STUDY GUIDE 18

Genesis 44

Study warm-up: What is evidence of true repentance?

**OBSERVATION – Lord, help me to discover it!**

Take a moment to praise God for His tender mercy and beautiful grace. Ask Him to further reveal these qualities to you as you study this week.

*Proverbs 28:13*

*One who conceals his wrongdoings will not prosper,*

*But one who confesses and abandons them will find compassion.*

We are getting very close to Joseph’s great reveal. However, in chapter 44 Joseph remains uncertain about his brothers’ hearts; he has one more test for them.

1. Briefly recall what the Text has previously revealed about Jacob’s first four sons.
   a) Reuben (Genesis 30:14; 35:22; 37:21, 22, 29; 42:22, 37)

   b) Simeon & Levi (Genesis 34:25, 30; 42:24, 36)

   c) Judah (Genesis 37:26; 38:24-26, 43:1-10)

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**Jacob’s Children**

Jacob

With wife Leah

1. Reuben
2. Simeon
3. Levi
4. Judah
5. Dan
6. Naphtali
7. Gad
8. Asher

With Rachel’s slave Bilhah

9. Issachar
10. Zebulun
11. Joseph
12. Benjamin

With Leah’s slave Zilpah

With wife Rachel

With wife Rachel

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*Genesis 44*
Read Genesis 44.

2. Briefly summarize what happens in each section. If the events raise any questions for you, make note of those as well.
   a) Genesis 44:1-5
   
   b) Genesis 44:6-13
   
   c) Genesis 44:14-17
   
   d) Genesis 44:18-34
INTERPRETATION – Lord, help me to understand it.

3. In Genesis 44:1, we learn that once again each brother’s money is placed in the opening of his sack before the return journey to Canaan. This money isn’t mentioned again in chapter; the silver cup takes priority. Why?

4. What is Joseph’s motive for framing his brothers as thieves this time? (There are some things that Joseph still needs to discover about them.)

5. Who has emerged (chapters 42 and 44) as the family spokesperson and why?

As we have read Joseph’s encounters with his brothers, the story has been presented from what is known as a Third Person Omniscient point of view. In other words, the narrator of the story is all-seeing and knows the feelings and thoughts of everyone. As we experience the story through the narrator’s telling, we can miss how the individual characters experience the events. In this case, we are privy to information that Joseph does not know.

6. What new information is revealed to Joseph in his exchange with Judah? (You may find it helpful to review the various meeting dialogs as they are arranged at the end of this study guide.)
7. Judah knows he and his brothers are innocent of taking the silver cup, so why does he say what he does in Genesis 44:16?

8. You may have caught it in question 6, but how does Judah feel about Benjamin? About his father Jacob? (1 John 3:16 may help.)

**APPLICATION – Lord, help me to live it!**

9. Steven J. Cole, retired pastor of Flagstaff Christian Fellowship, said, “God’s grace leads us to repentance by revealing His great love and our great sin.” How has this been true of your own journey with Jesus?

10. How has Joseph’s dealings with his brothers informed your understanding about trust and trustworthiness? (Can one exist without the other?)
FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OR CONTEMPLATION:
I) Do you think Joseph literally meant that he practiced divination in Genesis 44:15?

II) As Judah recounted Jacob’s words to Joseph, he said, “You know that my wife bore me two sons…” What does that mean for Judah to say that? For Joseph to hear it?

III) In what ways has Joseph forced his brothers to relive much of the same struggles that Joseph experienced from their mistreatment of him twenty years earlier?

Scripture for Guide 18
1 John 3:16
We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters.

Dialogs with Joseph and his Brothers (Question 3)

[Genesis 42 – The brothers’ first visit to Egypt. Joseph recognizes his brothers.]

JOSEPH: Where have you come from?

THE BROTHERS: From the land of Canaan to buy food.

JOSEPH: You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land.

THE BROTHERS: No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies.

JOSEPH: No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!

THE BROTHERS: Your servants are twelve brothers in all, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive.

JOSEPH: It is as I said to you, you are spies; by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here! Send one of you and have him get your brother, while you remain confined, so that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, you are certainly spies.

[The brothers spend three days in prison.]

JOSEPH: Do this and live, for I fear God: if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for the rest of you, go, carry
grain for the famine of your households, and bring you youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and you will not die.

[The brothers talking amongst themselves, unaware Joseph understands their language.]

THE BROTHERS:  Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; for that reason this distress has happened to us.

REUBEN:  Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? Now justice for his blood is required.

[Genesis 43 – The brothers’ second visit to Egypt; Benjamin accompanies them. Joseph has them invited to his home for a noontime meal. When Joseph arrives at the house, the brothers bow before him and he asks about their welfare.]

JOSEPH:  Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?

THE BROTHERS:  Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.

[Brothers bow again.]

JOSEPH:  Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?

May God be gracious to you, my son.

[Joseph is overcome with emotion and has to leave for a bit. When he returns the meal is served. Joseph serves his brothers portions from his own table, giving Benjamin five times as much.]

[The next morning Joseph has his steward fill the brothers’ sacks with as much food as they can carry and their money. In addition, Joseph has the steward place Joseph’s silver cup in Benjamin’s sack. The brothers leave for Canaan.]

[Genesis 44 – Upon giving the brothers a bit of a head start, Joseph sends his steward after the brothers. The brothers are accused of thievery and upon a search, Joseph’s silver cup is discovered in Benjamin’s sack. The men tear their clothes [in grief] and return to the city.]

JOSEPH:  What is this thing that you have done? Do you not know that a man who is like me can indeed practice divination?

JUDAH:  What can we say to my lord? What words can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we
are my lord’s slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found.”

JOSEPH:  
Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father.

JUDAH:  
Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord’s ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’ And we said to my lord, ‘We have an old father and a little boy born in our father’s old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.’ Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me so that I may set my eyes on him.’ But we said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’ 23 You said to your servants, however, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.’ So it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, ‘Go back, buy us a little food.’ But we said, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’ Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons; and the one left me, and I said, “Surely he is torn to pieces,” and I have not seen him since. If you also take this one from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.’ So now, when I come to your servant, my father, and the boy is not with us—since our father’s life is so attached to the boy’s life—when he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die. So your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant, our father, down to Sheol in sorrow. For your servant accepted responsibility for the boy from my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, then my father can let me take the blame forever.’ So now, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear that I may see the evil that would overtake my father.
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STUDY GUIDE 19

Genesis 45

Study warm-up: Have you ever received news that left you speechless? What happened?

OBSERVATION – Lord, help me to discover it!

As you continue examining Joseph and his brothers this week, ask your sovereign Father to reveal in their story, His great love for you.

Romans 5:3-5

And not only this, but we also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

What a chapter awaits us this week!

Read Genesis 45.

1. Put yourself in the brothers’ sandals for a moment. When the powerful and unpredictable Egyptian official says, “I am Joseph,” what goes through your mind?

2. Read Genesis 45:1-15 again and identify Joseph’s attitude and feelings:
   a) Toward his brothers –

   b) Toward God –
3. How do Pharaoh and Joseph provide for the brothers’ journey to Canaan and move to Egypt?

4. What were Jacob/Israel’s hopes and expectations when he sent his sons to Egypt a second time? (Genesis 43:1:14) When the sons arrived back in Canaan, how did the results compare to Jacob’s hopes? (Think about other times the sons have shown up with news.)

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<tr>
<th>Jacob/Israel’s hopes for the 2nd journey</th>
<th>Actual results of the 2nd journey</th>
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INTERPRETATION – Lord, help me to understand it.

5. Why does Joseph reveal himself to his brothers at this time? (Reviewing Judah’s plea to Joseph in Genesis 44:18-34 may help.)
6. What are key elements for the relational reconciliation for Joseph and his brothers?

7. According to Joseph, why is he in Egypt and who is responsible?

8. What instruction does Joseph give his brothers in Genesis 45:24 and why? (Genesis 42:22 may provide insight.)

9. How does Jacob initially respond to the news his sons bring him? What causes Jacob’s understanding to unfold?

Think about the good news Israel/Jacob received:

- The cherished son, even when all evidence indicated his death, is not dead but very much alive!
- The living son is elevated to a position of great honor. (Genesis 41:40)
- The living son is mighty and powerful; every knee before him bows. (Genesis 41:43)
- The living son is a savior to his nation and the world. (Genesis 41:56, 57)
- The living son provides grain so that the people may have bread and life. (Genesis 41:56)
- Through the living son, the family is restored and reconciled.
- The living son is evidence of the faithfulness and trustworthiness of the LORD!
APPLICATION – Lord, help me to live it!

10. Joseph credits God’s and His plan for bringing him to Egypt and yet it was clearly his brothers’ evil actions which were the method. How do you understand (in Joseph’s story and your own) the mysterious coexistence of both God’s divine sovereignty and man’s responsibility? What does this mean for your life?

11. Jacob initially rejects his sons’ good news; similarly, people can reject The Gospel of Jesus Christ. When you consider the hurdles that Jacob* had to overcome to accept the news as truth, how does this inform your witness to people who don’t know Jesus? (Remember Joseph’s role in drawing Jacob to Egypt.)

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*Jacob had been a deceiver, who was himself deceived, and when presented with the truth, thought it to be a deception.

FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OR CONTEMPLATION:
I) Is Genesis 45 the chapter in which Joseph forgives his brothers, or did he forgive them earlier and is just now expressing it? Explain.

II) Sometimes God gives abundantly, sometimes He does not. How can we understand this?

III) Some twenty years earlier, the brothers had taken Joseph’s tunic and sold him for 20 pieces (possibly shekels) of silver. In Genesis 45, Joseph gives each of his half-brothers a change of garments (outer wraps); to Benjamin he gives five garments and 300 pieces of silver. What might this indicate?

IV) If you are familiar with the story of the Hebrew Exodus from Egypt, what similarities and differences do you notice about their beginnings in Egypt?