**The Ten Go Down to Egypt**

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The Seed: Sovereignly Preserved / Messiah; Christ / Genesis 42
In Genesis 42, Jacob sends the ten brothers, not including Benjamin, down to Egypt to buy grain to survive the worldwide famine. In this chapter, Moses moves the narrative through three distinct scenes between Canaan and Egypt.

# Pre-Sermon Comments

**Romans 8:28** LSB
And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to *His* purpose.

# Introduction and Series Review

## Genesis 37 - Jacob's Troubled Family

**Genesis 37:4** LSB
And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, and *so* they hated him and could not speak to him in peace.

**Genesis 37:8** LSB
Then his brothers said to him, "Are you really going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

**Genesis 37:18** LSB
And they saw him from a distance, and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death.

**Genesis 37:24** LSB

24 and they took him and cast him into the pit. Now the pit was empty, without any water in it.

**Genesis 37:26–27** LSB
26 And Judah said to his brothers, “What gain is it that we kill our brother and cover up his blood?

27 “Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our *own* flesh.” And his brothers listened.

**Genesis 37:26** LSB
And Judah said to his brothers, “What gain is it that we kill our brother and cover up his blood?

## Genesis 38 - Judah’s Troubled Family

**Genesis 3:15** LSB
15 And I will put enmity

Between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her seed;

He shall bruise you on the head,

And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

**Genesis 12:1–3** LSB
**1** And Yahweh said to Abram,

“Go forth from your land,

And from your kin

And from your father’s house,

To the land which I will show you;

2 And I will make you a great nation,

And I will bless you,

And make your name great;

And so you shall be a blessing;

3 And I will bless those who bless you,

And the one who curses you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

**Genesis 38:6–7** LSB

**6** Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* Tamar.

7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of Yahweh, so Yahweh put him to death.

**Genesis 38:9–10** LSB

9 And Onan knew that the seed would not be his; and it happened that when he went in to his brother's wife, he wasted it on the ground in order not to give seed to his brother.

10 But what he did was displeasing in the sight of Yahweh; so He put him to death also.

**Genesis 38:11** LSB

Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Live as a widow in your father’s house until my son Shelah grows up”; for he thought, “*I am afraid* lest he also die like his brothers.” So Tamar went and lived in her father’s house.

**Genesis 38:24** LSB

Now it happened about three months later that it was told to Judah saying, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot, and behold, she is also with child by harlotry.” Then Judah said, “Bring her out and let her be burned!”

## Genesis 39 - The Trials and Temptations of Joseph

**Genesis 39:5** LSB

Now it happened that from the time he appointed him overseer in his house and over all that he owned, Yahweh blessed the Egyptian’s house on account of Joseph; thus the blessing of Yahweh was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field.

**Genesis 39:21–23** LSB

21 But Yahweh was with Joseph and extended lovingkindness to him and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer.

22 So the chief jailer gave into the hand of Joseph all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was the one who did *it*.

23 The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph’s hand because Yahweh was with him; and whatever he did, Yahweh made to succeed.

## Genesis 40 - Imprisoned but not Forgotten

**Genesis 40:4** LSB

And the captain of the bodyguard appointed Joseph as overseer over them, and he attended to them; and they were in confinement for some time.

**Genesis 40:14** LSB

“Only remember me when it goes well with you, and please show me lovingkindness by remembering me to Pharaoh and getting me out of this house.

## Genesis 41 - From the Pit to the Palace

**Genesis 41:1** LSB

Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile.

**Genesis 41:8** LSB

Now it happened that in the morning his spirit was troubled, so he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh recounted to them his dream, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

**Genesis 41:12** LSB

“Now there *was* with us a Hebrew youth, a slave of the captain of the bodyguard, and we recounted *them* to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his *own* dream.

**Genesis 41:14–15** LSB

**14** Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they rushed him out of the pit; and he shaved himself and changed his clothes, and he came to Pharaoh.

15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; yet I have heard it said about you, that you hear a dream *and that* you can interpret it.”

**Genesis 41:25** LSB

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one *and the same*; God has declared to Pharaoh what He is about to do.

**Genesis 41:28–32** LSB

28 “It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do. 29 “Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; 30 and after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the abundance

will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will ravage the land, [31] so that the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; for it *will be* very heavy. [32] "Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, *it means* that the matter is confirmed by God, and God will quickly bring it about.

**Genesis 41:33–36** LSB

[33] "So now let Pharaoh look for a man understanding and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. [34] "Let Pharaoh take action and appoint overseers over the land, and let him exact a fifth *of the produce* of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance. [35] "Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and let them store up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh's authority, and let them keep watch over *it*. [36] "And let the food be appointed for the land for the seven years of famine which will happen in the land of Egypt, so that the land will not be cut off during the famine."

**Genesis 41:56–57** LSB

[56] Now the famine was over all the face of the land. And Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. [57] Now all the earth *also* came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was severe in all the earth.

## Sermon Proposition and Outline

In Genesis 42, Jacob sends the ten brothers, not including Benjamin, down to Egypt to buy grain to survive the worldwide famine. In this chapter, Moses moves the narrative through three distinct scenes between Canaan and Egypt:

- Jacob Sends His Ten Sons from Canaan (Genesis 42:1–5)
- Joseph Tests His Brothers in Egypt (Genesis 42:6–28)
- Jacob Resists Sending Benjamin to Egypt (Genesis 42:29–38)

# Jacob Sends His Ten Sons from Canaan (Genesis 42:1–5)

## The Effect of the Drought

**Genesis 42:1–2** LSB

1 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, “Behold, I have heard that there
is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy *some* for us from there, so that we may
live and not die.”

## Jacob Holds Back Benjamin

**Genesis 42:3–4** LSB

3 So ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt. 4 But Jacob did
not send Joseph’s brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, “Lest *any*
harm befall him.”

**Genesis 35:16–18** LSB

16 Then they journeyed from Bethel; and there was still some distance to go to
Ephrath, and Rachel gave birth, and she suffered severely in her labor. 17 Now it
happened that when she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, “Do not
fear, for now you have another son.” 18 Now it happened as her soul was
departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him
Benjamin.

**Genesis 42:5** LSB

5 So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the
famine was in the land of Canaan *also*.

# Joseph Tests His Brothers in Egypt (Genesis 42:6–28)

## Joseph’s Power Over the Land and His Brothers

**Genesis 42:6** LSB

[6] Now Joseph was the one in power over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground.

**Psalm 24:1** LSB

[1] The earth is Yahweh's, as well as its fullness, The world, and those who dwell in it.

**Genesis 42:6** LSB

[6] Now Joseph was the one in power over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground.

**Genesis 37:7** LSB

[7] Indeed, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf rose up and also stood upright; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf."

## Joseph Disguises Himself

**Genesis 42:7** LSB

[7] And Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, "Where have you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

**Genesis 42:8–9** LSB

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

**Genesis 42:10–11** LSB

[10] Then 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."

## Joseph Continues to Press His Brothers

**Genesis 42:12–13** LSB

[12] And he said to them, “No, but you have come to look at the nakedness of our land!” [13] So 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 more.”

**Genesis 42:14** LSB

[14] And Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you, you are spies;

**Genesis 42:15** LSB

[15] by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here!

**Genesis 42:16–17** LSB

[16] “Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.” [17] Then he put them all together in prison for three days.

## Joseph Fears God and Shows Mercy

**Genesis 42:18** LSB

[18] And Joseph said to them on the third day, “Do this and live, for I fear God:

**Genesis 42:19–20** LSB

[19] if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for *the rest of* you, go, bring grain for the famine of your households, [20] and bring your youngest brother to me, so your words may be proven true, and you will not die.” And they did so.

**Genesis 42:21** LSB

[21] Then they said to one another, “Surely we are guilty concerning our brother because we saw the distress of his soul when he begged us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us.”

**Genesis 42:22–23** LSB

[22] And Reuben answered them, saying, “Did I not tell you, saying, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; yet you would not listen? So also his blood, behold, it is

required *of us*.” [23] Now they did not know that Joseph was listening, for there was an interpreter between them.

### Joseph Weeps

**Genesis 42:24** LSB

[24] And he turned away from them and wept. Then he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

**Genesis 42:25–26** LSB

[25] Then Joseph gave a command to fill their bags with grain and to restore every man’s money in his sack and to give them provisions for the journey. And thus it was done for them. [26] So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and went from there.

**Genesis 42:27–28** LSB

[27] Then one *of them* opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place. And he saw his money; and behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. [28] So he said to his brothers, “My money has been returned, and behold, it is even in my sack.” And their hearts sank, and they *turned* trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

## Jacob Resists Sending Benjamin to Egypt (Genesis 42:29–38)

### The Brothers Recount the Events in Egypt to Jacob

**Genesis 42:29–34** LSB

[29] Then they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan and told him all 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] “So we said to him, ‘We are honest men; we are not spies. [32] ‘We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.’ [33] “Then 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 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.’”

**Genesis 42:35** LSB

[35] Now it happened that they were emptying their sacks, and behold, every man’s bundle of money *was* in his sack; and they and their father saw their bundles of money, and they feared.

### Jacob’s Refusal

**Genesis 42:36** LSB

[36] And their father Jacob said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me.”

**Genesis 42:37** LSB

[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 hand, and I will return him to you.”

**Genesis 42:38** LSB

[38] But Jacob said, “My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone remains. If harm should befall him on the journey on which you are going, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.”

**Romans 8:28** LSB

[28] And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to *His* purpose.

## Discussion Questions

What three scenes does Moses use to structure Genesis 42?

Why do you think Moses alternates between Canaan and Egypt?

What evidence do you see that Joseph was testing his brothers rather than seeking revenge?

What actions reveal both firmness and mercy?

What changes do you observe in the brothers compared to Genesis 37?

What indicates that God is beginning to awaken their consciences?

What does Jacob believe about his circumstances?

How is the reader's perspective different from Jacob's?

Joseph repeatedly shows both justice and mercy. Why do you think genuine repentance is so important before full reconciliation?

How does Joseph model wisdom?

Why do the brothers immediately connect their present suffering with their past sin?

What does this teach us about the work of conscience?

Jacob famously says, “All these things are against me. “Why is that statement understandable? Why is it ultimately untrue for Jacob? And for us?

How does Genesis 42 deepen your understanding of God's providence?

Where do you see God working even though He is never directly mentioned in the chapter?

Have you ever experienced a season where, like Jacob, it seemed that "everything was against you"? Looking back now, can you see ways God was working that you couldn't see at the time?

Joseph sought repentance, reconciliation, and restoration - not revenge. Why is revenge so attractive?

What practical steps help believers pursue forgiveness instead?

The brothers' guilt remained with them for more than twenty years. What does that teach us about hidden sin How does confession bring freedom?

Jacob interpreted God's providence through present pain rather than future promises. What present circumstance are you tempted to evaluate only through what you can currently see?

How does Romans 8:28 help reshape that perspective?

Read Romans 8:28 again. How does Paul's statement help us understand Genesis 42? In what ways is Joseph's story an illustration of this promise?

Which person in Genesis 42 do you most identify with this week?

Jacob, struggling to trust God?

Joseph, extending costly mercy?

Reuben, burdened by past failures?

The brothers, carrying guilt from past sins?

Benjamin, unknowingly caught in God's larger plan?

What is one specific way you can trust God's providence this week instead of reacting in fear or trying to control your circumstances?

## Family Discussion Questions

### Family Memory Verse

### Parents' Takeaway