

# SOWING/REAPING/CHANGE

## INTRODUCTION

We have all been like Judah at some point.

- We have been separated from God (like Joseph and His family) and Jesus died in our place to bring us together,
- We should have been punished like Simeon and the brothers, but Jesus was punished in our place
- We should have DIED, but what we have received, by trusting in Jesus, is His harvest of righteousness.

## DISCUSSION

Talk about sowing and reaping in your life, good and bad.

## EXPLANATION

Have you ever seen God bring a harvest to something you have been praying for?

What things are you currently praying for and still waiting?

## APPLICATION

Read Ephesians 4:11-16

Why is it important that we grow up?

Why is it important that we learn responsibility?

What ways has God most grown you and taught you responsibility?

## MISSION

What does a “harvest of righteousness” look like to someone who doesn’t believe?

How can we better show that Jesus has brought us together?

## HOMEWORK FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Genesis 43:11-34.

What is the last test you went through?

What happened? How did it work out?

Have you ever tested someone else?

How?

# GENESIS

THE FINAL CHAPTERS

## SOWING/REAPING/CHANGE

PART 62

GENESIS 42-43:10

Psalms 51:15-17

Genesis 42:1-38

Genesis 43:1-10

James 3:18

Galatians 6:7-10

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

**BAPTISMS** - Today, 1pm  
1371 Solomon Road.

**NEWCOMER PARTY**  
April 26th, 7pm

**ELEMENT MOMS**  
Wednesday, 2p at Sunset Park

**YOUTH BREAKFAST**  
April 27th

**EKIDS! SPRING MARKET**  
April 20th, 9-3pm

**MOE BEER TASTING**  
April 28th 1pm



[ourlement.org/events](http://ourlement.org/events)



# GENESIS THE FINAL CHAPTERS: PART 62

## SOWING/REAPING/CHANGE

**Psalm 51:15-17 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

In Genesis today Joseph meets his brothers again, but before offering them trust, or revealing himself to them, he tests them to see if they are still the same brothers who sold him into slavery.

Joseph devised two plans to test his brothers. The first was that “one” of the brothers should return for the youngest and the rest remain in prison. After three days the second plan was announced, “one” of the brothers was to remain behind and the others were to return to get the youngest.

The double plan fits into the overall narrative scheme of repetition in that, for both plans, it is the “one” brother who rescues the others that is central. Within the narrative this “one” brother appears to be an echo of the “one is no more.” It is no wonder that the brothers’ own conclusion from within the narrative is that their present distress had been caused by the distress that they had brought on Joseph (v21-22).

Joseph’s explanation of the change in plans also ties the narrative to the larger themes of the book. He said about his plan, “Do this and you will live.... that you may not die,” which aligns the narrative with the theme of “life” and “death” that runs throughout the Torah. Joseph also said, “For I fear God” (v. 18), which again identifies Joseph’s plans with the will of God.

We can see that Joseph’s plans were not in revenge; they were to show how, in God’s world, the “guilt” of the brothers that came back on them and called for justice. There is a remarkable message in the narrative: Joseph had already forgiven his brothers of the evil they had done to him. Joseph had to turn away from them to hide his sorrow for the distress his plan now caused.

Joseph’s next plan was to fill the brothers’ sacks with the money they had brought to buy grain. Though nothing was said about Joseph’s intention, the words of the brothers as they discovered their money were all that the narrative required: “What is this that God has done to us?” (v. 28). The brothers give expression to the underlying point of the narrative, God was behind it all and through it all was working out His purposes.

The brothers tell their father they must take their youngest brother back to Egypt in order to free Simeon, but Jacob is having none of it. The brothers had deprived their father of Joseph, and now he didn’t want to have Benjamin taken away as well. In the words of their father, there was a reminder of the guilt that lingered over their treatment of Joseph.

Reuben tries to guarantee the safety of Benjamin with a very unusual response, “You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you.” Reuben uses his children, not himself, as collateral. Within the context of the narrative, it appears only to add insult to injury as now two of Jacob’s sons are gone.

Eventually the famine was still in the land, and the grain purchased earlier was gone; so the father sent his sons back for more. This time though, it was Judah who insisted on taking Benjamin back with them in accordance with Joseph’s demands.

In persuading his father, Judah gives expression to the central themes of “life” and “death” that have been carefully interwoven throughout these narratives. Judah offered to take full responsibility for Benjamin if he was allowed to accompany the brothers to Egypt: “I myself will guarantee his safety.”

Jacob gave in to Judah’s plan and gives them this farewell, “May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man.” At the conclusion of the narrative, when the sons reached Joseph and he saw Benjamin, we are told that “his mercy” was kindled toward his brother. It is important that in these words of Jacob the compassion (*mercy*) that Joseph was to find toward his brothers was given by “God Almighty.”

Judah steps into his role as a leader of the family. God is now the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob...& Judah. Until now Judah has been a failure; now he takes responsibility.

We have all been like Judah at some point.

- We have been separated from God (like Joseph and His family), but Jesus died in our place to bring us together.
- We should have been punished like Simeon and the brothers, but Jesus was punished in our place.
- We should have DIED, but what we have received, by trusting in Jesus, is His harvest of righteousness and life.