

GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 13

QUESTION 1

- a) The brothers would have been surprised to be invited by the steward into his master's house.
- b) This kindness brought additional feelings of fear and guilt.
- c) They were convinced that this could not simply be an act of pure kindness. Perhaps it was a trap, because of the money they had found in their sacks.
- d) They had travelled back to Egypt expecting the worst. In effect; they had stolen from Egypt.
- e) No wonder in verse 18 they were afraid to be taken to Joseph's house.
- f) Joseph instructs his servant to take these men into his house and to prepare a meal for them in a way that parallels the reception of the prodigal son in **Luke 15:22-23**.
- g) This set of events is sparked off when Joseph sees his younger brother Benjamin and shows the extent of his love for him.

QUESTION 2

- a) They want to take the first opportunity they can, to come clean and set the record straight before entering the Governor's house.
- b) They have nothing to offer but to ask for mercy.
- c) The nervousness is evident in their voices. They certainly aren't expecting the response that comes from the steward.

QUESTION 3

- a) We must assume that Joseph briefed his steward on how to respond to the brothers.
- b) This shows that Joseph had been talking to the steward about the one true God.
- c) Returning their money was a sign of Joseph's love for his brothers.
- d) The Steward reassures them that they needn't be afraid; and that their God had given them back the money. He confirms he had received it.
- e) They are no longer condemned men. There is no charge to answer.
- f) This is confirmed in the release of Simeon from prison. He had been held as surety for their good faith during their previous visit.
- g) 'Peace' here means 'well-being' and 'happiness'.
- h) Here is a lovely picture of the 'peace' that God brings. When guilt is covered and the debt of sin paid.
- i) They could now sit with the great ruler here with nothing to fear.

QUESTION 4

- a) It must have been hard for Joseph not to tell his brothers then and there, who is was.
- b) This was not the time.
- c) There are still lessons that his brothers need to learn. There still needs to be proof of a change of heart.
- d) We see how Joseph continues to trust God.

QUESTION 5

- a) Joseph sat on his own; revealing his elevated position of authority. God had placed him there and he had power over the brothers who had sold him into slavery.
- b) The other Egyptians sat separately because it was deemed detestable to eat with Hebrews.
- c) The most interesting thing here is that the eleven brothers were seated in age order. This would never have happened by coincidence. No wonder they were amazed; and probably fearful.
- d) They received their food from Joseph's table, which demonstrated that they were totally reliant on his kindness.
- e) The biggest portion was for the last in line. Joseph was testing the brothers to see whether they would still show the jealousy that had triggered the whole set of events off, when they had sold him into slavery.

QUESTION 6

- a) Grace shows us the enormity of our sin; the holiness of God and the fact that we must stand before the judgement seat. As John Newton wrote in 'Amazing Grace': *"Twas grace that taught my heart to fear"*.
- b) Grace enables us to stand, having received peace with God.
- c) The brothers brought gifts to appease the ruler of Egypt (v11-12) but instead were given good things freely. Nothing they brought could buy that favour. So with us.
- d) We are invited into the banqueting hall to receive all that Christ has provided; having been given the treasure of grace by God.