

Gen. 42:1 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?

Gen. 42:2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

Gen. 42:3 And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

Gen. 42:4 But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

Gen. 42:5 And the sons of Israel came to buy *corn* among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt and sent his sons to buy grain to provide for his household. We are told that Joseph was 17 when he had the dreams regarding his brothers bowing to him. Now, just 13 years later, he is the second in command in Egypt, and they are still under the direction of their father. Matter of fact, it is 20 years later since he was 30 when he became second in command and there were seven years of prosperity and the seven years of famine had begun, which would make Joseph at least 37. Jacob sent all of his sons except Benjamin, Rachel's only other son besides Joseph. He didn't want to take a chance on losing him too.

Gen. 42:6 And Joseph *was* the governor over the land, *and he it was* that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him *with* their faces to the earth.

Gen. 42:7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

Gen. 42:8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

Joseph was the one who sold the grain; and when his brothers arrived, they bowed to him with their faces to the ground. He recognized them immediately, but pretended to be a stranger. He spoke harshly to them and asked where they were from. They told him they had come from Canaan to buy food. Still, they did not recognize him.

Gen. 42:9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye *are* spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

Gen. 42:10 And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

Gen. 42:11 We *are* all one man's sons; we *are* true *men*, thy servants are no spies.

Gen. 42:12 And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

Gen. 42:13 And they said, Thy servants *are* twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest *is* this day with our father, and one *is* not.

Gen. 42:14 And Joseph said unto them, That *is it* that I spake unto you, saying, Ye *are* spies:

Then Joseph remembered his dreams about them. He accused them of being spies coming to see where Egypt was vulnerable to attack. They assured him they had only come to buy food. They explained that they were 12 brothers, the

sons of one man; the youngest brother was at home and one “is not.” Joseph insisted that they were spies.

Gen. 42:15 Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

Gen. 42:16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether *there be any truth in you*: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye *are spies*.

Gen. 42:17 And he put them all together into ward three days.

Gen. 42:18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; *for I fear God*:

Gen. 42:19 If ye *be true men*, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

Gen. 42:20 But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

Now Joseph is going to give them an opportunity to prove themselves. One of them must go to bring the youngest brother to him while the others remained in custody in prison. First, he put them all in custody for three days. On the third day Joseph came and modified his request. He told them that he feared God; and if they obeyed, they would live. One of the brothers must stay as hostage in prison while the others returned with food for their families. But they must bring their youngest brother back to prove their honesty and avoid death. So they agreed.

Gen. 42:21 And they said one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us*.

Gen. 42:22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

Gen. 42:23 And they knew not that Joseph understood *them*; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

The brothers immediately decided that they were being punished for how they had treated Joseph. They remembered his distress when he had pleaded for his life and just knew that they were reaping their just reward. Reuben reminded them that he had tried to get them not to harm Joseph and now they were being held to account. All of this they had been discussing out loud not realizing that Joseph could understand them, since he had been using an interpreter.

Gen. 42:24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

Gen. 42:25 Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man’s money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

Gen. 42:26 And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

Gen. 42:27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it *was* in his sack’s mouth.

Gen. 42:28 And he said unto his brethren, *My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?*

Joseph was so emotionally moved that he had to turn away because of his tears. When he spoke again, he had Simeon taken and bound right in front of them. Then he ordered that their bags be filled with grain and their silver be put back in their sacks. They were also given provisions for their journey. Then they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left. When they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey. There was his silver in the top of the sack. He immediately told his brothers, and their hearts sank. They trembled in fear and wondered together what God was doing to them.

It seems to me that each one of them would have opened their sacks right then and there to see if their silver were there too; but they didn't. At least it is to their credit that they knew/recognized that any punishment they received was coming from God, and that they deserved it because of their treatment of Joseph. They had been living with quite a load of guilt for 20 years.

(9/06) At www.lampresource.com, Wayne Walter stated some thoughts worth considering in his article on 10th Sedrah.

“Joseph had already made his peace with God concerning all that had happened to him. He knew the destiny of himself and his brothers was tied to God's promise to their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Joseph was in a position not to tear down but to build up. He would try his brothers. He would call forth from them compassion and love for one another. He would rend confession and sorrow for their past conduct to pour out of them like water unto God. They would realize and acknowledge who they were and what it was they were chosen for. They would be humbled and stand the measure. They would know sacrifice and redemption, and all due to the wisdom and firm gentleness of Joseph.”

Gen. 42:29 And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying,

Gen. 42:30 The man, *who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.*

Gen. 42:31 And we said unto him, *We are true men; we are no spies:*

Gen. 42:32 *We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.*

Gen. 42:33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, *Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone:*

Gen. 42:34 *And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.*

When they got home to Jacob in Canaan, they told him everything that had happened. They told him that they had to take Benjamin back with them as proof of their honesty to rescue Simeon and be able to buy grain.

Gen. 42:35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack: and when *both* they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

Gen. 42:36 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of *my children*: Joseph *is* not, and Simeon *is* not, and ye will take Benjamin *away*: all these things are against me.

Gen. 42:37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

Gen. 42:38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Then they began to empty their sacks, and there was each man's pouch of silver. This really scared them. Jacob was really distraught. It's interesting that he said, "Me have ye bereaved of my children." I wonder if he suspected the brothers all along of getting rid of Joseph. Then he blamed them for Simeon's plight and told them that no way were they taking Benjamin too. Reuben was desperate—He told Jacob that he could kill both of his sons if he did not bring Benjamin back. That's really strange to me for him to even think that Jacob would want to kill his own grandsons for vengeance. Even though he had obvious favorites, I'm sure Jacob loved all of his children and grandchildren. Jacob was firm that Benjamin could not go. Joseph was dead, and he was the only one of Rachel's children left. To lose him would be more than he could bear.