis 32:1-32

Proverbs 24:1-10

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Matthew 5:23-26

John 16:31-33

Revelation 2:7

Revelation 2:26-29

Revelation 3:18-21

Revelation 21:5-8

WORDS TO KNOW

COVENANT - formal, solemn and binding agreement

PACIFY- appease, soothe

ENTOURAGE - one's attendants or associates

THE LESSON

One of my high school girlfriends, who was an only child, was envious of me. She said there was always something going on at my house. Of course there was. Day and night something was happening. Why? Because I had five brothers and four sisters. We cooked and ate together. We exercised together. We tried on each other's clothes and borrowed what happened to fit and looked good on us. We played and argued together. It was a household with a lot of love, noise, and activity.

There was a family in the Bible that had some similarities to mine. But Jacob had more sons than I had siblings. He had enough boys to make an entire football team, plus one. In other words, Jacob had 12 sons and one daughter. Count them. Reuben was Jacob's first. Then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Isaachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin followed.

Jacob and his growing family still lived on the same land with Laban. Jacob worked for Laban 20 years. He was honest and fair in all of his dealings with Laban, his father-in-law. Laban had been a very demanding employer and far from the easiest man to work for.

Do you remember that Laban promised Jacob that he could have Rachel as his wife for seven years of labor? Jacob felt it was worth the effort. But remember, Jacob hadn't counted on Laban deceiving him by putting Leah, Rachel's oldest sister in his tent to be his wife. Remember, Jacob had to work seven more years to get Rachel. That wasn't all, he worked six years for Laban's flock and Laban changed Jacob's wages ten times. It was worth the effort . . . but God knew Laban wasn't treating Jacob fairly.

God blessed Jacob with 12 sons, one daughter, many servants, and many kinds of cattle and flocks. But God saw Jacob's hardship and how hard he worked. God spoke to Jacob one day and told him to "Return to the land of your fathers; and I will be with you."

While Laban was shearing his sheep one day, Jacob fled with his family and animals without telling Laban that he was leaving. Three days later someone told Laban that Jacob had taken his family and fled. This didn't set well at all with Laban. So he started out to find Jacob and his family. Laban found them where Jacob had camped with his family in the hill country of Gilead. Jacob didn't like it that Laban followed him out there. He was angry and took Laban to task, asking, "What is my crime? What sin have I committed that you hunt me down?" Well, they patched things up with a covenant that Jacob and Laban made. Jacob saw it was worth the effort to make peace with his father-in-law. Then Laban kissed his daughters and went home.

Jacob, his wives, and his children traveled toward home to see his mother and father, Rebekah and Isaac. But there was something else he wanted to do along the way. Even though he was afraid of his brother, Esau, he wanted to make peace with him and felt it was worth the effort. Jacob sent messengers ahead of his entourage to Esau, and servants went with many gifts to pacify Esau: 200 female goats, 20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 female camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys, and 10 male donkeys. What do you think all of those animals would cost in today's dollars? A bunch! If that's what it took to make peace with his brother, Jacob felt it was worth the effort.

That night Jacob sent his entourage across the Jabbok River with all of his possessions. Jacob was left alone and had a dream that a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw

that he couldn't overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Now Jacob was at a terrible disadvantage with this very painful hip. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

The man asked him, "What is your name?"

"Jacob," he answered.

Then the man said, 'Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.'

Jacob said, "Please tell me your name."

But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.

Again Jacob was blessed. His name was changed to Israel. His descendants today are called Israelites. And they are the peoples who are receiving the blessings God gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. All the way through Jacob's life he showed such strong character. He worked hard even in the face of adversity and deceit. He was an honorable man who made peace with all of his enemies. He wrestled with God and wouldn't give up until God blessed him. God said that he overcame with Him and men. Do you think Jacob would say, "It was worth the effort?"

You too will face many adversities in life. There will be people who will deceive you. Some will be your enemies. You may get hurt in the process. But how will you handle it? Will you, like Jacob, make peace with your enemies? Will you fight to receive your blessings from God even when it hurts? Will you say with Jacob, "It's Worth the Effort?"

STUDENT PRAYER

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,

What a wonderful example Jacob is to me. He overcame adversities with You and men. Nothing seemed to deter him from getting Your blessings. You want to bless us, but we, like Jacob, must work hard, be honorable, make peace with our enemies, and even struggle with You, if necessary, to receive the blessing You have in store for us - Your Kingdom.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Proverbs 24:1-10

Monday - Revelation 2:7

Tuesday - Revelation 2:26-29

Wednesday - John 16:31-33

Thursday - Revelation 3:18-21

Friday - Revelation 21:5-8

Saturday - Matthew 5:23-26

Activity

1. God gave Jacob a new name. What was it? _____

2. What did Jacob's new name mean? (You'll find it in Genesis 32:28)

3. What if God let you choose a name that fits your character? From the possible names below, circle the ones that you feel fit you best.

Peacemaker

Prayerful

Determined

Friendly

Trustworthy

Seeker of God

Helpful

Truthful

Loyal

Dedicated

Patient

Follower of God

Hard working

Perseveres

Obedient



4. Pick three of the character traits Jacob had, list them on the lines below, and explain how you determined this. You may cite the incident or give the Scripture reference.

A.

B.

C.

5. Briefly explain why you think the trials Jacob faced in his life were worth the effort.

Favorite Son

MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction and haughtiness before a fall" (TLB).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 35:1-29

Genesis 37:1-36

Proverbs 9:7

Proverbs 16:1-8

Proverbs 16:18

Proverbs 18:1-7

Proverbs 21:23

Philippians 2:3-7

James 1:17-18

James 3:17-18

James 4:7-12

WORDS TO KNOW

CISTERN - an underground tank for storing liquid

COMPLEX - repressed desires that exert a dominating influence upon the personality

BALM - any of several aromatic plants of the mint family

MYRRH - aromatic gum resin with a bitter taste

THE LESSON

If you have a brother or sister, do you think your parents play favorites? Are you the one who gets doted on, or is it one of your siblings? How do you feel when you think your sibling gets special treatment? Maybe you feel either your mother or dad actually loves one of your siblings more than you. If you're the one who is their Favorite Son, how do your siblings react when you get special treatment? Our Bible lesson today is about a 17 year-old Favorite Son.

Jacob, or Israel, as God had renamed him, set up a stone where he wrestled with God. He started with his 11 sons towards Bethel where his father, Isaac, lived. Israel's wife, Rachel, was pregnant. Along this journey, Rachel went into labor. It was a difficult birth. Just as Benjamin, Joseph's only full brother, was born, Rachel died in childbirth. Israel buried Rachel, the wife he worked 14

years to have, in Bethlehem. Then Israel continued his journey to see his 180-year-old father, Isaac. Not long after Israel and his family arrived, Isaac died. Jacob and Esau buried him.

Joseph, a teenage boy, tended the flocks with his brothers. Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons. He made a beautiful, ornate robe for Joseph. It was evident to the other 11 sons that Joseph was Israel's Favorite Son and the other boys were jealous. What happens when jealousy creeps into your life? You start picking apart the person you're jealous of. You can't see any of their good qualities. So you enlarge every fault that person has and create others in your mind. Then you begin to hate that person. And that's exactly what happened to Joseph's brothers.

Joseph had a dream that made him feel very important. Rather than cooling it and not saying a word to his brothers who hated him, he began blabbing. "Listen to this dream I had," he said to his brothers. "We were bringing sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."

All of this bowing down stuff sounded to Joseph's brothers like he had some kind of a "king complex." After all, Joseph was just another brother and no better than they. Why should they gather around him and bow down? Now they hated him all the more.

Joseph had another dream. If he'd only kept his mouth shut, he could have saved himself some trouble. But he just had to tell his brothers about his dream. He told them, "The sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." Eleven stars? Well, those boys could count. There were 11 brothers. Now Joseph was making it even clearer that his 11 brothers would bow down to him. Talk about being jealous, these boys had a load of it. Joseph had now added fuel to the flame. Then Israel questioned his son about his dream. Perhaps Israel wondered if Joseph was forgetting the eternal principle that is in today's memory verse, "Pride goes before destruction and haughtiness before a fall."

The 11 brothers went to Shechem to graze their flocks. Israel sent Joseph to check on his brothers in Shechem and report back to him. By that time, the boys had moved on to Dothan. So, Joseph went to Dothan and found them. Joseph's brother had been busy plotting to kill him. When Joseph showed up, they said to each other, "Hear comes that dreamer!"

Reuben, the oldest brother, didn't like the idea of his siblings killing Joseph. He suggested throwing Joseph in a cistern in the desert. Secretly, Reuben planned to rescue Joseph and take him back to his father. The brothers agreed that throwing Joseph in the cistern was a good plan. So they stripped him of the beautiful, ornate coat of many colors that Israel had made for Joseph. They threw him in the cistern, but it didn't have any water in it.

Meanwhile, a caravan of Ishmaelites on camels, loaded down with spices, balm, and myrrh, was making its way towards them on their way to Egypt. By now, Judah realized there was no

financial gain in killing Joseph. Maybe, just maybe, they could make some money if they would sell him to these Ishmaelites. The brothers agreed. They pulled Joseph out of the cistern and sold him to the men, but kept the robe that his father made. They slaughtered a goat and put some of its blood on Joseph's beautiful robe. They headed home to their father, Israel, and showed him the robe with the blood on it. Israel immediately thought that Joseph was dead. The boys allowed him to believe this lie. Israel tore his clothes and mourned many days for his son and refused to be comforted. In Egypt the Ishmaelites sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's captain of the guard. This Favorite Son had now been sold twice.

What lesson can you learn from this? When God blesses you or uses you in some way, don't be proud. Always keep in mind what James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (Kids NIV Bible). We shouldn't be taking credit for what God gives us - our looks, brains, wealth, or whatever. We should give thanks to God for giving us these things.

STUDENT PRAYER

Great God,

You are the giver of every good and perfect gift. Help me to never think more highly of myself than I should. I owe you everything. Please help me to be humble.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Proverbs 16:1-8

Monday - James 1:17-18

Tuesday- James 4:7-12

Wednesday - James 3:17-18

Thursday - Philippians 2:3-7

Friday - Proverbs 18:1-7

Saturday - Proverbs 21:23; 9:7

Activity

IT'S HARD TO BE HUMBLE

Mac Davis wrote the lyrics to a song titled *It's Hard to Be Humble*. It went something like this:

"Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble
When you're perfect in every way.
I can't wait to look in the mirror
Cos I's better looking each day.
To know me is to love me. . ."



1. Joseph was a very good-looking man and he was his father's *Favorite Son*. He also had unusual dreams that indicated he was going to be greater than his brothers. On the lines below, list the things that Joseph did that caused his brothers to hate him:

2. On the lines below, list things Joseph could have done differently to not antagonize his brothers.

3. On the lines below, list three times when you find it difficult to show humility rather than pride.

Bad Things Happen to Good People

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord, those who are called according to His purpose."

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 39:1-23

Proverbs 3:1-6

Proverbs 4:1-27

Proverbs 5:1-22

Luke 16:10-13

Romans 8:23

Romans 8:28

WORDS TO KNOW

BOORISH - uncouth and rudeness of manners, tasteless, lacking all grace

GROSS - immediately obvious; glaringly noticeable, usually because of inexcusable badness or objectionableness in manner

EXECUTIONER- one who puts to death

THE LESSON

Joseph headed out with the Ishmaelite traders who bought him from his brothers. When they arrived in Egypt, they sold him to Potiphar, who was Pharaoh's body guard and chief executioner.

In spite of Joseph's problems, no slave had as much going for him as Joseph had. He was very handsome and very special to God. He was special to God because he was Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's descendant. God was with Joseph and saw to it that everything he did succeeded. It was obvious to Potiphar that God was blessing Joseph in special ways. Joseph became Potiphar's favorite worker. He put Joseph in charge of the administration of his household, including his business affairs. He knew he could trust Joseph and didn't worry about a thing Joseph was doing.

Everything was going well for this handsome young man. He had an excellent job and his boss trusted him. But when things are going this well, sometimes it seems too good to be true. Then

you start wondering, when is all of this going to end? Well it was about to end for Joseph.

Potiphar's wife was very much aware of what a good-looking young man Joseph was. She began making eyes at Joseph and

was so gross that she asked him to sleep with her. Joseph refused! He told her that his master, who was her husband, trusted him with his entire household and had given him equal authority with Potiphar. "He has held back nothing from me except you, yourself, because you are his wife. How can I do such a wicked thing as this? It would be a great sin against God."

Congratulations, Joseph! You did exactly the right thing. Potiphar's wife was so gross and cheap that she wouldn't even take no for an answer. This woman kept after Joseph day after day.

Joseph, being a wise young man kept out of her way. Again, hurrah for Joseph! That's exactly what he should have done.

One day Joseph was alone in the house going about his work as usual. Potiphar's boorish wife came and grabbed Joseph. "Sleep with me." Again, Joseph did exactly the right thing. He tore away from this tasteless woman. But as luck would have it, his jacket slipped off and this woman was holding on to it. When she realized that she had Joseph's jacket and he had gotten away from her, she began screaming and putting on a real show. Other workmen showed up and she cried almost hysterically, "My husband had to bring in this Hebrew slave to insult us!" She sobbed, "he tried to rape me, but when I screamed, he ran, and forgot to take his jacket."

She was a cheap, immoral woman. She was not only out to seduce Joseph, but she lied about it, big time. Lying once wasn't good enough for Potiphar's wife. One lie called for another lie to her husband to cover up her adulterous acts. When Potiphar heard his wife's story he was furious and threw Joseph in prison and kept him in chains.

How unfair for Joseph! He was innocent and his heart was right. But God knew all of this and He was always with Joseph. It wasn't long before the chief jailer turned over the administration of the prison to Joseph. He took care of everything because God was with him.

Think about it. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and threw him in a pit. They dragged him out and sold him to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar. Joseph's good looks didn't save him. But, because of his attitude and God's plan for him, He saved him every time. How would you like for God to always save you from such disasters as being in a pit, sold as a slave, and your boss' wife trying to seduce you, lying about it, and her husband throwing you in jail one more time? Bad Things Happen to Good People. But God looks on the heart as He did with Joseph. It was obvious to God that Joseph was doing the right things. If you will be honest and do right, you can pray this prayer in Psalm 17 with confidence that God will take care of you as well.

"I AM PLEADING for your help, O Lord; for I have been honest and have done what is right, and you must listen to my earnest cry! Publicly acquit me, Lord, for you are always fair. You have tested me and seen that I am good. You have come even in the night and found nothing amiss and know that I have told the truth. I have followed your commands and have not gone along with cruel and evil men. My feet have not slipped from your paths.

"Why am I praying like this? Because I know you will answer me, O God! Yes, listen as I pray. Show me your strong love in wonderful ways, O Savior of all those seeking your help against their foes." God can see to it that good things will happen to good people.

So what do you do when you find yourself in a compromising situation? You get out of there as fast as you can, even if it means leaving your coat. Do what is right. Trust God. And He will work it out for your good.

STUDENT PRAYER

Gracious Father,

Thank you for encouraging me with Joseph's example. I may not be as good-looking as he was, but you look on the heart. It's awesome how you intervened for Joseph every time and turned bad things into good things for Joseph. Help me to live an honest, moral life so that you will look after me too.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Luke 16:10-13

Monday - Genesis 39:7-12

Tuesday - Proverbs 3:1-6

Wednesday - Proverbs 4:1-6

Thursday - Proverbs 4:7-18

Friday - Proverbs 5:1-22

Saturday - Proverbs 4:20-27

Activity

Write your own story on the lines below about something that could happen on a date today with either the boy or girl seducing the other one. Explain: 1) where they were; 2) how it happened; 3) who seduced whom; 4) what the one being seduced did; 5) if they did the wrong thing, what they should have done; and, 6) what the consequences were. These stories will be shared in class. The one voted to be the best will get a prize.

A Good-Looking Prisoner

MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 31:30 "Charm can be deceptive and beauty doesn't last, but a woman who fears and reverences God shall be greatly praised" (TLB).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 41:1-57

2 Samuel 7:25-29

Psalms 62:9

Proverbs 16:12-19

Proverbs 18:12

Proverbs 31:23-31

Proverbs 31:30

Jeremiah 9:23-24

John 6:25-29

WORDS TO KNOW

SHRIVELED - to draw into wrinkles, especially with a loss of moisture

WITHERED - to become dry and sapless; to shrivel from loss of bodily moisture

SAGES - one distinguished for wisdom

THE LESSON

What's the worst dream you've ever had? Did you wake up scared to death? Was it hard to go back to sleep? Did you wonder what it meant - its significance for you?

Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing on the bank of the Nile River, when suddenly, seven sleek, fat cows came up out of the river and began grazing in the grass. Then seven other cows came up from the river, but they were very skinny and all their ribs stood out. They went over and stood beside the fat cows. Then the skinny cows ate the fat ones! Then Pharaoh woke up!

What in the world was that all about? It didn't seem to bother Pharaoh very much, because he went back to sleep and had a second dream about seven heads of grain on one stalk, well formed and plump. Then he dreamed about seven more heads of grain, shriveled and withered. The seven thin heads swallowed up the seven plump heads. Then Pharaoh woke up again. The next morning Pharaoh began to think about his dreams and wondered what they meant. He called all

of the Egyptian magicians and sages and went over his dreams with them. But not one of them knew what they meant.

The king's wine taster told Pharaoh that while he was in prison, Joseph had interpreted his dream for him, and his interpretation was correct. Pharaoh immediately sent for Joseph. Wow! What a relief. He was glad to get out of that dungeon. He'd been there for more than two years.

Pharaoh told Joseph his dreams. Joseph reminded Pharaoh that he couldn't tell him what they meant without God's help. "But God will tell you what it means. .. The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout all the land of Egypt; but afterwards there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten and wiped out; famine will consume the land.

"The famine will be so terrible that even the memory of the good years will be erased. The double dream gives double impact, showing that what I have told you is certainly going to happen, for God has decreed it, and it is going to happen soon."

Joseph went on to tell Pharaoh that he should put the wisest man in Egypt in charge of administering a nationwide farm program. He laid out a plan to prevent disaster where many would starve to death in Egypt from this famine. Pharaoh recognized that Joseph was filled with the Spirit of God. And he turned to Joseph and told him that since God had revealed all of this to him, he was the wisest man in all of Egypt. So Pharaoh appointed Joseph to be the administrator of this project and put his own signet ring on Joseph's finger as a sign of authority. He dressed Joseph in beautiful clothes and put the royal golden chain around his neck. Joseph went from being a prisoner again to being completely in charge of Egypt.

But that wasn't all. Pharaoh gave Joseph the chariot of the second in command and one of Potipher's daughters, Asenath, to be his wife. He was now 37 years old and he traveled throughout the land. Guess what he saw? He saw the land produce bountifully with bumper crops for seven years. They stored their crops in nearby cities until the granaries were overflowing.

Joseph and Asenath had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Then the bountiful years came to an end and the worldwide famine started, just as Joseph had predicted. Because of the insights God gave Joseph, he was able to sell grain to the Egyptians and people of other nations who came to buy grain.

Why do you think God gave Joseph such wisdom and insight? Was it because he was such a charming, good-looking man? Proverbs 31:30 says, "Charm can be deceptive and beauty doesn't last." So if it wasn't his good looks and charm, then what was it? Even Pharaoh could tell that Joseph was filled with the Spirit of God. Will God give wisdom and fill someone with His Spirit who doesn't obey Him? Joseph conducted his life in such a way to show his obedience to God.

He ran from Potiphar's wife when she tried to seduce him even though it meant he had to spend time in prison. Pharaoh thought Joseph was the wisest man in Egypt and put him in charge of administering a nationwide farm program. What does that say to you about how much Joseph believed God and what kind of relationship he had with Him? Joseph didn't take the glory for interpreting Pharaoh's dreams. He humbly told Pharaoh that only God interprets dreams.

What can you learn from Joseph? Keep in mind that God is all wise and all powerful. He can do great things through you if you will have the kind of trusting relationship with Him that Joseph had. Joseph wasn't conceited. He recognized that only God could interpret dreams. But he knew he had to go to Pharaoh and be willing for God to work through him. Do you recognize that God is the Greatest? Greater than yourself? Greater than what your peers think of you? Are you willing to go and do what God would have you do? Your peers may not like you any better than Joseph's own brothers liked him when they sold him to be a slave. But Joseph trusted God and lived an exemplary life. His life was so remarkable that Pharaoh trusted Joseph and put him in charge of everything he had. Are you willing to be like Joseph?

STUDENT PRAYER

Awesome Father,

Joseph was a remarkable young man. His looks weren't the most important thing about him. He believed, trusted, and obeyed you. You looked upon him with favor and gave him wisdom and the ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. You got him out of prison and put him in charge of administering a nationwide farm program. Help me to be more like Joseph.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Proverbs 31:23-31

Monday - Proverbs 16:12-19

Tuesday - Jeremiah 9:23-24

Wednesday - 2 Samuel 7:25-29

Thursday - John 6:25-29

Friday - Psalm 62:9

Saturday - Proverbs 18:12

ACTIVITY

On the lines below write out a dream you have had
or a dream you just make up.

A cartoon illustration of a young boy with a large nose, wearing a green t-shirt and blue pants. He is holding a purple gift box with a green ribbon. Above his head is a blue thought bubble containing a purple video game console with a screen and buttons. The background is white with horizontal lines.

Heavy Weights

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 11: 3 "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! (The NIV Study Bible For Kids).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 42:1-29

Genesis 44:1-34

Genesis 45:1-13

2 Chronicles 7:12-16

Psalm 55:22

Psalm 103:12

Luke 13:1-3

Romans 11:33

WORDS TO KNOW

CONSENSUS - general agreement

APPREHENSIVE - viewing the future with anxiety

THE LESSON

Have you ever been really hungry? Well, maybe by the time the sun sets on the Day of Atonement you really are hungry. But what if, at the end of the day, there was no food to eat - anywhere? What if there was a famine and you couldn't go to the grocery store to buy food? Would you be scared that you might soon starve to death?

Do you remember in last week's lesson, Pharaoh had some dreams and sent for Joseph to interpret them? Joseph interpreted them with God's help. "The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout all the land of Egypt; but afterwards there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten and wiped out; famine will consume the land." Those dreams came true! Pharaoh said Joseph was the wisest man in Egypt. Because God revealed this to Joseph, Pharaoh appointed him to be the administrator of his nationwide farm project to conserve and store grain.

Jacob, Joseph's father, heard that there was food available in Egypt. So he sent ten of his sons to Egypt to buy grain. Jacob wouldn't let Benjamin, his youngest, much loved son, and Joseph's only full brother, go with them because he was afraid something would happen to him.

Drought had caused widespread famine. People from many nations went to Egypt to buy grain. Since Joseph was now the administrator of the nationwide farm project, his ten brothers had to see him to get their grain. They greeted him and bowed before him, but didn't recognize him. Joseph knew who they were, but pretended he didn't. This was a very emotional moment for him. To cover his emotions he asked them questions roughly. A number of years had passed since his own brothers had sold him to be a slave. Joseph had made the most of his time in Egypt, but that didn't mean his brothers would get off scot-free. Joseph remembered the dream he had before his brothers sold him into Egypt? Do you remember it? "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!" Joseph's brothers couldn't imagine that dream was from God because he was their brother.

Through an interpreter, Joseph continued with the hard questions. "You come to see how destitute the famine has made our land." They immediately denied that and explained there were 12 brothers, that their father was in the land of Canaan, and Benjamin was with him. They told Joseph that one brother was dead. Joseph must have found that interesting, as he was very much alive and right there with them. But he didn't say anything. He then accused them of being spies. He told them he'd test the truth of their story by putting all of them, but one in prison, and the one not in prison was to go get their youngest brother and bring him back. But three days later, Joseph became soft-hearted and changed his mind. One would remain chained in jail while the others went home with the grain, and with the requirement that they come back with Benjamin, their youngest brother.

Joseph understood everything his brothers were saying, but they didn't know it. He became so emotional that he had to leave the room to weep. When he returned, he selected Simeon to be chained and let the other brothers start home with their grain. Joseph ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, and he gave secret instructions to put each brother's payment for the grain in his bag. He gave them food for their journey home.

The ten brothers headed home. When they stopped overnight, one opened his bag of grain to feed their donkeys. He couldn't believe what he saw. The payment he had given Joseph for the grain was right there on top of his bag. The apprehension among this group was so bad they were filled with terror and trembling! They thought God was out to get them for what they had done to Joseph. It was reflection time for the brothers who had sold Joseph to be a slave. They thought Joseph was dead and blamed each other. The consensus was they would all die because of what they had done. A little soul-searching was probably good for them, even though they didn't know Joseph was alive.

When they arrived home, they told Jacob, their father, the story. Terror gripped Jacob as it had his sons. He thought he'd lost Simeon and he wasn't about to let Benjamin go to Egypt. But the famine continued and he realized they would all starve if his boys didn't return to Egypt. After much conversation, Jacob let them take Benjamin and go for more grain.

Have you ever heard the statement "Be sure your sins will find you out"? The brothers knew it was wrong to put Joseph in that pit and to sell him into Egypt to be a slave. They knew they did this out of jealousy. Until this time, Joseph was out of sight and out of their thoughts. But their sin was haunting them. They knew they had done wrong and that God was going to make them pay for what they had done. But why were they still feeling so guilty? They had never repented of what they had done to Joseph. How do we know? Because they had never confessed to their father that an animal hadn't killed Joseph and that they had sold him to be a slave.

Have you ever committed a sin and had it haunt you? Did you worry that God was going to get you for it? The only way out of this is going to God, confessing your sins openly and honestly, and asking for forgiveness. Psalm 55:22 says, "Give your burdens to the Lord. He will carry them. He will not permit the godly to slip or fall" (TLB). Psalm 103:12 says "He has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west." Isn't that a great feeling?

STUDENT PRAYER

Gracious and loving God,
Thank you for giving me the history of the children of Israel. Because Abraham was obedient to you, you said his seed would be as the stars of the heavens. Jacob is one piece in this puzzle. His son Joseph was sold into Egypt for a purpose. It's all part of your wonderful plan. Grant me understanding as I study your Word.
In Jesus' name I pray.
Amen

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Genesis 42:1-15

Monday - Genesis 42:16-29

Tuesday - Genesis 45:1-13

Wednesday - Psalm 55:22

Thursday - Psalm 103:12

Friday - Luke 13:1-3

Saturday - 2 Chronicles 7:12-16

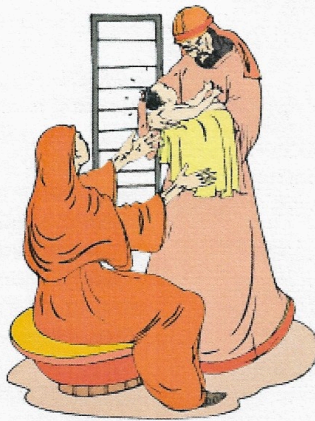
Activity

Jacob had 12 sons by four different wives. Use your Bible and list the names of all 12 sons and put their mother's name beside theirs.

Brothers

Mothers

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Saved From the Famine

MEMORY VERSE

Romans 6:13 "Give yourselves to God. . . . Surrender your whole being to him to be used for righteous purposes" (TEV).

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 42:1-3

Genesis 43:1-2

Genesis 45:1-11

Genesis 47:7-12

Genesis 49:1-28

Psalm 119:19

Proverbs 16:1-8

Matthew 10:29-30

Romans 6:13

WORDS TO KNOW

ABJECT - existing in a low state or condition

LAVISH - marked by an abundance or excess

THE LESSON

Jacob, whom God had renamed Israel, finally agreed for his boys to take Benjamin and return to Egypt so they could get more grain. They loaded their donkeys with the best products of the land - balm, honey, spices, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. They took twice as much money so they could repay what they found in their sacks. Jacob asked for God's mercy before "this man" (Joseph), and that he would release Simeon and return Benjamin. Jacob had come to the place of accepting the death of these two sons, if he must.

Jacob's sons headed back to Egypt. At the entrance to the palace, they found Joseph's household manager. They told him about finding the money in their sacks and said they wanted to return it, explaining that they didn't know how it got there. The household manager told them not to worry about it; that God must have put it there. Then he released Simeon from prison and led them into the palace and gave them water to wash their feet while the donkeys were fed. They got presents ready to give Joseph when he came into the room.

Joseph entered the room and they bowed low before him. He asked if Jacob was alive. Remember, at this point, the brothers still didn't know this was Joseph. He was speaking through an interpreter. They told him that Jacob was alive and well. They bowed to him again. Joseph asked Benjamin if he was their youngest brother. "How are you, my son? God be gracious to you." He loved Benjamin so much, his emotions again got the better of him. He rushed out of the room and wept.

The 11 brothers were served a lavish banquet and Benjamin got five times more food as the others. It was a wonderful celebration even though Joseph ate alone.

Their sacks were filled with grain. Joseph secretly told his household manager to put Joseph's own silver cup at the top of Benjamin's sack, along with the money he paid for the grain. The brothers were up early and ready to return home the next morning. They were barely out of the city when the household manager caught up with them. "What do you mean stealing Joseph's silver cup?" he asked. They didn't know it was in Benjamin's sack, so they answered, "What in the world are you talking about? If you find his cup with any one of us, let that one die. The rest of us will be slaves forever to your master."

"Fair enough," the man replied, "except that only the one who stole it will be a slave, the rest of you can go free." The sacks were searched and the silver cup was in Benjamin's sack. This was the last thing they wanted to happen because Jacob loved Benjamin so much. So they returned to the city to face Joseph one more time.

They made every effort to prove their innocence. But deep down they thought that God was still punishing them for the sin of selling Joseph into Egypt. They told Joseph that they had all returned to be his slaves. But that wasn't what Joseph wanted. He only wanted Benjamin and all the others could go home. That was the last person the brothers wanted him to have.

Judah, one of the brothers, stepped up and said, "O sir, let me say just this one word to you. . . we have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one. And his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him very much. And you said to us, 'Bring him here so that I can see him. . . the lad cannot leave his father, for his father would die. . . and we will be responsible for bringing down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. .. Let me stay here as your slave instead of the lad and let the lad return with his brothers.'" Can you imagine becoming a slave in place of your sibling?

Joseph couldn't stand it any longer. He sent everyone out of the room except the brothers and he wept aloud. His sobs could be heard throughout the palace. "I am Joseph!" he said to his brothers. "Is my father still alive?" His brothers were so surprised they couldn't say a word. He reminded them that they had sold him into Egypt but asked that they not be angry with

themselves. "Yes, it was God who sent me here, not you! And he has made me a counselor to Pharaoh, and manager of this entire nation, ruler of all the land of Egypt."

Then he told his brothers to hurry home and tell his father this story. He sent an invitation for him to come to Goshen to live near his children, grandchildren, and his flocks and herds. Joseph wanted him to come because there would still be five more years of famine. Coming to Egypt would spare Jacob and all of the family abject poverty. Joseph hugged Benjamin, and they both wept for joy. Then he hugged all of his brothers.

Pharaoh also extended an invitation to Jacob to come to Egypt. He promised the best territory in Egypt. He offered wagons to move their wives and children. Joseph gave them clothes, but he gave Benjamin five changes of clothes and 300 pieces of silver. He sent his father ten donkeys loaded with grain and all kinds of food.

The 11 brothers arrived home with the wonderful news that Joseph was alive! At first Jacob couldn't believe it. After seeing wagons filled with food he began to realize it was true. "I will go see him before I die," he said. They all arrived in Egypt with a welcome from Pharaoh. He let them pick the best land. Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

Joseph was right when he said "God sent me here, not you." God was involved in this unusual story each step of the way. He had a purpose for Jacob and his son Joseph. He has a purpose for you too. Will you find it in your life?

STUDENT PRAYER

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Thank you for saving this beautiful story so that we can know about it. It means so much to know that you have a plan that you're working out through people like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Please show me how I fit into your plan and how I can serve you as they did.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday - Proverbs 16:1-8

Monday - Matthew 10:29-30

Tuesday - Genesis 45:1-11

Wednesday - Genesis 47:7-12

Thursday - Psalm 119:19

Friday - Romans 6:13

Saturday - Genesis 49:1-28

YE4F · A Team of Brothers · Student Workbook

Activity

YOU'RE PART OF GOD'S PLAN

*The man without a purpose is like
a ship without a rudder – a waif,
a nothing, a no man.*

Thomas Carlyle

You've learned in today's lesson that it was in God's plan for Joseph to be sold into Egypt. God didn't want Abraham's children to remain in pagan Canaan where they would be corrupted. What is God's plan for you? Answer the questions below.



1. Why was everything made? See Proverbs 16:4 and write it on the lines below.

2. How long did God create man to last? See Ecclesiastics 3: 11 and write it on the lines below.

3. How long will you be on this earth? See Psalm 119:19 and write it on the lines below.

4. What should you do while you live on earth? See Romans 6:13 and write it on the lines below.
