

As the duration of the famine continues, a second trip to Egypt for grain is in order. However, complications arise as their return necessitates Benjamin's presence with them, which throws Jacob into turmoil. With the severity of famine, comes the severity of greater familial risk and escalating tension in the plot of the story.

Genesis 43:1-34

Joseph's

Brothers

Return to

Egypt

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Forgiveness can be a difficult exchange for the offender AND the offended. It requires humility, grace, and resolution. Our view of forgiveness toward each other is directly related to our understanding of God's forgiveness of us. If we are hindered in really believing our sins are forgiven and we're truly cleansed in His righteousness, then we will struggle to extend forgiveness to others in our life.

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

WHAT is the first thing that comes to mind when you consider God's forgiveness of your sin?

HOW have you experienced forgiveness from another person that truly reflected the character of God?

CAN you recall a time when you struggled to forgive another? **WHAT** hindered you from doing so?

WHY can forgiveness be such a challenge when the end result is so fruitful?

Genesis 43:1-34 Read Genesis 43:1-34

Joseph's Brothers Return to Egypt

OBSERVATION

What is the status of the famine in vs. 1-2?

According to vs. 3-5 who must return to Egypt with Jacob's son if they are to request more grain from Joseph?

Who takes responsibility for Benjamin's safety in vs. 8-9?

What does Jacob send with his boys as an "offering" to Joseph in vs. 11-13?

In vs. 16 how does Joseph prepare to greet his brothers? What do his brothers suspect from him in vs. 18?

How does Joseph's steward respond to the men's worries in vs. 23-25?

Describe Joseph's response to seeing all his brothers in vs. 27-31?

What do you observe regarding the eating situation in vs. 32-33?

How does the text describe the scene at the end in vs. 34?

INTERPRETATION

Why is Jacob so reluctant to allow Benjamin to return to Egypt with his brothers? Consider 42:38 and 35:24.

Contrast Judah's words and behavior now to that we saw in chapter 38. How has he seemingly changed, and why is this important to consider as the story progresses forward? See 49:9-12 for insight.

What parallel (and potential meaning) can you draw from the gifts given to Joseph in vs. 12 and those the Ishmaelites were carrying upon purchasing him as their slave in 37:25? How could this have fueled Joseph's anger towards his brothers, had he allowed it?

What comparison/contrast can you make regarding the fears of the men in vs. 18 and what actually happens to them in vs. 24? How does this mirror grace and mercy?

What do Joseph's actions in vs. 29-30 reveal about his heart attitude?

Where do you see Christ's forgiveness for our sins in the picture given with Joseph and his brothers?

APPLICATION

Do you believe you're fully, completely, and freely forgiven by God, in Jesus, for all your sins?

What hindrances do you experience forgiving others, in Christ, the same way you've been forgiven?