

NOT YOUR AVERAGE JOES

A study of the lives of Joseph, Jonah, and Job

Joseph - Genesis 43 and 44

Lesson 5

Week by week, the family watched their food supply diminish, but knowing their father's feelings, none of the sons dared to bring up the subject of a second trip to Egypt. The tension in the home must have been unbearable, especially for Benjamin. While Jacob was protecting his preferred son, who was voicing concern for Simeon in Egypt and his family in Canaan? Jacob could not bear the thought of losing Benjamin. Yet, the need to feed his family overruled Jacob's concerns and he finally relented, allowing Benjamin to accompany them. Again the brothers found themselves before Joseph, pleading for mercy.

OBSERVATION: Read Genesis 43

1. Read Genesis 43 using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. List two things Genesis 43 reveals about:

Jacob

Joseph's brothers

Joseph

THE DILEMMA: Read Genesis 43:1-14

1. *Now the famine was severe in the land.* What did Jacob tell his sons to do? Verse 2

2. Using verses 3-14, summarize the conversation between Jacob and his sons.

Judah (verses 3-5):

Jacob (verse 6):

Brothers (verse 7):

Judah (verses 8-10):

Jacob (verses 11-14):

3. What was Jacob's concern?

4. Jacob was between a rock and a hard place. His family needed food. Yet, he feared for the life of his son Benjamin. He had lost one son already. How can a prior loss or heartache affect our thinking?

a. What are some truths that are helpful to remember in times of fear of a repeated heartache?

Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answer.

5. What was Jacob's statement to his sons in verse 14?

a. Nehemiah was fearful about asking the king for permission to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall. Record his words in Nehemiah 1:11.

1.) What did you learn about his prayer?

EXECUTING THE PLAN: Read Genesis 43:15-25

1. What did the brothers take with them on their return trip to Egypt?
2. Genesis 43:15 reveals that the brothers unknowingly stood before Joseph. What did Joseph tell the steward of his house to do?
3. Genesis 43:18 tells us that the brothers were *afraid*. Why did they think they were being taken *into Joseph's house*?
4. After the brothers defended themselves to the steward, what did he say to them? Verse 23
 - a. Describe the *peace* this *steward* was referring to.
 - b. To whom did the steward credit for the *treasure in their sacks*?
 - c. Record the words of 2 Corinthians 4:7 as you meditate upon the *treasure* God has put in you.
 - 1.) Our God is sovereign over all things. In what ways does it help you to be reminded of this truth?
5. Using verses 23b-25, list the things the steward did to show his intention was not to harm them.

THE BROTHERS UNKNOWINGLY BEFORE JOSEPH: Read Genesis 43:26-34

1. Although the brothers had stood before Joseph before he directed his steward to take them to his house, Joseph has now come home and begins to interact with them. Joseph first asked about the *well-being* of their/his father. After answering Joseph, what did the brothers do? Verse 28
 - a. Joseph's dream of over 13 years ago had come to fruition. The younger Joseph might have gloated over his brother's *bowing their heads and prostrating themselves before him*. But to whom did Joseph direct his attention?

2. Joseph's first words to Benjamin were, *God be gracious to you, my son*. Define the word *gracious*.

3. Record the first phrase of Genesis 43:30.
 - a. What are some synonyms for the word *yearned*?

4. Record the last two phrases of Genesis 43:30.
 - a. How does this speak to you that Joseph felt such pain regarding the absence of his brother?

5. Joseph sat his brothers at the table according to their *birthright*. How did his brothers react?

6. Ignoring his status, Joseph served his brothers, giving Benjamin *five times as much as any of theirs*. What was their response?

7. Go back to Jacob's desire in verse 14. Jacob unknowingly was praying for Joseph. Joseph extended *mercy* to his brothers. What are some components of *mercy*?

OBSERVATION: Read Genesis 44

1. Read Genesis 44 using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?

2. List two things Genesis 44 reveals about:
Joseph

Joseph's brothers

GOING BACK HOME: Read Genesis 44:1-15

1. Using verses 1-10, summarize the conversations:

Joseph to his steward (verses 1-6)

Joseph's brothers (7-9)

Joseph's steward (verse 10)

2. Each of Joseph's brothers innocently *opened his sack* before the steward. Much to their surprise, what was found in Benjamin's *sack*?
 - a. How did the brother's react to this discovery? Verse-13
3. Upon returning to Joseph's house, they found that *he was still there*. What thoughts might have been running through the brothers' minds?
4. Using verse 15, record Joseph's words to his brothers.
 - a. Joseph was a man of great authority. What options did he have regarding his brothers?
 - 1.) You too have options as to how you will relate to someone who has hurt you. Describe how you handle those times.

JUDAH INTERCEDES FOR BENJAMIN: Read Genesis 44:16-34

1. Judah spoke on behalf of his brothers to Joseph. He realized that they had no means by which to *clear themselves*. Scan Judah's questions and statements in verse 16. Why do these statements represent a healthy process in the road to repentance?

2. At first, Judah appeared to be at a loss for words. Beginning with verse 18 through the end of the chapter, Judah attempted to change Joseph's mind. List a few of his statements.
 - a. What was Judah's concern?

3. Although Joseph's brothers were innocent of stealing Joseph's cup, they knew they were not innocent. Why do the sins of the past often resurface when we are accused of wrong doing?
 - a. Rather than ignore the sins of the past, what would God have us do? 1 John 1:9.
 1. What does God promise to do when we *confess our sins* to Him?
 - a.) Explain this as you would to a believer trapped in the condemnation of her sins.

4. Have you ever tried to justify yourself before God? What excuses have you sometimes used?

REVIEW: Read Genesis 43 and 44

1. These two chapters reflect both our need to receive and extend mercy. What did you learn about *mercy* from these chapters?

2. Consider the phrase from Genesis 43:23, *Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure*. What *treasures* has God given you?

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah
- Psalm 46:7

Observation Worksheet - Genesis Chapter 43

¹Now the famine was severe in the land. ²And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."
³But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'
⁴"If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵"But if you will not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'" ⁶And Israel said, "Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?" ⁷But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" ⁸Then Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. ⁹"I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰"For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time." ¹¹And their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and carry down a present for the man--a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. ¹²"Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. ¹³"Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. ¹⁴"And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!" ¹⁵So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. ¹⁶When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon." ¹⁷Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. ¹⁸Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, "It is because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys." ¹⁹When they drew near to the steward of Joseph's house, they talked with him at the door of the house, ²⁰and said, "O sir, we indeed came down the first time to buy food; ²¹"but it happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand. ²²"And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks." ²³But he said, "Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. ²⁴So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. ²⁵Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there. ²⁶And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the earth. ²⁷Then he asked them about their well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" ²⁸And they answered, "Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves. ²⁹Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." ³⁰Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there. ³¹Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the bread." ³²So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. ³³And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another. ³⁴Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

Observation Worksheet - Genesis Chapter 44

¹And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. ²"Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. ³As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. ⁴When they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? ⁵Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.' " ⁶So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. ⁷And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. ⁸"Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? ⁹"With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." ¹⁰And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." ¹¹Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. ¹²So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city. ¹⁴So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground. ¹⁵And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?" ¹⁶Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found." ¹⁷But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father." ¹⁸Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh. ¹⁹"My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' ²⁰"And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' ²¹"Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' ²²"And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' ²³"But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' ²⁴"So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵"And our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.' ²⁶"But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' ²⁷"Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸'and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. ²⁹'But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.' ³⁰"Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, ³¹"it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. ³²"For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' ³³"Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. ³⁴"For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"