

BROTHERS RETURN

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS RETURN TO JOSEPH IN EGYPT

PREPARING FOR THE NEXT LESSON:

1. Read Aloud

Choose someone to read the passage aloud to the family. Watch for Word Alerts (over).

2. Recount

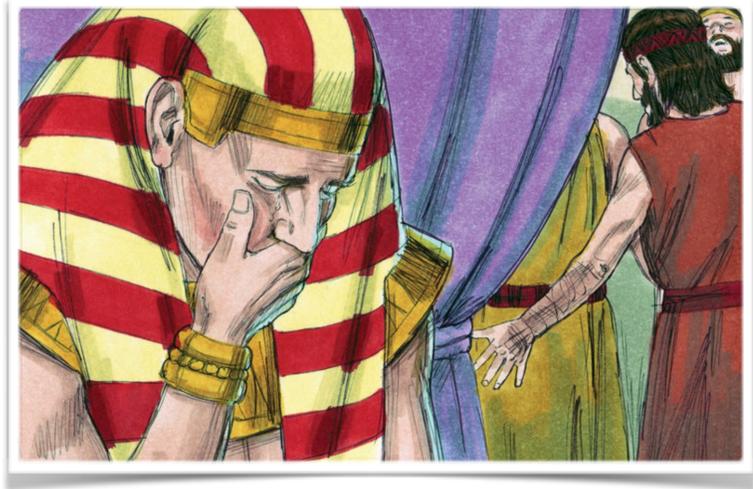
Ask people to explain what they just heard.

3. Ask Questions

What do they think about the story? What does it tell them about God? What does it tell them about human beings, and our relationships with one another and with God?

3. Help Interpret

Offer some of your own insights from the discussion here, and help develop their understanding by asking questions and gently guiding them toward the answers. They might disregard a lecture, but when they discover a connection on their own, it will be truly rooted in their minds.



Joseph Sees His Brother, Benjamin

Last week, we saw that when Jacob's sons arrived in Egypt, they bowed before Joseph — just as Joseph once foresaw in the very dreams that inspired their envy and jealousy. Reminded of their betrayal, Joseph tested them as spies. When we are sinful, God gives us trials and difficulties, so that we can repent and be forgiven. After their trials, Joseph's brothers returned home humbled and repentant for having sold their brother into slavery.

In this lesson, Jacob and his sons have used up the grain that they received from Joseph, and the sons will now return to ask for more. This time, they know that they must bring Benjamin, though Jacob is very worried that he will lose his most beloved living son.

Remember that Joseph was the first beloved son, and now that Joseph is lost, Rachel's only other child, Benjamin, is Jacob's remaining most beloved son.

WORD ALERTS!

As we read through the Bible, we'll notice important words that keep coming up again and again, drawing attention to the connections that God uses to teach us. We want to take note whenever we find a Word Alert in the Scriptures!

- When Joseph sees Benjamin, his brother by the same mother, Rachel, he tells the steward to “slaughter an animal and make ready” for a feast. We have already seen Abraham welcome three angels by slaughtering an animal for a feast, and Christ will teach the parable of the Prodigal Son, in which the father welcomes his repentant son by slaughtering an animal for a feast. All of these feasts remind us of the Great Banquet, the Eucharist! We eat the Lamb of God, taking in His body and blood in Holy Communion. These meals are not just about food, but people coming together in communion, with love and mercy, just as we come together with God and His Saints in the Kingdom.

In Egypt, the brothers approach Joseph with Benjamin among them, and Joseph wishes to be reunited with his younger brother. He places a silver cup in Benjamin's bag, making him appear to be a thief, so that he can demand to keep his brother by his side as a servant in Egypt.

The rest of the brothers are expected to leave Egypt without Benjamin — they are being asked to sacrifice the beloved son, to leave Benjamin behind, just as Jacob most feared could happen.

Back when the brothers first plotted against Joseph, it was Judah who first suggested that they get rid of Joseph. Seeing that his father would now lose Benjamin as well, Judah is terribly upset; he cannot bear to disappoint his father this way again. Judah steps forward and offers himself in Benjamin's place, and becomes a type of Christ by being willing to offer himself.

Judah redeems himself by offering himself for Benjamin, redeeming the great heartache he caused for his father when he started the sequence of events that made him lose his beloved son, Joseph, in the first place

What do we mean by Re-Entry?

On Sunday morning, we gather together for Divine Liturgy, and the priest begins, “Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.” He is announcing and blessing the Kingdom of God, which we are entering together in faith and love. The people respond, “Amen,” signifying their agreement, their fervent desire to enter into the Kingdom. In Holy Communion, the faithful receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. We receive the divine, and it transforms us. We complete the Divine Liturgy and then go out into the world, carrying Christ and the Kingdom within us. Let's think about how are we to re-enter the world; how will we guard the grace that we have received? How will we prepare ourselves to go out?