

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

Lesson 5 – Genesis 43-44

Jacob's sons came back from Egypt without Simeon, and they did have grain to feed the family... but only for a time. As the grain diminished, the time to face the decision about going back to Egypt approached. In Chapters 43 and 44 we will see the brothers return to Egypt and face their brother Joseph again, but with a very different outcome!

Begin your study with prayer...

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse is Micah 6:8.

*“He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”*

Read Genesis 43:1-14.

At the end of chapter 42 Jacob refused to send Benjamin back to Egypt with his brothers, but the situation has changed.

1. We see that the famine was still severe in Genesis 43:1.
 - a. What condition is revealed in verse 2?

 - b. What did Jacob say to do?

2. We read of a discussion in Genesis 43:3-10 between Jacob and Judah and the other brothers.
 - a. What point did Judah present to his father in verses 3-5?

 - b. What was Jacob's complaint in verse 6?

 - c. Judah saw the reality of the situation. What was the reason from verse 8 that he said they had to go?

 - d. What offer did Judah make in verse 9? (Notice the difference from Reuben's offer in Genesis 42:37.)

3. Jacob listened to his sons and changed his mind.
 - a. What three things did Jacob tell his sons to take with them in Genesis 43:11-13, along with Benjamin, when they returned to Egypt?

 - b. What was Jacob's prayer for his sons in Genesis 43:14?

4. Write Jacob's declaration from the end of Genesis 43:14.
 - a. How is this different from his attitude in Genesis 42:38?

 - b. What was the purpose for Jacob's change of heart? (see Genesis 43:8)

 - c. We can find a similar statement in Esther 4:16. What do you see in the similarities or differences in Jacob's and Esther's situations and attitudes?

Read Genesis 43:15-25.

1. So the brothers took the gifts and brought Benjamin and returned to Egypt, where they again stood before Joseph without knowing who he was.
 - a. What did Joseph see in Genesis 43:16 that seemed to direct his next instructions?

 - b. What were his instructions to the steward?

2. Genesis 43:18 tells us that the brothers were *afraid*. Why?

3. After the brothers defended themselves to the steward in Genesis 43:20-22, the steward's response in Genesis 43:23 must have been surprising to them.
 - a. Write the first words of the steward's answer to them.

 - b. To whom did the steward credit for the *treasure in their sacks*?

 - c. What did he do next?

 - d. What attitude would all these words and actions represent to the brothers as they entered Joseph's house?

4. As the steward brought the brothers into Joseph's house in verse 24, what three things did he do that further showed his intention was not to harm them?

Read Genesis 43:26-34.

1. Since the brothers have returned to Egypt, notice their action before Joseph in each of the following verses.

a. Genesis 43:26

b. Genesis 43:28

c. This is the third time we have read of this action of the brothers before Joseph. As a reminder, write the significance of these actions below. (if needed, see Genesis 37:7-10)

2. Joseph asked about their father, then saw his brother Benjamin.

a. What were his first words to Benjamin in Genesis 43:29?

b. How did seeing his brother affect him in verse 30?

3. Joseph sat at a separate table, as an Egyptian would have to do, but did several things that were out of the ordinary in Genesis 43:33-34.

a. In what order were the brothers seated?

b. What was their reaction to this?

c. Who served the brothers?

d. Instead of the eldest, as would seem most common, who was served the extra portions?

4. Look back at Jacob's prayer in Genesis 43:14. Jacob unknowingly was praying for the attitude Joseph would have for his other sons. In what way do you see Joseph extend mercy to his brothers?

5. Since the brothers arrived in Egypt for the second time, they have felt a wide range of emotions. What emotion do you see in each verse below?

a. Genesis 43:18

b. Genesis 43:33

c. Genesis 43:34

6. Try to put yourself in the place of these brothers. What words would you use to describe how you might be feeling in their situation?

It does seem that the brothers have relaxed a bit and are feeling more comfortable, but there is more to come!

Read Genesis 44:1-13.

1. As the brothers prepare to return home, what did Joseph tell his steward in Genesis 44:1-2?

2. After they left, Joseph put the second part of his plan into action. In Genesis 44:4-5, what were Joseph's instructions to the steward?

3. What defense did the brothers offer to the steward in verses 7-8?

4. The brothers were confident of their innocence.

a. What rash statement did they make in Genesis 44:9?

b. How did the steward reword what would happen if they found the silver cup?

c. Why would the steward make the change?

5. Genesis 44:11-13 describes what happened as each of Joseph's brothers innocently opened his sack before the steward.

a. Whose sack contained the silver cup?

b. How did the brothers react to this discovery?

Read Genesis 44:14-17.

1. Upon returning to Joseph's house, they found that he was still there. Again, they *fell before him on the ground* and Judah spoke for the brothers again in Genesis 44:16.

a. What did Judah say *God has found*?

b. Complete his statement of the punishment.

"...here we are _____
_____."

2. Joseph was man of great authority, so he was the one who would decide the punishment.

a. What punishment did he declare in Genesis 44:17?

b. How does this compare to the steward's words in Genesis 44:10?

Read Genesis 44:18-34.

This section of the chapter gives an account of Judah attempting to change the mind of Joseph as he considers their innocence or guilt. As we read his words recounting what has happened, we will focus on a few specific verses.

1. From Genesis 44:20, write what Judah says about each of the following:

a. Jacob

b. Benjamin

c. Joseph

2. Judah shares words Jacob spoke that we haven't heard before in Genesis 44:27-28.

a. What were Jacob's words according to verse 27?

b. Which wife was he talking about?

- c. How did Jacob describe what happened to Joseph?
 - d. How do you think Joseph felt hearing his father's perception of what happened to him?
 - e. How have you seen the deception effect Jacob's decisions?
3. As a reminder, what do verses 29-31 tell us of what Judah believes will happen if they return home without Benjamin?
4. Genesis 44:32-34 pinpoints Judah's concern.
- a. What do you find in verse 32?
 - b. What does Judah offer in verse 33?

In closing...

1. Judah's appeal to Joseph in Genesis 43:18-23 shows so much about Judah and his heart. It is well said and heartfelt as he offered himself up for Benjamin. How does John 15:13 apply here?
2. Read the following scripture examples of people who were willing to lay down their lives for others and share your thoughts.
- a. Exodus 32:31-32
 - b. Roman 9:1-4
3. Jesus was the ultimate example of such a sacrifice. Take time to consider this amazing act of love and write a prayer of thanks to the Lord.

Memory Verse

*"He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you
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Micah 6:8