

JOSEPH REVEALS HIMSELF

Genesis 42-50

Lesson Memory Verse: Proverbs 28:13 "He that covers his sins shall not prosper."

Lesson Aim: Teach the children that they should confess their sins and not try to hide them. Then they will receive forgiveness from God and also from godly men.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Ricky threw a pencil and hit another student in his class. His teacher sent him to the principal's office for doing this. Ricky was afraid of what the principal might do to punish him for throwing the pencil. Have you ever been sent to the principal's office to be punished? (Give the children a chance to tell about one or two of their experiences.) Were you afraid to tell what you had done wrong? (Again let them answer.) Ricky went to the principal's office and was so afraid that he could hardly talk. The principal, Mr. Jones, asked him why he had been sent to his office by his teacher. Ricky did not think that Mr. Jones knew why, so he thought he could hide the truth from him. Do you think this is what Ricky should have thought? (Let the children respond to this.) Ricky told Mr. Jones, "I was playing with my pencil and accidentally hit someone." This was not the truth. Ricky had deliberately thrown his pencil at a person across the room. Do you think it was right for Ricky to try to hide what he had done? (No) Why do you think Ricky did it? (Let the children tell what they think.) Our memory verse for today tells us why Ricky was not very wise to try to hide his sin from Mr. Jones.

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse says, "He that covers his sins" (he that hides his sins) "shall not prosper" (shall not do well or shall not be successful). Is it wise for any of you to hide your sins? (No) If we try to hide our sins, God will not let us be successful. We will be very unhappy until we confess our sins. So do not cover up your sins. Confess them to God and also to the people against whom you have sinned.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. In our lesson today we are going to see that when the brothers of Joseph tried to hide their sins, they were convicted for their wrong doing, but when they were sorry for their sins, they were forgiven and blessed.

Do you remember how Joseph's brothers sinned? (Let the children review the story of how they hated Joseph and cast him into a pit to let him die. Then they changed their minds and decided to sell Joseph as a slave to some men going to Egypt. They tried to cover up their sin with another sin. They tried to make their father think that Joseph was killed by some wild beast. They did this by taking Joseph's coat and splattering it with goat's blood, and then they showed it to their father.) Joseph's brothers thought they had covered up their sin with their trick, but they had not. No one can cover up his sins, and anyone who tries is foolish because God sees everyone's sins. Let us see how the sins of Joseph's brothers were uncovered by God.

I. Joseph's Brothers' First Visit to Egypt (Gen 42)

- A. Joseph was the governor over Egypt (42:6).
- B. Joseph's brothers came to Joseph: they did not know him, but he knew them (42:7-8).
- C. Joseph said they were spies and made them prove they were not by having one of them put in prison until they brought their youngest brother to him in Egypt (42:18-20).
- D. When this happened to them, they remembered how they had treated Joseph and talked about it in front of Joseph, but they did not know Joseph could understand them (42:21-23). They had never been able to cover their sins well enough to remove them from their own memories. Certainly they had not removed them from God's memory.
- E. Joseph was tenderhearted: he cried when he heard them talk about their sin against him (42:24).
- F. Joseph was kind: he secretly returned the money they spent for the corn by putting it in their sacks of corn (42:25).

- G. But Joseph could not forgive them yet (Eph 4:32), because they were still covering up their sins (Prov 28:13).

WE: We must uncover our sins by admitting them. We must admit our sins when we do wrong and not try to cover up our sins. When we admit we are wrong, God will forgive us right away. Also, when we admit our sins to others, they will forgive us, too, if they love God. Joseph would have forgiven his brothers, but they were not ready yet to uncover their sins. So Joseph's brothers were not forgiven for a while longer and had to have more trouble sent to them. We need to admit our sins to God so we can be forgiven.

II. Joseph's Brothers' Second Visit to Egypt (Gen 43-44)

- A. Joseph's brothers brought their youngest brother, Benjamin, to Egypt after waiting a long time to do so. Jacob did not want to let Benjamin go because he loved him so much (43:1-14).
- B. Joseph treated his brothers very kindly by preparing a feast for them (43:15-34).
- C. Joseph tested his brothers further by secretly putting his silver cup in Benjamin's sack of corn before he sent them on their journey home. Then after they left, Joseph sent his officer after them to discover which brother had "taken" his cup. This one would become his servant. When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, it brought great grief to the brothers. Now they were ready to do anything to spare Benjamin from slavery (44:1-13).
- D. Judah spoke for the rest of the brothers and explained how Benjamin had to go back to his father (Jacob) or else his father would die. This would happen because his whole life was wrapped up in Benjamin since Joseph had been "killed by an evil beast" (37:33; 44:28). Judah and his brothers had brought enough grief to their father in what they had done to Joseph, and now Judah was willing to be made a slave in Benjamin's place so Benjamin could go home to his father. Judah had been the very person who had given his brothers the idea to sell Joseph as a slave so many years before (37:26), but now he was willing to be a slave so Benjamin would not be taken from his father. Judah had really changed in his heart (44:14-34). Judah would have saved himself much trouble if he had been sorry for his sins earlier in his life.

WE: What about us? Are we hiding some of our sins? We need to be sorry enough to confess our sins to God. Then we need to confess our sins to the ones we sinned against so we can be forgiven.

III. Joseph's Brothers Forgiven in Egypt (Gen 45)

- A. When Joseph saw how broken-hearted his brothers were when Benjamin was in trouble, he was sure they would be broken-hearted for what they had done to him, too. With his heart full of forgiveness, he decided to let them know who he was without any more testing (45:1).
- B. He wept as he told them he was Joseph, but his brothers were shocked (45:2-3).
- C. Then Joseph talked kindly to them and forgave them and kissed all of them (45:4-15).
- D. Then Joseph sent for his father to come to Egypt so his family could be spared of the famine that was to be for another five years (45:16-28). Now the sins of Joseph's brothers were completely uncovered. Even Jacob, their father, knew the whole story now. But best of all, everyone was forgiven. This made the brothers happy that their sins were finally uncovered.

WE: If we uncover our sins and are sorry enough to leave our sins, we can count on God to forgive us. Also, people who are godly will forgive us, too. When we do this we will find peace and joy in our lives.

BE (for Action): Do you remember Ricky who was sent to the principal for throwing his pencil? Ricky thought that he could hide his sin from the principal by lying. Ricky was always afraid of seeing the principal again because he felt guilty in his heart. If Ricky had told the truth and confessed his wrong, he would have felt a whole lot better. It is worse to feel guilty than to be spanked. And do you know what else is true? You cannot hide your sin from God. God will have to punish you just like He punished Joseph's brothers. (Have the children bow their heads; give them an opportunity to respond by a lifted hand to these two questions: [1] Will you uncover your sins by telling God that you are sorry for these sins? [2] Will you tell those people you have hurt that you are sorry? Then pray for the children to confess their sin(s) to God and to the people that they have hurt.)