

# Undeserved Mercy

#### What's It All About?

Butch stomped around enraged after football practice. "Hey, Butch, what's wrong?" Jordan asked.

"I'm bigger and stronger than Alex, but Coach is starting him instead of me!"

"Alex does practice hard, and he volunteers whenever Coach needs help," Jordan replied.

"So?" declared Butch.

Jordan shrugged. "Perhaps Coach is interested in heart as well as ability. I'm not as big as you, but I practice like it's game time. And, it paid off since Coach has me playing, as well."

"That doesn't matter! You play a different position than I do!"

"Butch. Relax. Just practice hard, and you'll get your spot," Jordan suggested.

Butch did not answer and left, fuming.

The next day at practice while Jordan rested on the sidelines, he saw Butch deliberately give a cheap shot that injured Alex's leg. Alex fell in pain, holding his knee.

Butch snickered. "Guess you should be tougher."

When practice was over, the burden of seeing Alex purposely hurt bothered Jordan. As he headed to talk to his coach, Jordan noticed several other players coming down the hallway. Once everyone sat in front of the coach, the players shared what happened in practice.

"So, you saw Butch hurt Alex on purpose?" the coach asked, disturbed.

"Yes, sir. All of us did. Butch was angry about your decision to start Alex ahead of him," Jordan said.

The coach frowned in displeasure. "I will take care of it. Thank you, boys, for your honesty and for caring about your teammate."

The next day, Coach huddled the team around him and discussed what transpired between Butch and Alex. Other players were surprised at the news.

"And for his wrongdoing, I am cutting Butch from the team."



Jordan smiled at how justice prevailed and how God's Word proved true, even at football practice. The players were also pleased to find out Alex would be able to return to practice in a month after his knee healed.

Name a situation in life where you saw someone hurt another through words or actions because of a sin like jealousy. How did you feel?

## **Learning From God**

Cain and Abel were both diligent workers, but Abel's heart proved closer to God with his offering given. Instead of correcting his situation, Cain grew jealous. His sin worsened until he committed murder. God gave Cain a chance

to repent. When Cain did not, God punished him.

Genesis 4:1-13, NIV-Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man." 2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. 3 In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. 4 And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. 6 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? 7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." 8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field. Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. 11 Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth." 13 Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear.

### What I Have Learned

Answer True or False to the following statements.

- 1. Today's lesson is taken from Genesis. T or F
- 2. Eve gave birth to sons, Cain and Abel. T or F
- 3. Cain was a farmer and Abel a shepherd.  ${\bf T}$  or  ${\bf F}$
- 4. Cain gave the best offering to God. T or F
- 5. God did not give Cain a warning about sin. T or F
- 6. Angered, Abel murdered Cain. T or F
- 7. God said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" T or F
- God scolded Cain by making him become a shepherd. T or F

9. Cain felt God's punishment was too much to handle. **T** or **F** 

## Keep In Mind

"The LORD said, 'What have you done?
Listen! Your brother's blood cries out
to me from the ground'"
(Genesis 4:10, NIV).

Think of people you have mistreated because you

were angry at them. Think of how you mistreated

## **Choosing What's Best**

them. Make a list of some of those people and discuss it with the other Juniors in class. Have your teacher					
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## **Doing My Part**

Use the list you created in class of people you have mistreated, and during the week, ask them for forgiveness. Then, next to their names, write down their reactions.