

Character Through Suffering

Lesson Five

Genesis 42-50 & Job

The saga is almost complete. Joseph is well established in Egypt with a powerful position. All that remains is the rest of the family. They have no idea of what has become of Joseph. Some believe he is dead. Others carry the deep secret about him. Yet God will reunite them and bring them into Egypt where they will multiply and become God's chosen nation.

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS GO TO EGYPT

Genesis 42

The famine is so widespread that even in Canaan the people are suffering and running out of food. Joseph's father, Jacob, and his brothers are looking for relief from the famine. **Read Genesis 42:1-24.**

How many of the brothers go to Egypt? _____

Which brother is kept at home? _____

What is Joseph's title? _____

To whom do the brothers bow down? _____

What is this action a fulfillment of? _____

Did Joseph let his brothers know he recognized them? _____

Did the brothers recognize Joseph? _____

What does Joseph accuse his brothers of? _____

What does he order them to do? _____

For how many days does he keep them in custody? _____

In what way does the order he gave them change? _____

Why do the brothers think all of these bad things are happening? _____

Which brother is bound and kept? _____

Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn and to restore every man's money into his sack and to give them provisions for the way. And they departed from there. And when they came to Jacob, their father, they told him all that befell them. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack. They and their father were afraid. And Jacob said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children. Joseph is not and Simeon is not and you want to take Benjamin away. All these things are against me." And Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; if mischief befall him by the way, then shall you bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Why are they all afraid when they discover the money in their sacks? _____

What would happen to Jacob if anything bad happened to Benjamin? _____

THE SECOND JOURNEY OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS

Genesis 43

And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little food." And Judah said, "The man did solemnly protest to us saying, 'You shall not see my face except your brother be with you.' If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food. But if you will not send him, we will not go down." And Israel said, "Why did you deal so ill with me as to tell the man you had yet a brother?" And they said, "The man asked us straightly of our family. Could we certainly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" And Judah said to his father, "Send the lad with me. I will be surety for him. If I do not bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame forever." And their father said to them, "If it must be so, do this; take of the best fruits in the land and carry the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices and myrrh, nuts and almonds. And take double money in your hand, and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother and go. And God Almighty give you mercy before the man that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Which brother takes full responsibility for Benjamin? _____

What does the last sentence indicate about Jacob's attitude? _____

Read Genesis 43:15-34 to see what happens to the brothers as they return to Egypt.

The brothers believe they are taken to Joseph's house for what reason? _____

What does the steward tell the brothers? _____

About whom does Joseph ask? _____

Why did Joseph hurry out of the room when he was introduced to Benjamin? _____

Who got five times as much food as the rest? _____

JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN

Genesis 44,45



And Joseph commanded the steward of his house saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry; and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest and his corn money." And he did so. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away. And when they were gone out of the city, Joseph said to his steward, "Up, follow after the men." And when he overtook them, he said, "Why have you rewarded evil for good? Is not this the cup from which my lord drinks? You have done evil in so doing." And they said to him, "Why does my lord say words? God forbid that your servants should do according to this thing. Behold, the money which we found in our sack's mouth we brought again to you. How, then, should we steal out of your lord's house silver or gold? With whomever it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondsmen." And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it be found shall be my servant, and you shall be blameless." Then they took down every man his sack to the ground and opened every man his sack. And he searched and began at the eldest and left at the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes and returned to the city.

Joseph has set up the brother that he loves the most. (Joseph's mother was Rachel. She had only one other son, Benjamin. All the other brothers had different mothers.

Read Genesis 44:14-34 to see how this episode ends.

What does Judah offer to do? _____

Read verse 30 again. What does this indicate about the relationship between Jacob and Benjamin? _____

Do you think this relationship is similar to the one Jacob had with Joseph? _____

What proves that the brothers' attitude toward this favored son (Benjamin) is very different from their attitude toward Joseph when he was their father's favored one?

The brothers have passed the test Joseph put them through. The time has come for him to let them know who he is.

Then Joseph could not refrain himself any longer and he cried, "Cause every man to go out from me." And no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud and said to his brothers. "I am Joseph! Does my father yet live?" And his brothers could not answer him for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, I pray you. I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here for God did send me before you to preserve life. So now it was not you that sent me here, but God. And He has made me a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go to my father and say to him, 'Thus said your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me, tarry not, and I will nourish you. For yet there are five years of famine.' And you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt. And you shall hurry and bring my father down here." And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept. Moreover, he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. And after that his brothers talked with him.

Even Pharaoh gets in on all the excitement. **Read Genesis 45:16-24.**

What kind of land will Pharaoh give them? _____

What does Pharaoh give them to make their move easier? _____

Who gets special provisions? _____

Joseph's last words to his brothers as they are about to leave for Canaan are, "Don't quarrel on the way." Joseph wants them to hurry on their way. He is anxious to see his father. He also doesn't want them to relive the past and blame each other for what they had done to Joseph.

JACOB IN EGYPT

Genesis 45-50

And Joseph's brothers came into the land of Canaan to Jacob, their father, and told him saying, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart fainted for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph which he had said to them. And when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob revived. And Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die." And Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to him in

the visions of the night and said, "I am God, the God of your father. Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will make of you a great nation. I will go down with you into Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again. And Joseph shall put his hand upon your eyes." And all the souls of the house of Jacob which came into Egypt were threescore and ten, besides his sons' wives and servants. And he sent Judah before him to Joseph. And Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel, his father, to Goshen and presented himself to him. And he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are yet alive."

About how many people went to Egypt? _____

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh. And Pharaoh spoke to Joseph saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. The land of Egypt is before you. In the best of the land make your father and brothers to dwell. In the land of Goshen let them dwell. And Joseph brought Jacob, his father, and set him before Pharaoh. And Pharaoh asked him, "How old are you?" And Jacob said, "The days of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have the years of my life been and have not attained to the years of the life of my fathers in their pilgrimage." And Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Joseph nourished his father and his brothers and all his father's household with bread in the best of the land as Pharaoh had commanded. And Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years.

Jacob is about to die. He has yet to give the blessings to his sons. **Read Genesis 47:27-48:22.**

What does Jacob want Joseph to promise him? _____

What status is given to Ephraim and Manasseh? _____

Where was Rachel buried? _____

What is unusual about the way the blessing was given to Manasseh and Ephraim?

And Jacob called his sons and blessed them. And when he blessed Judah, he said, "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; your father's children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's cub. From the prey, my son, you are gone up. The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and to Him shall the gathering of the people be. I have waited for Your salvation, O Lord." And when Jacob had made an end, he yielded up the ghost and was gathered to his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept upon him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his



servants, the physicians, to embalm his father. And the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days. Then Joseph and his brothers went up into the land of Canaan and buried Jacob in the cave of Machpelah which Abraham had bought.

Who uses a scepter? _____

From which of the sons of Jacob will Jesus be descended? _____

For how long did Egypt mourn? _____

Read Genesis 50:15-26 for the end of this episode.

Of what are the brothers afraid? _____

What does Joseph tell them? _____

For how many years does Joseph live? _____

What does Joseph make his brothers promise? _____

JOB

The Book of Job

The author of this book is not known. The book begins the section of poetry in the Bible. The time of the writing of this book also is not known. It is thought that Job lived around the time of Abraham, but the account of his life was probably not written until after Solomon's reign (about a thousand years later). Job had several things in common with the other Old Testament Patriarchs. Job lived in the land of Uz. (This is believed to be east of Canaan.) He lived to be more than a hundred years old. His wealth was measured by the number of cattle he had. And, like the other patriarchs, he served as priest for his family.

The story of Job is intriguing. It is not as action packed as the stories of the other patriarchs. It focuses on the relationship between Job and God. Satan tries hard to destroy this relationship, but he does not prevail.

Read Job 1:1-5 to find out some background information about Job.

How many children did Job have? _____

What was Job's social economic standing? _____

Why did he offer sacrifices after the children had feasts? _____

All seems to be going very well in the life of Job. But things are about to change in a big way. **Read Job 1:6-12.**

Who came with the angels? _____

What had Satan been doing? _____

Satan said Job was blameless and upright for what reason? _____

What did Satan say Job would do if he lost his possessions? _____

What did God give Satan permission to do? _____

What restriction did God place on Satan in this matter? _____

And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine. And there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them. And the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away and killed the servants with the edge of the sword. I only am escaped alone to tell you." While he was yet speaking there came another and said, "The fire of God is fallen from heaven and has burned up the sheep and the servants. I only am escaped alone to tell you." While he was yet speaking there came also another and said, "The Chaldean took the camels and killed the servants with the edge of the sword. I only am escaped alone to tell you." While he was yet speaking there came also another and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking; and, behold, there came a great wind and struck the house and it fell upon them and they are dead." Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell down upon the ground and worshiped and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Did Satan succeed in his plans? _____

Satan did not give up that easily. **Read Job 2:1-10.**

Who came with the angels? _____

What had Satan been doing? _____

What did Satan want to do to Job? _____

Did God give him permission? _____

What restriction did God place on Satan? _____

What physical affliction did Satan give to Job? _____

What advice did Job's wife give him? _____

Did Job sin in this? _____

Although Job does not "curse God," he does examine himself to see what could be the cause for all of these calamities. His friends also reflect on his situation and try to determine the cause. The friends assume that Job has done something wrong and this is his punishment. A short summary of their reactions and advice follows.

Then came Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, to comfort him. And they hardly recognized him and they wept. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spoke a word to him for they saw that his grief was very great. After this Job opened his mouth and cursed his day. Then Eliphaz said, "Who ever perished being innocent? Happy is the man whom God corrects. Therefore despise not the chastening of the Almighty."

And Job answered and said, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me. My brothers have dealt deceitfully as a brook. Is there sin in my tongue? Cannot my mouth discern perverse things?"

Then Bildad answered, "How long will you speak those things? Does the Almighty pervert justice?"

Then Job answered, "I know it is so. How can a man be righteous before God? Though one wished to dispute with Him, he could not answer Him one time out of a thousand. My soul is weary of life. I will say to God: Do not condemn me, but tell me what charges you have against me."

Then answered Zophar, "If sin be in your hand, put it far away, for then shall you lift up your face without spot and shall not fear."

Then Job answered, "Miserable comforters are you all. Oh, that my words were now written! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another."

What did all three friends presume Job had done? _____

Could the friends see any other possible explanation? _____

How did Job answer these accusations? _____

Even though Job could discern no specific sin that might account for his troubles, he still maintains hope in the Lord. Look at the underlined passage above.

Which person of the Trinity do we refer to as our Redeemer? _____

Whom does Job know he will see after he dies? _____

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

And Job answered, "Behold, I am vile. I have uttered what I understood not, things too wonderful for me which I knew not. Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."

And the Lord said to Eliphaz and his two friends, "You have not spoken of Me the thing that is right as My servant Job has."

Then the Lord accepted Job and turned the captivity of Job. He blessed him and gave him twice as much as he had before. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And Job saw his sons and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died being old and full of days.

What is the point of what the Lord says to Job? _____

What does Job realize about himself? _____

What does Job teach us about ourselves? _____

REVIEW

1. Does Jacob want Benjamin to go to Egypt? _____
2. Does Jacob consent to let Benjamin go? _____
3. Who says he will be responsible for Benjamin? _____
4. Whose sack contains the silver cup? _____
5. Who offers to take the punishment for Benjamin? _____
6. What is the brothers' first reaction when Joseph reveals himself? _____
7. Joseph says who was responsible for bringing him to Egypt? _____
8. Will Jacob go to Egypt? _____
9. What kind of land does Pharaoh give Jacob? _____
10. From which son will Jesus be descended? _____
11. What happens to Job's wealth? _____
12. Does Job curse God? _____
13. Are Job's friend a comfort to him? _____
14. Does Job find out why things happened the way they did? _____