

Genesis 42 - An Unexpected Reunion

Outline

1. **A Surprising Encounter**
2. **A Revealing Interrogation**
3. **A Troubling Test**

Big Idea: God sometimes plays the long game in fulfilling his promises and healing our wounds.

A Surprising Encounter

Genesis 42:1–3

[1] When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?” [2] And he said, “Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die.” [3] So ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.

[5] Thus the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

Genesis 42:6–8

[6] 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. [7] 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.” [8] And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

A Revealing Interrogation

[9] And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, “You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land.” [10] They said to him, “No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food. [11] We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.”

Genesis 42:18–20

[18] On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: [19] if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, [20] and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they did so.

[21] Then they said to one another, “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.” [22] And 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.”

Kent Hughes

“True guilt is a grace because it brings the guilty to seek forgiveness and to repent...Joseph’s brothers were wracked with guilt that, in the context of the Bible, put them in the way of grace. That was good guilt, healthy guilt, graced guilt. Without guilt there could be no forgiveness and no resolution.”

[23] They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. [24] Then he turned away from them and wept.

Iain Duguid

“Joseph’s inability to restrain his outpouring of emotional response may explain both why he and why we do not pursue reconciliation with some people. Many of us do not want to revisit old hurts after trying so hard, like Joseph, to forget them and put them behind us. There is a price to pay in revisiting old experiences: old wounds will be reopened, old aches will throb, and many tears will flow. There is no reconciliation without cost.”

[25] And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man’s money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

A Troubling Test

28 At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

Kent Hughes

“Joseph’s brothers realized that their sins were against God. Fear is one thing, but godly fear comes from sensing that a holy God is the hand behind the circumstances of your life to bring you to where you ought to be...Godly fear is a grace because the fearer knows where he or she must turn to have the fear assuaged.”

Genesis 42:35

[35] As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man’s bundle of money was in his sack. And when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid.

How do we need to respond to this text?

1. Grow in the Practice of Waiting
 - Mark Vroegop: *“this shows [us] that patience starts by simply waiting more than what I’ve wanted or expected. Waiting patiently embraces the uncomfortable addition*

of more time...Patience is formed by letting go of what I thought was going to be true about my life."

- Learning to wait patiently requires us to...
 - Honestly name your expectations and disappointments
 - Embrace the tension
 - Practice active waiting

2. Prepare Yourself to Forgive and Reconcile

- Duiguid: *Through Christ, we can access the building blocks of reconciliation: confession of our sin, repentance, and forgiveness of the sins of others. Because my sin has been paid for by Christ, I can confess it freely and not be crushed by it. I don't have to deny my sin or minimize it. Because Christ has given me his heart-changing Spirit, I can begin to repent, turning away from my habitual sins that repeatedly hurt others. Because Christ is Lord and Judge, I can entrust to him the fitting judgment of those who have sinned against and hurt me.*

3. Marvel at the Grace of Jesus