

Joseph's Brothers Sent to Egypt

42 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 ^[a]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 ^[b]had about them, and he said to them, "You are spies; you have come to look at the ^[c]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 ^[d]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 ^[e]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 ^[f]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 [g]you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? [h]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 [i]sank, and they *turned* [j]trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

Simeon Is Held Hostage

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 [k]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 [l]care, and I will return him to you.” **38** But [m]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 [n]you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.”

The Return to Egypt

43 Now the famine was severe in the land. **2** So it came about, when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food." **3** Judah spoke to him, however, saying, "The man sternly warned ^[a]us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' **4** If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. **5** But if you do not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'" **6** Then Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly, ^[b]by telling the man whether you still had *another* brother?" **7** But they said, "The man specifically asked about us and our relatives, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you *another* brother?' So we ^[c]answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" **8** So Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy with me and we will arise and go, so that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. **9** I myself will take responsibility for him! You may demand him back from ^[d]me. If I do not bring him *back* to you and present him to you, then ^[e]you can let me take the blame forever. **10** For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice."

11 Then their father Israel said to them, "If *it must be* so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your ^[f]bags, and carry down to the man as a gift, a little balsam and a little honey, labdanum resin and ^[g]myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. **12** And take double *the* money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the opening of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. **13** Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man; **14** and may ^[h]God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my sons, I am bereaved!" **15** So the men took this gift, and they took double *the* money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they set out and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

Joseph Sees Benjamin

16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, "Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make preparations; for the men are to dine with me at noon." **17** So the man did as Joseph said, and ^[i]brought the men to Joseph's house. **18** Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and they said, "*It is* because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, so that he may ^[j]attack us and ^[k]overpower us, and take us as slaves with our donkeys." **19** So they approached Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, **20** and said, "Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food, **21** and it happened when we came to the campsite, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's money was in the opening of his sack, our

money in [f]full. So we have brought it back in our hand. **22** We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks.” **23** But he said, “Peace be to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; your [m]money was in my possession.” Then he brought Simeon out to them. **24** Then the man brought the men into Joseph’s house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. **25** So they prepared the gift [n]for Joseph’s arrival at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat [o]a meal there.

26 When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the gift which was in their hand, and they bowed down to the ground before him. **27** Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, “Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?” **28** And they said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” Then they bowed down *again* [p]in homage. **29** And as he raised his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, he said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?” Then he said, “May God be gracious to you, my son.” **30** Joseph then hurried *out*, for [q]he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he looked *for a place* to weep; so he entered his chamber and wept there. **31** Then he washed his face and came out; and he controlled himself and said, “[r]Serve the meal.” **32** Then they served him by himself, and [s]Joseph’s brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. **33** Now they [t]were seated before him, from the firstborn according to his birthright to the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. **34** Then he took portions to them from [u]his own table, but Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank freely with him.

The Brothers Are Brought Back

44 Then he commanded his house steward, saying, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the opening of his sack. **2** And put my cup, the silver cup, in the opening of the sack of the youngest, and his money for the grain.” And he did [a]as Joseph had told *him*. **3** [b]As soon as it was light, the men were sent away, they with their donkeys. **4** They had *just* left the city, *and* were not far away, when Joseph said to his house steward, “Up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? **5** Is this not *that* from which my lord drinks, and which he indeed uses for divination? You have done wrong in doing this!’”

6 So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. **7** And they said to him, “Why does my lord say such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing! **8** Behold, the money which we found in the opening of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? **9** With whomever of your servants it is found, he shall die, and we also shall be my lord’s slaves.” **10** So he said, “Now let it indeed be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, but *the rest of you shall be considered innocent.*” **11** Then they hurried, each man lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. **12** And he searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. **13** Then they tore their clothes *in grief*, and when each man had loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

14 When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house, he was still there, and they fell down to the ground before him. **15** Joseph said to them, “What is this thing that you have done? Do you not know that a man who is like me can indeed practice divination?” **16** So Judah said, “What can we say to my lord? What *words* can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord’s slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found.” **17** But he said, “Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father.”

18 Then Judah approached him and said, “Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord’s ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. **19** My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’ **20** And we said to my lord, ‘We have an old father and a little boy *born in our father’s* old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.’ **21** Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me so that I may set my eyes on him.’ **22** But we said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’ **23** You said to your servants, however, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.’ **24** So it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. **25** And our father said, ‘Go back, buy us a little food.’ **26** But we said, ‘We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’ **27** Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons; **28** and the one left me, and I said, “Surely he is torn to pieces,” and I have not seen him since. **29** If you also take this one from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.’ **30** So now, when I come to your servant, my father, and the boy is not with us—since our father’s life is so attached to the boy’s life— **31** when he sees that the boy is not *with us*,

he will die. So your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant, our father, down to Sheol in sorrow. **32** For your servant accepted responsibility for the boy from my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him *back* to you, then my father can let me take the blame forever.' **33** So now, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord instead of the boy, and let the boy go up with his brothers. **34** For how shall I go up to my father if the boy is not with me? *I fear* that I may see the evil that would overtake my father."