



BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2023 – WEEK 9

### Genesis 42-43: Dead Man Walking

*There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when he judges you.*

– James 2:13 NLT

*God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

– Galatians 5:7 NLT

- **God's grand plan**

*...the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover, **all the earth** came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe **over all the earth**.* – Genesis 41:56-57 ESV

- This is all part of God's sovereign plan
- He is fulfilling His will and His promises
- Including His promise to Abraham

*"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."* – Genesis 12:3 ESV

- This part remained unfulfilled
  - Jacob's family only numbered about 70
  - They were few in number
  - They were far from influential
  - Or were they?

*So Pharaoh put **Joseph** in charge of all Egypt. And Pharaoh said to him, "I am Pharaoh, but no one will lift a hand or foot in the entire land of Egypt without your approval."* – Genesis 41:43-44 ESV

*...all the earth came to Egypt to **Joseph** to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.* – Genesis 41:57 ESV

- God was blessing the nations through Joseph

- The great-grandson of Abraham

*“...and in you [Abraham] **all the families of the earth** shall be blessed.”* – Genesis 12:3  
ESV

- Even the nations of Canaan would be blessed
- Including the Israelites

- The nations were coming to Egypt

*“Why are you standing around looking at one another? I have heard there is grain in Egypt. **Go down there, and buy enough grain to keep us alive.**”* – Genesis 42:2 ESV

*Thus **the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.*** – Genesis 43:5 ESV

- Among the others
 

Canaanites	Hivites
Amorites	Jebusites
Girgashites	Perizzites
Hittites	<b>Israelites</b>

- Joseph’s brothers arrive in Egypt

*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.* – Genesis 42:6 ESV

- This scene stirred up some memories for Joseph

*“Hear this dream that I have dreamed: Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, **your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf.**”* –Genesis 37:6-7 ESV

*Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, “Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, **the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.**”* – Genesis 37:9 ESV

- The dream never said they would do so...  
...**willingly** or **knowingly**

- **A dream come true**

*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.” And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them.* – Genesis 42:7-9 ESV

- Joseph has waited 13 years for this day
  - o His dreams are being **validated**
  - o His mistreatment is being **vindicated**
  - o His brothers are about to be **repudiated**
- Everything is coming into focus

- **A test of character**

*And he said to them, “**You are spies**; you have come to see the nakedness of the land.” They said to him, “No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.” – Genesis 42:9-11 ESV*

- 13 years have passed
- Joseph **recognizes** his brothers
- But he doesn’t really know them
  - o He has changed, but have they?
  - o These were far from God-fearing men
- Joseph was familiar with their track record

#### **Back in Shechem**

*...two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem’s house and went away. – Genesis 34:25-26 ESV*

#### **Back in Dothan**

*They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits.” – Genesis 37:18-19 ESV*

- o In that pit, Joseph heard Judah say:

*“What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, **let us sell him to the Ishmaelites**, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” – Genesis 37:26-27 ESV*

- **A taste of their own medicine**

*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.” But Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you. You are spies. By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here.” – Genesis 42:13-15 ESV*

- They get to experience Joseph’s life
  - o Misunderstood and mistreated
  - o Falsely accused
  - o Unjustly imprisoned

- Having to wait on God for justice
- **A test of their godliness**
  - Could they be trusted?
  - Would they prove faithful?
  - Were they repentant?
  - Had they been changed?
  - Joseph devised a character assessment test

**tested** – *bāhan* – to try, prove, or examine

- To assay or test the purity of metals

The test:

- They must choose one brother to stay
- The other ten can return home with grain
- But they must bring Benjamin back
- Or their brother will die
- Guilt, fear, and sorrow, oh my!
  - Their first response is **guilt**
  - Quickly followed by **blame**

*“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.”*  
– Genesis 42:21 ESV

*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.”* – Genesis 42:22

The test – part 2:

- Joseph returned their money
- Making it look as if the grain was stolen
- And they viewed it as divine punishment

*“What is this that God has done to us?”* – vs 28

The test – part 3:

- They told Jacob all that had happened
- They relayed the “governor’s” demands
- And Jacob refused to comply

*“My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left.”* – Genesis 42:38 ESV

- He cannot bear to lose another son
- But he seems willing to sacrifice Simeon

#### The test – part 4:

- Time goes by
- They run out of grain and options
- So, Jacob orders the sons back to Egypt, minus Benjamin
- Judah convinces Jacob to send Benjamin
- Jacob sends them with double the money
- He prepares a gift for the governor
- Then he asks God to be merciful

*“May God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”*  
– Genesis 43:14 ESV

- In his time of need, Jacob turns to God
  - He was sending all his sons away
  - He was powerless and helpless
  - His food supply was low
  - And his remaining days on earth were few

#### ● **The mercies of God**

- The 11 brothers return to Egypt
- They are taken to the Governor’s home
- Where they begin to panic

*And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, “It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants and seize our donkeys.”* – Genesis 43:18 ESV

*When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground. And he inquired about their welfare...* – Genesis 43:26-27 ESV

- The “Governor” showered them with grace
  - He pronounces a blessing on Benjamin  
*“God be gracious to you, my son!”* - vs 29
  - Then he treats all of them to a feast
  - All arranged in their proper birth order

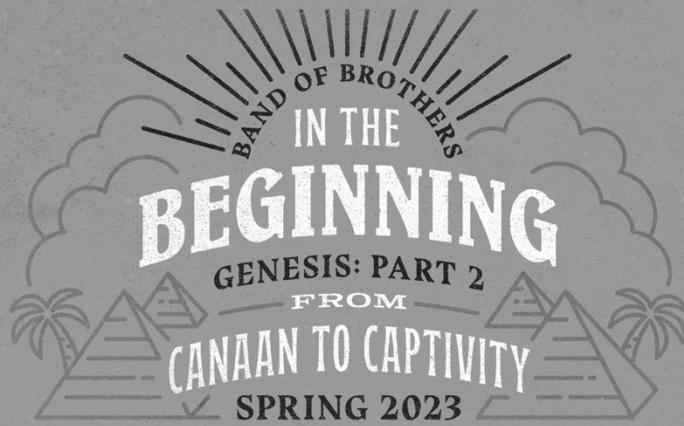
*And the men looked at one another in amazement. Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.* – Genesis 43:33-34 ESV

- **Discussion questions**

List some specific ways in which God has shown you grace when you didn't deserve it? Why does He do it?

Look at the two verses on the front of this handout. How does Joseph's life model these verses for us?

Eleven of the tribes of Israel came from these flawed men. How should that bring us encouragement?



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SPRING SERIES 2023 – WEEK 10 HOMEWORK

**WEEK 10 – Genesis 44:1-46:27: Surprise!**

Much to his brothers' shock and dismay, Joseph finally reveals his true identity. This unexpected revelation leaves them scared out of their wits and fully expecting to be the recipients of their brother's long-pent-up rage. But they are in for even greater surprise when they discover that Joseph isn't out for revenge but desires complete restoration of their relationship with him. Even Jacob receives God's directive to make the long and arduous journey to Egypt. He has plans for the descendants of Abraham that Jacob could have never imagined or dreamed up on his own. In time, the unjust treatment of Joseph by his brothers and the widespread famine in the land will all make sense. It will become increasingly clear that every phase of this rags-to-riches story was the work of the sovereign God of the universe.

- Read Genesis 44:1-46:27. This is a longer section, but simply write down the major highlights that you find as you read through it.
- Now read pages 171-189 of Ken's Devotional™ on Genesis Part II.
- In verses 1-13, Joseph orders yet another test for his brothers. What do you think he is hoping to accomplish by using what appears to be entrapment?

Verse 9 records a rather harsh penalty for their supposed crime. Why is Joseph using such harsh tactics with his brothers? What is he hoping to expose?

Verses 14-34 reveal what happened when the brothers arrived at the home of the “Governor.” How does this passage paint Judah in a positive light in comparison with the rest of his brothers?

- Chapter 45 is one of the most important chapters in the entire book of Genesis. What would you consider the most powerful message contained in this chapter and why?

How does Joseph reveal that he is fully aware of God’s sovereign plan for his life?

How does God end up blessing the brothers through Joseph?

Why do you think Joseph told his brothers, “Do not quarrel along the way” (Genesis 45:24)?

- Look over Genesis 46:1-27 again. What is so important about the message God to Jacob as he offered sacrifices in Beersheba?

Verses 8-25 contain a listing of all those who traveled with Jacob. Verse 26 provides the total number of persons in Jacob’s house as 70. Now, read Exodus 1:1-7. It begins with a recap of the 70 people who entered Egypt 400 years earlier, but then describes what has happened in the meantime. Why does this reveal about the character of God and, particularly, His faithfulness?