

# The Story of Joseph: Seeing the Bigger Picture

## Week 7: Brother's Trip to Egypt

### Scripture:

Genesis 42:1-20

### Motivation (Why You Need This):

#### *Where are we in Joseph's story?*

- Joseph was hated by his brothers – favoritism by his father, coat, dreams
- Joseph was forsaken by his brothers and sold into slavery (ended up as the overseer of Potiphar's house in Egypt)
- Joseph was falsely accused of rape by Potiphar's wife

When we left off last week, we concluded that **Joseph kept doing the right thing even when things went from good to bad to worse.** Why? He trusted that God knew

what He was doing and knows the bigger picture.

**Daily steps in the right direction doesn't always mean immediate deliverance. Sometimes disappointment precedes deliverance.**

### Information (What You Need to Know):

#### **Joseph's Family Reenters the Story**

**Genesis 42:1-2 (ESV)** 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."

#### **Family Review**

- **Jacob the Trickster** - Genesis 25:29-34 & 27:1-46
- **Trickster Gets Tricked** - Genesis 28:1-5 & 29:1-30
- **Big Messy Family** - Genesis 29:31 - 30:24
- **Favoritism and Passivity** - Genesis 34; 35:16-26 & 37

- **One Son Bails - Genesis 38**

So, how is the family doing?

## **10 Brothers Travel to Egypt**

**Genesis 42:3-5 (ESV)** 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.

Family is not doing well. Jacob doesn't seem to even trust the brothers with Benjamin.

Heading toward Egypt is bringing bad memories and heartburn

## **God Can Use Pain to Awaken and Prod us**

**Genesis 42:6-17 (ESV)** 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.

-Jacob still does not trust the brothers with Benjamin

-Brothers bow down before Egyptian man like everyone else

-The Egyptian Man is Rough - Like they were with Joseph

-The Egyptian Man doesn't Trust - You are spies!

Why? - Joseph watching carefully and testing to see if these were indeed the same brutish brothers from 20 years earlier. Has their been any change?

-The Egyptian Man demands Proof

-The brothers enter the Pit (same place where Joseph spent so many years.

Why all of this stress and pain? God wants to reopen and old wound so that true healing can begin. Guilt is not a bad thing. These brothers have not faced or dealt with this in 20 years. God knows what it takes to bring us back to Himself. So he awakens the guilt so they will seek forgiveness.

Guilt strikes our consciences and pulls us toward seeing forgiveness.

## God's Grace and Mercy Are Ever Present

**Genesis 42:18-28 (ESV)** 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?”

The first mention of God comes from the Egyptian Man

Mercy - One brother could not transport so much food to such a large family by himself. Joseph changes the demand as an act of mercy to his brothers.

Think of the Simple Mercy you and I have received when you have lied, sinned, hurt people. Truthfully we deserved justice for our sin. We have not received just punishment for our sins because of God's great mercy toward us. Drawing us to repentance. Toward forgiveness. Giving you and I the opportunity for salvation. New life in Christ.

Before I knew God from studying the Word I felt that he was just out to ruin my good time. As you read and study you meet this extravagant God of tremendous grace and mercy.

**Micah 7:18** - He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.

The brothers likely found the Egyptian man harsh and unfair. But they are remembering Joseph in the pit pleading, crying, begging his brothers. They drug him out and sold him to slavery all while he called out and pleaded with them.

Joseph was not being unfair. But the reality could not be further from the truth. Even as a wounded brother Joseph is moved hearing his brothers talk. He leaves the room because he is weeping for them. Compassionate love

Grace - Is seen in the heart of love he has for his brothers. And Joseph sends 9 brothers home with grain and their original payment.

If you do not receive forgiveness from God it is not because God's heart is hard. It is because we have scorned God's lavish love toward you. So many turn away from God's lavish love, grace and

mercy. Wanting to ignore their sin or settle on their own terms. The only thing we contribute to our salvation is the sin that makes Salvation necessary.

When they see the money back in their grain sacks they realize they are dealing with God and not just a Egyptian Man.

They had traded Joseph for some silver. Now would they betray another brother for a little money and never return?

## **9 Brothers Return to Canaan With a Load of Guilt**

**Genesis 42:29-2 (ESV)** 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.”

This is a lot of termoil that all this guilt is stirring up. They begin by reiterating the story so that Jacob understands what happened to Simeon. They share the Egyptain Man’s accusations and his demand.

Reuben gives a tone deaf response. Let’s make this whole thing worse by killing grandchildren.

The reality is they were not ready to confess their wrongdoing. They continue to play in their guilt. How long can this last?

#### **Application (What You Need to Do):**

Guilt is good. What is God laying on your heart today?

Is God addressing any guilt in your heart today? Now is the time to deal with whatever he has laid finger on in your heart.