

Genesis Bible Study 24

Rebuilding Trust within a Family

taken from

***Salvation for the Social Order: For Those Who Haven't Read the Bible
and for Those Who Think Religion is Merely a Private Matter***

by Philip E. Friesen

Reading: Genesis 42:1-46:6

Notes

In these chapters, all the unresolved issues of the family are exposed. Keep the list of brothers and mothers in front of you as you read. Review what you already know about each brother as you discuss.

Discussion

1. How do you think Joseph felt when he saw his brothers bowing before him?
2. If you were Joseph, would you tell the brothers who you are? Why or why not?
3. Do you believe Joseph was fair to his brothers in this episode?
4. If you were one of Joseph's brothers, how would you feel about this experience?
5. What reason did Joseph give for letting them out of prison (v 17-20)?
6. Why do you suppose Joseph selected Simeon to stay in prison (v 22-24)?
 - Review Genesis 34 and Genesis 37 before answering.
 - Also take note of Simeon's place in the birth order. Who is second in command if Reuben is not there?
7. Based upon v 22-24, how do you think Joseph felt as Simeon was arrested and imprisoned?
8. Did Joseph enjoy his revenge, or actually suffer through the experience?
9. From what you already know about Reuben and his brothers, do you think Reuben is trusted and respected as a leader by his brothers?
10. Discuss Benjamin's importance to Joseph's strategy towards his brothers.
11. How will Joseph's demand affect the family back home?
12. Is Joseph merely trying to create trouble for his brothers, or does he have some more far-reaching purpose in his strategy?
13. Who took leadership in negotiating with Jacob about returning to Egypt?

14. Compare Jacob's response to Judah with his response to Reuben in Genesis 42.
15. If you have time, compare Judah with Reuben and note the development of each character until now.
16. Benjamin says nothing and does nothing in the entire story. How important is he to the success of the story, in your judgment?
17. Do you think Rachel really knew she would have another son?
18. Review Judah's role in Genesis 37-38. How has Judah's character changed?
19. Review the role of Joseph in Genesis 37:2-10. Has Joseph changed? How?
20. What other questions do you have about this story?
21. Do you think family reconciliation is now complete, or will further steps to forgiveness and rebuilding of trust be necessary?
22. Review the story of Jacob from his birth until this moment. Describe his character in Genesis 25, 27 and his relationship with his brother.
 - Include the circumstances of his final reconciliation. How did this happen?
 - Describe his relationship with his mother, Rebekah, and his Uncle Laban.
 - Describe his relationship to each of his wives.
 - Describe his relationship to each of his sons.
 - How has Jacob changed?
 - What significant experiences caused him to change?
23. Review the story of Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Judah, and Joseph.
 - How has each one reaped the consequences of his own behavior in some way?
 - How has each one been shown mercy?