

=EVENTS FROM GENESIS=

Lesson 18
Young Joseph

AIM: to teach my pupils the importance of a dedicated youth.

POINT OF CONTACT: Since Joseph was known by his coat of many colors made by his father, bring a “loud” coat of some kind to the class. Put on the brightly colored coat and ask the class to guess what you are going to talk about. See if they can guess that this represents Joseph’s coat of many colors.

INTRODUCTION: We will be discussing Joseph for several weeks in our lessons. The book of Genesis has seven main characters: Adam, Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. There are some symbolic teachings in the listing of these seven characters. However, Joseph is allotted more space in the book of Genesis than any of the others. Hence, we should spend several weeks studying his life. The lesson for this week covers his youth.

- I. JOSEPH WAS A YOUNG MAN WHO WAS ABOVE REPROACH. The children and young people should be taught that every Christian should live above reproach. It certainly paid for Joseph in his latter years, and it will pay for a young person now.
- II. PROBABLY NO ONE IN THE BIBLE IS A BETTER PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST THAN IS JOSEPH. His life pictures Jesus’ life and foreshadows it so beautifully. He was beloved by his father, hated by his brethren, sold by Judah for 20 pieces of silver, cast into the place of death (the pit), raised up from the place of death, exalted to the right hand of the king of Egypt. He blessed his brethren back in the homeland and provided for their needs as he sat at the right hand of the king. He later revealed himself to his brethren and they lived together. He was tempted and stood the test. All of these picture the Lord Jesus Christ. Every item that has been listed can be said about the Lord Jesus Christ and His life. Jesus was loved by the Father, was hated by the brethren, was sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver, was cast into the pit, was raised up, was exalted to the right hand of the Father, provides for the needs of His own who are still in the far country, and will someday reveal Himself to his own.
- III. WE SHOULD ALSO BE LIKE CHRIST. We should not leave the above teaching without emphasizing to our pupils that they too should be like Christ. Ask the pupils to list some ways that we are like Christ, ways that we should be like Christ, and ways that we shall be like Christ.
 1. Ways that we are like Christ:
 - 1) We are a child of God like Christ. See John 3:5.
 - 2) We are to be baptized like Christ. See Romans 6:1-4.
 - 3) We are secure as sons of God just as Christ is secure. See Colossians 3:3.
 - 4) We are heirs like Christ. See Romans 8:17.
 2. Ways that we should be like Christ:
 - 1) We are to love like Christ. Paul said, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” In Philippians 2:5.
 - 2) We are to be soul winners like Christ. John 20:21 says, “...as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”
 - 3) We are to do the same works that Christ did. John 14:12 says, “...He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”
 3. Ways we shall be like Christ:
 - 1) We shall have a body like His. See I John 3:2.
 - 2) We shall live in the same city with Him. See John 14:1-3.

Consequently, we should endeavor to be like Him. In any given circumstance, we should ask ourselves, “What would Jesus do?”
- IV. JOSEPH WAS THE SON OF JACOB’S BETTER YEARS. Here is something very interesting. Joseph was the oldest son of Rachel. See Genesis 30:20-24. He was, therefore, the child of Jacob’s later life. He was probably just a little lad when Jacob left Padan-aram. Because of this, he escaped many of the bad experiences associated with his father’s sinful life at Haran. Jacob’s older sons had been affected by the

life in Haran, by unhappy home life, and by the jealousy and scheming. They had been brought up under the influence of the “old” Jacob, while Joseph was brought up under the influence of the new Jacob. This, of course, is the real reason for his being a fine Christian.

- V. JOSEPH WORE A COAT OF MANY COLORS. See Genesis 37:3. Jacob, his father, loved Joseph more than he loved any other son, and he made him a coat of many colors. We learn from Scripture the meaning of these coats. Judges 5:30 and II Samuel 13:18 tell us that these coats had two meanings: honor and purity. Chaste and pure women wore such robes. If they lost their purity, they had to take off the robe. By this we find that Joseph was a pure lad. This certainly was borne out in his later years when he was tempted and tested. (We will discuss this in future lessons.) Nothing is as rewarding in the Christian life as purity! Nothing will hinder future success in God’s service as much as impurity!
- VI. JOSEPH HAD TWO NAMES: JOSEPH AND ZAPHNATH-PAANEAH. Notice this in Genesis 41:45. The word “Joseph” means “adding.” The word “Zaphnath-paaneah” means “revealer of secrets.” In other words, the name Joseph, meaning “adding,” shows that he was constantly growing in grace. This growth in grace gave him a new name which means “revealer of secrets.” It gave him wisdom. Wisdom is certainly a need in our day. God gives it to those who grow in grace.
- VII. JOSEPH HAD A WONDERFUL CHRISTIAN SPIRIT. It is said three times within a few verses that Joseph was hated by his brethren. This can be found in Genesis 37:4-11. It says, “...they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.” Again it says, “They hated him yet the more.” Still again it says, “And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.” In spite of this, Joseph sought the welfare of his brethren. Read Genesis 37:14. Joseph was aware of his brethren’s hatred, envy and jealousy. Yet Joseph rendered good for evil. He blessed those that cursed him, loved those that hated him, and prayed for those that spitefully used him. This, of course, should be the Christian spirit.
- VIII. JOSEPH PREPARED HIMSELF FOR HIS LIFE’S WORK. This should be stressed especially to the children: It is important to prepare for the service of God! Any good building must have a good foundation. Any good tree must have healthy roots. Any successful life must have a good foundation.
- IX. THE THEME OF JOSEPH’S LIFE IS THIS: WE MUST SUFFER BEFORE WE CAN BE EXALTED. Again and again this was shown in the life of Joseph. Let us not kick against the suffering, against the testing, and against the trials. They are simply stepping stones to a more exalted position and greater success. If a person is in the will of God, he must take trials as a part of the will of God. It is simply an education for exaltation in the future. We must remember that the way up is the way down, the way forward is to go backward, the way to go high is to go low, and he that shall be the greatest man must be the least!