

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ADVENTURES

Solving the Puzzle

YE3G · Student Workbook

Juniors · Year 2: Creation

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

It Pays to Obey God

MEMORY VERSE

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." - Matthew 5:11-12

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 37:1-11

Deuteronomy 8:18-20

Deuteronomy 13:1-4

1 Samuel 15:22-25

Isaiah 1:19-20

Matthew 5:11-12

Acts 2:17

Colossians 3:20-25

WORDS TO KNOW

SHEAVES - a bunch of grain tied together for drying

PROPHECY - to tell what will happen in the future or to teach

NOTEWORTHY - attracting attention because of some special excellence

THE LESSON

Ryan rubbed his eyes. It was pitch dark in his room. "I guess it was just a dream," he said, shaking his head. He had been running down the field with the football, about to score the winning touchdown. Then he woke up. "Mom told me that I was getting too nervous about this game. I guess she's right. Now I'm beginning to dream about it."

Ryan really wanted to win this coming week's game. It would put his team in the playoffs. "Well, maybe the dream means that I will score the winning touchdown," he thought happily as he settled back to sleep.

Ryan certainly isn't the only young man who has had a dream. The Bible tells us about many different dreams. Joseph had two noteworthy dreams. But these dreams didn't make him popular with his brothers. As a matter of fact, there were several things about Joseph's dream that gave them reason to hate him.

Joseph was a seventeen-year old lad who watched the family flocks of sheep with his older brothers. When the brothers misbehaved, Joseph told his father, Israel. Now how would you feel if your younger brother tattled to your father about your behavior? Joseph's brothers felt the same way you would feel.

Because Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, he gave Joseph a coat of many colors. This coat was very pretty and probably quite expensive. But Joseph getting this coat didn't gain him any brownie points with his brothers. They hated Joseph even more.

Then Joseph had a dream that he and his brothers tied grain into sheaves as they harvested the field. Suddenly his sheaf stood up taller than his brothers' sheaves. Their sheaves even bowed down to his sheaf. When Joseph shared his dream with his brothers, they hated him even more. They thought he was saying that he was more important than they were.

"So you want to be our king, do you?" his brothers said, making fun of him. They hated him - and not only for the dream. They were jealous of Joseph because Jacob, his father, was partial to him. Jacob had given him the coat of many colors; Joseph had dreams that sounded like he would rule over them. It was too much! Each step of the way, the hatred built.

Joseph had another dream, and again, shared it with his brothers. "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." This time even Jacob rebuked Joseph! Did Joseph really think that not only his brothers, but his father and mother as well, would bow before him?! His brothers were fit to be tied and started called him that "master-dreamer." Jacob, however, continued to think about Joseph's dream.

Why were his brothers so upset? Joseph and all of his brothers would receive a blessing because of Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's obedience. But their blessing would not be as great as Joseph's. When they heard the dream about Joseph's sheaf standing tall and his brother's sheaves bowing in honor they knew he would receive a greater blessing. Joseph's second dream was even greater proof, "The sun, moon, and stars bowed low before me." His brothers were jealous and didn't like what they heard.

Maybe Joseph's brothers shouldn't have been so quick to judge. The dreams Joseph had were from God. God promised a very special plan for Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Joseph's dreams were a part of God's plan. This promise was so important that He passed down the greatest physical blessing ever from father to son. God promised that this blessing would continue even until Christ returns (Genesis 49:1).

Why was God going to give them such wonderful blessings? Do you remember the lesson we had a few weeks ago about Abraham taking his son, Isaac up to the mountain? He made all the preparations and was willing to offer Isaac as a sacrifice to God. God has never required this of any other human being. But Abraham passed the test! This was such a remarkable act of

obedience that God never forgot it. He remembered that Joseph's great-grandfather Abraham obeyed Him regardless of the cost. God also remembered that Isaac and Jacob obeyed Him. Their obedience was so important to God that He felt this was worthy of a great reward that would last until Christ returns. It pays to obey God! Not only that, it will keep paying for a long time.

Can we see evidence of that blessing anywhere today? Wouldn't you say a nation that has the best-educated, most wealthy, and healthiest people in the world has been blessed of God? When you look at all the nations in the world today, which ones would you say are blessed the most? Do you think that such nations as the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada could be receiving the blessings today that were promised to Abraham's descendants? Isn't this a long, long time for God to remember that Abraham obeyed Him? God always remembers our obedience and blesses it. If you will faithfully obey God as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph did, God will bless you as well. It Pays to Obey God!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank you for my father Abraham obeying you and thank you for remembering his obedience for such a long time. It's awesome to think that I am able to live in a wealthier nation today, because Abraham obeyed you.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Genesis 37:3-8

Monday: Genesis 37:9-11

Tuesday: Deuteronomy 8:18-20

Wednesday: Isaiah 1:19-20

Thursday: Deuteronomy 13:1-4

Friday: Colossians 3:20-25

Saturday: 1 Samuel 15:22-25

Activity

Label the sheaves with the names of Joseph's brothers.
Then label the sun, moon, and stars with Israel, Rachel, and Joseph's brothers.

Simeon

Levi

Judah

Zebulun

Issachar

Dan

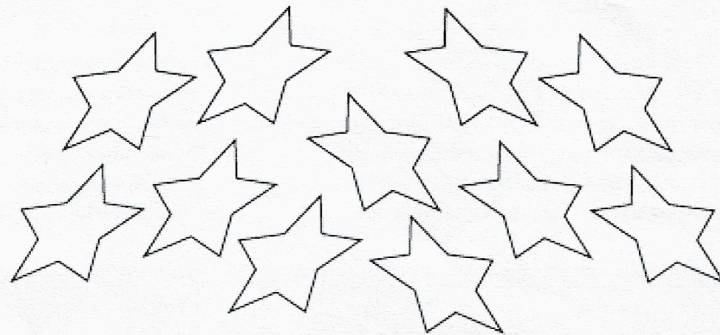
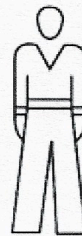
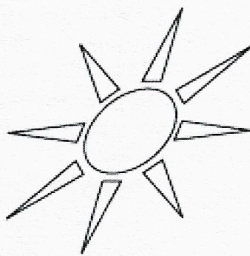
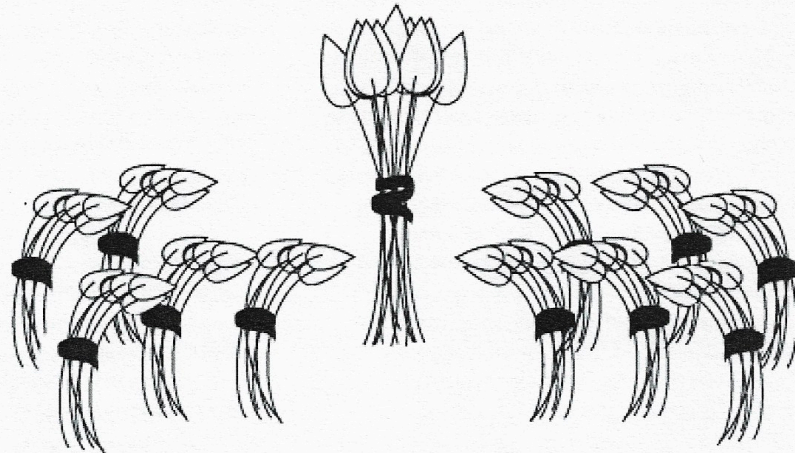
Naphtali

Benjamin

Reuben

Gad

Asher



Sold!

MEMORY VERSE

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." - Psalm 23:4

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 37:12-36

Joshua 1:7-9

2 Chronicles 16:9

Job 1:18-22

Job 2:10

Job 13:15

Psalm 23:4

Psalm 32:6-8

Hebrews 13:3, 5-6

James 1:13-17

WORDS TO KNOW

CISTERN - a deep, covered pit in the ground for storing water

CARAVAN - a long line of camels which transport goods from one place to another

THE LESSON

Robbie stormed out the back door, very angry at his brothers and sisters. Why couldn't they just leave his things alone? Why did he have to share? Why did Mom and Dad always take their side? Sometimes he wished he was an only child. Robbie's anger took him past the back fence and to the creek that ran between their property and the Benders' property. He plopped down along the edge of the creek, quickly scanning for frogs. Yep, it would be nice to be an only child, he repeated in his head. But as suddenly as the thought came again, he thought about his best friend, Alex. Alex's little sister had just died in a car accident. Suddenly his anger was gone. Instead he bowed his head to quickly thank God that his brothers, sisters, and parents were all okay. But, he grumbled, "I still wish they'd leave my stuff alone. Maybe he'd better pray about that attitude too," he scolded himself.

Joseph, the man in the Bible that we learned about last week, did not have a very good relationship with his brothers. His father had given him a special coat that made his brothers jealous. Joseph had gotten his brothers into trouble by telling on them. Then, problems between them became worse when he told them about the dreams he had about ruling over his brothers. One day Joseph's brother's took their flock of sheep to graze in Shechem. Jacob began to wonder how his sons were doing. So he asked Joseph to go see how they were and report back to him. Joseph did as his father asked him to do and headed out to Shechem. As he searched the field to find his brothers and their flocks, a man asked who he was looking for. "For my brothers and their flocks," Joseph replied. This man told him that they had gone to Dothan. So Joseph headed out to Dothan and found them.

Joseph's brothers were still angry about his dreams. When they saw him coming they said, "Here comes that master-dreamer. Come on, let's kill him and toss him into a well and tell father that a wild animal has eaten him. Then we'll see what will become of his dreams!" (Genesis 37:19-20 TLB).

Reuben was one of Joseph's brothers. He didn't like what his brothers were planning. He wanted to spare Joseph's life. Rather than killing Joseph, Reuben suggested that they throw him alive into a cistern. "That way, he would die without anyone actually killing him," Reuben told them. But Reuben's real motive was to convince his brothers to do this so he could come back later, get Joseph out of the cistern, and return him to his father.

When Joseph showed up on the scene, his brothers pulled off his coat of many colors and threw him into the empty cistern. Now that this was taken care of, they sat down to eat supper. Suddenly they heard a noise getting closer and louder. What could it be? They looked up and saw a whole string of camels with Ishmaelite traders riding on them. These traders were taking spices, gum, and herbs from Gilead to Egypt.

Judah began to think about what was happening. He saw the traders coming as a way to make some money off of Joseph. "Let's don't kill Joseph; let's sell him to these traders," Judah said. Selling Joseph to the traders sounded like a good idea to his brothers. Not only could they make some money, best of all, they would be completely rid of Joseph. So they agreed to sell him to the traders for 20 pieces of silver. And Joseph left with the traders.

After Joseph was gone with the traders, his brothers had another problem. What would they tell their father about Joseph disappearing? The brothers knew they would have to come up with a story Jacob would believe. So they made up a story that would lead Jacob to think a wild animal had eaten Joseph. They killed a goat, put spots of blood all over Joseph's coat, and took the coat to their father. The brothers told Jacob they had found the coat. They asked if Jacob knew who it belonged to. Jacob immediately knew it was Joseph's coat. He thought that Joseph had been

killed and eaten by a wild animal. Jacob tore his clothes and refused to be comforted by his family - he wept for Joseph. He cried and mourned his son for many weeks. Jacob said, "No, in mourning will I go down to the grave to my son." But Joseph was still alive.

Meanwhile in Egypt, Joseph was sold yet one more time. The traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, who was Pharaoh's captain of the guard. After all that Joseph had gone through, it would have been easy for Joseph to think that he had lost everything. He'd lost his family. He'd lost his freedom. He had lost his coat of many colors. But had he really lost everything? He had his life and he still had the most important thing anyone can have. He had his relationship with God. And God was working things out for him.

There may be times when things get really bad for you. You may feel hopeless. But remember the story of Joseph. He kept his relationship with God. In the next lessons, you'll see how God took care of Joseph. How do you have a relationship with God? Every day you read your devotional Bible readings on the back of your book and you pray. You obey God and do what the Bible says. Always remember God loves you and is as close as a prayer. No matter how bad things might get, God is always there ready to work things out for you. You can count on it!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Please watch over me and guide me in your ways. Help me to
always know that you are there to help me.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Genesis 37:23-27

Monday: Job 1:18-22

Tuesday: James 1:12-17

Wednesday: Joshua 1:7-9

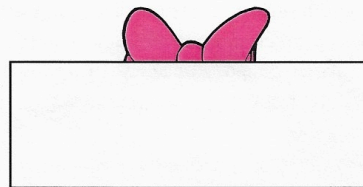
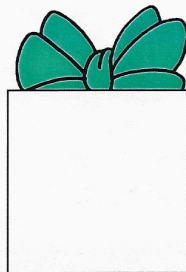
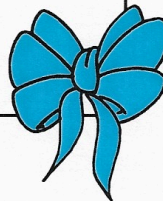
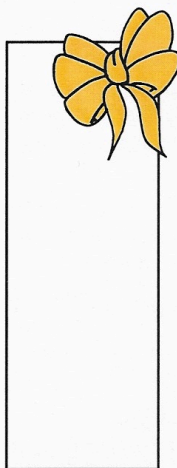
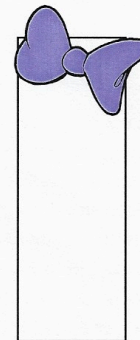
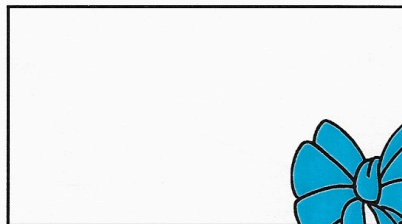
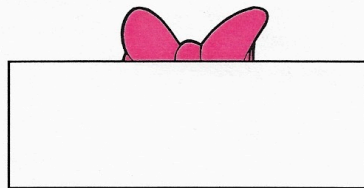
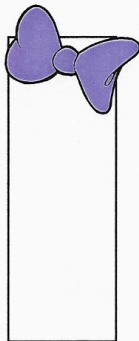
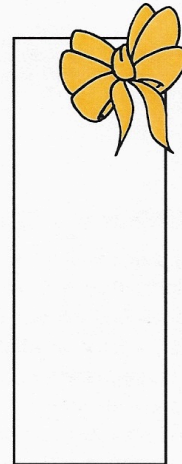
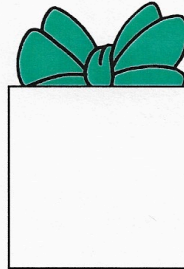
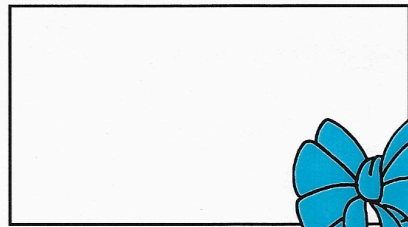
Thursday: Hebrews 13:3, 5-6

Friday: Psalm 32:6-8

Saturday: 2 Chronicles 16:9

Activity

In the boxes, write down the 10 most precious blessings or gifts that God has given to you.



Right in God's Sight

MEMORY VERSE

"Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. . . I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path." - Psalm 119:97-100, 104

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 39

Genesis 41:33, 37-40

Psalm 1:1-3

Psalm 15:1-5

Psalm 34:11-16

Psalm 40:8-11

Psalm 119:97-100, 104

Psalm 119:125-130

1 Peter 3:10-12

WORDS TO KNOW

INTEGRITY - standing firm for what is right; doing what is right

AUTHORITY - the right to tell you what to do

WARDEN - the person in charge of a prison

ADULTERY- having sex with someone who is not your wife or husband

IDOL - an image that is worshiped

THE LESSON

Stacy had a problem at school. Oh she loved going to school. She loved doing her best, which is why she usually got straight-As. She really liked her fourth grade teacher, Miss Filer. Miss Filer knew Stacy always tried to do her best, no matter what the assignment. So when Stacy finished her assignment early, Miss Filer would sometimes have Stacy help her. Sometimes Stacy would file graded papers into the student mailboxes. Sometimes she delivered notes to the office. Sometimes she helped redo a bulletin board. But Stacy's favorite job was checking papers. She

loved getting to sit at Miss Filer's desk, using Miss Filer's red grading pen, and carefully comparing the answers in the teacher's book to the answers the students had written on their own papers. But yesterday, Stacy's favorite job had become not so fun. Megan and Jeremy, Stacy's best friends, had come up to Stacy at recess and had asked her to get the answers from the teacher's book for the upcoming social studies test. They told her how easy it would be. They told her no one would find out. But Stacy told them no. It was cheating. It was wrong. Besides, Miss Filer trusted Stacy and believed in Stacy's integrity. She was not going to cheat for any reason. But Stacy hadn't realized how miserable her two best friends, fi that's what you would call them, could make her. Then she thought about Joseph and Potiphar's wife.

You will remember that Joseph's brothers sold him to the traders going to Egypt. Then the traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard. It sounds pretty bad to be a slave, but remember, God was with Joseph. It was obvious to Joseph's master, Potiphar, that the LORD was with Joseph and that everything he did turned out well. So Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household and entrusted everything he owned to Joseph's care. God even began to bless Potiphar because Joseph was in charge. Potiphar didn't worry about anything, except what he was going to eat.

But one day Potiphar's wife noticed how handsome Joseph was. She began making eyes at him. Then she asked Joseph to have sex with her. But Joseph immediately refused. He told her that Potiphar had entrusted everything to him, and that Potiphar didn't worry about anything except what he would eat. He told her that he couldn't do such a wicked thing! This would be a great sin against God. But Potiphar's wife would not leave Joseph alone.

She kept on with her suggestion day after day even though Joseph refused to listen to her. Then one day he went into the house to do something. None of the other servants were in the house. Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's cloak and again demanded that he commit adultery with her. He fled so fast that he left her holding onto his cloak when he ran out of the house.

Potiphar's wife began screaming. She blamed her husband for bringing Joseph, this Hebrew slave to insult her. She claimed that he tried to rape her so she had to scream to prevent it from happening. She used Joseph's jacket as evidence against him.

Potiphar believed his wife's story. He was very angry at Joseph and had him put into prison where the king's prisoners were kept in chains. Even though things looked bad for Joseph, God knew what was going on. He knew Joseph was a righteous man and that he would never commit adultery with Potiphar's wife.

God was with Joseph and kind to him right there in prison. He began granting him favors with the chief jailer. In fact, the chief jailer soon put Joseph in charge of the entire prison. Joseph

could be counted on. Now the chief jailer didn't have to worry about a thing - the prison system ran smoothly under Joseph's charge.

There may be times in your life when someone who has authority over you will ask you to do something that is not right. If that happens, remember this lesson. Joseph obeyed God and refused to commit adultery. Because he loved God, nothing was worth sinning against Him. God blessed Joseph because he chose to follow God. Love God with all of your heart! Seek God and His ways all of your life. God's laws are a lamp unto your feet, to show you the way to live. When you follow God's ways, life works out right for you - even if it may not be when or how you expect it to.

Trust God - no matter what. You were born to win. He will work things out for your good.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Please teach me your ways. I want to serve you and do what is right in your sight always. Please give me the strength to stand up for what is right no matter what happens.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Psalm 119:125-130

Monday: Genesis 41:33, 37-40

Tuesday: Psalm 34:11-16

Wednesday: 1 Peter 3:10-12

Thursday: Psalm 1:1-3

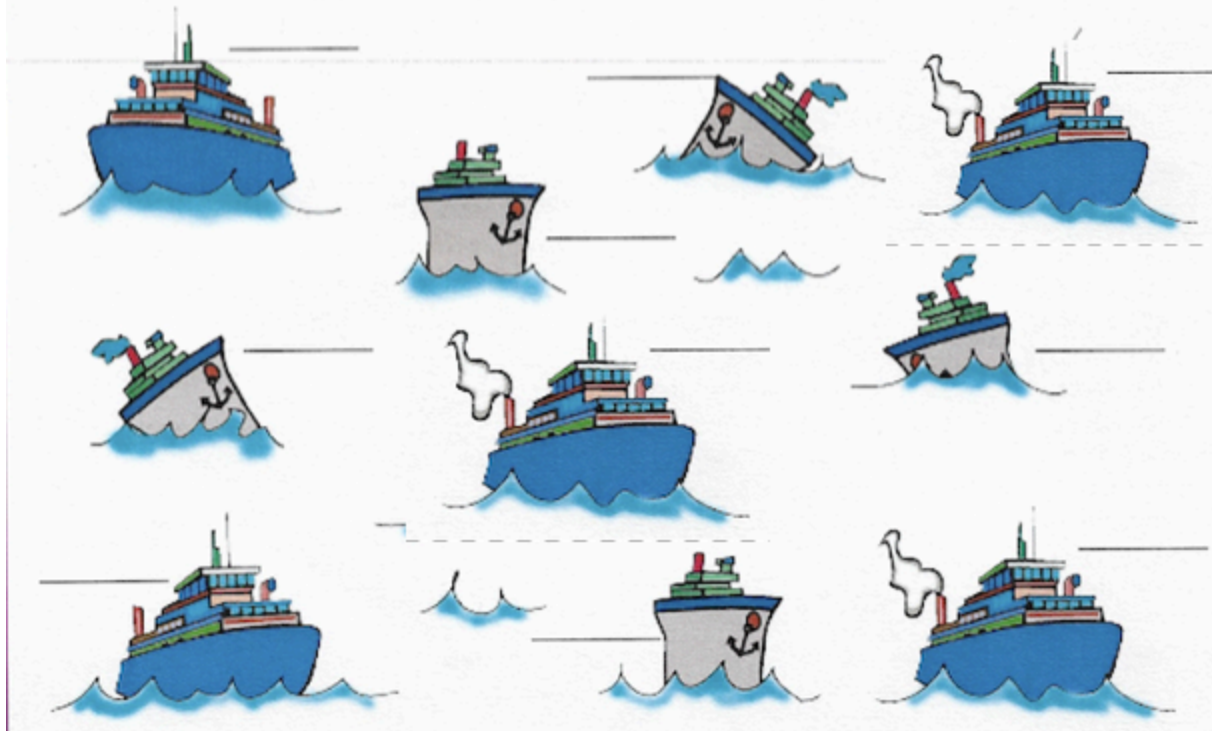
Friday: Psalm 15:1-5

Saturday: Psalm 40:8-11

Activity

Integrity means standing firm for what is right. Listed below are some biblical examples of people who showed integrity and did what was right in God's sight. Others failed to show integrity. Decide who showed integrity, and put the letter of those examples beside the ships sailing on the water. Then put the letters of the examples which didn't show integrity beside the ships which are sinking.

- A.** Daniel continued to pray to God, despite the new law forbidding it (Daniel 6:7, 10).
- B.** Aaron made a golden calf for the Israelites to worship (Exodus 32:2-5).
- C.** David stole another man's wife, committed adultery, and then had Uriah killed (2 Samuel 11)
- D.** The Israelites gathered twice as much manna on Friday (Exodus 16:29-30).
- E.** Abigail convinces David not to kill (1 Samuel 25).
- F.** Joseph runs from Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:10).
- G.** Rachel takes her father's household idols (Genesis 31:19).
- H.** Joseph's brothers return twice the amount of silver that was in their sacks (Genesis 43:12).
- I.** A prophet of God is killed by a lion when he listens to a false prophet (1 Kings 13).
- J.** Gehazi coveted the riches, lied to Naaman, stole the goods, then lied to Elisha (2 Kings 5:15-27).



Taste and See

MEMORY VERSE

"Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him." - Psalm 34:8

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 40:1 - 41:36

Psalm 27:11-14

Psalm 34:8

Isaiah 40:3-5

Daniel 2:20-23

Matthew 6:31-34

Matthew 24

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

2 Timothy 3:1-5

1 Peter 1:3-5

2 Peter 3:8-10, 14

WORDS TO KNOW

REVEAL - to make known

INTENTIONS - what you plan to do

WITHERED- dried up and wilted

STALK - the stem or main part of the plant

INTERPRET- to tell the meaning of

INTERPRETATION - the meaning of something

FAMINE - a severe lack of food

THE LESSON

Josh and Lauren raced home from school, eager to share their report cards with their parents. "Mom!" they both called as they skidded to a surprised halt inside the front door. Their mouths opened in shock as they viewed the piles of camping equipment in the entryway: sleeping bags,

the tent, the Coleman cooker, fishing poles, cooler, thermos, lantern, and Mom and Dad's suitcase and duffle bags.

"Hey! So that's why they were asking us which was our favorite campsite last week," Lauren told Josh. "And that's why Dad was working on the car-top-carrier last night," Josh observed. Suddenly the two children could think of dozens of clues they had overlooked. If they had been paying attention, it would not have been a surprise to them that Mom and Dad were planning this trip.

God didn't leave His plans for Egypt to be a surprise either. He revealed his intentions in a dream to Pharaoh, who was the ruler of Egypt. Pharaoh dreamed that seven fat cows came up out of the Nile River. Cows often submerged themselves up to their necks in the river to keep cool. The fat cows grazed among the reeds at the edge of the river. Then he dreamed that seven skinny, ugly cows came up out of the river. The seven fat cows were eaten up by the skinny, ugly cows. But the skinny cows stayed skinny. He couldn't tell that they had eaten anything at all.

Then Pharaoh had another dream. He saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a stalk and seven other heads of grain sprouted. These were withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads.

When Pharaoh told these dreams to his magicians, they couldn't explain them to him. Then the chief cupbearer remembered that Joseph had explained the dream he had to him. He had this dream while he was in prison. Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and baker were put into the same prison where Potiphar had earlier sent Joseph. Both the cupbearer and the baker had dreams. Joseph told them that the interpretations of dreams belong to God. Then Joseph told each one what their dream meant. The cupbearer was to be released from prison. The baker would be hung to death.

Now, when Pharaoh had his dream, the cupbearer suddenly remembered Joseph, and he told Pharaoh what had happened. Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph because he realized God's Spirit was in him. Pharaoh admitted that there was no one as wise as Joseph. Joseph told Pharaoh, "I cannot interpret your dream." Joseph was wise enough to ask God to give him the interpretation of the dream.

God gave Pharaoh the dreams to let him know that Egypt was going to have seven good years of harvest followed by seven years of famine. Long famines were rare in Egypt because the Nile River frequently overflowed. God gave a dream to the ruler of the country. God told them what would happen in the future.

Other rulers in the Bible had dreams and wanted them interpreted. King Nebuchadnezzar didn't want to tell his wise men what he'd dreamed. When he did tell them, none of them could interpret it for him, so he ordered them to be killed. Daniel knew he would be killed with the rest

of them. So he prayed to God for the dream and the interpretation of it. When God did give it to Daniel, he praised God for it. Daniel went to the king and told him, "No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries" (Daniel 2:27). Then Daniel told the king the interpretation of the dream.

People like to know the future. They like to plan for the things that will happen. We, too, can plan for the future. But we don't have to be given a dream from God to plan for the future. God has given us the Bible to tell us what will happen. It describes some of the future for us. Jesus Christ will return and will rule upon the earth for a thousand years. The Bible gives us some signs to watch for. And Jesus told His disciples to watch.

Why do you think Jesus wants us to watch? Better yet, what are we supposed to watch? There are two things to watch. Watch the signs of the times. Paul describes to Timothy how people will act during the last days. Jesus Christ also describes the end times in Matthew 24. But it won't do you any good to watch the signs if you're not living your life the way God wants you to.

Some people spend all of their time studying prophecy. Prophecy is important, but understanding all the prophecies in the Bible won't do us much good if our heart is not right. God says, "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word" Isaiah 66:2 (NIV). You must think about your relationship with God - now. Peter puts it this way: "So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" (2 Peter 3:14). Jesus also stresses the importance of seeking God first. "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33).

Think about it! What good will it do you to have figured out when Christ will return to this earth if you don't have a good relationship with Him? But, if you have a good relationship with Him, He will keep you safe - even if you have missed some of the clues about His return.

Remember, if you love God, try to live as Jesus Christ did, and seek God with all of your heart, He will give you what you need- both for today and in the future. Your Heavenly Father loves you! And you were born to win!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you that you love me and want the best for me. Help me to come to know you and to be at peace with you always.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: 2 Peter 3:8-10

Monday: Matthew 6:31-34

Tuesday: Daniel 2:20-23

Wednesday: Psalm 27:11-14

Thursday: Isaiah 40:3-5

Friday: 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

Saturday: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Activity

List ten ways that you can get to know someone better.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



Who's In Charge?

MEMORY VERSE

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." - 2 Corinthians 4:17

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 41:39-56

Psalms 47:1-4

Isaiah 64:8

Romans 9:20-23

1 Corinthians 1:25-31

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

2 Corinthians 4:6-9

2 Corinthians 4:17

WORDS TO KNOW

ABUNDANCE- plenty, lots

FAMINE - a severe shortage of food

FAVOR - when someone likes you and responds to you in a positive way

THE LESSON

When Cynthia was nine years old, she was in Miss Hageman's third grade class. Cynthia liked school, and she really liked Miss Hageman. So she tried her best, wanting to please both her teacher and her parents. One day, Miss Hageman announced to the class that Cynthia had a streak of 16 days of 100 percent on her math assignment. As a reward, Cynthia would get to teach the math class the following day and grade the papers for all of her classmates. After she taught the class, she did the assignment herself. Then she checked all of the papers. That was an experience Cynthia never forgot. It was kinda fun being in charge.

Joseph had been in charge a couple of times in Egypt. First, he was in charge of Potiphar's household. Then he was in charge of the prison where he was a prisoner! Now he found himself before Pharaoh - explaining the meanings of both of Pharaoh's dreams. Then Pharaoh told Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with

respect to the throne will I be greater than you. . . .I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt" (Genesis 41:39-40, 44).

But it didn't stop there. He put a ring on Joseph's finger to show his authority and put the royal golden chain around his neck. Then Pharaoh said: "See, I have placed you in charge of all the land of Egypt." And Joseph became famous across the land.

Pharaoh also gave Joseph a wife, Asenath.

Joseph was 30 years old when he began to serve Pharaoh. For seven years the harvests were good. Joseph collected food. In fact, he stored so much food that he quit keeping records. There was too much to count. Also during the seven years of plenty, Joseph and Asenath had two sons. He named his firstborn Manasseh, saying, "It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household. He named his second son, Ephraim, saying, 'It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering'" (Genesis 41:50-52).

After seven years of abundance. The granaries were full to overflowing. Then the seven years of famine began. The whole area around Egypt experienced the famine. When the people started to run out of food, they went to Pharaoh. He told them, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you." Then Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians.

This is a remarkable story. Remember Joseph had been sold as a slave in Egypt. He had no rights! But God gave him favor in Potiphar's sight because Joseph honored God! Then, even though Joseph did the right thing, he was falsely accused and put in prison. So he was a slave with no rights and he was also a prisoner, which was doubly bad. But God again gave Joseph favor in the eyes of the warden. Why? Because God had a plan that was bigger than Joseph.

The Apostle Paul describes it this way: "Notice among yourselves, dear brothers, that few of you who follow Christ have big names or power or wealth. Instead, God has deliberately chosen to use ideas the world considers foolish and of little worth in order to shame those people considered by the world as wise and great. He has chosen a plan despised by the world, counted as nothing at all, and used it to bring down to nothing those the world considers great, so that no one anywhere can ever brag in the presence of God. For it is from God alone that you have your life through Christ Jesus. He showed us God's plan of salvation; he was the one who made us acceptable to God; he made us pure and holy and gave himself to purchase our salvation. As it says in the Scriptures; 'If anyone is going to boast, let him boast only of what the Lord has done' " (I Corinthians 1:26-31).

There are three things you need to remember, as Joseph did: 1) that you were born to glorify God. 2) You need to remember that who you are - your looks, personality, and achievements - should also glorify God. That means, the way you dress should always please God. Before you try to look like someone you see on television or YouTube, ask God and your mom if that's the way

you should dress. 3) You need to learn that what you become is for God's glory as well. God gives you your intelligence and He can give you the breaks as He did Joseph. He expects you to use what He gives you for His glory. Joseph never forgot these things. We've seen in this lesson that his blessings were awesome!

Always remember, "Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8. Once we know that and honor God with our lives, He makes people around us like us. He gives us the breaks in life. Then, at baptism, God gives us His Holy Spirit. Paul calls the Holy Spirit a treasure, and he - like Isaiah- calls us jars of clay. In other words, God gives us His Holy Spirit at baptism and that Spirit is powerful! It can help you through bad times like it did Joseph.

If you will learn to please God, rely on Him, and follow Him through all of the hard times that come our way in life, God will bless you as He did Joseph. Then you'll look back on your bad times and think they were worth it. We'll say as Paul did, "These troubles and sufferings of ours are, after all, quite small and won't last very long. Yet this short time of distress will result in God's richest blessing upon us forever and ever!" (2 Corinthians 4:17 TLB).

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
When difficult things come my way, help me to remember that you are in charge of my life. Help me learn to rely on you.
In Jesus Christ's name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Genesis 41:41-44

Monday: 1 Corinthians 1:25-31

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 4:6-9

Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

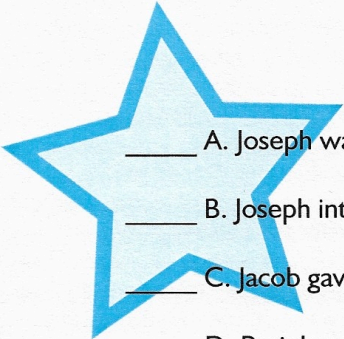
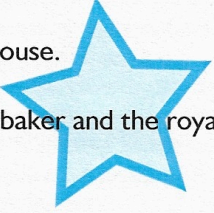
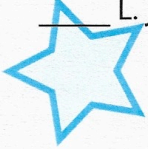
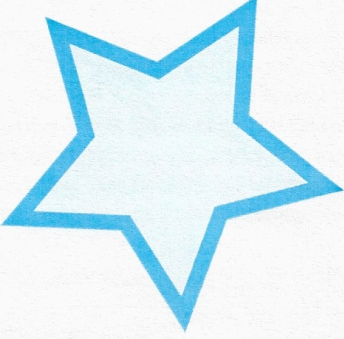
Thursday: Isaiah 64:8

Friday: Romans 9:20-23

Saturday: Psalm 47:1-4

Activity

Let's review events in Joseph's life to this point. Put the following events in order, number one to number 12. (Hint: You may look in your Bible or at the previous lessons if you need help. And your teacher has the answers.)

- 
- 
- 
- 
- ____ A. Joseph was sold to traders going to Egypt.
 - ____ B. Joseph interpreted Pharoah's dream.
 - ____ C. Jacob gave Joseph a coat of many colors.
 - ____ D. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his house.
 - ____ E. Joseph interpreted the dreams of the baker and the royal cupholder.
 - ____ F. Potiphar put Joseph in prison.
 - ____ G. Pharoah put Joseph in charge of Egypt.
 - ____ H. Joseph's brothers threw him in a cistern.
 - ____ I. The warden put Joseph in charge of the prison.
 - ____ J. Joseph had dreams about his brothers, mother and father.
 - ____ K. Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph.
 - ____ L. Joseph had two sons.

What's Your Response?

MEMORY VERSE

"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." - 2 Corinthians 10:5

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 42

Matthew 26:36-42

Romans 8:27-31

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

2 Corinthians 10:5

Ephesians 6:5-8

1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

1 Peter 3:14-17

WORDS TO KNOW

SULLEN- angry and pouting

SUBMISSION- the act of allowing someone else to have their way

RESOLVED - decided, determined

FACILITY - building

CONDUCT - actions

HARSHLY - acting in a way that is mean or cruel

THE LESSON

Jenny loved going to Six Flags with her family. Once a summer, every summer, the whole family would spend three days riding rides, eating junk food, and generally wearing themselves out walking around the park and having fun. Tonight, Jenny and her family would sit down to discuss the upcoming annual trip. She could hardly wait.

Four hours later, a very quiet and sullen Jenny stomped to her bedroom. Her parents had shocked the whole family! They had announced that they were not going to do the annual Six Flags trip this year. Instead, Mom and Dad had volunteered the family to help the local pro-life

and pregnancy center move into their new facility. The building needed the old tile replaced and all the walls painted. It would take the three days usually spent at Six Flags.

Jenny sat at her desk. She glanced at the Daily Devotional Bible calendar before her. The words that she had not fully understood this morning jumped out at her. "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Suddenly Jenny bowed her head in submission to her parents' will. She resolved to enjoy tearing out tile, laying new tile and painting. This, after all, was a worthwhile cause. It could help to save the lives of unborn babies. Unlike going to Six Flags, when these three days were over, she would have something positive to show for them.

Joseph, too, learned to submit to God's guidance. He suffered a lot in Egypt. But he followed God's laws. He honored God with his words and conduct. He praised God for the two sons he and Asenath had. And God blessed him. Then, in the middle of the famine, his dream came true. Remember how Joseph dreamed his brothers would bow down to him? Joseph was about to see it. Here's how it happened:

The entire region was affected with the same famine that Egypt had. Word spread quickly that there was food in Egypt. So Jacob sent his ten oldest sons to buy some grain. Joseph's brothers had to come to him because he was the one selling the grain. They bowed to him with their faces to the ground. As soon as Joseph saw them, he recognized his brothers. But they didn't recognize him. Now Joseph had a choice. He could either welcome his brothers and give them all the grain they wanted, or he could have them bound and put into prison or even killed. He could pay them back for selling him to be a slave.

What was Joseph's reaction? Well, Joseph pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. He asked lots of questions. He accused them of being spies and of telling lies. Then he demanded that the brothers bring Benjamin, Joseph's younger brother, to Egypt. And then he put them all in prison. After three days, Joseph talked to his brothers again (using an interpreter). He demanded that one brother stay in prison while the other nine returned home to get Benjamin. The brothers were sure they were being punished because of how they had treated Joseph. When Joseph heard them talking this way, he turned and wept. But then, Joseph had Simeon bound before their eyes. He sold them the grain they wanted. And when they arrived home in Canaan, guess what they found? Their money was in the grain sacks! So the brothers told the whole story to Jacob. He refused to even consider letting the brothers take Benjamin to Egypt.

There are many stories in the Bible of the reactions people have had in different circumstances. Some people reacted with their human emotions. Others reacted in a very godly way. The most important example of this is Jesus, when he was praying in the Garden of Gethsamane. Jesus

struggled with knowing the torture and death He was about to face. He asked His Father if there was any other way - any way that He would not have to go through this. Yet, at the end, He said, "Not as I will, but as you will . . . may your will be done."

Just as Jesus learned to submit to God and react in a godly way, we must learn to choose God's will instead of our own. That's not easy. It may not seem like much fun. Just as Jenny and her family chose to paint walls rather than going to Six Flags, God may want you to make choices that show you put Him first.

It would have been much easier for Joseph to hug his brothers than to put one in jail and send the others home. It would have been much easier if Jesus had not been tortured and killed for our sins. But we would be without a Savior if He hadn't submitted His will to His Father's. God isn't interested in just today. He is interested in your future - your being with Him for all eternity. It may mean that you will have to do some things you don't want to. It may mean that you will have to do without some things that you want. It could even mean that you may have to suffer. But remember, just as all of Joseph's bad treatment by his brothers and even being sold and thrown in jail worked out for his good, God can work things out for you too. God wants every thought you have, and every thing you do, to please Him. Then He will bless you. You can count on it.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Help me learn to seek your ways and to submit to your will, even when I don't want to. I know you want the very best for me.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Genesis 42:6-8, 24

Monday: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Tuesday: Romans 8:27-31

Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 8:1-5

Thursday: Ephesians 6:5-8

Friday: 1 Peter 3:14-17

Saturday: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

ACTIVITY

When you are born to win, there is really only one way to react to situations – the godly way.

But sometimes we still choose to react in a very human way.

For each situation below, write a human reaction and a godly reaction.

1. Your parents won't give you permission to go to the new PG-13 movie with your friends.

2. Your younger brother gets into your room and makes a big mess.

3. Your parents tell you they don't have the money to buy the shoes you wanted. You'll have to get some cheaper ones.

4. Your best friend tells the whole class your most embarrassing secret.

5. Your older sister leaves her homework and books all over the kitchen table and Mom just told you to set it for supper.

6. For boys: Mark tells Sarah that you really like her. Now she won't quit following you around.
For girls: Sarah tells Mark that you really like him. Now he won't quit following you around.

Letting God Make Lemonade

MEMORY VERSE

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." - Genesis 50:20

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 43 - 47:6, 27

Genesis 50:19-21

Genesis 50:20

Psalm 37:23-26

Psalm 56:3-4

Psalm 56:9-11

Romans 8:26-30

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

2 Timothy 1:9-10

1 Peter 5:10-11

WORDS TO KNOW

GOSHEN - an area in the land of Egypt

DETERMINE - decide, resolve

ACCOMPLISH - to do

THE LESSON

Alexi was hurt by the lies that her best friend had told the teacher about her. Julia had told Mr. Robbins that it was Alexi who had made the mess under their desks! Julia said it was Alexi who was whispering and making noise during his lecture! But the worst was the accusation of cheating! Julia told Mr. Robbins that Alexi always tried to copy her math answers. So Mr. Robbins moved Alexi to the very front row of desks, right in front of him. She just wanted to bury her face in her arms and cry with embarrassment. She peeked quickly at Julia. Julia was sitting smugly in her desk at the back of the room. Alexi decided she would not let Julia see how much her lies had hurt. She was just going to ignore Julia as much as possible until the end of the day. Then she would go home and tell her mom what had happened.

As the day passed, Alexi began to notice things: She could see the blackboard a lot better than she could before. She wasn't distracted from the lesson by Julia's whisperings. But, best of all, she was right where Mr. Robbins could easily see her working - silently proving that Julia had been lying all along. When the bell rang at the end of the day, Alexi could hardly wait to run home. She wanted to tell her mom just how good the day had been.

Joseph must have had days when he also felt shame and embarrassment. He was separated from his family. He had been sold as a slave. He was falsely accused. He had been unfairly thrown into prison. But in each situation, God blessed Joseph.

Then Joseph's brothers came to buy grain. They told Joseph about his father and Benjamin. So Joseph told them they had to bring Benjamin the next time they wanted grain. But he kept Simeon in prison. The other brothers took the grain and traveled back home.

It wasn't long before Joseph's brothers and their families ate all the grain they bought from Joseph. They needed to go back to Egypt and buy some more. There was still famine in the land. So the brothers reminded Jacob, their father, that Joseph had demanded to see Benjamin. Jacob finally agreed to let the brothers take Benjamin with them. When Joseph saw them, he still pretended to be a stranger. He made a meal for them and sold grain to them. But when they left, he again put their money in with the grain. He also placed his silver cup in Benjamin's sack of grain. Just after the brothers had left, Joseph sent his servant after them to find who had the silver cup. All of the brothers returned to Egypt and begged for mercy from Joseph.

This time Joseph cried in front of his brothers. He told them who he was. Then he said a remarkable thing. He told them not to be upset about selling him to be a slave. He told them it was God who had sent him to Egypt - to save all of their lives. Somewhere along the line, Joseph learned that God was in control of his life - every step of the way. God had big plans for Joseph and his entire family. God was going to use the events in Joseph's life to bring good to the rest of the family - for generations to come.

Because Joseph was in charge in Egypt, he was able to know who was buying grain. He was able to be there when his brothers came for food. He was important enough that his family was given the land of Goshen to live in. They would have enough food even though there were going to be five more years of famine. Everything was working out really well for the whole family! God was in charge!

Sometimes we have really bad things happen to us in this life - separated from our families, death of someone we love, false accusations, mean actions towards us from others, illnesses, or whatever. Sometimes we feel like burying our faces in our arms and crying from the embarrassment and pain. But that's when we need to look up and remember that God is in control. God is good - all the time. Whatever bad is in our lives, God can use it for our good. It

may take years, just like it did for Joseph. It may mean lots of sorrow and tears during those years. But someday, you will see God's plan for your life. You must determine, as David did, to trust in God. "When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me?" (Psalm 56:3-4). People can do some pretty awful things to us, but God can turn evil into good. Count on it.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Please teach me how to trust you all the time. I know that you love me and you have me in your hands.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Genesis 50:19-21

Monday: Psalm 56:9-11

Tuesday: Psalm 37:23-26

Wednesday: Romans 8:26-30

Thursday: 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Friday: 1 Peter 5:10-11

Saturday: 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Activity

Match the statements together.
Then make a drawing of your favorite saying in the box below.

- A. When life gives you lemons. . .
- B. It is always darkest. . .
- C. Every cloud. . .
- D. Stand still. . .



- 1. just before the dawn.
- 2. make lemonade.
- 3. and see the deliverance of the Lord.
- 4. has a silver lining.

A Child of the King

MEMORY VERSE

"Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honoured his name. 'They will be mine,' says the LORD Almighty, 'in the day when I make up my treasured possession, I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him.' " - Malachi 3:16-17

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 48

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

1 Samuel 16:7

Malachi 3:16-17

Malachi 3:16-18

John 1:10-13

Acts 2:38-39

Romans 8:12-17

2 Corinthians 10:12-13

1 John 3:1-3

WORDS TO KNOW

ADOPTED- legally made part of a family

INHERITANCE - what you receive from your parents, usually after their death

FEAR - in the case of God, having a deep and reverent respect for Him

RIGHTEOUS - a person who is right with God because of Jesus Christ

WICKED - someone who does wrong, evil, or does not accept Jesus Christ

THE LESSON

Anne and Greg were overjoyed. They had just received a call telling them they could adopt a little Chinese girl. Anne and Greg had two other children, but they felt very strongly that God wanted them to have another - an adopted child. She was only three months old! Anne and Greg would be flying to China to get her in five weeks. There was so much to do! Anne suddenly realized that they would have to tell the other two children they would soon have a little sister. They would

have to explain what "adopted" meant. But Greg and Anne didn't want their new daughter to feel adopted. The three children would grow up as one family. Anne and Greg would treat all three equally.

Jacob, his sons, their families, and all their possessions moved to Egypt because Joseph was there to save them from the famine. Jacob lived another 17 years in Egypt. Then Joseph was told that his father was ill. So he took his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him to see Jacob. Jacob told him that Manasseh and Ephraim would be counted as his. He said, "Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine." In a way, Jacob was adopting his grandsons. They were to be given an inheritance along with Joseph's other brothers.

But Jacob did something strange. Usually the firstborn is the one who receives the greater blessing. It is the right of the first born. But Jacob placed his right hand on Ephraim's head instead of Manasseh's head. Joseph didn't like it. He tried to move his father's hand. Manasseh was the first born! But Jacob knew what he was doing. He told Joseph, "I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations." So Jacob put the younger brother, Ephraim, ahead of the older brother, Manasseh.

Look at the blessings of Ephraim and Manasseh. Even though Manasseh was the older of the two boys, Ephraim received the greater blessing. That should tell you a couple of things. First, God blesses whom He wishes to bless - regardless of wealth, birth order, intelligence, or family standing. That means you cannot compare yourself with someone else. You can only see what is on the outside, and that doesn't matter very much to God. You can't see what is in a person's heart. And you don't know the whole story of why they do what they do. So don't look to see what someone else is doing, what kind of situation they are in, or how they react to a problem. You have to do what you know is right. The only way you can do that is if you keep your eyes focused on Jesus Christ.

Secondly, things are not always going to work the way they are supposed to work. Manasseh was the oldest. He was supposed to get the greater blessing. But that's not the way it worked. God had other plans. Similarly, don't think that you have 70 years to live, so you can wait to learn God's lessons for you. It may not work that way. You don't know how long you have to live. You are given today. What are you going to do with it?

The third thing you can see from this blessing is that God has the right and ability to count you as His. Because Jesus Christ died for you, He satisfied the legal requirements for your adoption into God's family. But God is not just adopting you! It is more than that! When Christ returns, you will be born into the family of God! God is giving you sonship! Right now, you belong to God, if you accept Jesus Christ's sacrifice for you, and if you love God and seek to do His will.

Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit within us testifies that we are God's children. And if we are God's children, then we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:12-17). Wow! Do you understand a little of what that means? You know that Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Everything is His! Because you are a co-heir with Christ, and because you are a child of God the Father, you are a prince or a princess right now!

Just like the prince or the princess doesn't rule the kingdom, you are not sitting on a throne somewhere ruling either. Rather, the princes and princesses have to be taught how to rule, how to judge, and how to govern the people. They have to go to school and become educated so they will someday know how to rule. In the same way, God is teaching you today through the Bible and your YEA lessons!

Greg and Anne's little Chinese girl was adopted into their family. The rules that applied to Greg and Anne's other children also applied to their new little Chinese child. But more than adoption, you have been given the promise of being born into God's family. So God expects you to do His will, to seek His ways, and to learn the lessons He prepares for you."Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honoured his name. 'They will be mine,' says the LORD Almighty, 'in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.'"

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Help me to live my life as your child, learning your ways and your will in my life.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Monday: 2 Corinthians 10:12-13

Tuesday: 1 Samuel 16:7

Wednesday: John 1:10-13

Thursday: Romans 8:12-17

Friday: Acts 2:38-39

Saturday: 1 John 3:1-3

YE3G · Solving the Puzzle · Student Workbook

Activity

On the scroll below, write the rules you know God wants you to follow.
(Hint: You might want to start with the Ten Commandments.)

A yellow scroll with a black outline and decorative red and black scroll ends. The scroll is unrolled and features 15 horizontal lines for writing.

Promises and Blessings

MEMORY VERSE

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God." - 2 Corinthians 6:18-7:1

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 49:1-33

Joshua 24:14-15

Matthew 25:26-29

Matthew 25:31-34

Romans 14:17-19

2 Corinthians 6:18-7:1

Ephesians 1:3-5

Ephesians 4:24-29

2 Timothy 2:21-22

WORDS TO KNOW

CONCUBINE - mistress, living together outside marriage

DESCENDANTS- the children and grandchildren (and so on) of a person

PROSPER - to do very well

FERTILE - good for growing crops (land), produces many babies (animals and people)

ISOLATED - living away from other people

HOROSCOPES- predictions of the future falsely based on astrological signs

THE LESSON

Andrea walked towards her group of friends huddled over a paper on the ground. "What could they be reading so intently?" she wondered. As she got closer, she could hear Britney reading out loud. Suddenly she recognized what it was: they were reading horoscopes. Andrea wanted to be with her friends, but she didn't like horoscopes. "It's more than just that they are silly," she thought to herself. "They are ungodly."

As Andrea thought about this, she turned on her heels and walked over to join the basketball game. As she sank her first lay-up, she thought about the choices Jacob's sons made and Jacob's blessing on each of them just before he died.

In the last lesson, you learned that Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph. Then he blessed all of his sons. It is interesting that halfway through the blessing, Jacob stopped and asked God for help. He said, "LORD, I look to you to save me" (Genesis 49:18).

Reuben was Jacob's firstborn son. He should have received the greatest blessing. But Reuben had sex with Jacob's concubine. The consequences for this sin resulted in the loss of Reuben's rights of firstborn. Reuben's descendants would not be powerful. Instead, they had a problem making right choices.

Because Simeon and Levi were so violent and had killed men when they were angry, Jacob cursed their anger. Then he said their descendants would be scattered among the other tribes of Israel.

Judah was made the leader because of the actions of Judah's three older brothers. Also, Judah's descendants were given the promise of having a ruler through the generations until Jesus Christ comes to set up His Kingdom on this earth.

Zebulun's descendants would live by the sea. Issachar's descendants would be strong, even when forced into slavery. Dan's descendants would provide justice for their own people, but some would be disloyal to others. Gad's descendants would have conflicts with their neighbors. Asher's descendants would be farmers in the fertile lands near the Mediterranean. Naphtali's descendants would settle in an isolated hill country.

The blessing for Joseph's descendants seems to focus on Ephraim. (Remember that Ephraim was given the greater blessing, even though Manasseh was the firstborn.) Because God would be with them, Ephraim's descendants would prosper. The land and animals would be fertile. Ephraim's descendants would have lots of children and would become the most powerful of the northern tribes. Some of Benjamin's descendants would be cruel in dealing with others.

There are three things to learn about these blessings. First, the blessings are more than blessings. They are prophecies of what the descendants of each person would tend to be like. Not all of the descendants of Benjamin would be cruel, but many of them would. That's because a child will tend to grow up behaving like the people around him, but they have a choice. You must work really hard to break away from behaviors that you have grown up with. That's why your mom tries so hard to get you to keep your room clean now. She knows that if you do it now, you'll do it as you get older too. And it's the same with God and His ways. The more we choose His ways, the more they become our normal behavior all the time. So God tells parents to teach their children about Him all the time.

The second thing to learn about the blessings is that they were the direct result of what Jacob's sons had done. If Levi and Simeon had not been violent and killed men in their anger, the blessing Jacob gave them would have been much different. Reuben also lost his blessing as firstborn because of his sins. It is the same for us today. We are given blessings based on our actions. If we follow God's ways, good things happen to us. If we are loving, helpful, and generous, people like us and things go well. In the same way, if we don't follow God's ways, bad things happen to us. If we are mean, angry, and deceitful, people don't like us, don't trust us, and don't want to be around us. Things do not go well. The neat thing is - it's your choice. For example, no one can force you to be angry. You can choose to be very forgiving and loving, no matter how badly someone treats you.

The third thing is that blessings for obeying God can continue for many, many years. We today are blessed because of Jacob's obedience. Your children and grandchildren can be blessed too if you will obey God.

Here's the bottom line: As you learned in the last lesson, you are God's children. You are princes and princesses. But it's your choice. You can choose to act like your peers, doing what you feel like doing and serving yourself. If you do, you will not be princes and princesses. Or you can choose God's way and God's promises for you. If you choose God's way, He promises to bless you and be your Father. You will inherit His Kingdom. With these promises in mind, avoid everything that God hates, those things which are evil and against His ways. “ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,’ says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God” (2 Corinthians 6:18-7:1).

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Please help me to remember your promises to me when I face difficult choices. Help me always to choose you.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Ephesians 1:3-5

Monday: Romans 14:17-19

Tuesday: Matthew 25:26-29

Wednesday: Ephesians 4:24-29

Thursday: Joshua 24:14-15

Friday: 2 Timothy 2:21-22

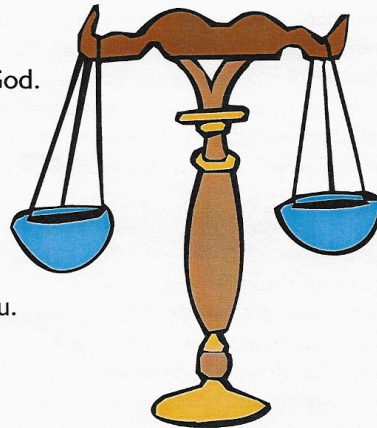
Saturday: Matthew 25:31-34

Activity

The Law of Natural Consequences: match the action with its logical result.

- _____ 1. You lie to your parents.
- _____ 2. You clean your room without being told.
- _____ 3. You refuse to cheat on a test.
- _____ 4. You cheat on a test like all of your friends do.
- _____ 5. You read the horoscopes with your friends.
- _____ 6. You wear clothes that are neat, clean, and tasteful.
- _____ 7. You take candy from the teacher's desk while she's out of the room.
- _____ 8. You don't go to the movies with your friends on the Sabbath.

- A. You show everyone around you that you are responsible and considerate.
- B. Your parents no longer trust you.
- C. Your friends no longer trust you.
- D. Your friends don't think you really believe in God.
They think you believe in luck or the stars.
- E. Your friends think you might take their things
when they're not around.
- F. Your friends know that you take going to
church seriously - even if they make fun of you.
- G. Your friends know you can be trusted -
even if they call you a goody-two-shoes.
- H. Your parents know that you are responsible.



A Precious Gift

MEMORY VERSE

"Children are a gift from God; they are his reward." - Psalm 127:3 (Children's Living Bible)

SCRIPTURES

Exodus 1:8-22

Psalm 127:3

Psalm 127:3-5

Psalm 139:14-17

Mark 10:13-15

Luke 1:39-44

1 Corinthians 15:57-58

Revelation 21:8

WORDS TO KNOW

DEFORMITY - something that is not formed or made correctly

ABORTION - the act of killing a baby before it is born

CONSEQUENCES - the result of your actions

MIDWIVES - women who help deliver a baby

ISRAELITE - a descendant of Jacob (Israel)

POLITICALLY CORRECT - what is accepted by a large part of this society

THE LESSON

Tara and Shane raced into the kitchen after school, eager to tell their mom about the homework assignment. "Mom!" they called, "You won't believe what we have to do for homework tonight. We have to watch television!" Well, it was just the evening news, for the current events discussion the next day. Mrs. Peterson decided to watch the news with her twins.

Tara and Shane each had a notebook on their laps, ready to take notes. After the newscast, the twins looked at their mom with concern and confusion. Tara asked her mom, "What is abortion? Why are so many people upset about it? Are you pro-life or pro-choice?" Mrs. Peterson explained, "Abortion is killing a baby before the baby is born. There are lots of reasons why some pregnant mothers want to kill the baby. Sometimes the mother wants a boy instead of a girl, or a

girl instead of a boy. Sometimes she just doesn't want the baby. Sometimes the baby would be born with a severe disease or deformity. Sometimes it is a teenage girl who is ashamed to be pregnant and doesn't want her parents to ever find out."

Mrs. Peterson told her children, "Babies are alive, even before they are born. They feel heat and cold. They hear noises and see light. And they kick! Abortion is wrong. It is wrong to kill the most helpless of all human life! God tells us that children are a gift from Him. When we, as a society, decide to kill that gift, we will pay the consequences." Tara, Shane, and their mom talked for a long time about why people would kill babies and how God feels about it.

Then Mrs. Peterson told her twins about Egypt, Pharaoh, and Jacob's descendants - the Israelites. Even after the famine was over, the sons of Jacob continued to live in Egypt. Their families grew larger and larger! Exodus 1:7 says "The people of Israel had many children. They greatly increased their numbers. There were so many of them that they filled the land" (NIrV Kids Devotional Bible). There were so many Israelites that the Egyptians were afraid of them. So the Egyptians began to mistreat the Israelites, forcing them to work very hard. But God blessed the Israelites with more and more children.

So the Pharaoh told the midwives to watch the Israelite women as they were helping them deliver the babies. He said that if the baby was a girl, the midwives should let her live. But if it was a boy, the midwives should kill him! The midwives feared God and did not do what the Pharaoh had ordered them to do. When the Pharaoh asked them why they didn't do as he had told them, the midwives told him that the babies were already born before the midwives arrived. God continued to bless the Israelites with many children, and He also blessed the midwives and gave them families of their own.

So Pharaoh ordered his people to let the baby girls live. But he told them to throw the baby boys into the Nile River for the crocodiles to eat. God would punish Pharaoh for doing this! Eighty years later, the first plague was the Nile River turned to blood. And the last plague before Israel left Egypt was the death of all the firstborn sons - those who were not protected by God. In the same way, God will punish people today who kill babies- even the unborn.

You need to know the truth. Pro-life means that you believe all babies should have a chance at life. God is the One who decides to grant this gift. It is too late to make this choice after a woman is already pregnant. This choice should be made before a woman gets pregnant. Pro-choice means that you want the right to kill an unborn baby. Even if our government says that it is all right, that it is legal, God's law says that it is murder. And God says that the place for murderers is the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8).

It is not politically correct to call abortion murder. It is not politically correct to take a stand against abortion. But it is the right thing to do. However we are not the civil government. So it

would be wrong for us to go out and kill those who have abortions or perform abortions. May God grant you the strength to stand up for what is right in a Christian way. "Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (I Corinthians 15:58).

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,
Please give me the strength to stand up for what is right always,
whether it is against abortion or for your ways.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Sunday: Exodus 1:13-14

Monday: Exodus 1:16-20

Tuesday: Psalm 127:3-5

Wednesday: Psalm 139:14-17

Thursday: Luke 1:39-44

Friday: 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

Saturday: Mark 10:13-15

Activity

Pretend you have a pen-pal who writes to you every two weeks. You have just gotten a letter from her. In the letter, your pen-pal tells you her older sister is planning to have an abortion. She is asking your advice. What do you write back? How can you be gentle and loving, and yet stand up for what is right?

