

Read: Numbers 12:1-15

I Forgive You

Numbers 12:10,11,13

When the cloud lifted from above the tent, Miriam's skin was leprous—it became as white as snow. Aaron turned toward her and saw that she had a defiling skin disease, and he said to Moses, "Please, my lord, I ask you not to hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed."

So Moses cried out to the Lord, "Please, God, heal her!"

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Isabel had tears running down her cheeks as she sank into the arms of her grandmother. "Abuela (Grandma), he ruined my quinceañera party! All my friends came to celebrate my fifteenth birthday! I had a beautiful dress! Everything was perfect! But Jose told everyone bad things about me. They were all laughing at me. It ruined my party! How could he? Él es mi hermano! He's my brother!"

Even though Isabel was hurt so much by what her brother had done, the next time she saw him, she said the most incredible thing. "Jose, te perdono . . . I forgive you."

Sometimes the people we are the closest with can hurt us the most. Brothers and sisters argue and fight. Children are sassy with their parents. Parents are too hard on their children. Husbands and wives say mean things to each other. The devil loves this. Satan wants to get in between people who should love each other and cause them to hurt each other. And not only does he want us to hurt each other, Satan wants us to hate each other and refuse to offer forgiveness.

One time Satan caused problems in a famous family of the Bible. Aaron and Miriam were the brother and sister of Moses. Once, Aaron and Miriam started to get jealous of Moses because he was the leader of the Israelites and the one that God spoke to so often. Aaron and Miriam started to say bad things about Moses. God was not happy about this, so he allowed Miriam to have a serious (and gross) skin disease.

Moses could have fallen into the temptation to be happy about this. He could have been so angry with his brother and sister and let them suffer because they deserved it. But Moses didn't do that. Instead, he reacted with love and forgiveness. Moses immediately prayed for his sister Miriam, "Please God, heal her!"

It's not easy to forgive other people when they are mean or hurt us, especially when it's someone close to us like a family member. But then we remember how much God has forgiven us. We have hurt him so often with our many sins, but Jesus died on the cross for every single one of them. God forgives us every time for every sin because of Jesus! Now we pray that God will fill us with that love of Jesus that we can forgive others when they sin against us, too!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Recall a mean thing that someone did to you at home or at school.
- How do we know for sure that God has forgiven us?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What makes it so difficult to forgive others who sin against us?
- When do you find it the most difficult time to forgive other people? Why?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Describe in your own words how Jesus teaches us about forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer.
- Agree/Disagree: There is never a time when you would not forgive someone.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, in your love and kindness you have forgiven all of my sins. Help me now to forgive others when they sin against me. Amen.

Hymn: CW 484:1-2 – Brothers, Sisters, Let Us Gladly

Brothers, sisters, let us gladly
Give to God our all, our best—
Service hearty, thorough, honest,
With a living love impressed.
All our duty, all our striving,
All our time to him belong;
Praise him, then, with true devotion;
Come before him with a song.

By his mercy, by his bounty,
By the gift of Christ, his Son,
What great goodness he has shown us,
What high marvels he has done!
Let us to him promptly, freely,
Yield our bodies and our souls,
Thankful that his love protects us,
That his wisdom all controls.