



## Forgiveness – Healing Others

When Romania entered WWII on Germany's side, many thousands of Jews were killed or deported.

Although Sabina Wurmbrand was a Christian, she was of Jewish decent. Her parents, one of her brothers, three sisters, and other relatives were arrested, sent to Transnistria and eventually died. Sometime after these deaths, her husband, Richard Wurmbrand (founder **Voice of the Martyrs**) met the man responsible for these deaths.

"Lounging in an armchair was a giant of a man whom the landlord introduced as Borila, the killer of Jew from Transnistria. Soon he was telling us of his adventures in the war and of the Jews he had slaughtered."

The talk turned to more neutral subjects, and Borila told how much he loved Ukrainian folk songs. Richard offered to play some for him. "My wife was in bed. She was used to my playing softly at night and did not wake up. I played the folk songs, which are alive with feeling, and I could see that Borila was deeply moved."

Richard then told Borila, "If you look through that curtain you can see someone is asleep in the next room. It's my wife, Sabina. Her parents, her sister, and her twelve-year-old brother have been killed with the rest of the family. You told me that you had killed hundreds of Jews near Golta, and that is where they were taken. You yourself don't know who you have shot, so we can assume that you are the murderer of her family."

Instead of getting into a fight, Richard offered the following experiment, "I shall wake my wife and tell her who you are, and what you have done. I can tell you what will happen. My wife will not speak one word of reproach! She'll embrace you as if you were her brother. She'll bring you supper, the best things she has in the house. Now, if Sabina, who is a sinner like us all, can forgive and love you like this, imagine how Jesus, who is perfect Love, can forgive and love you! Only turn to Him – and everything you have done will be forgiven!"

Borila then falls to his knees with the weight of his actions, praying and asking for forgiveness. He and Richard pray together and then Richard does his "experiment". "I went into the other room and found my wife still sleeping calmly. She was very weak and exhausted at that time. I woke her gently and said, 'There is a man here whom you must meet. We believe he has murdered your family, but he has repented; now he is our brother.' She came out in her dressing gown and put out her arms to embrace him; then both began to weep and to kiss each other again and again. I have never seen bride and bridegroom kiss with such love and purity as

the murderer and the survivor among his victims. Then as I foretold, Sabina went to the kitchen to bring him food."

Adapted from **In God's Underground** by Richard Wurmbrand

## Scripture

Read Genesis 45:1-20

## Discovery Questions

1. Vs 1 "Then Joseph could no longer control himself". Why do you think there is a limit to how long we can stay unforgiving? What actually brings us to the point of forgiveness?
2. Vs 5 "God sent me". Our sin typically creates bad situations. God comes into the situation and turns them into seasons of insight and mercy. How did God use this situation to strengthen Joseph's family and offer healing?
3. Vs 10 "You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me" Describe how this shows healing in this situation.
4. What do you think it took for Joseph to be able to offer this forgiveness? How do you think things were different with the family after all this happened?

## **Journaling**

Which verse spoke most powerfully to me? Why?

**Prayer:** Spend some time in prayer conversing with your God. Use the following ideas as a potential guide to your prayer time.

- Dear Lord,
- Dear Jesus, please provide opportunities and show me ways in which I may use these gifts to further Your kingdom.
- Lord, please forgive me for any feelings of envy toward others' gifts or blessings or for grumbling and feeling discontented. Fill me with a thankful heart that understands that You have given me more than enough.
- Heavenly Father, please fill me with Your presence and use me as a vessel to accomplish Your will.