

**A. The Patience of  
Joseph's Actions  
(42:1-43:34)**

-Joseph greatly loved his brothers in spite of their cruel treatment of him in the past.

-Because Joseph loved his brothers so greatly, he wanted to give generously.

**1. The Timing of Endowments**

Why did Joseph take so long to reveal himself?

- (a) Joseph knew he could not bless bad men.
- (b) The last Joseph knew of his brothers, they were very bad men.
- (c) Joseph's brothers could have changed since he was last with them over 20 years earlier.
- (d) To see if the brothers had really changed, Joseph had to test them thoroughly.

-If the brothers were still wicked, and if Joseph immediately revealed himself, the men would greedily feign a change of heart toward him in order to benefit from having a close relative in high office.

<sup>1</sup> When **Jacob** learned that there was *grain for sale* in **Egypt**, he said to his sons ... <sup>3</sup> So *ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt* ...

<sup>6</sup> ... And **Joseph's** brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> **Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them**, but he treated them like strangers and *spoke roughly to them* ... <sup>9</sup> 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." ... "

<sup>13</sup> 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*." ... <sup>15</sup> By this you shall be tested: by the life of **Pharaoh**, you shall not go from this place *unless your youngest brother comes here* ... <sup>17</sup> And he put them all together in *custody for three days*.

<sup>18</sup> ... **Joseph** said to them, "Do this and *you will live*, for I fear **God**: <sup>19</sup> ... let *one of your brothers remain confined* where you are in custody ... <sup>20</sup> ... bring your youngest brother to me ... and *you shall not die*." And they did so. <sup>21</sup> 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."

<sup>22</sup> 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." <sup>23</sup> They did not know that **Joseph understood them**, for there was an interpreter ... <sup>24</sup> Then *he turned away from them and wept* ... And he took **Simeon** from them ... <sup>25</sup> And **Joseph** gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to *replace every man's money in his sack*, ...

<sup>27</sup> And as one of them opened his sack ... *he saw his money in the mouth of his sack* ... At this *their hearts failed them*, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that **God** has done to us?"

<sup>29</sup> When they came to **Jacob** their father in the land of **Canaan**, they told him all ...

<sup>36</sup> And **Jacob** their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: **Joseph is no more**, and **Simeon is no more**, and now you would take **Benjamin**. All this has come against me." <sup>37</sup> Then **Reuben** said to his father, "**Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you**. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." ...

**2. The Temperance of Emotions**

-In order to remain incognito toward his brothers, he was forced to maintain control of his emotions (Pr 16:32)

**First Incident:**

42:21-23 - He heard his brother's conversation about their guilt concerning Joseph.

-This was the first evidence of their change of heart, but he could not let them see him weep.

42:24 - "turned away from them and wept"

**Second Incident:**

43:29 - Joseph saw Benjamin, his mother's only other son, and knew that his other brothers had not treated him like they had Joseph.

43:30-31 - "Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there. Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, 'Serve the food.'" "

**B. The Probing of Joseph's Brothers  
-Part 1  
(42:9-24; 43:16-34)**

-Joseph's executed two important tests which would reveal the condition of his brother's hearts.

**1. The Transgression Mirrored**

-Joseph's treatment of his brothers during the first test mirrors the way they treated him in Dothan (37:18-36).

**Joseph accused his brothers**

-He accused them three times of being spies (42:9, 14, 16)

-The brothers had called him "dreamer" (37:19), but could they also have accused him of spying on them for their father?

-That they would not listen to Joseph's pleas on that occasion is evident in their confession, "he begged us and we did not listen" (42:21)

-Joseph would not listen to their pleas on this occasion.

**Joseph imprisoned his brothers**

-He put them in prison for 3 days (42:17).

-This is like what his brothers did to him in casting him into the pit (39:24).

-Joseph also modified his plans from keeping 9 of them to keeping 1 of them (42:16, 19)

<sup>2</sup> ... their father said to them, "**Go again, buy us a little food.**" <sup>3</sup> But **Judah** said to him, "The man solemnly warned us ... <sup>5</sup> But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face, **unless your brother is with you.**'" <sup>6</sup> **Israel** said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to **tell the man that you had another brother?**" ... <sup>8</sup> And **Judah** said to **Israel** his father, "Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die ... <sup>9</sup> **I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him** ... <sup>10</sup> If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

<sup>11</sup> Then their father **Israel** said to them, "... take some of the **choice fruits of the land** in your bags ... a little **balm** and a little **honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.** <sup>12</sup> Take **double the money** with you ... Perhaps it was an oversight. <sup>13</sup> **Take also your brother**, and arise ... <sup>14</sup> May **God** Almighty grant you mercy ... and may he send back your other brother and **Benjamin** ... " ...

<sup>16</sup> When **Joseph** saw **Benjamin** with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Bring the men into the house ... for the men are to **dine with me at noon.**" ... <sup>18</sup> And the men were afraid ... and they said, "It is **because of the money** ... so that he may assault us and fall upon us ... " <sup>19</sup> So they went up to the steward of **Joseph's** house and spoke with him ... <sup>23</sup> He replied, "**Peace to you**, do not be afraid. Your **God** and the **God** of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. **I received your money.**" Then he brought **Simeon** out to them. <sup>24</sup> And when the man had brought the men into **Joseph's** house ...

<sup>26</sup> ... they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them ... <sup>27</sup> And he inquired ... "**Is your father well, ...**" <sup>28</sup> They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." ... <sup>29</sup> And he lifted up his eyes and **saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son**, and said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? ... " <sup>30</sup> Then **Joseph** hurried out ... and **he sought a place to weep.** ... <sup>32</sup> They served him **by himself**, and them **by themselves**, and the **Egyptians** who ate with him **by themselves**, because the **Egyptians** could not eat with the **Hebrews**, for that is an abomination to the **Egyptians.**

<sup>33</sup> And they sat before him, **the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth** ... <sup>34</sup> 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.**

**Joseph took a hostage from his brothers**

-He kept Simeon as a hostage (42:19,24)

-Is it possible that Simeon was the ringleader of the plan in Dothan?

-Simeon and Levi led the way in murderous madness in Shechem earlier (34:25).

*Why did Joseph mirror their actions back to them? To convict them! (42:21)*

-God sent the prophet Nathan to David to tell him a simple parable which mirrored David's sin regarding Bathsheba and Uriah. (2Sam 12:1-14)

-This is also part of the play *Hamlet*

**2. The Transformation Examined**

-Joseph purposely treated them much differently than he had on their previous visit.

He released Simeon from prison (43:23)

He dined with them (43:16)

He had a "merry time" with them (43:34)

**The details of the test (to be cont...)**

-At the meal Joseph began the second test by giving Benjamin "five times" (43:34) as much as he gave the other brothers.

-Joseph wanted to see how they would treat the son who was favored above themselves.

## Patience

### Proverbs 16:32 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup> Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

## Probing

### Genesis 37:18–36 (ESV)

<sup>18</sup> They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. <sup>19</sup> They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. <sup>20</sup> Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams.” <sup>21</sup> But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.” <sup>22</sup> And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father. <sup>23</sup> So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. <sup>24</sup> And they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

<sup>25</sup> Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> Then Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.” And his brothers listened to him. <sup>28</sup> Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

<sup>29</sup> When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes <sup>30</sup> and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?” <sup>31</sup> Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. <sup>32</sup> And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.” <sup>33</sup> And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.” <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. <sup>35</sup> All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him. <sup>36</sup> Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

### Genesis 34:25 (ESV)

<sup>25</sup> On the third day, when they were sore, 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.

## 2 Samuel 12:1–14 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> And the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said to him, “There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. <sup>2</sup> The rich man had very many flocks and herds, <sup>3</sup> but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children. It used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup and lie in his arms, and it was like a daughter to him. <sup>4</sup> Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the guest who had come to him, but he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” <sup>5</sup> Then David’s anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die, <sup>6</sup> and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.”

<sup>7</sup> Nathan said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. <sup>8</sup> And I gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your arms and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah. And if this were too little, I would add to you as much more. <sup>9</sup> Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your wife and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. <sup>10</sup> Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ <sup>11</sup> Thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house. And I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. <sup>12</sup> For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel and before the sun.’ ” <sup>13</sup> David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, the child who is born to you shall die.”