

Genesis 42

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Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you staring at one another?" ² Then he said, "Look, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy *some* for us from that place, so that we may live and not die." ³ So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "I am afraid that harm may happen to him." ⁵ So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, because the famine was *also* in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold grain to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him *with their* faces to the ground. ⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. He said to them, "Where have you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

⁸ But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him. ⁹ And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had about them, and he said to them, "You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land."

¹⁰ And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. ¹¹ We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies." ¹² Yet he said to them, "No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!" ¹³ But they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers *in all*, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive." ¹⁴ Yet Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies; ¹⁵ by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Send one of you and have him get your brother, while you remain confined, so that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, you are certainly spies!" ¹⁷ So he put them all together in prison for three days.

¹⁸ Now Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: ¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for *the rest of* you, go, carry grain for the famine of your households, ²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified, and you will not die." And they did so. ²¹ Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; for that reason this distress has happened to us." ²² Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now *justice for* his blood is required." ²³ They did not know, however, that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them.

²⁴ Then he turned away from them and wept. But when he returned to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. ²⁵ Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, but *also* to return every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. And that is what was done for them. ²⁶ So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there. ²⁷ But when one *of them* opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the overnight campsite, he saw his money; and behold, it was in the opening of his sack! ²⁸ So he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned, and look, it is right in my sack!" Then their hearts sank, and they *turned* ^Utrembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

Simeon Is Held Hostage

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²⁹ When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him everything that had happened to them, saying, ³⁰ "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly with us, and took us for spies of the country. ³¹ But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.' ³³ But the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me and take *grain for* the famine of your households, and go. ³⁴ But bring your youngest brother to me so that I may know that you are not spies, but honest men. I will give your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'"

³⁵ Now it came about, as they were emptying their sacks, that behold, every man's bag of money *was* in his sack; and when they and their father saw their bags of money, they were afraid. ³⁶ And their father Jacob said to them, "You have deprived me of my sons: Joseph is gone, and Simeon is gone, and *now* you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me." ³⁷ Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him *back* to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you." ³⁸ But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should happen to him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow."

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Pauls Insights and questions

1. Jacob says 'why are you staring at one another'?
2. Why is Jacob the one who has to take the initiative?
3. Why is Jacob reluctant to let Benjamin go with them to Egypt? Was he suspicious of his sons?
4. The famine of the land affected all the nations in that area.
5. It seems as if Joseph has to consent to who may receive the food.
6. How must Joseph have felt, seeing his brothers standing before him, broken, he, having experienced such great trials himself?
7. Was Joseph's harsh talking reflective of 'pay back'?
8. Why did the brothers not recognise Joseph?
9. Why was it important that Joseph remembered the dreams about his brothers?
10. The brothers claimed to be honest men, but were they?
11. Why is Joseph being so confrontational?
12. Having made their confession to their brother regarding their testimony did Joseph appear convinced?
13. Why is confession important?
14. The brothers declare 'one of the brothers is no longer alive'. Had they come to believe their own report to their father?
15. Joseph makes an unacceptable request to lure Benjamin to Egypt.
16. Did Joseph send the brothers to prison to torment them out of resentment?
17. Why did Joseph do this to his brothers?
18. On the way home the brothers show remorse to what they had done to their brother Joseph.
19. They saw a strange irony that this was God punishing them for what they had done. How true was this?
20. Why did Joseph weep and turn away from his brothers? What does this reveal?
21. He sends them home to their father, with all their money still in their sack.
22. When the money was found in the sack on the way home, why didn't this motivate all of the brothers look in their sacks?
23. What is it for 'your heart to sink'?
24. Do you think Jacob thought to himself 'why did they tell him about Benjamin'?
25. Joseph made it possible for his brothers to buy food only if Benjamin came down to Egypt.
26. What is it to be dismayed?
27. Why did Jacob consider Simeon as no more?
28. Jacob had made up his mind not to let Benjamin go to Egypt.
29. The pledge Reuben made to Jacob was that he was willing to let his sons go to their death if they didn't bring Benjamin home..