

It's Not Fair

Genesis 37:12-36

Week of June 2, 2024

BELONG

Ask this Ice Breaker Question: With summer months arriving, can you think of a few fond summertime memories from your childhood? Bonus: a favorite ice cream flavor

BELIEVE

Have someone in your group read aloud: Genesis 37:12-36

Leader Context (not to be read aloud):

The distance from Hebron to Shechem is about 50 miles over rugged terrain. By the time Joseph arrives at the location of his brothers in Dothan, he will have traveled some 65 miles.

Ask these questions to prompt group discussion:

- 1. What might have motivated Reuben to try and save Joseph? Why didn't he simply resist them openly?**

Leader Context (Not to be read aloud):

Reuben, recently guilty of seducing his father's concubine, attempts to deceive his brothers and to rescue Joseph. Though he is the firstborn, he lacks the moral depth to oppose their plans openly, perhaps fearing that they might turn on him. After making this proposition, Reuben seems to have left the group (vs. 29).

- 2. Do the brothers of Joseph seem to be burdened by guilt about his plight in verse 25? Read James 1:14-15 and Rom 1:21 then discuss various ways sin affects us.**

Leader Context (Not to be read aloud):

The brothers deposit him in a nearby cistern and—the coldness of it stuns the reader—sit down to enjoy a hearty lunch together. While they eat, Joseph pleads for his life (cf. 42:21), but his cries fall on dull ears and stony souls. Sin hardens our hearts, isolates us, and if not addressed will ultimately destroy us, as James 1 shows).



3. What is the irony of verse 32?

Leader Context (Not to be read aloud):

The brothers conclude that Joseph's infamous robe (which they had despised) is the perfect solution to their current dilemma. They dip the garment in goat's blood to simulate the attack of a predator and present it to Jacob. They are so filled with hate that they cannot bring themselves even to utter Joseph's name as they present the gory artifact.

4. Make a brief list of the changes that Joseph had to face in his new situation (vs. 36).

Leader Context (Not to be read aloud):

Joseph is sold to Potiphar, the captain of the guard of the Pharaoh of Egypt. Joseph is about to undergo a period of trial so severe that the mind can scarcely take it in. Everything is unfamiliar to him now. Language, setting, customs, his role, etc.

BECOME:

Ask this question:

1. Thinking about Joseph's trek to Egypt, what are some internal thoughts and feelings he might have been experiencing in those moments during the long journey? As you list them, are there any that you can relate to?

Bonus Challenge: In the midst of great hardship it can be difficult to trust God. As you pray, it's best to be honest with God (e.g. Psalm 88) as you seek to hope in Him. If you find yourself angry at God for situations from your past (or present), consider also discussing the matter with a pastor, trusted friend, or counselor (e.g. First Orlando Counseling). You can't do this alone and we are here for you!

Close by praying together.