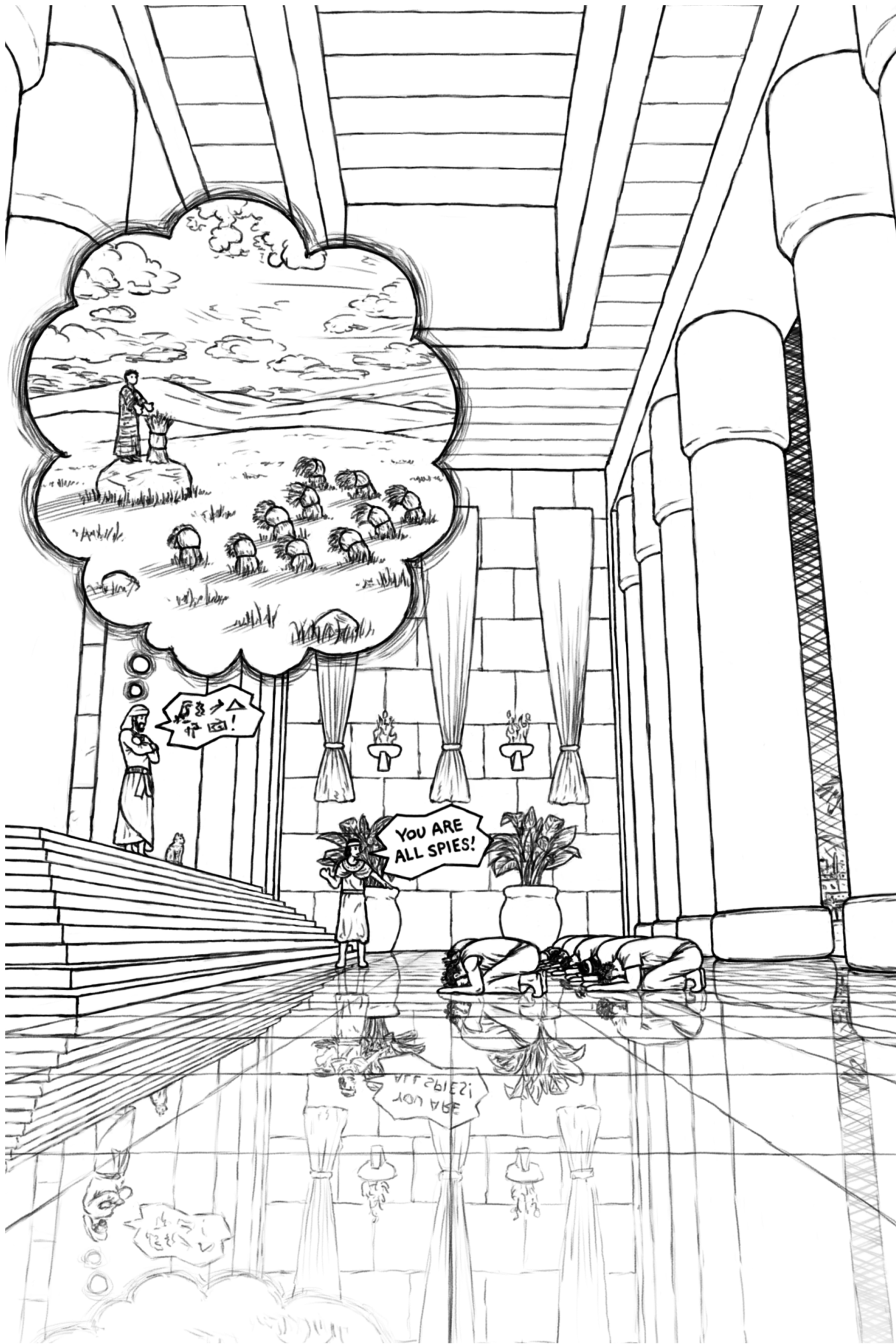




# Lesson 14

Proverbs 28:13

*Anyone who hides their sins doesn't succeed. But anyone who admits their sins and gives them up finds mercy.*

## Joseph's Brothers Go Down to Egypt

### Genesis 42:1–38

<sup>1</sup>Jacob found out that there was grain in Egypt. So he said to his sons, “Why do you just keep looking at one another?” <sup>2</sup>He continued, “I’ve heard there’s grain in Egypt. Go down there. Buy some for us. Then we’ll live and not die.”

<sup>3</sup>So ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain there. <sup>4</sup>But Jacob didn’t send Joseph’s brother Benjamin with them. He was afraid Benjamin might be harmed. <sup>5</sup>Israel’s sons were among the people who went to buy grain. There wasn’t enough food in the land of Canaan.

<sup>6</sup>Joseph was the governor of the land. He was the one who sold grain to all its people. When Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup>As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he pretended to be a stranger. He spoke to them in a mean way. “Where do you come from?” he asked.

“From the land of Canaan,” they replied. “We’ve come to buy food.”

<sup>8</sup>Joseph recognized his brothers, but they didn’t recognize him. <sup>9</sup>Then Joseph remembered his dreams about them. So he said to them, “You are spies! You have come to see the places where our land isn’t guarded very well.”

<sup>10</sup>“No, sir,” they answered. “We’ve come to buy food. <sup>11</sup>All of us are the sons of one man. We’re honest men. We aren’t spies.”

<sup>12</sup>“No!” he said to them. “You have come to see the places where our land isn’t guarded very well.”

<sup>13</sup>But they replied, “We were 12 brothers. All of us were the sons of one man. He lives in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is now with our father. And one brother is gone.”

<sup>14</sup>Joseph said to them, “I still say you are spies! <sup>15</sup>So I’m going to test you. And here’s the test. You can be sure that you won’t leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. You can be just as sure of this as you are sure that Pharaoh lives. I give you my word that you won’t leave here unless your brother comes. <sup>16</sup>Send one of you back to get your brother. The rest of you will be kept in prison. I’ll test your words. Then we’ll find out whether you are telling the truth. You can be sure that Pharaoh lives. And you can be just as sure that if you aren’t telling the truth, we’ll know that you are spies!” <sup>17</sup>So Joseph kept all of them under guard for three days.

<sup>18</sup>On the third day, Joseph spoke to them again. He said, “Do what I say. Then you will live, because I have respect for God. <sup>19</sup>If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison. The rest of you

may go and take grain back to your hungry families. <sup>20</sup>But you must bring your youngest brother to me. That will prove that your words are true. Then you won't die." So they did what he said.

<sup>21</sup>They said to one another, "God is surely punishing us because of our brother. We saw how upset he was when he begged us to let him live. But we wouldn't listen. That's why all this trouble has come to us."

<sup>22</sup>Reuben replied, "Didn't I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn't listen! Now we're being paid back for killing him." <sup>23</sup>They didn't realize that Joseph could understand what they were saying. He was using someone else to explain their words to him in the Egyptian language.

<sup>24</sup>Joseph turned away from his brothers and began to weep. Then he came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken and tied up right there in front of them.

<sup>25</sup>Joseph gave orders to have their bags filled with grain. He had each man's money put back into his sack. He also made sure they were given food for their journey. <sup>26</sup>Then the brothers loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.

<sup>27</sup>When night came, they stopped. One of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey. He saw his money in the top of his sack. <sup>28</sup>"My money has been given back," he said to his brothers. "Here it is in my sack."

They had a sinking feeling in their hearts. They began to tremble. They turned to one another and said, "What has God done to us?"

<sup>29</sup>They came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. They told him everything that had happened to them. They said, <sup>30</sup>"The man who is the governor of the land spoke to us in a mean way. He treated us as if we were spying on the land. <sup>31</sup>But we said to him, 'We're honest men. We aren't spies. <sup>32</sup>We were 12 brothers. All of us were the sons of one father. But now one brother is gone. And our youngest brother is with our father in Canaan.'

<sup>33</sup>"Then the man who is the governor of the land spoke to us. He said, 'Here's how I will know whether you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers here with me. Take food for your hungry families and go. <sup>34</sup>But bring your youngest brother to me. Then I'll know that you are honest men and not spies. I'll give your brother back to you. And you will be free to trade in the land.'"

<sup>35</sup>They began emptying their sacks. There in each man's sack was his bag of money! When they and their father saw the money bags, they were scared to death. <sup>36</sup>Their father Jacob said to them, "You have taken my children away from me. Joseph is gone. Simeon is gone. Now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is going against me!"

<sup>37</sup>Then Reuben spoke to his father. He said, "You can put both of my sons to death if I don't bring Benjamin back to you. Trust me to take care of him. I'll bring him back."

<sup>38</sup>But Jacob said, "My son will not go down there with you. His brother is dead. He's the only one left here with me. Suppose he's harmed on the journey you are taking. Then I would die as a sad old man."



When these events took place, Joseph was around 39 years old, Jacob/Israel was around 130 years old, and Benjamin was probably in his late 20's or early 30's. Joseph hadn't seen his ten half-brothers, his brother Benjamin, or his father, Jacob, in close to 22 years.

**Questions**

- 1 Where did Jacob hear there was grain? Jacob heard there was grain in \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:1)
- 2 What would happen to Jacob and his family if they didn't get grain? They would \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:2)
- 3 What did Jacob tell his sons to do? Jacob told his sons to \_\_\_\_\_ to Egypt and \_\_\_\_\_ some grain. (Gen. 42:2)
- 4 How many of Joseph's eleven brothers went down to Egypt? \_\_\_\_\_ of Joseph's brothers went down to Egypt. (Gen. 42:3)
- 5 Which brother stayed home? Why? \_\_\_\_\_ stayed home, because Jacob was \_\_\_\_\_ that Benjamin might be \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:4)
- 6 Who was the one in Egypt who sold grain to all its people? \_\_\_\_\_ was the one in Egypt who sold grain to all its people. (Gen. 42:6)
- 7 What did Joseph's brothers do when they arrived in Egypt? They \_\_\_\_\_ down to Joseph with their \_\_\_\_\_ to the ground. (Gen. 42:6)
- 8 Did Joseph recognize his brothers as soon as he saw them? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:7)
- 9 What did Joseph do when he saw his brothers for the first time in nearly 22 years? Joseph \_\_\_\_\_ to be a \_\_\_\_\_ to them. (Gen. 42:7)
- 10 Did Joseph speak kindly to them? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_. Joseph spoke to them in a \_\_\_\_\_ way. (Gen. 42:7)
- 11 Did Joseph's brothers recognize Joseph (who was older, speaking Egyptian, and probably dressed in Egyptian clothing)? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:8)
- 12 What did Joseph remember when he saw his brothers bowing down to him? Joseph remembered his \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:9)
- 13 What did Joseph's brothers call themselves? They called themselves \_\_\_\_\_ men. (Gen. 42:10)
- 14 Would you describe Joseph's brothers as honest men? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_.
- 15 What did Joseph call his brothers? Why? Joseph called his brothers \_\_\_\_\_, because it was part of his plan to get one of them to go back to Canaan and bring their \_\_\_\_\_ brother, Benjamin, to Joseph. (Gen. 42:14–16)
- 16 What did Joseph do with his brothers for three days? Joseph kept them under \_\_\_\_\_ for three days. (Gen. 42:17)
- 17 What did Joseph say to his brothers on the third day? After thinking about it for three days, Joseph

changed his mind and said to his brothers that only one would have to stay in \_\_\_\_\_ while the other nine could go back and take \_\_\_\_\_ to their \_\_\_\_\_ families. But those nine still had to \_\_\_\_\_ their youngest brother to Joseph. (Gen. 42:19–20)

- 18 What did the brothers think about all of this? They thought \_\_\_\_\_ was surely \_\_\_\_\_ them because of what they did to their brother Joseph. In other words, they were feeling **g**\_\_\_\_\_ (opposite of “innocent”). (Gen. 42:21)



Hidden sin leads to guilt, and guilt leads to misery and fear.

Psalm 38:4

*My guilt has become too much for me. It is a load too heavy to carry.*

- 19 What did Joseph's brothers say about how Joseph had reacted when they had been planning on killing him? They said Joseph had been very \_\_\_\_\_ and had \_\_\_\_\_ them to let him live. (Gen. 42:21)
- 20 What had been the response of all but one of Joseph's brothers to Joseph begging for his life? They wouldn't \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:21–22)
- 21 What had been the response of Reuben? Reuben had told his brothers not to \_\_\_\_\_ against Joseph. (Gen. 42:22)
- 22 What didn't Joseph's brothers realize about Joseph? They didn't realize that Joseph could \_\_\_\_\_ what they were \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:23)



Joseph could speak both Canaanite and Egyptian.

- 23 What did Joseph do when he heard his brothers talking about him? Joseph \_\_\_\_\_ away and began to \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:24)
- 24 Which brother did Joseph have tied up in front of the others? Joseph had \_\_\_\_\_ tied up in front of the others. (Gen. 42:24)



The Bible doesn't say why Joseph chose Simeon. Perhaps it was because Simeon, the second oldest of the brothers, and Levi, the third oldest, were so violent: when their sister Dinah was raped, they murdered all the men in town to get revenge (Genesis 34).

- 25 What kind things did Joseph do for his brothers and their families? Joseph gave \_\_\_\_\_ to

have his brothers' \_\_\_\_\_ filled with \_\_\_\_\_ and to have each man's \_\_\_\_\_ put back into his sack. He also made sure they were given \_\_\_\_\_ for their journey. (Gen. 42:25)

- 26 What was the response of Joseph's brothers that night when one of them found his money in the top of his sack? Joseph's brothers had a \_\_\_\_\_ feeling in their hearts, and they began to \_\_\_\_\_. They thought they would be accused of **S** \_\_\_\_\_ (means "taking without permission"). (Gen. 42:27-28)
- 27 When Joseph's brothers got home, what did they tell their father, Jacob? They told their father \_\_\_\_\_ that had happened to them. (Gen. 42:29)
- 28 What was the response of Joseph's brothers and their father when the brothers began emptying their sacks and *every* brother found his bag of money in his sack? They were all scared to \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:35)
- 29 What was the response of Jacob to his sons' story? Jacob **b** \_\_\_\_\_ them (means "thought they were responsible or at fault") for taking his \_\_\_\_\_ away from him. (Gen. 42:36)
- 30 What children did Jacob blame his sons for taking away from him? Jacob blamed his sons for taking \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ away from him, and for wanting to take \_\_\_\_\_ away from him. (Gen. 42:36)



It looks like Jacob at least suspected his sons of having some involvement in Joseph's apparent death. Jacob must not have really believed the story that Joseph had been innocently torn to pieces by a wild animal.

- 31 Which son spoke up to promise he would bring Benjamin back to his father? \_\_\_\_\_ spoke up to promise he would bring Benjamin back to his father. (Gen. 42:37)



Reuben was the one who had stopped his brothers from killing Joseph and had planned on later taking Joseph back to their father.

- 32 What did Reuben say Jacob could do if Reuben didn't bring Benjamin back to him? Reuben told Jacob that Jacob could put both of Reuben's \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ if Reuben didn't bring Benjamin back to him. In other words, Jacob could **t** \_\_\_\_\_ Reuben. (Gen. 42:37)
- 33 Did Jacob agree? (Yes/No) \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen. 42:38)



Jacob didn't trust any of them.

How did the Holy Spirit speak to you this week as you studied these Bible verses? In other words, what did you learn this week from reading God's Word?

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