

GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 10

QUESTION 1

- a) To the casual onlooker, what we have here are a series of random events.
- b) However, what we have here is a seamless advance of God's plan to save a nation through which the whole world will be blessed.
- c) *"What the family didn't know was that God had been at work over the past twenty years setting things up just so that they would be saved from death"* (Liam Goligher).
- d) This is a reminder that God has everything under control. Note what He told Abraham back in **Genesis 15:13-15**.
- e) Verse 57 of the previous chapter shows the extent of the famine; but also, the importance of where Joseph now finds himself. Things have been leading up to this. Everything points to Egypt and to Joseph.
- f) To Jacob, Egypt was just a country that might help them. To the brothers, it was a reminder of their guilt. For it was to traders heading to Egypt that they had sold their brother; before claiming to their father that he had been killed by a wild animal.
- g) We see something of this dilemma for them in verse 1 when their father asks: "Why do you look at one another?"

QUESTION 2

- a) This wasn't to do with Benjamin being too young. He would have been in his twenties by now.
- b) Jacob had already lost one of the two sons he had with his Rachel; the one he truly loved. He doesn't want to lose the other son. Has he not yet lost that favouritism streak of his?
- c) We also sense an element of mistrust directed at the other sons.
- d) Verse 4 is certainly a reminder of the lie in which the family were still living.

QUESTION 3

- a) This is the first mention of 'Israel' in connection with these brothers.
- b) This was the name given to Jacob; the name of the nation which God was building (**Genesis 35:10-11**).
- c) Here we see God's covenant plan unfolding.

QUESTION 4

- a) When he saw his brothers, he must have immediately realised that the revelation God had given him twenty years earlier was coming to fulfilment.
- b) The other dreams he had interpreted for Pharaoh, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker had come to pass. So now were his own.
- c) The brothers' arrival in Egypt is no coincidence. It is the hand of God.
- d) Joseph has begun to see why God had allowed him to be in this position; with all that he had experienced leading up to this time.

QUESTION 5

- a) Their claim to honesty shows that they have conveniently forgotten what they did with Joseph.
- b) They almost believe their own lie.
- c) When they say that their brother is no more; are they assuming that he is dead, or that he is no longer a legitimate part of the family?
- d) It suggests that they really haven't changed.

QUESTION 6

- a) Twenty years on; dressed as an Egyptian; and without a beard, the seventeen-year-old of chapter 37 would have looked very different.
- b) And of course, the brothers would not have expected to have seen him in this context.
- c) Notice in verse 6 that they bowed down with their faces to the ground. This was the custom of the day when coming before someone of important status. In this case; their lives depended on him.
- d) Joseph's response to his brothers is not out of malice or revenge. It is to see whether they have come to repentance. Whether they have really changed.
- e) What is important is a right relationship with God; not just physical food.
- f) God is using Joseph to bring them to that repentance and a change of heart and mind.
- g) This only comes when there is a recognition of guilt.