

## JOSEPH- PROFILE OF COURAGE

### Part 6: Courage to Face the Past (Chs. 42-44)

**INTRO:** Joseph's life has turned the corner. Years of undeserved and unfair treatment, beginning with hateful brothers ... have ended. Good and prosperous times have arrived with a few tearful episodes along the way. No matter how bad your life has been or is Joseph's was worse. No matter how great your life is or will be Joseph's was greater still. In Ch. 41 Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams (detailing next 14 years of plenty and famine) and he was rewarded and promoted to prime minister of Egypt (dreams fulfilled 37:5-11). He has prosperity and wealth and the power to pay back all who have hurt him. What will he do? What would (did) I do? All been there...

**SERIES QUESTION:** "How would your outlook on life change if you had the courage to really believe God was with you in every situation?" Joseph never changes even when he has all the power. He'd need to be absolutely convinced God was with him as he'd need great courage to face the past of his brothers (Chs. 42-44). The famine has now spread to his homeland (41:55-57).

### CH. 42 JOSEPH'S BROTHERS 1<sup>ST</sup> TRIP TO EGYPT

These three chapters include a series of tests for Joseph to tell if all these years had changed his brothers. Why did Joseph test them? Revenge, conditional forgiveness—about more than Joseph's forgiveness but greater still: family reconciliation. Reconciliation is a restored relationship, which takes more than one person to accomplish.

Test #1: *Hunger* (42:1-5) – Joseph has them right where he wants them. What would he do? What would anyone do if they were confident God was with them?

Test #2: *Confrontation* with harsh words (42:6-13)

Test #3: *Confinement* in prison (vv.14-20)

Test #4: *Acknowledgement* of sin and guilt and repentance (vv.21-24). Sometimes a process.

TENSIONS Build (vv.25-38) Boys return home without Simeon. Jacob's response is pathetic and mistrusting (again).

### CH. 43 MORE TESTS

Test #5: *Loyalty* (43:1-15) Read vv.6-14

Test #6: *Jealousy* (43:16-34) Read vv.24-34 — in birth order! (Freaking out!)

Test #7: *Sacrifice* (Ch. 44) Read vv.30-34—not only am I not jealous, I will give my life for you.

**Ch. 44** We see a radically changed Judah (Chs. 37-38). First time in Bible someone offers to trade their life (Jesus—tribe of Judah).

### LIFE LESSONS

1. *It is probable that people who hurt you will one day need you.* What goes around comes around. Reap what we sow.
2. *How we respond to people who hurt us is important.* There's more than one way to settle a score. One of the most courageous things we can do is to choose to forgive those who've hurt us. (2 Tim. 4:14-17).
3. *Keep your heart tender so it won't become tough.* Joseph weeps (6 recorded times). Hard to remain tender when life has been so tough. We see this time and again in Joseph's life. God was with Him all the way.
4. *God may seem silent but He is never absent.* (Job 30:20; Psa. 22:1-2). God's silence may be how it feels, it's not how it is (Psa. 13).
5. *Always be generous*—Joseph could've executed them. Instead he provided for them the rest of their lives. We give people what they don't deserve when believe God is with us.

**SERIES QUESTION:** How would your outlook on life change if you had the courage to really believe God was with you in every situation?" No need to panic, overreact, take control, manipulate if you truly trust God is with you. We'll never experience all the good that God can bring from the bad, until we are willing to acknowledge that God is with us in the bad, and refuse to play God when things are good.

**CONC:** "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Heb. 13:5