

Day 39 - WEDNESDAY: December 7th

Genesis 42

Genesis 42:1-38 NKJV

When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die." So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "Lest some calamity befall him." And the sons of Israel went to buy grain among those who journeyed, for the famine was in the land of Canaan. Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, "Where do you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food." So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!" And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies." But he said to them, "No, but

you have come to see the nakedness of the land." And they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more." But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!' In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!" So he put them all together in prison three days. Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us." And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us." But they did not know that Joseph understood them, for he spoke to them through an interpreter. And he turned himself away from them and wept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon

from them and bound him before their eyes. Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them. So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there. But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack. So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?" Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.' Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.' "

Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said to

them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me." Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."

Daily Deep Dive:

Famines were nothing new. Abraham had gone to Egypt during one (Gen 12:10) and Isaac had gone to Gerar (Gen 26:1). God could have intervened for Jacob and his family and provided them miraculously with food, and maybe they wondered why He wasn't providing and allowed them to be on the brink of starvation, but we know it was all apart of God's plan for them to come down to Joseph in Egypt.

Verse 6 – From the high position of power, influence and control, Joseph oversaw in detail the selling of food, so when his brothers show up, they come and not only bow the knee, but place their faces on the ground and act that John Gill's commentary says was a submission to him in the

humblest of manners which brought about God's fulfillment of Joseph's dream (Gen 37:7).

Verse 7 – Even though Joseph recognizes them, he acts as he didn't, and in a hard tone "Where did you come from?".

Verse 8 – His brothers did not recognize their brother who is now a full-grown man, and they had no reason to even expect that their brother who they sold as a slave could possibly be in such a position of great power.

Verse 9 – What does it mean when it says "You have come to see the nakedness of the land!?" When something is naked, everything can be seen and nothing is hidden or held back. Joseph here makes his brothers believe he thinks they are spies looking for how the city might be vulnerable. Here's what John Gill's commentary states: "what parts of it are weakest, most defenseless, and less fortified, and most easy to break in at, and invade the land;"

Verse 16 – NKJV says "You shall be kept in prison". This word for prison (['asar](#)) means "to tie or bind".

Verse 17 – Again the NKJV says "he put them all in prison three days." This word for prison is not the same as the previous verse and it's not the word used for the type of prison Potiphar threw Joseph in. This is the first time this word [mishmar](#) is used in the Bible, and while it means "a

place of confinement, prison, guard, jail, observance, etc.” It’s used throughout the bible more in the idea of putting someone in a place where they can be “watched, observed, kept contained” but not in the sense of a “dungeon or pit” like Joseph himself was in. I bring this out because initially I thought, “did Joseph throw his brothers into the same type of place where he spent so many years, and if so, was that done to teach them a small taste of what he went through?” But I also had the thought, “that seems a bit cruel to put them in such an awful place, and was that really the type of man he was?” In digging into this, I don’t think so. I think he simply had them held and contained in a place (a type of prison or confinement) so that they didn’t run away and his plan could come about, but not in a way that would treat them cruelly.

Verse 19 – After three days, Joseph let’s all but one of them go.

Verse 21 – We see that Joseph, and their guilt of him, is now squarely on the forefront of their minds. They believe they are being punished for their cruelty to him.

Verse 23 – In this verse we find that Joseph is actually in hearing distance of these conversations, but has spoken

Egyptian through a translator thus far, so his brothers don't know that he understands what they are saying.

Verse 24 – Take a moment to imagine the heart ache of this moment. For years he has felt the enormous grief of being betrayed, sold and unwanted by his brothers. He probably great struggled with mixtures of anger and sadness over the years and even here at this moment. But then listening to his brothers, he hears that they at least understand to some degree their guilt and learns that his oldest brother Rueben tried to talk them out of harming him. He turns away from them and weeps.

After turning back around, he then binds Simeon in front of all of them.

John Gill's commentary states: "who perhaps was the most cruel and hardhearted among them; and it appears from the affair of Shechem, that he was a man of a fierce and bloody disposition. According to Jarchi, it was he that said to Levi, on sight of Joseph, behold this dreamer cometh; and that it was he that cast him into the pit; and, as the Targum says, advised to kill him: and perhaps Joseph might pitch upon him as the hostage, not only because he had used him more evilly than the rest, but because he might

observe he was less concerned, and not so much humbled now for the evil he had done as the rest were;" [END]

Verse 28 – They stop at a place of lodging or an inn, and one of them after opening their sack of grain to feed a donkey, and learning that they still had their money, they are very afraid and fear that God has continued to punish them.

Verse 35 – After recounting the whole story to their father Jacob, they find that all of them still have their money, and again fear grips them all. Never in their wildest dreams do they think that they would have purposely been given their money back.

Verse 36 – Jacob is greatly grieved by this whole series of events. He's already lost his son Joseph, he assumes he will never see Simeon again, and he greatly fear if he allows Benjamin to go too, he will lose him as well. He feels everything is going against him. In our hardest and darkest moments, we don't always remember how much God has been with us and intervened in our lives, we tend to focus on the difficulty of the moment and often feel overwhelmed.

Verse 37 – Rueben promises his father that he will bring Benjamin back, and appears to offer the life of two of his

four sons if he doesn't, however, that may not be the case. John Gill's commentary states "to lose his own son, and to have two of his grandchildren slain, would have been an increase of his sorrow and grief, instead of being an alleviation of it; but Reuben's meaning was, not that his children should be slain, but this he says, to show that he would be as careful and solicitous for the return of Benjamin as if the life of two sons of his lay at stake, and was so confident of it that he could risk the life of them upon it, who were as dear to him as one Benjamin was to his father:"

Verse 38 – Jacob says essentially says, “no, you’re not taking Benjamin! It would kill me if anything happened to him.”