

# **From Bitter to Better: Choosing to Forgive**

## Lesson 4

Genesis 43:1-45:28, 46:1-7, 28-30

September 6, 2020

### **Forgiveness: Releasing to God Our Need for Justice**

#### **Introduction**

There are many misnomers when it comes to forgiveness. Many believe it is a one-time event, or that forgiving someone means saying that what the offender did was okay. Or even that forgiveness means that you should immediately trust a person.

However, forgiveness is much more nuanced than that. It's been said that forgiveness is a one-way street, and reconciliation is a two-way street. In the case of Joseph, he chose to forgive his brothers, regardless of how they might act in the future. But, his brothers showed true repentance and sorrow for their actions and were reconciled to Joseph.

Forgiveness is a choice and a difficult one. It allows us to recognize two things: God's sovereignty in the situation to bring about our good and how we are just like the offenders before God in need of His forgiveness for our sin. We can forgive others of their offenses toward us because we recognize how deeply we have been forgiven and loved by a perfect and holy God. The change that He brings about in our lives through His Spirit indwelling in us gives us the ability to forgive those we never thought we could.

***Memory verse: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."—Colossians 3:13***

Pray and read Genesis 43:1-45:28, 46:1-7, 28-30. What questions or observations do you have about these passages?

## What do the passages say?

1. What finally convinced Jacob to send Benjamin along with the other brothers? (Genesis 43:1-14)
2. How did Joseph treat the brothers once he saw Benjamin had come along? (Genesis 43:15-25, 31-34)
3. What was Joseph's reaction when he saw his brothers? (Genesis 43:29-30)
4. What was Joseph's instructions to the steward of the house? What did the steward do? (Genesis 44:1-10)
5. How did the brothers react to the cup being found in Benjamin's bag? (Genesis 44:13-14)
6. Summarize in a sentence or two what Judah said to Joseph to convince Joseph not to take Benjamin. (Genesis 44:16-34)
7. How did Joseph respond to Judah's plea? (Genesis 45:1-15)

8. What was Pharaoh's offer to Jacob's family? (Genesis 45:16-20)
  
9. How did Jacob react to the news? (Genesis 45:26-28)
  
10. How did God reassure Jacob about the move to Egypt? (Genesis 46:1-4)

### **What do the passages mean?**

1. Joseph saw the activity of God in his story (Genesis 45:5-8), despite the difficult things he went through to get there. What can we remember at similar times in our lives? (Romans 8:28; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 1:6, 2:12-13; Hebrews 13:21; 1 John 4:12)
  
2. Judah showed incredible character by offering to trade himself for Benjamin to be imprisoned. Jesus comes from the line of Judah. How is Judah exemplifying Jesus? (Matthew 20:28; John 10:11; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:20; 1 John 3:16)

3. Joseph's mindset toward his brothers is fully understood once the brothers show true grief over what they did to Joseph many years before. What is repentance, and how does a person show true repentance and grief for their sin? (Psalm 38:18, 51:3-5; Ezekiel 18:21-23; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 1 John 1:9)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Jacob's grief over the death of his son turned into joy at finding out he was still alive. How does the Gospel turn our grief into joy? (Psalm 30:11; Jeremiah 31:13; Matthew 5:4; John 16:19-24)

### **Applying the passages**

1. Who is someone you recognize you need to forgive? What steps can you take this week to actively pursue forgiving them, even if they don't apologize?

