

**This week...**

**Scripture: Genesis 44-45:1-11**

**Monday** Genesis 44:30-31 *“if my father, whose life is closely bound up with the boy’s life, sees that the boy isn’t there, he will die. Your servants will bring the gray head of our father down to the grave in sorrow.”*

Read all of chapter 44 to get the back story leading up to chapter 45. Close your eyes and imagine yourself in the room witnessing this exchange. What is going through your mind? If you did not know the rest of the story, how would you expect Joseph to treat his brothers?

**Tuesday** Genesis 45:1 *“Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, ‘Have everyone leave my presence!’”*

*“Stress is your body’s way of responding to any kind of demand or threat. When you feel threatened, your nervous system responds by releasing a flood of stress hormones which rouse the body for emergency action”*, (helpguide.org). Hormones were in overdrive on that day. How do you react and deal with high level stress? Does it help?

**Wednesday** Genesis 45:2-5 *“And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it. Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph! Is my father still living?’ But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence...do not be distressed and do not be angry”*

What is your definition of “*forgiveness*”? The biblical definition is freedom; pardon:—deliverance, liberty, remission. How does your definition compare with the Bible’s? God forgives without reservation. He holds no record of wrongs and does not dredge

up past offenses. With forgiveness in mind, read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Do you need to adjust the way you forgive others? When you are wronged, does your forgiveness look like Joseph’s?

**Thursday** Mark 11:25; Matthew 6:14 *“‘And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.’...‘if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins’”*

How’s your prayer life? Jesus teaches us many things about forgiveness, but we are not always ready to receive what He has said. Are you forgiven? Do not be fooled. If you are unable to forgive and love your brother, even if he has wronged you, then you have not yet understood Christlike forgiveness.

**Friday** Genesis 45:10-11 *“‘You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come.’”*

Read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-8, and compare it with Genesis 45:10-11. One is the account of a man forgiven while the other is the story of a man who forgives. Which is harder, to be forgiven or to forgive? Joseph’s life once again points to the ultimate picture of unconditional love that not only forgives those who had wronged him but was able to bless beyond our imaginations. He lived out Christ’s command to *“do good, bless, love and pray for those who persecute, hate, and spitefully use you”*. Spend time in prayer concerning those you must forgive and the forgiveness that has been poured out upon you over the years. Is there something you must do?