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**Opening Scripture:** [Genesis 42:29-38](#);

*Republic, Sept. 29, 2024*

*Text:* [Genesis 42](#), [43](#), [44](#), [45](#).

**Title:** *The Tough, but Inspiring, Life of Joseph, Pt. 4*

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### **Quick review of Pt 3**

Egypt is now in the 7 years of famine, and at the time of our story is about 2 years in those famine years. Joseph is 2nd in command of Egypt, and a major part of his job is food distribution from food that has been stored up during the 7 years of prosperity.

**X. During the famine years, Joseph's dad, Jacob, sent 10 of Joseph's brothers to Egypt to buy grain.** Benjamin is the only brother that he did not send.

**[Genesis 42:7-8](#) We looked at 3 things about verses 7 and 8:**

***1. Why didn't Joseph's brothers recognize him?***

We looked at 5 possible reasons why.

***2. Why did Joseph choose to act like a stranger to them? Along with that, why was Joseph asking them where they came from?***

***3. Why did Joseph speak to them in a rough manner?***

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**XI. The 9 brothers go home to their father.**

**[Genesis 42:29-36](#) (NIV)**

<sup>29</sup> When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them. They said,

<sup>30</sup> "The man who is lord over the land spoke harshly to us and treated us as though we were spying on the land.

<sup>31</sup> But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies.

<sup>32</sup> We were twelve brothers, sons of one father. One is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan.'

<sup>33</sup> "Then the man who is lord over the land said to us, 'This is how I will know whether you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take food for your starving households and go.

<sup>34</sup> But bring your youngest brother to me so I will know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will give your brother back to you, and you can trade in the

land."

- 35 As they were emptying their sacks, there in each man's sack was his pouch of silver! When they and their father saw the money pouches, they were frightened.
- 36 Their father Jacob said to them, "You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and **Simeon is no more**, and now you want to take Benjamin. **Everything is against me!**"

Jacob makes quite the exaggeration of the situation in verse 36.

*Have you ever exaggerated something when you felt things were not going well in your life?*

If you do this, your mind tends to think that everything is going wrong.

**What Jacob says is not even accurate.**

*Jacob says 2 things that are not true:*

**It is not true that:** "Simeon is no more."

The truth is he is in jail & can get out once they prove they have a younger brother.

**It is not true that:** "Everything is against me."

It may look a little bad right now, and they do have to prove they are not spies, but **they do have food to eat now**. So, **not** EVERYTHING is against Jacob.

Sometimes you have to look at any positives. Stop and think through some of this stuff. Count your many blessings, name them one by one.

### [Genesis 42:37](#) (NIV)

- 37 Then Reuben said to his father, "You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to my care, and I will bring him back."

That is really a ridiculous statement for Reuben to make. He cannot control what Egypt is going to do when they go back. And, his father is not going to put his two grandsons to death. For Reuben to even offer such a thing is ridiculous.

### [Genesis 42:38](#) (NIV)

- 38 **But Jacob said, "My son will not go down there with you;** his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in sorrow."

**XII. The brothers know they are forced to go back to Egypt with Benjamin, if they are going to get more grain.** They can stall for a little while because of the food they brought back from the first trip. But, when that gets close to running out, they have to go back for more.

**Genesis 43:1-15 (NIV)**

- <sup>1</sup> Now the famine was still severe in the land.
- <sup>2</sup> **So when they had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go back and buy us a little more food."**

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I tried to find out how long it had been until they went back to Egypt, and I could not find out anything from my commentaries about it. Here is all I know:

They were running out of food again.

I am not sure how much food they originally brought home from Egypt, but you would think that it would be at least 1-2 months worth of food.

One scholar said it was about a 200 mile trip, & would have taken about 10 days just to go there. Then one day overnight, then 10 days back. A 21 day trip, or 3 weeks. So, it isn't like you would want to make this trip very often. You would want to bring back enough food for a couple of months.

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Let's continue on at verse 3:

**Genesis 43:3-6 (NIV)**

- <sup>3</sup> But Judah said to him, "The man warned us solemnly, 'You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.'
- <sup>4</sup> If you will send our brother along with us, we will go down and buy food for you.
- <sup>5</sup> But **if you will not send him (*Benjamin*), we will not go down**, because the man said to us, 'You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.'
- <sup>6</sup> Israel (*Jacob*) asked, "Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?"

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There is no doubt that Jacob was a godly man. God changed his name to Israel & later referred to a whole nation as "Israel." So, he must have been a godly man.

**However, you also see his fleshly side a lot.** We saw it during our opening scripture today when he exaggerated about Simeon & that "Everything is against me." Now we see it again when he is "jumping onto his sons about mentioning to Joseph

that they had another brother.

*Have you ever had a parent, or anyone for that matter, seem to blame you for something that was not fully your fault, just because they are frustrated at the situation?*

We see Jacob doing that here. We see him showing his fleshly side.

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### [Genesis 43:7a](#) (NIV)

<sup>7</sup>**a** They replied, "The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our family. 'Is your father still living?' he asked us. 'Do you have another brother?' **We simply answered his questions ...**

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They kind of did just answer Joseph's questions, but they also volunteered a lot.

I could not find any verses in their discussion with Joseph ([Genesis 42:10-17](#)) where Joseph asked if their father was still living, or if they had another brother. Unless scripture is not telling us the full conversation, they offered that information to Joseph themselves.

### [Genesis 42:12-13](#) (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> But he (*Joseph*) said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."

<sup>13</sup> And they said, "Your servants *are* twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, **the youngest is with our father today**, and one *is* no more."

So, the brothers are making it sound like they did not volunteer the information about Benjamin. But, this is a lie. They actually did mention there was one more.

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### [Genesis 43:7 b](#) (NIV)

<sup>7</sup>**b.** ... **How were we to know he would say, 'Bring your brother down here'?"**

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This is really a good point. There is no way they would know Joseph was going to require them to bring back their younger brother.

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### [Genesis 43:8-10](#) (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> **Then Judah** said to Israel his father, "Send the boy along with me and we will go

at once, so that we and you and our children may live and not die.

<sup>9</sup> I myself will guarantee his safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life.

<sup>10</sup> **As it is, if we had not delayed, we could have gone and returned twice.**"

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*Have you ever said something like verse 10, ..."Look, we could have been there and back twice by now?"*

Earlier I told you that I could not find out how long it had been since they first came home from Egypt, to their returning again to Egypt. I said "*Could it have been as much as 1-2 months?*" I mentioned that I could not find out anything about it.

Look again at verse 10, in what Judah says about they could have returned twice by now. If scholars are right that it would take about 10 days one way, to go to Egypt, and 1 day being there, & 10 days back that would equal 21 days, or 3 wks, then gone there and came back twice by now might give us a time frame.

*So, when Judah said we could have went there and returned twice, was that an exaggeration by Judah, or is it possible that the time that had gone by since they were last in Egypt was about 6 wks, or 1 1/2 months?*

That also means Simeon has been in jail that entire 6 weeks and was probably wondering when his brothers were going to come back for him.

*Also, it is interesting that in our opening scripture, Reuben tries to convince his father to make him (Reuben) responsible for Benjamin as they return to Egypt. But, Jacob refused to do so. NOW, in verses 8-10, **Judah** says HE will guarantee Benjamin's safety. We will see in verse 11, here in a minute, that Jacob goes along with Judah's plan.*

Here is my question to you: *Why did Reuben fail to convince Jacob to let him take Benjamin and return to Egypt, whereas Judah succeeds in convincing him?*

I can think of 2 reasons:

1. TIME had gone by since they first brought food home from Egypt, & they were almost out of food again. Jacob was basically stuck with allowing Benjamin to go.
2. Reuben, who had offered to be responsible earlier, was the oldest of the brothers. The oldest sometimes gets blamed for anything that goes wrong. Reuben was there many years ago when Joseph disappeared. *Was Jacob*

*not wanting to trust Reuben because of the past event with Joseph?*

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**Genesis 43:11** (NIV)

- <sup>11</sup> Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be, then do this: Put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift-- a little balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.
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Sometimes in life, when we don't want to go through something, and we just have to tell ourselves "If it must be, it must be." That was Jacob at this point.

Also .....

*Bible Knowledge Commentary says about the items they took to Joseph:*

"Jacob suggested that they take some of their **best products ... to the man as a gift, including balm... honey... spices and myrrh... pistachio nuts, and almonds.** Apparently these delicacies were not available in Egypt... They also took **double the amount of silver,** returning what they had found in their money pouches before. Jacob resigned himself to the high risk involved in possibly losing a third son—first, Joseph; then Simeon; & now perhaps Benjamin too."

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**Genesis 43:12-14** (NIV)

- <sup>12</sup> **Take double the amount of silver with you, for you must return the silver that was put back into the mouths of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake.**
- <sup>13</sup> Take your brother also and **go back to the man at once.**
- <sup>14</sup> And may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved."
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The bottom line is **he had no other choice but to put his trust in God,** in order to get more food, and to bring Simeon back, and hopefully return with Benjamin.

Jacob had delayed this whole thing of going back to Egypt, as long as possible. He simply could not wait any longer are the family would starve to death.

Sometimes we delay what we don't want to do as long as possible, until we can't wait any longer, when we could have done it and been back twice by now.

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**Genesis 43:15 (NIV)**

- <sup>15</sup> So the men took the gifts and double the amount of silver, and Benjamin also. **They hurried down to Egypt** and presented themselves to Joseph.

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*Why might they hurry down to Egypt?*

2 possible reasons:

1. The family was running out of food.
  2. They wanted to hurry to rescue Simeon who had already sat in jail wondering what was going on for around 6 weeks + another 10 days for the brother to return to Egypt. So, Simeon was probably in jail close to 2 months by then.
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**XIII. The brothers arrive and come before Joseph.****Genesis 43:16-33 (NIV)**

- <sup>16</sup> When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Take these men to my house, slaughter an animal and prepare dinner; **they are to eat with me at noon.**" (*leading us to believe that Joseph's brothers arrived in Egypt first thing in the morning*)
- <sup>17</sup> The man did as Joseph told him and took the men to Joseph's house.
- <sup>18</sup> Now the men were frightened when they were taken to his house. They thought, "We were brought here because of the silver that was put back into our sacks the first time. He wants to attack us and overpower us and seize us as slaves and take our donkeys." (*They are thinking the worst*)
- <sup>19</sup> So they went up to Joseph's steward & spoke to him at the entrance to the house.
- <sup>20</sup> "Please, sir," they said, "we came down here the first time to buy food.
- <sup>21</sup> But at the place where we stopped for the night we opened our sacks and each of us found his silver--the exact weight--in the mouth of his sack. So we have brought it back with us.
- <sup>22</sup> We have also brought additional silver with us to buy food. We don't know who put our silver in our sacks."
- <sup>23</sup> "It's all right," he said. **"Don't be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks; I received your silver."** (*NLT says "I received your payment."*) Then he brought Simeon out to them.
- <sup>24</sup> The steward took the men into Joseph's house, gave them water to wash their feet and provided fodder for their donkeys.
- <sup>25</sup> They prepared their gifts for Joseph's arrival at noon, because they had heard that they were to eat there. (*from verse 11: balm and a little honey, some spices and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds.*)
- <sup>26</sup> When Joseph came home, **they presented to him the gifts** they had brought into the house, **and they bowed down before him to the ground.**
- <sup>27</sup> He asked them how they were, and then he said, **"How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?"**
- <sup>28</sup> They replied, "Your servant our father is still alive and well." And they bowed low to pay him honor.
- <sup>29</sup> As he looked about & saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, he asked, "Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?" And he (*Joseph*) said, "God be gracious to you, my son."
- <sup>30</sup> Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a

place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there.

31 After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, "Serve the food."

32 They served him by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians.

33 The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; **and they looked at each other in astonishment.**

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*2 interesting things here in verses 32 and 33:*

*Verse 32:* I am guessing there were 3 different tables set up. Joseph is at one table. The brothers at another table, & the Egyptians who were there at Joseph's house is at another table.

*Verse 33:* Each of the other brothers were seated in a certain order, from firstborn to the youngest (Benjamin). And, its interesting that the brothers noticed this. I am guessing that when they were given their seats, the fact that they were told which seat to sit at is what caused them to figure it out. The bible says "they looked at each other in astonishment."

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#### **Genesis 43:34 (NIV)**

34 When portions were served to them from Joseph's table, Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

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So, this had to make Benjamin and the brothers wonder why this was the case.

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#### **XIV. Joseph comes up with a plan to keep Benjamin in Egypt, then when that plan doesn't work, he finally reveals who he is to his brothers.**

The entire chapter of [Genesis 44](#) is all about Joseph's plan to keep Benjamin there. When it came time for the brothers to go back to their father, Joseph has his attendants hide the cup Joseph drinks from by putting it in one of the brother's pack. Then, after they left Joseph has his stewards chase down the brothers on their way home. The brothers are then falsely accused of stealing Joseph's cup, and they are told that they have to leave Benjamin in Egypt with Joseph.

**But, Judah talks Joseph out of it because his plan to keep Benjamin would literally kill his father.**

*Chapter 44 ends with Judah's plea to Joseph with these 3 verses:*

#### **Genesis 44 (NIV)**

32 Your servant guaranteed the boy's safety to my father. I said, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!'

33 "Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord's slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers.

34 How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come upon my father."



Chapter 45:**Genesis 45:1-15 (NIV)**

- <sup>1</sup> Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, "Have everyone (*Egyptians*) leave my presence!" So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers.
- <sup>2</sup> And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh's household heard about it.

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Just because we forgive, doesn't mean that there are not a lot of feelings involved, especially when something finally gets resolved.

We see Joseph's tender feelings pouring out of him.

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**Genesis 45:3 (NIV)**

- <sup>3</sup> Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

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We can be sure they are completely stunned by Joseph's comment.

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**Genesis 45:4-5 (NIV)**

- <sup>4</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!"
- <sup>5</sup> **And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.**

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When you look at all things from the perspective of God's will, **you cannot have it both ways.** You cannot continue to hate someone for what they did to you, when God made something really good out of it.

**Stop blaming and hating people.** It is NOT a part of the Christian life. **It's okay to not LIKE what someone said or did, BUT, a true Christian** always **looks inside of themselves** in order to grow in their experiences, and they always keep looking for God's greater plan while they are waiting for it to happen. If you are still blaming others, you have no clue what at least half of the Christian life is about.

**Joseph makes it clear that he understood God's bigger plan.** He is making sure that his brothers know that. Chances are they did not know that God had bigger plans. *Did God want them to hate Joseph?* Absolutely not. *Did God turn this into a huge miracle for many people?* Absolutely !

Joseph had to have been a wonderful godly man to think like he did, and to say what he said to his brothers. He had the power to destroy them and get revenge for what they did to him. But, he was always learning and he saw God's bigger plan.

I have seen Christians blaming other people for things in their lives, and they never acknowledge, like Joseph, that what happened worked for the best. Yet, they still want to **BLAME**. Again, **you cannot have it both ways.**

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**Genesis 45:6-8 (NIV)**

- <sup>6</sup> **For two years now there has been famine in the land,** *(This tells us that the brothers came to Egypt at 2 years into the famine years) and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. (because nothing is growing)*
- <sup>7</sup> But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.
- <sup>8</sup> **"So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God.** He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.

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*Are we getting this?* This is one of the most important things you **MUST** learn in life. Stop making life about your negative experiences with people. Instead, start making life about what God is teaching you, or what greater thing God is going to make out of what we are going through. So, always keep wondering what God's greater plan is.

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**Genesis 45:9-15 (NIV)**

- <sup>9</sup> Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay.'
- <sup>10</sup> You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me--you, your children & grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have.
- <sup>11</sup> I will provide for you there, **because five years of famine are still to come.** Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.' *(Joseph saw the bigger picture that God was not going to allow anything on earth to destroy God's people.)*
- <sup>12</sup> "You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you.
- <sup>13</sup> Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly."
- <sup>14</sup> Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. *(What a scene that must have been! If you were there, would you have cried watching that?)*
- <sup>15</sup> And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. **Afterward his brothers talked with him.**

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Forgiveness was given, and God's plan was about to save His people. What a wonderful thing to watch.

*Wouldn't you love to know what all was asked or said on the part where it says*  
**"Afterward his brothers talked with him?"**

*Are these things the kind of things you would love to see replayed in heaven?*

Next week we will finish this incredible story.

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**Summary comments:**

## 2 keys highlight verses from [Genesis 45:1-15](#)

### [Genesis 45:5, 8](#)

<sup>5</sup> **And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.**

<sup>8</sup> **"So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father (*adviser*) to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.**

Not only was Joseph used mightily to help starving people, along with God's people (*which was God's bigger plan*)

but Joseph also

got back his family (*Which surely helped with some of his and his father's hurts*)

He lost a lot of years, but what he got back was still really good. He will enjoy the last years of his father's life.

### LESSONS:

Start looking at everything you face, especially the negative stuff, as God has a plan of some sort. If nothing else, you can grow from it, and find yourself looking at people even when they do you wrong, like God looks at people. You will learn to see like the Father sees.

Stay close to God, never develop attitudes, and He will bless your life. And, He will even help you through the hurt of what you experienced.

In your own closing prayer today, straighten out any wrong thinking in your on life. Ask God's forgiveness for making life about negative attitudes with others. Ask God to help you think and act totally different than you have been. Ask Him to teach you lessons that you need to learn.

Shall we stand....