

Genesis 42

Joseph's brothers go to Egypt

42 When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?”² And he said, “Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die.”³ So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.⁴ But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might happen to him.⁵ Thus the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground.⁷ Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. “Where do you come from?” he said. They said, “From the land of Canaan, to buy food.”⁸ And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.⁹ And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, “You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land.”¹⁰ They said to him, “No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food.¹¹ We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.”

¹² He said to them, “No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see.”¹³ And they said, “We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more.”¹⁴ But Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you. You are spies.¹⁵ By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here.¹⁶ Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.”¹⁷ And he put them all together in custody for three days.

¹⁸ On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God:¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households,²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they did so.²¹ Then they said to one another, “In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us.”²² And Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.”²³ They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them.²⁴ Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.²⁵ And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

²⁶ Then they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed.²⁷ And as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack.²⁸ He said to his brothers, “My money has been put back; here it is in the mouth of my sack!” At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

²⁹ When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying,³⁰ “The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us and took us to be spies of the land.³¹ But we said to him, ‘We are honest men; we have never been spies.’³² We are twelve brothers,

sons of our father. One is no more, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.’³³ Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, ‘By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way.’³⁴ Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I shall know that you are not spies but honest men, and I will deliver your brother to you, and you shall trade in the land.’”

³⁵ As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack. And when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid. ³⁶ And Jacob their father said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me.” ³⁷ Then Reuben said to his father, “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.” ³⁸ But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left. If harm should happen to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.”

Genesis 43

Joseph's brothers return to Egypt

43 Now the famine was severe in the land. ² And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, “Go again, buy us a little food.” ³ But Judah said to him, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ ⁴ If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵ But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.’” ⁶ Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?” ⁷ They replied, “The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’” ⁸ And Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. ⁹ I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰ If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice.”

¹¹ Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry a present down to the man, a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. ¹² Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was an oversight. ¹³ Take also your brother, and arise, go again to the man. ¹⁴ May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”

¹⁵ So the men took this present, and they took double the money with them, and Benjamin. They arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon.” ¹⁷ The man did as Joseph told him and brought the men to Joseph's house. ¹⁸ And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, “It is because of the money, which was replaced

in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants and seize our donkeys.”¹⁹ So they went up to the steward of Joseph's house and spoke with him at the door of the house,²⁰ and said, “Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food.²¹ And when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was each man's money in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it again with us,²² and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”²³ He replied, “Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.²⁴ And when the man had brought the men into Joseph's house and given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given their donkeys fodder,²⁵ they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there.

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground.²⁷ And he inquired about their welfare and said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”²⁸ They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves.²⁹ And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!”³⁰ Then Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there.³¹ Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, “Serve the food.”³² They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.³³ And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the men looked at one another in amazement.³⁴ Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.