



STUDY NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Unexpected Journey to Joy

- 1 Have you ever correlated something bad that happened with the expectation that bad things were coming because of a bad decision in the past? What about on the good (good things happen because of my good decisions)?
- 2 Why do you think we tend to find “reasons” why good or bads things happen?
- 3 Read Genesis 37:1-11. What problems were present that set up the bigger problems between Joseph and his brothers? Do you think Joseph is innocent, or intentionally rubbing his dreams in his brother’s face?
- 4 Read Genesis 39:1-20. Where does Josephs right decision lead him? Have you experienced difficulty as a result of making the right decision? How does this push against the idea that a dark valley must mean a wrong turn?
- 5 Even after ending up in slavery (maybe partly because of his own bad decision to flaunt his dreams) Joseph still decided to make the right decision rather than give up. How have you seen God lead even in the mess of a bad decision and not give up on you? Do you believe that God does this? Why or why not?
- 6 Read Genesis 40:1-41:1. Have you had to live through a long dark valley as a result of doing the right thing? Why is it so difficult to do?
- 7 Read Genesis 42:21-24. What did the brothers believe about the correlation between our actions and what happens to us? What could they not have “realized” or imagine was happening though it was actually happening?
- 8 Read Genesis 50:15-21. What did the brothers believe, and what had Joseph learned that were at odds with each other? Joseph was there to save, and his brothers thought he was there to condemn...how can this represent God and us?
- 9 What would freedom from condemnation actually look and feel like in your life?
- 10 The road to happiness can lead down some dark roads, in what ways have you or are you tempted to take a short-cut rather than keep living rightly when the road gets tough? How did Joseph face this in his life?



Genesis 42:21-24 & 50:15-21

21They said to one another, “Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.”

22Reuben replied, “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood.” 23They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

24He turned away from them and began to weep, but then came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?” 16So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father left these instructions before he died: 17‘This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.’ Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.” When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

18His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said.

19But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. 21So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.
