

Lesson 11 God Brings Good Out of Tough Times

Genesis 42-47, 50 - Summary

PART 1 Genesis 42 – Brothers Bow

When Jacob found out there was grain in Egypt, he sent all his sons to Egypt to buy grain, except his youngest son Benjamin, as he was afraid that he might be harmed.

When they arrived, they came before Joseph and bowed down to him. They did not recognise him, but he knew them, although he pretended not to.

Instead, he spoke harshly and asked, "Where do you come from?"

"From the land of Canaan," they answered, "Come to buy grain."

Joseph remembered what he had dreamt. Then Joseph called his brothers spies.

Then they explained, "Sir, we come from a family of twelve brothers. The youngest is still with our father, and one is dead."

Joseph replied, "You are spies. You won't leave until your youngest brother comes here. Choose one of you to get your brother, while the rest stay here."

Joseph kept them in jail for three days then said, "Since I respect God, one of you must stay here in jail, and the rest of you can go. Bring your youngest brother, then I'll know that you're not spies."

They agreed and said to one another, "We're being punished because of Joseph."

They did not know that Joseph could understand them, since he was speaking in Egyptian.

Joseph had Simeon tied up and taken to jail. He gave orders for his brothers' grain sacks to be filled with grain along with their money. When they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to get some grain, and right away he saw his moneybag. "Here's my money!" he told his brothers. "Right here in my sack." They were trembling with fear.

When they returned to their father, they told him everything that had happened. They were all frightened.

Jacob said, "You have already taken my sons Joseph and Simeon from me. And now you want to take away Benjamin!"

Jacob refused to let Benjamin go.

Part 2 Genesis 43 – A Second Trip

The famine got worse. Jacob's family had eaten all the grain from Egypt. Jacob said, "Go back and buy some more grain."

Judah replied, "The governor warned us we would not be allowed to see him without Benjamin. We must take him!"

Judah promised to bring him back safely. Jacob said, "If Benjamin must go, take the governor a gift of some of the best things from our own country like perfume, honey, and spices. Also take twice the amount of money for the grain, to make up for the money that was put back in your sacks. Take Benjamin and leave right away. I pray that God will be good to you and that the governor will let your other brother and Benjamin come home.

The brothers took the gifts, twice the amount of money, and Benjamin. Then they hurried off to Egypt.

When they stood in front of Joseph, he saw Benjamin. He told his servant to prepare lunch for the brother at his own house.

When they arrived at Joseph's house, the brother told servant in charge about the money found in their grain sacks.

"It's all right," the servant replied. "Don't worry. I received your payment in full."

Then he brought Simeon out to them.

The servant took them into Joseph's house.

When Joseph came home, they gave him their gifts, and bowed down to him.

When Joseph saw Benjamin, he said, "This must be your youngest brother. God bless you, my son." Right away he rushed off to his room and cried because of his love for Benjamin.

After washing his face and returning, he was able to control himself and they ate together.

Part 3 Genesis 44 - The Missing Cup

Later, Joseph told the servant, "Fill the men's grain sacks with as much as they can hold. Also put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest brother."

The next morning, the men headed home. They had not gone far when Joseph told his servant to go after them and say, 'My master has been good to you. Why have you stolen his cup?'

The servant did this, but they replied, "Sir, why do you say such things? We would never do anything like that! If you find that one of us has the cup, then kill him, and the rest of us will become your slaves."

"Good!" the man replied, "I'll do what you have said. But only the one who has the cup will my slave. The rest of you can go free."

Each of the brothers opened his sack. When he came to Benjamin's sack, he found the cup. They were so upset they began tearing their clothes.

When Judah and his brothers got back to the city Joseph was still at home. They bowed down to Joseph, who asked them, "What have you done? Judah replied. "How can we prove we are innocent? God has shown that we are guilty. And now all of us are your slaves."

Joseph told them, " Only the one who was caught with the cup will become my slave. The rest of you are free to go home."

Judah pleaded for Benjamin. He said, "Our father is a very old man. Benjamin's brother is dead and our father loves him very much. If we return without Benjamin, he will die of a broken heart. Sir, I am your slave. Please let me stay here in place of Benjamin. I couldn't bear to see my father in such sorrow."

Part 4 Genesis 45 - Joseph Forgives.

Joseph could no longer control his feelings in front of his servants, so he sent them out of the room. When he was alone with his brothers, he told them, "I am Joseph." Then he cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him. Joseph asked his brothers if his father was still alive, but they were too frightened to answer.

Joseph told them to come closer to him. He said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt. Don't worry or blame yourselves for what you did. God is the one who sent me ahead of you to save lives. There are five more years of famine so God has sent me on ahead of you to keep your families alive and to save you in this wonderful way. After all, you weren't really the ones who sent me here- it was God. He placed me over all Egypt. Now hurry back and tell my father that his son Joseph says, "God has made me ruler of Egypt. Come here as quickly as you can. You will live near me"

Then Joseph and Benjamin hugged each other and started crying. Joseph was still crying as he kissed each of his other brothers. After this, they started talking with Joseph.

When it was told in the palace that Joseph's brothers had come, the king and his officials were happy.

So this is the way Jacob and his family came to live Egypt and survived the famine.