

Genesis Chapter Forty Three Workbook

Key Words:

Harmonize:

Read John 13. What secrets are kept at each of these meals, and by whom?

Dig:

- 1) What conditions have changed since chapter 42?
- 2) Can you see any reason for Judah being able to persuade his father when Reuben had failed?
- 3) What is Jacob being required to sacrifice in this return trip to Egypt?
- 4) How is Israel/Jacob similar to Abraham in this chapter?
- 5) What do the brothers anticipate from this encounter with Joseph?
- 6) What emotions are expressed in this chapter? By whom?

Discuss:

- 1) What happens when one nation becomes dependent on another?
- 2) Name some 'dependent' nations. How did they find themselves in such circumstances?

Point of Prayer:

Pray for a region (city, state, country...) that is currently in need.

Integrate:

What other scripture comes to mind as you read this chapter?

Application:

- 1) Who had the most influence with mom and dad while you were growing up?
- 2) If you could use one word to describe each of your children's roles in your family, what would it be?
- 3) What reasons cause the men you know to cry?
- 4) Were any of your siblings given greater privileges than the others?
- 5) If you were to prepare a gift for someone, out of what you already possess, what would it be?
- 6) Is there someone you are currently afraid to face?

Genesis Chapter Forty Three

Genesis 43:1-5

Now the famine was severe in the land. So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food." Judah spoke to him, however, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. But if you do 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.'"

- Deadlock over decision to return to Egypt is broken due to pressure from the famine and Judah's initiative
- Simeon seems forgotten until family exhausts their food supply
- They make their decision in midst of crisis
- Judah challenges Jacob's stubborn refusal to send Benjamin—laying out the insistence of Joseph—not to return without him
- Many fail to respond to God unless they face their own need

Genesis 43:6-10

Then Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had another brother?" But they said, "The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' So we answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" And Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever. For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice."

- Israel/Jacob treats this occasion as personal—challenging and chiding sons
- Reuben had offered more surety than Judah—but starvation helps convince.
- Judah boldly criticizes father for the delay—Reuben had pleaded but didn't rebuke

Genesis 43:11-15

Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. And take double the money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man; and may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; they they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

- They prepare a gift appropriate to honor Joseph
- God Almighty—how he revealed Himself to Abraham
- When you look at food available to take as a gift—it appears that the grain crops have failed
- Jacob is willing to part with scarce resources in order to establish favor
- They still have money to make an exchange with
- A side-ways prayer is offered for deliverance

Genesis 43:16-18

When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, "Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon." So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and they said, "It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys."

- Did not anticipate such a personal encounter—causes further anxiety
- When they fail to understand situation—they verbalize their fear for the worst
- Brothers assume their donkeys might be valued assets in Egypt.

Genesis 43:19-23

So they came near to Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, and said, "Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food, and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's

money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. So we have brought it back in our hand. We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks." And he said, "Be at ease, 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.

- Servant indicates God is at work concerning the money in the bags—that their money had been dutifully received
- Simeon was imprisoned less than 2 years
- Servant speaks freely about God—tries to calm the fear of the brothers

Genesis 43:24-28

Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys fodder. So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there. When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present which was in their hand and bowed to the ground before him. Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" And they said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." And they bowed down in homage.

- Brothers are being treated as guests of the house—rather than finding that they are regarded as offenders—needing to defend themselves.
- Bow before Joseph a second time—as they bear gifts—then again a third time

Genesis 43:29-34

As he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son." And Joseph hurried out for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought a place to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face, and came out; and he controlled himself and said, "Serve the meal." So they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians, who ate with him, by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians. Now they were seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. And he took portions to them from his own table; but Benjamin's portion was

five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

- Refusal to eat together—based on cultic practices—this resembles the Jewish refusal to eat with gentiles
- Being seated in their birth-order further stirs brother's hearts to believe all this interaction has divine oversight
- Seating arrangements are a reminder that they are aliens
- Benjamin's portion—5 times the size of his brethren
- When he inquires about Benjamin—he may not be recognizable to Joseph—15 years have passed. Older brothers still call Benjamin a lad, so must have been very young when Joseph left for Egypt.
- Official protocol in place in the serving of the meal.