

Bible Workshop

Joseph and his family*

5. Joseph's brothers

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS went through a huge change in their characters, both individually and together. As you go through these questions, you will see that Joseph had a significant part in organising circumstances so that he could test his brothers and lead them along the long road of repentance (just as God will do for us). Joseph's brothers had to learn vital lessons about *loving God, caring for their father and families, and forgetting about material things*. We must also learn these lessons; we may accept and practice them, or we may learn them the hard way, as Joseph's brothers did.

- c) Find some other verses that speak of loving God and displaying this love by how we treat those around us.
- d) This development has to do with *taking responsibility*. In what ways today do we have to learn to take responsibility?

2 Getting rid of their greed and materialism

- a) Trace this list of verses through, making note of what each verse shows us about Joseph's brothers regarding their greed, their love for silver and their attitude towards material things (note, again, the

"If we were to draw a line here at Gen 37:36, and ask ourselves who was worthy of salvation and who was not, we would soundly condemn Joseph's brethren, determining they should be suitably punished . . . But the wonder of Yahweh is that through His divine grace and mercy He redeems men like Joseph's brethren. Yahweh uses men like Joseph as a vehicle for turning others towards the Truth".

Shane Kingsbury, *Teenagers of the Bible*, p. 31

1 Developing a love for God displayed by love and compassion for others

- a) Trace this list of verses from Genesis through, making a note of what each verse shows us about Joseph's brothers regarding their love and care for their father, children and each other (be sure to note the positive progression):

37:4,5; 37:18; 37:23-25 and 42:21;
37:28 (how much silver each?); 37:32 (sent the coat to Jacob); 37:33,34 (not *one* of them said something?);
37:35; 42:1; 42:3 (why aren't they called 'Jacob's sons?'); 42:11 (this is the first of many confessions); 42:13 (why mention Joseph and Benjamin?);
42:26 (leaving Egypt without Simeon);
42:27,28; 42:29; 43:3-5; 43:8,9; 43:15; 43:23; 43:34; 44:2 (final test!); 44:9; 44:10,13; 44:16,17; 44:33,34; 46:5.

- b) What does their development in these things teach us? How long did this process take?

positive progression). We'll see by the end of these events that Joseph's brothers *hated the sight of silver!*

37:13,25 (feed themselves, not the flock!); 37:28 (how much silver each?); 42:1,2 (did they fear Egypt?); 42:27,28; 42:35; 43:11 (tiny gift for a king!); 43:15; 43:18-22; 44:2 (final test!); 44:8; 44:11,12; 45:22.

- b) What other verses in the Bible talk about the *love* of money and the evil this causes?
- c) It has been said that Christadelphians today face two major problems: unfinished preaching work and materialism. Does materialism affect you? Why or why not?
- d) What are some practical ways for us to overcome materialism?

* Adapted from a workbook issued to young people attending the Manitoulin Youth Conference in Canada and used by permission. Comments on these questions are invited and should be sent to the Publishing Editor.

3 Bonus

On this long road to repentance there were some 'strange' events that Joseph's brothers encountered. Why was each of the events in

the following list very 'strange' to the brothers? Is there a lesson for us?

43:17; 43:23; 43:27; 43:29; 43:33; 44:17.

"[Joseph's brethren] had come to understand that the most important things in life revolved around the welfare of their brethren, their families and their father".

"As we grow and mature in the Truth we become aware that the world does not revolve around us and our desires. There must be compassionate concern for others who are sometimes greatly dependent on us for sustenance, guidance and protection".

Teenagers of the Bible, pp. 76,96