

## **Fellowship Group Notes – 25/26 April 2012 – Genesis 49v28-50v26 (Total Forgiveness)**

In the closing verses of chapter 49 and the first 14 verses of chapter 50 we are told that Jacob, Joseph's father, dies and his funeral and burial arrangements are explained to us ... what do these verses tell us about Joseph and his influence now in Egypt?

### **After the Funeral ...**

#### **The Brothers Fear**

When an important family member is gone relationships are often shown for what they really are ... Pastor Alistair Begg writes, "After years of dealing with grieving families, it is clear to me that usually it's not until after the funeral service that the true family issues, concerns and conflicts come to the surface. Many times I discover that it was only custom or good manners that allowed a particular family to display unity during the mourning for a family member. But soon after the funeral has been held and the daily routine has returned, family grievances that have been repressed, old wounds that have never been treated, and poisons that have never been purged begin to surface."

- What fear had lay deep within Joseph's brother's heart's for 17 years? (v15) What has caused this fear to surface now?

- Is their fear rational? Why or why not? (*ie. what do you think caused them to think this way about Joseph?*)

This scenario is similar to that of many Christians today with respect to our salvation ... in that, when we come to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith, we know we are forgiven – the Bible tells us so – and yet we may still ask those "what if" questions ... "what if it wasn't real?" "What if I'm not really forgiven?" "What if I'm not really going to heaven?"

- Have you ever questioned God's forgiveness for you?

- Often we allow our emotions and how we feel to overshadow the truth of God's Word. What does 1 John 3v19-20 have to say about this?

- To gain some assurance of your salvation read Hebrews 10v5-18 and answer these questions ...

- What were the Old Covenant sacrifices never able to do? v11.

- What did Christ do, that was different, at the cross? v10, 12

- How do we know that God was satisfied with Jesus Christ death as a substitute for man-kinds sin? v12

- What is a Christian believer's status in Christ? v14

- What promise does God make to the Christian? v17

- Do you believe yourself to be forgiven?

### **Josephs Reassurance**

- What do Joseph's brothers initially do in v16-17a, and who delivers this message? Is this significant? What does this tell you about Joseph's brothers?

- Why do you think Joseph reacts in this way (v17b)?

- What is 'Part B' of the brothers 'plan' in their felt need to appease Joseph (v18)?

- What enables Joseph to forgive his brothers even though they had done such a terrible thing to him? (v19-20) What should our reaction be to those who do evil to us? (See Romans 12v19-21)

- In v19-21 Joseph shows his forgiveness to them in both word and deed ... what does he say to them? And what does he do for them? Discuss whether it's enough to just say you're forgiven or do we need to follow it up with some practical proof? What might that be?

- Look at the Story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15v11-24). Is the youngest son's reaction in that story similar to that of Joseph's brothers in Genesis 50v16-18? In what ways? In the New Testament parable how did the father show the son that he was forgiven?

*In Joseph's loving response to his brothers we can see a glimpse of our Heavenly Father's love for us.*

### **Prayer Points**

- That God might help us to understand and rest in his forgiveness for us, and that we might be able to forgive others, showing kindness to those who may have hurt us in the past ... leaving them in God's hands.

- Sizewell Hall House Party (Fri 27<sup>th</sup> – Sun 28<sup>th</sup> April), and for Jason Griffiths who will be speaking.

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