



Lesson #7: Awakening the Hardened Conscience (Gen 42)

Joseph's brothers were a hardened bunch. Years before, under the leadership of _____ and _____, they had been guilty of premeditated genocide. _____, the oldest committed incest. _____ had two sons that were so wicked the Lord took their lives. He himself had an immoral relationship with his own daughter-in-law. All of these men were guilty of selling Joseph into slavery and then crushing their Father's heart to pieces by deceiving him into thinking Joseph was dead. Now it's _____ years later but in the process of this story, their consciences awake.

In Genesis 42 we see just a little microcosm of how people deal with their guilt. What we see here in this passage is a revelation of how the consciences of Joseph's brothers were awakened. In this chapter we are given 5 ways that God will awaken our conscience to sin that needs to be dealt with.

1. A guilty conscience can be awakened by _____ needs

Genesis 42:1-2

To awaken the consciences of a tough bunch like this God has to use some rather severe measures. The famine in Egypt extends into Canaan and they are facing _____. Jacob tells his 10 sons to go and buy grain from Egypt "that we may live, and not die." (42:2).

Now, not every time difficulty comes into our lives is it a result of sin. But we know from Scripture that there _____ times that difficulties come as a result of sin.

- **1 Corinthians 11:29** – "For this cause many are _____ and _____ among you, and many _____."
- **1 John 5:16** – "There is a sin unto _____"

The first, and most important, tool God uses to stir our deadened conscience is that He makes us _____.

2. A guilty conscience can be awakened by _____ reminders

Genesis 42:3-13

Perhaps Jacob was just being protective in verse 4 but it seems to me that he knew something had happened in regards to the brother's care of Joseph. Jacob doesn't want Benjamin going with them to Egypt "peradventure _____

befall Him." This was just another reminder of the circumstance when they had let mischief come to Joseph because of their sinful choices.

You see, you can brush your sin under the rug and hope that enough years will take care of it, but one day, perhaps years later, God will apply some sort of _____ in your life and your conscience will stir.

3. A guilty conscience can be awakened by _____ mistreatment

Genesis 42:14-24

Sometimes a guilty conscience is awakened when you get a little of your own _____. Joseph's brothers have not been known as _____ men, but at this moment they were actually being very _____.

Sometimes God will treat us harshly in order to mercifully _____ us and lead us to _____. (Psalm 119:67; Hebrews 12:5,11)

4. A guilty conscience can be awakened by _____ sympathy

Genesis 42:25-28

A guilty conscience can cause you to feel unworthy of _____. As you look forward in the text you find that Joseph was indeed the one whom God will use to feed his brothers and his family. He even put the money back in their pouches (v. 35). That would seem like a blessing. Well, even the _____ of days are _____ days to people who are laboring under a corrupt conscience.

Romans 2:4 says that the _____ of the Lord leads us to repentance. Through Joseph's kindness, for the first time in their lives these crusty, worldly brothers saw the hand of _____.

5. A guilty conscience can be awakened by _____ grieving

Genesis 42:36-38

A guilty conscience is often awakened by witnessing a loved one _____. These boys had watched their dad grieve and he would not be comforted when Joseph did not come home. Now, Jacob is saying, "This isn't happening again!?"
"If mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the _____." (v. 38)

Even sons who are estranged from their fathers do not like to _____.

Concluding Thoughts

Mark Twain's character Huck Finn observed, "A man's _____ takes up more space than all the rest of his insides." If your conscience feels like Joseph's brother did. If it is saying, "Ow!" then don't turn away from God in denial of your turn. Turn to him in genuine _____ and you will experience His abundant _____. God uses _____ and _____ to awaken our consciences and bring us to repentance.