

JOSEPH

The long road of reconciliation – Genesis 43

BIBLE STUDY



STARTER:

What are some of the ways God uses to soften hard hearts?

Read: Genesis 43

- Look at **verse 2**. How do you think God was using the ongoing situation to speak to Jacob the patriarch? In your experience, when life gets very tough, does it cause you to doubt God?
- Jacob was a follower of God, with personal experience of God's leading and forgiveness. He almost certainly prayed for the famine to end, but God didn't answer.
 - What might we learn from this chapter about why God sometimes says no to our prayers?
 - Do you have experience of God seeming to ignore your prayers, only to look back and see he had another plan?



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- Talk about the transformation of Judah from **Gen 37 : 27 (and chapter 38)** to the man who offers to act as a guarantee for Benjamin's safety in **verses 8-10**.
 - What do you think caused the softening of Judah's hard heart?
- Look at Jacob's approach in **verse 14** – 'If I am bereaved, I am bereaved'.
 - Do you have sympathy with Jacob's rather fatalistic approach here? How do you think we ourselves can change from a 'shrug of the shoulders' approach to life, to one that is built on trust in God's promises?
 - Look at **verse 23**. What is interesting about the steward's words as he talks to these Israelites, followers of the one true God?

*"It takes a deep
commitment to change
and an even deeper
commitment to grow."*

As we look back over this chapter, where do you think Joseph may have noticed the biggest change in the brothers who sold him into slavery?

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GOING DEEPER

In **verse 16**, we understand with our Western eyes that Joseph is simply inviting his brothers for a meal. But far more than that, this hospitality is an invitation to relationship.

Read **Luke 19 : 1-10** to see the impact it had on a New Testament seeker, and **Revelation 3 : 20** to understand the significance of Jesus' desire for us.

Where else do we see Joseph as a 'type' of Jesus here? Think about how grace is shown in today's story, for example.

When are the times when you feel God's love the most – when you're praying, serving him, reading the Bible, or during hard times? Why do you think this is true?



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LISTEN | PRAY

LISTEN

FORGIVENESS
Matthew West



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1Lu5udXEZI>

PRAY

Ask God to help your faith not to be 'like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind' (**James 1 : 6**), but to learn to stand firm as you face up to many and varied situations in life.