

# INTENDED FOR GOOD

## 3. DREAM WEAVER HVC, 6/21/20, Genesis 42-43

Do you know any really good story tellers? What makes them so good at telling stories?

What stories in the Bible are most memorable for you? Why?

### **Genesis 42:1-2 (NLT)**

**When Jacob heard that grain was available in Egypt, he said to his sons, "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. Otherwise we'll die."**

What might have been going through Jacob's mind as this was happening?

How do you respond in a crisis? (e.g. freeze up, get scared, act decisively, etc)

### **Genesis 42:3-4 (NLT)**

**So Joseph's ten older brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain. But Jacob wouldn't let Joseph's younger brother, Benjamin, go with them, for fear some harm might come to him.**

Why does Jacob have favorites among his children?  
(see Gen 29:16-30:24)

Have you ever experienced favoritism? What was that like?

### **Genesis 42:6-7a (NLT)**

**Since Joseph was governor of all Egypt and in charge of selling grain to all the people, it was to him that his brothers came. When they arrived, they bowed before him with their faces to the ground. Joseph recognized his brothers instantly...**

Had you been in Joseph's shoes, what would your reaction have been?

What were Joseph's 'options' here?

### **Genesis 42:8-9 (NLT)**

**Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they didn't recognize him. And he remembered the dreams he'd had about them many years before. He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see how vulnerable our land has become."**

What is the purpose of the spying accusation? Why might Joseph be concealing his identity?

Reread the dreams from Gen 37:5-9. How have those dreams begun to be fulfilled?

### **Genesis 42:17-20 (NLT)**

**So Joseph put them all in prison for three days. On the third day Joseph said to them, "I am a God-fearing man. If you do as I**

**say, you will live. If you really are honest men, choose one of your brothers to remain in prison. The rest of you may go home with grain for your starving families. But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. This will prove that you are telling the truth, and you will not die.” To this they agreed.**

What is Joseph’s plan here? Does it strike you as foolish, wise, or...?

What might the brothers be thinking at this point?

**Genesis 42:21-22 (NLT)**

**Speaking among themselves, they said, “Clearly we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his anguish when he pleaded for his life, but we wouldn’t listen. That’s why we’re in this trouble.”**

**“Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy?” Reuben asked. “But you wouldn’t listen. And now we have to answer for his blood!”**

What does this exchange reveal about the brothers? What possibility does it open?

**Genesis 42:25, 35 (NLT)**

**Joseph then ordered his servants to fill the men’s sacks with grain, but he also gave secret instructions to return each brother’s payment at the top of his sack...**

**As they emptied out their sacks, there in each man’s sack was the bag of money he had paid for the grain! The brothers and their father were terrified when they saw the bags of money.**

How does this figure into Joseph’s plan? What is he hoping to accomplish or reveal?

**Genesis 42:36 (NLT)**

**Jacob exclaimed, “You are robbing me of my children! Joseph is gone! Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin, too. Everything is going against me!”**

Ever felt like ‘everything’ was going against you? How did you respond? Where was God in the midst of that challenge?

**Genesis 43:14 (NLT)**

**(Jacob said) “May God Almighty give you mercy as you go before the man, so that he will release Simeon and let Benjamin return. But if I must lose my children, so be it.”**

Ever felt this desperate (i.e. faced with the possibility of losing three of your children)? Been this resigned to potential disaster?

Have you ever been able to trust God so completely that your trust persisted even *after* disaster hit?

**Genesis 43:15, 18 (NLT)**

**So the men packed Jacob’s gifts and double the money and headed off with Benjamin. They finally arrived in Egypt...The brothers were terrified when they saw that they were being taken into Joseph’s house. “It’s because of the money someone put in our sacks last time we were here,” they said. “He plans to pretend that we stole it. Then he will seize us, make us slaves, and take our donkeys.”**

Does Joseph's plan seem too harsh? Or is that justified in this case?

(e.g. here the brothers are afraid of the possibility of being unjustly enslaved- exactly what they did to Joseph!)

A harsh, long famine was the mechanism God used to accomplish his purposes. How might that give you hope when you are facing disaster or suffering?

**Genesis 43:23 (NLT)**

***"Relax. Don't be afraid," the household manager told them. "Your God, the God of your father, must have put this treasure into your sacks. I know I received your payment." Then he released Simeon and brought him out to them.***

What do you make of Joseph's manager's response? Why does he credit God for the restoration of the money? Why does he claim to have been paid?

What might the brothers have been thinking here? And when they saw Simeon released?

**Genesis 43:32-34 (NLT)**

***The waiters served Joseph at his own table, and his brothers were served at a separate table. The Egyptians who ate with Joseph sat at their own table, because Egyptians despise Hebrews and refuse to eat with them. Joseph told each of his brothers where to sit, and to their amazement, he seated them according to age, from oldest to youngest. And Joseph filled their plates with food from his own table, giving Benjamin five times as much as he gave the others. So they feasted and drank freely with him.***

What strikes you about this passage?

Discuss: "If God can use and heal a family like this, is anyone beyond his reach?"