

### Lesson 4.13 Joseph- Jealousy, Forgiveness and Empathy

Topic: Peace in a Family

Subtopic: Jealousy and Forgiveness

3F. Be Holy

3C. Reconciliation and Peacemaking

Class: IV (Grade 4)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will o answer correctly three application questions about jealousy, demonstrating that they know jealousy causes conflict.

**Attitude:** Students will guard against jealousy and be willing to forgive.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

*Peace Education*, Lesson 17

*Optional:* Drawing paper and colored pencils, crayons or markers

References: Genesis 37 and 42-45 and 50:15-21; *Peace Education* Lesson 17

Memory Verse: Exodus 20:17 (This is the last one of the 10 commandments.)

#### Teacher Activities

##### **Introduction:**

**Bible Story:** Read the story of Joseph (in Teacher's Notes) as students act it out.  
Ask: What do you think of this statement by Joseph, "Even though what you did was evil, God used it for good?"

**Application:** *Questions.* 1. What causes jealousy?  
2. What happens when you are jealous?  
3. What can we learn from the story of Joseph and his brothers? Make these points clear:

- Jealousy causes conflict
  - Don't compare yourself to others; be content with what you have
  - We must forgive those who hurt us.
  - Jealousy can lead to violence
4. Define empathy. Give examples.

**Evaluation:** Do students understand the connection between jealousy and conflict? Do you forgive easily yourself? Ask students from time to time, "*How do you think he or she feels?*" This could come when you are reading a story or when they arguing.

#### Student Activities

##### **Introduction:**

**Bible Story:** Students pantomime the story as the teacher reads.

**Application:** *Possible answers:*

1. Jealousy is caused by comparing ourselves to others.
2. We become angry and even hate the person who makes us jealous.
3. We should avoid jealousy by not making comparisons and we should be quick to forgive. If we don't, jealousy can lead to conflict.
4. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand somebody else's feelings or difficulties.

**Evaluation:** Were students able to answer the application questions? Do students forgive easily or hold grudges against each other? Do students try to understand each others feelings?

### Extension Activities:

*Writing.* Give students this sentence starter and have them write a short paragraph or poem. They might choose to work with a partner. *Jealousy is...* or *Empathy is...*

*Drawing:* (Requires optional art materials.) Have students draw different scenes from the story. Then have students try to put the scenes in order.

*Memory verse:* Ask if students remember the last one of the Ten Commandments. (They learned a shorter version of this verse.) Teach them the whole verse. Use this opportunity to review all of the 10 commandments.

*Peace Education.* Lesson 17: Have the students list things people are sometimes afraid of and then let other students explain WHY someone might fear that thing. When we understand why someone is afraid we are showing empathy.

### Notes for Teacher

This lesson shows clearly how jealousy leads to hatred and conflict. It also reviews the concept of forgiveness. Help students understand that God commands us to forgive others just as He has forgiven us. The next lesson builds on this lesson by explaining how we can handle jealousy, anger and other negative emotions in a good way.

Key Points: Jealousy leads to conflict but empathy and forgiveness heal relationships.

Bible Story: Tell the story in your own words or use the script below to tell the story while the students pantomime the action. What the teacher says is in bold type.

**You remember that Jacob had more than one wife. Which wife did he love the most? (Rachel) Rachel had two boys and then she died. Her sons were named Joseph and Benjamin. Today our story is about Joseph. It is also about a famine. What is a famine? (A time when there is no food. A time of extreme hunger**

Choose students to be Joseph, the 10 older brothers, Benjamin, the slave buyers, the prison guard, Pharaoh and Jacob. Have Jacob, Joseph, Benjamin and the 10 brothers stand on one side of the room (Israel) and the others stand on the opposite side of the room (Egypt).

**Because Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, he loved Joseph and Benjamin more than he loved his other sons. He had 10 other sons who were older and they were jealous of Joseph.**

**One day Jacob gave Joseph a beautiful coat.** (Jacob gives Joseph a coat.)

**Joseph went to his brothers and showed them the beautiful coat his father had made for him.** (Joseph walks around and shows off.) **The brothers were angry. They talked among themselves about how they wanted to hurt Joseph because their father loved Joseph more than he loved them.** (Brothers talk together.)

**Another day they all went to sleep.** (They pretend to sleep.)

**In the morning, Joseph called to his brothers and his father, “Come hear the dream I had last night.”** (They gather around Joseph as he makes motions about his dream.) **Joseph dreamed that one day he would be very important and his brothers and father and mother would bow down to him. The brothers are very angry now. They go out together and talk about how to get even with Joseph.**

**Sometime later the older boys are away from home taking care of the sheep. Jacob gives Joseph some food to take to his brothers. Joseph goes looking for them and finally**

**finds them a long way from home.** (Jacob can just pretend to give Joseph lunch to carry or you can use a book bag or sack for the “food”.)

**The brothers grab Joseph and take off his fancy coat. They throw him in a pit.** (Joseph can lie on the floor to represent the pit.) **Some of the brothers want to kill him. One brother, Reuben, wants to save Joseph’s life so he tells the others to leave him in the pit and let him die there. He thought he’d come back later and get Joseph out of the pit.**

**But while Reuben is busy, the other brothers take Joseph out of the pit and sell him to slave traders from Egypt. The traders buy Joseph, give the brothers twenty pieces of silver and take him away to be a slave.** (Traders take him to the “Egypt” side of the room.)

**Reuben comes back to the pit and doesn’t see Joseph. “Where is he?” he asks. His brothers tell him what happened. They decide to kill an animal and put blood on Joseph’s coat and then tell his father that he must be dead; killed by a wild animal.**

**So the brothers take the coat to Jacob and tell him Joseph is dead. Jacob believes this lie.** (Jacob pretends he is weeping.)

**Many years pass. Joseph serves as a slave and then, because someone lies about him, he is thrown into prison.** (One of the slave buyers can put Joseph in a “jail” –behind a chair or in a corner.)

**One day Pharaoh has a dream and asks if anyone in the land can tell him what it means. With God’s help, Joseph has interpreted dreams before so he is called out of prison to tell Pharaoh what his dream means.** (The slave trader now takes Joseph out of “jail” and leads him to Pharaoh.)

**Pharaoh told Joseph his dream. He said, “I saw seven fine, fat cows and they fed in a meadow. Then seven ugly, skinny cows came and ate the seven fat cows.** (Pharaoh can make motions with his hands as he pretends to tell the dream.)

**“Then I had a second dream. There were seven heads of grain on one stalk. They were full and good. Then there were seven heads of grain, withered and thin, that spring up after them. The thin heads devoured the good heads. Can you tell me what it means?”**

**Joseph said, “The two dreams mean the same thing. God has shown you what He is going to do. There will be seven good years; seven years where the cows will be fat and the grain will be plentiful. Then there will be seven years of famine when the cows will grow thin and the grain will not grow. All the plenty will be forgotten in the years of famine.”**

**Then Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint a wise man to collect food during the years of plenty and store it up for the people to have something to eat during the years of famine. The two talk together as Joseph explains the dream. Then Pharaoh points to Joseph.**

**Pharaoh said, “Since God has shown you all this, you are the one who should be over the entire kingdom and be in charge of collecting the grain.”**

**So Joseph was taken out of prison and made ruler over the entire kingdom. Only Pharaoh was greater than Joseph. He collected 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the grain during the seven good years and stored it in bins. Then the seven years of famine came and everyone had to go to Joseph to get food because there was no food anywhere else.**

**One day (back in Israel) Jacob said to his 10 sons, “We are all out of food. You must go to Egypt and asked Pharaoh for some grain.” So they took money and went.**

**They came before Joseph to ask for grain and Joseph knew who they were but they didn’t recognize him. He gave them grain. Then he asked them about their family. He learned that his father and younger brother Benjamin were still alive. He said, “If you want any more grain, you must bring your younger brother with you.”**

**The brothers went home. Sometime later Jacob said, “We are out of food again. Go to Egypt and get more grain.”**

**The brothers said, “We cannot go without Benjamin.” Jacob lets Benjamin go with them.**

**When Joseph’s servants filled the brothers’ sacks with grain, he had a gold cup hidden in Benjamin’s sack. Joseph gave them the sacks and the brothers started home. Then Joseph sent men to bring them back. He said, “Someone stole my gold cup.” They looked in the sacks and found the cup in Benjamin’s sack. Joseph said, “Benjamin must stay and be my servant for he stole my cup.” Then the brothers begged Joseph to let Benjamin return to their father. One brother even offered to stay in Benjamin’s place. (The brothers get down on their knees and plead for mercy.)**

**Joseph knew from this that the brothers’ hearts had changed. They did not want to hurt Benjamin as they had hurt him. So he told them who he was. (Brothers pull back in fear.) Then the brothers were afraid Joseph would punish them for the way they had treated him when he was younger. They said, “Please forgive our sins, Brother, for we did evil to you.”**

**Joseph said, “Do not be afraid. You meant evil against me but God used it for good so I could save your lives and the lives of all these people. Do not be afraid. I will provide for you and for your families. Go get our father and your families and come and live in Egypt.”**

Application: Encourage children to not compare themselves to others because it can lead jealousy, pride or envy. Remind them of the diagram from the lesson on Integrity and Deception (Lesson 4.10-Jacob). You may want to draw this diagram again.

Help students understand that being aware of the feelings of others can help us be more understanding. Write the word *empathy* on the board. Empathy is the ability to identify and understand someone else’s feelings or difficulties. Ask the students to give examples from the story where Joseph or his brothers did or did NOT empathize with each other.

- Joseph did not think about how his brothers felt when he was showing off his coat or bragging about his dreams.
- Joseph’s brothers did not think about his feelings when they threw him into the pit or sold him as a slave.
- Joseph *did* show empathy for his brothers when he forgave them in the end.

Empathy helps us act kindly toward others.