# 6

# Brother for Sale

Key References: Genesis 37:12-35; *Patriarchs and Prophets,* chap. 19, pp. 208-212; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 2, pp. 47-50; Our Beliefs, nos. 8, 14, 11















Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 47.

## powertext

"An honest witness tells the truth, but a false witness tells lies" (Proverbs 12:17).

*Have you ever felt misunderstood by a friend or family member? Did it seem as if you just couldn't communicate? What might have happened if you had spoken "the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15)?*

powerPoint

We respect one another by being honest and positive.

Here comes that dreamer! Let's do something to get rid of him once and for all." The brothers gathered as Joseph came across the fields toward their encampment. "Father has sent him to check up on us again."

Reuben, the oldest, spoke up. "Listen, let's not get too mean. Let's just throw him down this well. That will give us time to think up a good way to deal with him. But let's not kill him. After all, he is our brother." Secretly, Reuben hoped to rescue Joseph when the others were busy.

As Joseph got closer, his brothers started calling out names and making nasty comments. They grabbed him, tore off the fancy robe their father had given him, and threw him down the empty well nearby. Reuben, always a little weak, didn't want to get into trouble with his father by letting something bad happen to Joseph. But he didn't want to be in trouble with his brothers, either. He wandered off to try to think up a plan that wouldn't get him in trouble with anybody.

# 6

## Sunday

**READ** Read Proverbs 12:17 and this week's story, "Brother for Sale."

**DRAW** Draw a well. Write the power text, Proverbs 12:17, on it. Post it where you can see it every day, and start learning the text.

**PRAY** Ask God to show you how to be an "honest witness" this week.

## Monday

**READ** Read Genesis 37:12-20.

**THINK** When have you lied about something or gone along with someone else's lie?

**DESCRIBE** In your Bible study journal, describe what happened to you and the others in this situation. How could you have handled the situation better?

**PRAY** Ask God to help you to always speak the truth.

## Tuesday

**READ** Read Genesis 37:21-35.

**REVISE** Rewrite Reuben's part of the story, thinking about some of the things he could have done differently to save Joseph.

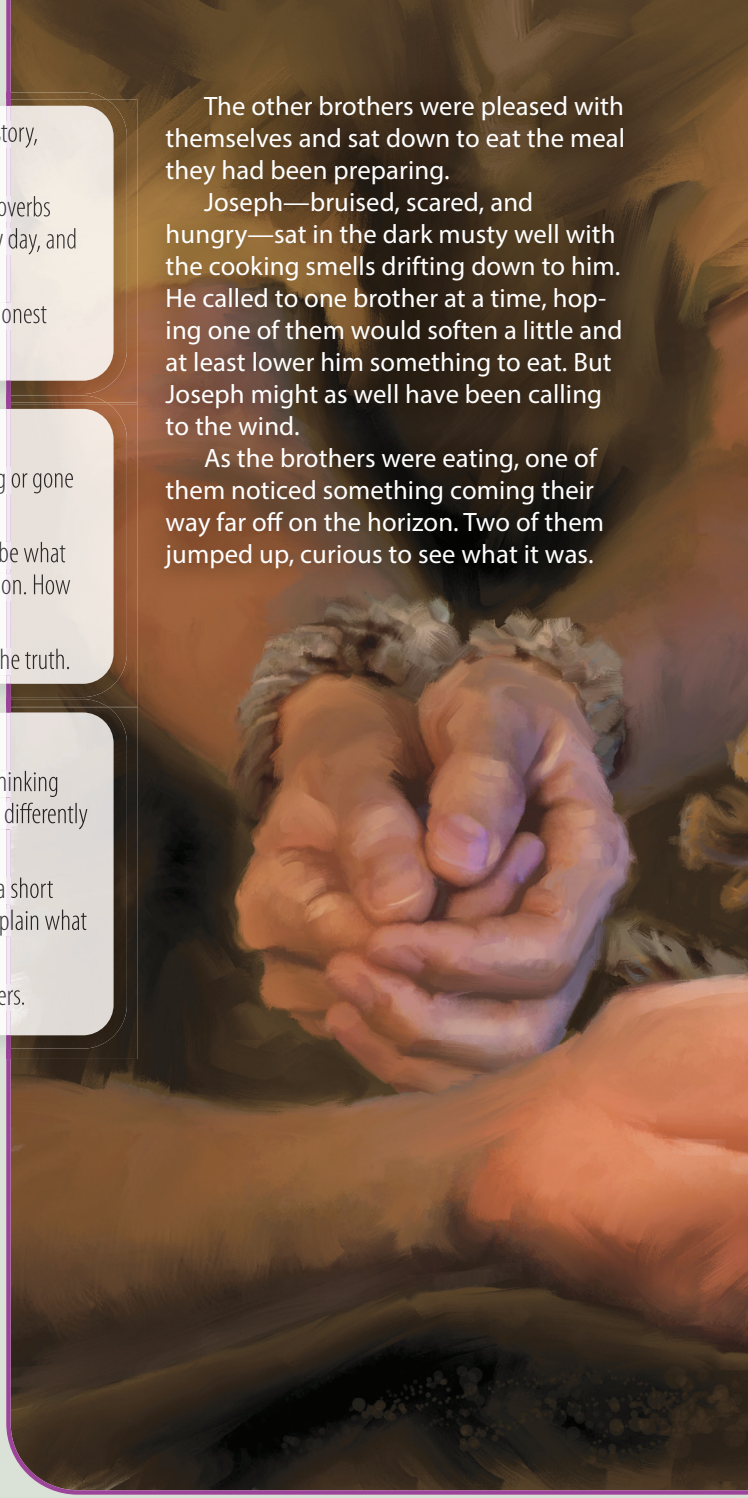
**IMAGINE** Imagine you are Reuben. Practice a short speech that you could say to your father to explain what has happened to Joseph and your part in it.

**PRAY** Ask God for wisdom in relating to others.

The other brothers were pleased with themselves and sat down to eat the meal they had been preparing.

Joseph—bruised, scared, and hungry—sat in the dark musty well with the cooking smells drifting down to him. He called to one brother at a time, hoping one of them would soften a little and at least lower him something to eat. But Joseph might as well have been calling to the wind.

As the brothers were eating, one of them noticed something coming their way far off on the horizon. Two of them jumped up, curious to see what it was.



"It's a caravan!" one brother shouted. From the direction it was heading, it must be on its way to Egypt, they reasoned.

Judah spoke up. "Why don't we sell Joseph instead of killing him?" The others looked at him to see if he was joking. "That way we won't have his death on our consciences," he continued. Although some of them still really wanted to kill Joseph, they finally agreed to Judah's plan.

By the time the caravan arrived, Joseph's brothers had pulled him up out of the well for the traders to look over. They haggled over the price, wanting to get the most they could out of this young pest.



6

**Wednesday**

**READ** Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15.

**APPLY** What is this verse saying we should do? How could I apply these principles in my relationships?

**PRAY** Ask God to show you three ways you could apply these verses to that problem.

**Thursday**

**READ** Read Hebrews 12:14, 15.

**RESEARCH** Find a Bible with a concordance or marginal references in it. Find as many texts as you can about honesty and truth.

**CREATE** Create a picture, sculpture, collage, or drawing of what honesty and truth look like.

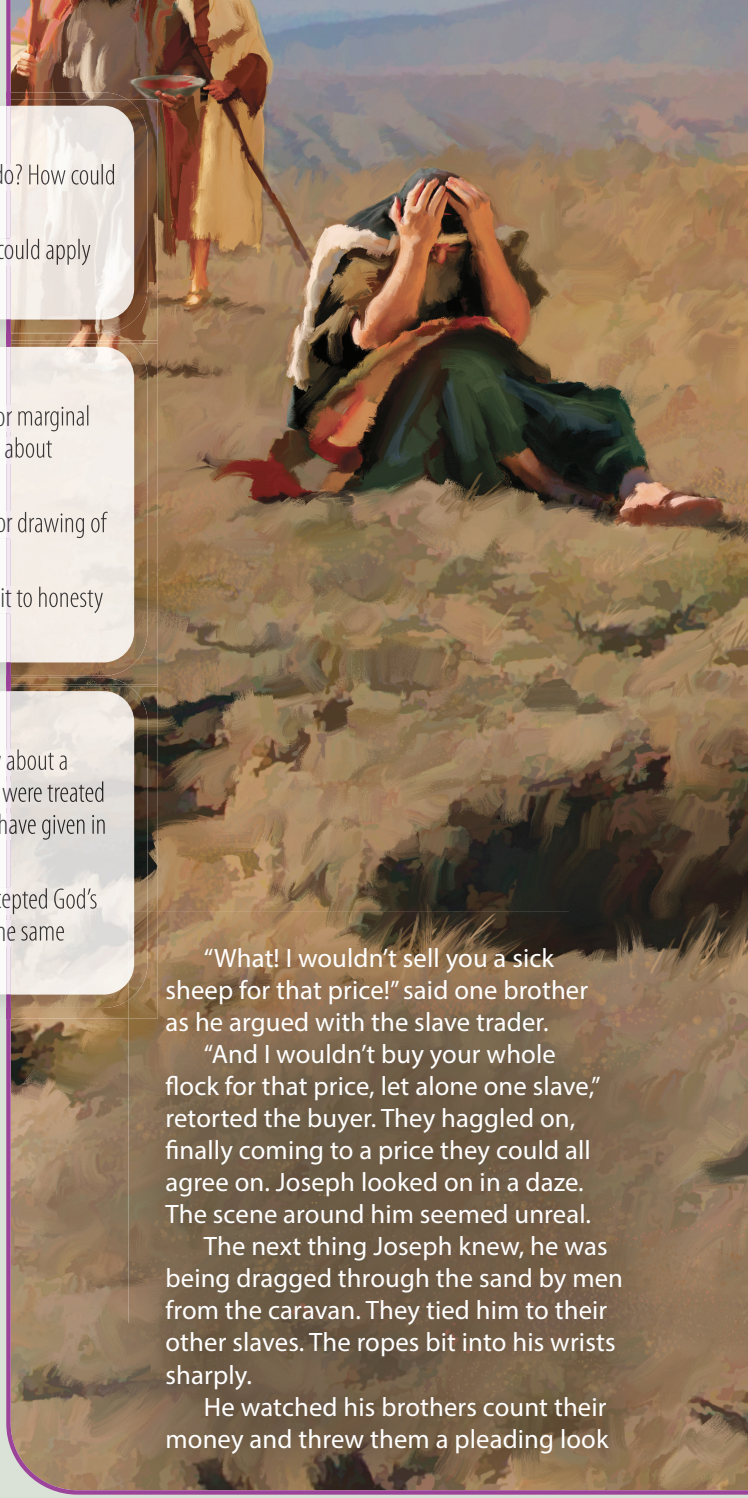
**PRAY** Ask God to speak to you as you commit to honesty and truthfulness.

**Friday**

**READ** Read 1 Peter 3:8, 9.

**TALK** If you are able to, talk with your family about a situation in which you may have felt as if you were treated unfairly. What is the best response you could have given in that situation?

**PRAY** Now that you have confessed, and accepted God's forgiveness, claim God's power not to make the same mistake again.



"What! I wouldn't sell you a sick sheep for that price!" said one brother as he argued with the slave trader.

"And I wouldn't buy your whole flock for that price, let alone one slave," retorted the buyer. They haggled on, finally coming to a price they could all agree on. Joseph looked on in a daze. The scene around him seemed unreal.

The next thing Joseph knew, he was being dragged through the sand by men from the caravan. They tied him to their other slaves. The ropes bit into his wrists sharply.

He watched his brothers count their money and threw them a pleading look

as he stumbled off behind the caravan. What had he done? What was he to do now? He decided that the only thing that might help was to pray for himself to the God his father had always told him about. He had no one else to turn to. His father's God would have to be his own God now.

A little while later Reuben came wandering back to camp, still hoping to find the right opportunity to rescue Joseph and send him back to their father. He stopped by the well and looked down. "He's gone! What am I to do now? What will I tell Father?" he cried, tearing his robe.

The other brothers were busy killing a goat. They dipped Joseph's coat in the blood of the goat.

"Calm down!" the brothers told Reuben. "With this bloodstain on his robe, Father is sure to think that a wild animal attacked and killed Joseph. We'll just say that we found it along the way." They laughed over their clever idea and got ready to roast the goat meat for their next meal.

Early the next morning they set out to face their father. When they arrived back at home camp, Jacob saw Joseph's robe with the bloodstains all over it. He assumed, just as the brothers had hoped, that a wild animal had attacked and killed Joseph. The grieving father cried and tore his clothes. He wouldn't be comforted.

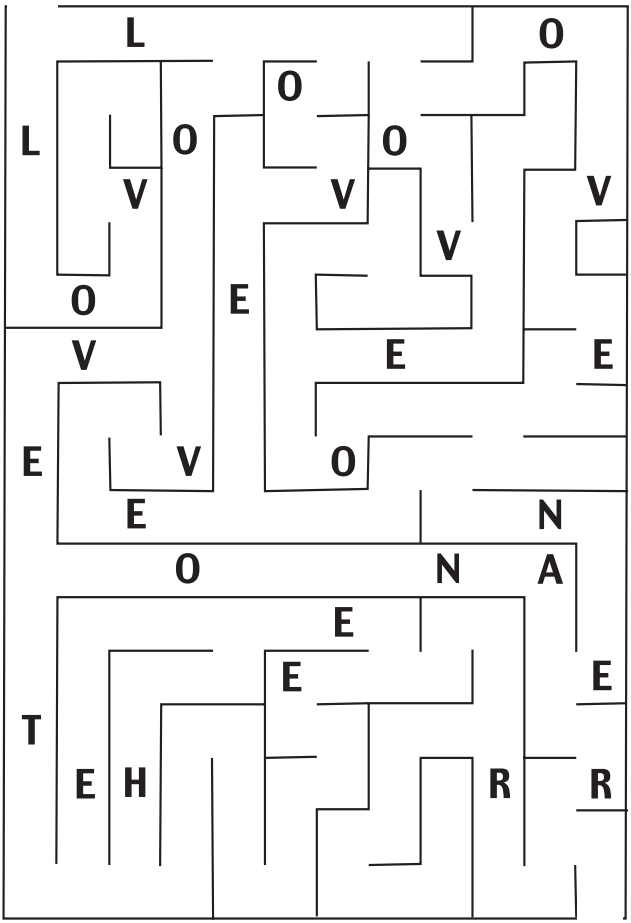
The brothers quietly drifted off to their own tents and families. What they had done didn't seem quite as clever now. They were rid of Joseph, but they would have to live with their father's grief for a very long time. Their camp community had lost its atmosphere of jealousy for a while, but now it was covered by an atmosphere of mourning.

As for Joseph, in those moments of deepest perplexity, he placed his life into the hands of God. He trusted that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would take care of him in the future.

PUZZLE 6

# AS THE WORLD WATCHES

**Instructions:** If we are truthful with each other, we show others respect. As the world watches us, we give our witness by what we do, by what our attitudes are, as well as by what we say. We represent Jesus to a world who may not otherwise see Him except by watching us. Jesus made this point in the following Bible verse: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you _____ _____ _____" (John 13:35).




Can you finish this quote by finding the only route in this maze that spells it out? Do not retrace a path.