

Things Don't Look Good - Genesis 42:1-38

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- [0 : 00] You can open your Bibles to Genesis 42. As we continue through Genesis, we are now in the life of Joseph. Joseph has been in Egypt for 20, not quite 20 years.
- He's been down there about 18. He has been raised up to a position of Grand Vizier, essentially, of second in command in Egypt after being falsely accused and thrown into prison, after being sold into slavery by his brothers, after them wanting to murder him and deciding instead, we'll just put him in a pit and then we'll sell him.
- And now Joseph, because of God's plan, purposes, and favor, has raised Joseph up to be number two in Egypt. And the seven years of plenty have come, and it's been fruitful for Joseph as well.
- He's had Manasseh. Name's in Manasseh, meaning God has made me forget. He's made me forget the past wrongs done to me. It made me forget my family. And then Ephraim, meaning double blessing or doubly fruitful, that God has made me twice as fruitful.
- But now the seven years of plenty are over, and the seven years of famine have come. And as we saw, the people in Egypt, they had seven years to prepare, and they didn't. They didn't. They said, where is the promise of his coming?
- [1 : 18] Where is the promise of the seven years of famine or whatever? They weren't prepared, and so they had to go to Joseph and say, we don't have anything. Would you sell it to us? And as we saw last week, that an exchange needed to happen for them to receive life from the son of favor, Joseph the son of favor.
- And we're going to see this week a lot more of that foreshadowing picture of Joseph being Christ, a typology. So if my son and I, Henry and I, stood and you just saw our shadows, you wouldn't know a lot about us.
- You wouldn't be like, oh, he's got blonde hair, and his dad also has white blonde hair, right? You wouldn't be able to tell that. But then if you saw the two of us, you'd be able to identify, oh, that was his shadow, and that was his shadow.
- There's enough difference there. And it's the same as we see the foreshadowing throughout Scripture of Jesus. When Jesus comes on the scene, we can look back and go, well, that was a picture of Jesus.
- That was a shadow, not perfectly, but it was a foreshadowing of that. And then we see the real thing, and we're like, wow, now that's a son of favor. Our outline in this chapter, well, first let me give you the title.
- [2 : 29] The title is Things Don't Look Good. Things Don't Look Good, right? You walk in your kid's room, like, man, that doesn't look good. And I'm not going to name which kid of mine it is. It's not one that's here. But one of them, if you walked in her room, that would be normal.
- It would look perfectly normal. But generally, that doesn't mean things don't look good. And in this chapter, it doesn't look good for a lot of the people involved. It doesn't look good at all. But it is good.
- So our outline, verses 1 through 5, is what are you looking at? And this word, Jacob, fantastic line in here, where he just goes to his sons and says, why are you just staring at each other?

These are 40-year-old men, still living home with Dad, still there. And he's like, why are you guys looking at each other? What are you looking at? Do something. 7 through 13 is you look familiar. That's when they show up down in Egypt, and they see Joseph, and Joseph sees his family again.

Verses 14 through 20 is this looks bad. And this is where everything seems to just go south for these 10 men who've gone to Egypt. Verses 21 through 26, they begin to look back.

[3 : 30] All the things happening in their lives are causing them now to look back to 20 years before to an event in their life they've tried to cover over. Verses 27 through 35 is look what we found.

They come back home, they open their sacks, and Dad, it's full of money. I promise we didn't steal it. Really, someone gave it to me. In verses 36 through 38, his looks can be deceiving.

As Jacob says, one of the best lines, well, a famous line in Scripture where he says, all these things are against me. And we'll see, are they? And our theme verse as we're going through Joseph's life definitely applies.

For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. And Joseph, we've seen that in his life, and we're going to see that now as we kind of change the lens back to Jacob and his sons.

Let's pick up in verse 1. And now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, why do you look one upon another?

[4 : 34] So we're two years into the famine now. Of the seven years of famine, we're two years in. And we saw last time how it didn't just affect Egypt, but the whole world. And so it's in Canaan as well. God's promised land.

God, this is the land you promised me. This is where you want me to be. Well, surely you'll provide, right? Well, the famine had touched there as well. And we're now two years into that. And Jacob says to his sons, why do you look one upon another?

Literally, why are you gazing at each other? Like, you see the problem, do something. Proverbs 27, 12 says, a prudent man foresees the evil and hides himself. He sees the situation, and he takes appropriate action to deal with the situation.

But the simple pass on and are punished. They just keep going and fall off the cliff with everybody else who's going that direction. And here you have these men that are, so Joseph's about 39.

And all of his brothers, you know, they're older than him. So you're talking 40 to 45 range, 47. Reuben may be seven years older than Joseph. So yeah, 46, 47.

[5 : 37] We know that at this point, from a couple chapters ago, we saw Judah's life presented to us in one chapter, which covered 20 years. And then we rewound back to Joseph.

So we know from Scripture that Judah has already taken a wife of the Canaanites. He's had three sons. Two of them have died because they were so wicked, God had to put them to death.

The first two people specifically that God steps in to take them out. And then the third son, Shelah, he was too afraid to give him to Tamar, his daughter-in-law. And then we go through that whole thing where then Judah ends up having twins by Tamar.

And he goes then back home because we see him here. He's back home. God does a work in his heart at that time. But right now we see no one's willing to lead. The last person in this family willing to lead, they just sold to Egypt, you know, 20 years ago.

Joseph was the only one willing to lead. And that's why his father put him in charge. Here you have now where there's an opportunity for someone to step up. Reuben, you want to be the guy, don't you? No, we're going to see some characteristics about Reuben in this chapter.

[6 : 40] But no one was willing to lead. And he said, behold, I've heard there's corn in Egypt. Get you down thither and buy for us from thence that we may live and not die.

Jacob's saying, take some initiative. A leader takes initiative to meet needs, not for his own need, but for others' needs. And Jacob's saying, take some initiative. There's life to be found in Egypt.

There's food in Egypt. But little did Jacob know who else was in Egypt, that the son of favor was hidden away in Egypt. Remember when Jesus, at his birth, the angels announce his birth, and then he's in a rented house in Bethlehem for two years.

And then the wise men come. And they go and they meet Herod first because they're like, well, if there's a king born, surely Herod would know about it. And Herod's all upset about this, but he puts a brave face on and he says, well, go and find him for me, that I could worship him too, intending to kill him.

So the wise men, they go find him and they worship him and they bring their gold, their frankincense and myrrh. And God warns them in a dream to go another way out of Judea. So they do. Herod gets angry and he's like, that's it. We're going to put all the young boys to death, two years old and under.

[7 : 48] And the scripture says about the time of life that the wise men revealed to him. In other words, they said, hey, two years ago, we saw a star that heralded his birth and now we've come to worship him.

And so then Herod goes about to do that. Before that happens, an angel appears to Joseph in a dream and says, hey, take the young child and take him and his mother into Egypt. And in Matthew 2, Joseph obeys that.

And he arose and he took the young child and his mother by night and departed into Egypt. And he was there until the death of Herod that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, out of Egypt, I have called my son.

And so here we see that shadow, that foreshadowing as Joseph, the son of favor. He is down in Egypt and from him will they receive a source of life.

Just as the father sent his son into Egypt to fulfill prophecy. And Joseph's 10 brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. Now, I think we're so used to this passage or this story.

[8 : 51] I mean, I grew up in the church with the flannel graph and Sunday school. So it's like, yeah, OK, then his brothers go to Egypt and they're going to get thrown in jail. Why did they all go? Why didn't just one go? And then a bunch of servants.

Why did all 10 have to go? And I think it speaks to the extreme insecurity of these guys. They're always together. They've never not none of them is willing to step out and take the lead. None of them is willing to step out and put their faith in God in the situation.

They all go together. But now Benjamin, but Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob, sent not with his brethren, for he said, less, less by chance, lest peradventure mischief befall them.

And the word mischief literally means harm. He's like, well, you know, it seems like whenever you guys get a son of Rachel, something happens.

Joseph's brothers, they had a reputation for harm. Simeon and Levi, they went and killed all of the men of Shechem, right? They were all involved in getting rid of Joseph and throwing him in the pit.

[9 : 52] And Jacob didn't quite buy their story, if you remember. He didn't out and out and accuse them. But he's like, look it, something happened when he was with you guys. But reputation takes a lifetime to build.

We can't build a reputation in a day. You can't change a reputation in a day either. You can't wake up tomorrow and be like, I have a brand new reputation. Now, praise God by his grace, he can change us in a moment.

But other people will say, well, okay, you seem a little different, but let's give it some time. Reputation takes a lifetime to build. And Jacob knew the reputation of his sons.

At 40-some years old, it was still there. But Jacob is also now willing to entrust Benjamin to these men. Those who are closest to Jacob. Those who you'd think would have had Jacob's interest at heart or Benjamin's best interest at heart.

They're all about seeking to fulfill their own interest at the expense of those closest to them. They had taken Joseph and said, hey, we want to fulfill our interest and we're going to use you at our expense.

[10 : 55] And it's always a shocking thing to find out that those closest to you are willing to sell you for their own gain.

And the sons of Israel then, they said, okay, we're going to go, dad. Thanks for giving us direction. We wouldn't have figured that out on our own. And they came to buy corn or wheat among those that came in Egypt.

For the famine was in the land of Canaan. Yes, God's promised land had a famine. The land that God had said to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that I will give you and your descendants this land forever.

But God does not allow famine for the purpose of destroying his people. It wasn't, Jacob, it's all over. We're just going to stay here and die. The purpose is to bring them to a place of deliverance.

God allows famine in our lives as his people so that he can bring us, he can move us to a place where we're able to be delivered. Many times we get in a place where we don't want to move.

[11 : 52] We're comfortable. I like it where I'm at. And God shakes things up and we think I must be out of God's favor. But as we're going to see from this passage, these men were never more in God's favor. God was working mightily in their lives, despite the fact that there appeared to them this famine.

And so Joseph, he was the governor over the land, the grand vizier. And he it was that sold to all the people of the land. So if you wanted to get food from Egypt, you had to come by way of Joseph. You had to go through his office.

As other countries came in, he wasn't just giving this away and he had to check your credentials. So if you were coming from somewhere in the further east, if you were coming down from up above the Mediterranean, if you were coming out of Africa, wherever, you had to come through Joseph.

The way of life was going to go through one man. If you wanted to access that life, you had to go through one person. In Matthew chapter 7, we read beginning in verse 13, The way of life goes by one direction, through one man.

All of these people funneling into Egypt. Behind him, limitless supply. But to access that supply, you had to go through the son of favor. And Joseph now sees his brothers.

[13 : 22] It's been 20 years since he saw them. The last time he saw them, they were pulling him out of a pit. As he's weeping. As he's begging them, don't do this. And heartlessly, they're just selling him into slavery.

And now Joseph sees them. Reuben's put on a little weight. You know, Judah's lost a little hair. But it's like, hey, these are my brothers. And oh my word, they still stick together like that? That's just kind of crazy.

He didn't leave home yet, guys. And Joseph saw his brothers and he knew them. But he made himself strange unto them and spake roughly unto them. Roughly means harsh or hard.

And he said unto them, Whence come you? And they said, from the land of Canaan to buy food. I'm like, oh, this guy's kind of creepy. We're going to find out later he's speaking to them through an interpreter.

He's not speaking directly to them. And they to him, that there's an interpreter so that he can kind of hide himself. So 20 years ago, they took a 17-year-old kid, a Canaanite, and sold him into Egypt.

[14 : 24] 20 years later, before them is an Egyptian, a man who looks like an Egyptian, who walks like an Egyptian. And they have no idea.

This is their brother. In Psalm 18, the psalmist is crying out to the Lord. And he's saying, God has mercy for all.

But those who want to receive it must come to him on his terms. God will deal with us however we choose to deal with him. He won't strong-arm us. And Joseph knows his brothers.

And so he's dealing with them according to that knowledge. And Joseph's reunion now, out of the blue as he's just doing his job, here comes, you know, some people from Phoenicia.

Here comes some from Alexandria. Here comes, and then here are these 10 men that come in before him. He sees his brothers. Joseph's reunion, it's been 20 years.

[15 : 43] How long did it take these guys to get to Canaan when Jacob said, go down and buy corn in Egypt? Seems like they're right there. A week, right? For 20 years, Joseph was a week's journey from home.

And for 20 years, he never went back. He never felt the need to. Why? Because I think when he looked at, when he named Manasseh, meaning forgetting, it's not like he saw these 10 men, and he's like, well, who are they?

You guys kind of seem familiar. He knew who they were. He didn't forget them. But God was no longer focused on that. God had let that go, and had a purpose for Joseph, and said, we're focusing right here, Joseph.

So if God's not focused on my past, I'm not going to be focused on my past either. If God needs to deal with it, man, he can bring it back around. And 20 years later, he knew these guys were at the right place. If Joseph had gone home, they would have known what?

Ah, whoa, he's second in command in Egypt. Whoa, if we want to get food, we need to get it through him. But maybe there would have been resentment, and bitterness, and frustration. God knows the timing.

[16 : 44] Joseph's reunion was in a time, a location, and circumstances of God's choosing. It was not initiated by Joseph. He allowed God to do that. And it's hard.

When we know in our past, there are things that our emotions and who we are still wants to focus on, and God's like, no, we're focusing right here now. I'll take care of that. And Joseph knew his brother, in verse 8, but they did not know him.

It makes me think of, in 1 Corinthians 13, 12, where Paul will write and say, for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as I also am known.

And it's that shadow, right? We don't just see the shadow of Christ anymore, but it's always a little out of focus. We can never quite grasp him. Every time we think we grasp him, it's like, whoa, there's a whole other part.

But one day we'll see face to face, and we'll know him as he is. And Joseph now, as these men bow before him, he remembers the dream which he dreamed of them. How long had it been since he thought of that dream?

[17 : 46] And he said unto them, you are spies. To see the nakedness of the land, you are come. What was that dream? Well, back in Genesis 37, this 17-year-old kid goes to his brothers, and he says, hey guys, I dreamed a dream.

And he said unto them, here I pray you this dream which I have dreamed. For behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright. And behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

They bowed down. And his brethren said unto him, as they bowed before him now, twenty years later, shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?

And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words. The deliverance that God had prepared for these men at one time they had despised. But God's word came to pass, and Joseph now remembers this.

And yet he speaks angrily to them. These men at this moment, they appear to be out of favor with Joseph. And yet there were never more in his favor. I think he's like, I can't believe it's my brothers.

[18 : 54] He's putting this face on. And we're going to see why he does that as he goes through this. Because he's going to test them to see, guys, have you changed? He's going to put them in specific scenarios and situations to ask the question, essentially, are you the same guys, or have you changed?

Psalms 85, the psalmist, the psalmist says to the Lord, will thou be angry with us forever? Will thou draw out thy anger to all generations? Will thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation. Man, sometimes it seems like, God, are you angry with me? My life, as I look around, seems like I'm out of favor with you. But we are never more in his favor in any one moment than we ever could be.

And so Joseph, he's going to do about three different things here. If you remember what happened to Joseph, Joseph was sold into slavery by those closest to him. He was then falsely accused by Mrs. Potiphar.

He was put in prison. He is going to, as one close to these men, they don't know it, but he's about to be, they're about to essentially be betrayed by him.

[20 : 05] He's going to falsely accuse them, and then he's going to throw them in prison. The same process that God took him through, he's now going to send them through as well. You think, well, is Joseph getting back at these guys? I don't think so.

Remember what we said testimony was? I think it was when we were looking at Acts with Paul, and we said it's, it's, um, it's my experience plus God's faithfulness. That becomes our testimony.

We say, well, here's God's faithfulness, and here's my experience in life, and now I have a testimony. I can tell you the things that God has been faithful to in my life. That becomes my testimony. You have a different testimony than me, but it's the same faithfulness.

It's just different experience. I'm not going to be able to tell someone your testimony and minister to them with your testimony. If you come to me for counsel or advice, I'm going to use God's word, the truth, what's been faithful to me, and my life experience.

I know, I don't have someone else's. So for Joseph, he's like, this is the process God used in my life to prepare me and to bring me to a place where I was ready to be used by the Lord.

[21 : 05] He's going to put them through like a crash course of the exact same thing he went through. So Joseph wants to see first, well, how are his brothers going to respond to being falsely accused? And they said unto him, no, my Lord, but to buy food are your servants come.

These 10 men, they show up to Egypt and they say, we have this physical need. Why are you resisting us? But God knew that there was a much deeper need. Philippians 4, 19 says, but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

We see this need and God sees this need and God says, we're going for that need. Like, yeah, but Lord, I need, I really need this right now. Lord, we don't have a building. We could really use a building.

He's like, no, I see a need that's much greater in your body than just having a place to meet. And so we got to bounce around. You look back on that now and we have a testimony. We have God's faithfulness plus our experience.

We can say, if someone comes and says, man, I don't know. I don't know. I mean, God's called me to do something or he's put this path in front of me. How's this going to happen? And we can just say, you just take the next step and God will open every door and he'll supply all your needs.

[22 : 13] But God is so often concerned about the need we don't see where we only see the need up here. And he says, they said, no, no, we are all one man's sons in verse 11.

We're true men. Your servants are not spies. Their identity is who their father, is in who their father was. They say, no, no, no, no. The thing that comes right away out of their mouth is we are one man's sons.

We are all brothers. Our father is the one who gives us our identity. And he said unto them again, no, but to see the nakedness of the land you are come. You are here to check on our defenses, our weaknesses.

You want our goods. Joseph knew his brothers to be men who used others to their advantage. He knew that of them. So he's going to purposely put them in multiple situations where they could do that.

Remember in Psalm 105, it was a specific description about Joseph's experience in Egypt. Beginning in verse 16, it says that the Lord, he called for a famine upon the land.

[23 : 14] He break the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, whose feet they hurt with fetters. He was laid in iron.

Literally, that means iron entered his soul. Until the time that his word, God's word came, the word of the Lord tried him, tested him, proved him. The king sent and loosed him, even the ruler of the people, and he let him go free.

He made him lord of his house and ruler of his substance to bind his princes at his pleasures and to teach his senators wisdom. Don't you wish we had someone today to teach our senators wisdom? That's not exactly what that means, but it would be great.

Joseph recognizes that God had a purpose in all of his trials and suffering, and here's a quick snapshot of it. God's word had proved Joseph.

It didn't mean it proved whether he was really in the faith. It meant that it proved that God's word would be faithful in Joseph. Joseph proved God's word as God's word proved Joseph, and now Joseph would use the same method to prove his brothers.

[24 : 18] He would prove them by his word. He said, no, you've come to spy out the nakedness of the land, and they said, thy servants are 12 brothers, and now they're going to offer a ton of information that they can't verify.

You know, they just kind of ramble it out. Sorry, I'm going to tell a story about you. My wife doesn't like needles. She has really the veins that they just can never find them, so when we'd have to go to all like the prenatal stuff, you know, as we're having kids, it was a very difficult time.

I mean, the nurse would, they couldn't get out of her arm. They would look at her neck, at her ankles, and it's like, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. But when she gets nervous to the doctors, she just starts talking and just starts talking, and then what's in there just comes out, and we're just, and it's like, you didn't need to tell them that information.

But when we're in a situation where we get nervous or we don't know what to do, we just ramble. I can be like that. I'm not really good with small talk. You know, once I get past, how are you?

It's good to see you. How's work? Sometimes I'll say things and I'll think afterwards, that was so awkward. What in the world did I say that for? That was so strange. But out of the abundance of the heart, we're told, in Luke chapter 6, verse 45, says, a good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good.

[25 : 38] Why does he bring forth what's good? Because what's in there is good. And an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil. For of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaks. Do you want to know what a lemon is made of?

Squeeze it. If orange juice comes out, it's not a lemon. It's a weird orange that's yellow. If you want to know what's in the glass, knock against it. See what sloshes out.

And Joseph is putting these men in a situation where he's squeezing them. What is going to come out? And what comes out, remarkably, is truth. These men who had used their brother, who had lied to their father, truth comes out.

And they say, no, your servants are 12 brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. And behold, the youngest is this day with our father. And when was the last time they thought of Joseph?

And one, one is not. Boy, we haven't thought about him in years. Joseph was giving his brothers ample opportunity to lie or come up with another story, but instead the truth is coming out.

[26 : 39] Psalm 51.8 says, behold, thou desires truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. God desires truth. How do I get it in there? He's got to put it in there.

There's a source for that. You want your lemon to be filled with truth? You want something sweet to come out when it's squeezed, when God puts you in that situation? Well, let God put truth in there.

Now we also see that some fruit just takes longer to ripen than others. James 5.7 says, be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth.

It means the guy is planting the garden, the farmer. He's waiting. You don't put the seed in and a week later, it's up. Some takes a long time. There's specific conditions you have to plant in.

There's specific conditions that it'll grow in. He waits long for the precious fruit of the earth and has long patience for it until he received the early and latter rain.

[27 : 36] There are specific conditions for that fruit to grow. Twenty years later, man, the fruit was ripening in these men's lives. And Joseph said unto them, now, it's what I said unto you.

It's as I spake. You're spies. And hereby shall you be proved, examined. We're going to give you an exam. By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

Send one of you and let him fetch your brother and you shall be kept in prison. So I'm going to send one back and all the rest of you kept in prison. You choose who goes back. The rest of you stay in prison.

You shall be kept in prison that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you or else by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies. So he's putting them in a situation where each one of them now could say, hey, hey, hey, Grand Vizier, send me back.

Leave the other nine guys. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I promise I'll come back, boys. Don't worry. I'll be back. He's putting them in a situation where they could choose to put themselves forth.

[28 : 38] 1 Peter 1.7 tells us that we are going through an exam. For the trial of our faith, the examining of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Our faith must be tested. It's a spiritual principle, just like suffering is a spiritual principle. Our faith must be tested. It must be proved. To God? No. It must be proved to us to see that God's word holds fast.

His promises never fail. Job 23.10, Job writes, he says, but he knows the way that I take. When he has tried me, I shall come forth his goal. He's like, you know what? I'm not going to fight against this.

As he's sitting there scraping himself with a piece of a pot to get the boils off. He's like, God knows my way and I shall come forth his goal because within me is something that can sustain this.

No way. My faith would fail. Remember Peter denied Jesus? But before that, Jesus says to him, Peter, you will deny me three times. He says, but I prayed for you that your faith fail not.

[29 : 42] And when you are converted, strengthen your brethren. In other words, when you are brought back, Peter had a unique opportunity to provide strength to his brothers because of the failure he went through.

But God kept him. Joseph needed to prove whether there was truth in these men. They said it. We are true men, Grand Vizier. We really are.

But what is truth? Remember Pilate asked that of Jesus when he had him before him. Jesus says, all those that are on the side of truth hear my voice. And Pilate says, what is truth?

I mean, here's a man who's heard so many lies and so much manipulation. What is truth? Truth is when word and deed align.

Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Never did word and deed so align as they did in Jesus. When word and deed don't align, that is called a lie.

[30 : 41] Did you slap your sister? No. No. Yet the handprint is, you know, perfectly fitted to my hand. I didn't. Well, my word and deeds did not align. That's no longer truth.

These men, Joseph is giving them a chance to see if their words and their deeds will continue to align. In the past, they had many words to their father about what happened, but their deeds didn't line up with it.

And so he put them all together in the prison for three days. He's like, I'm going to put you in there to sit and stew and we're going to see how many of you kind of like, he probably told the guard, listen, just be ready.

They're probably going to come to you one at a time when they think all the rest of them are sleeping and like, hey, by the way, I'm the guy to send to Canaan. But after three days, they didn't do that. They didn't betray one another, remarkably.

And he put them together and warred in the prison just as he was in a prison for three days. And Joseph said unto them, the third day, we're seeing another shadow getting cast right here of Jesus, this do and live for I fear God.

[31 : 41] What appeared to be death for three days was actually their pathway to life. It appeared like we are toast, we are dead. He's never going to take us out of here. And remarkably, none of them were willing to betray one another.

In Romans 6, 4, we read, therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. It appears like death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

What appeared to be death was actually the pathway of life. When we come and we confess our sin, when we realize I have to own who I am, this is like death. The other side of that, though, is resurrected life.

And so now Joseph says, all right, this didn't work. They're not going to betray each other. So after three days, the Son of Favor raises them up and he says, if you be true men, let one of your brothers, instead of all of you staying in one go, okay, you can all go back.

You only have to betray one. Let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison. You go, carry corn for the famine of your houses, but bring your youngest brother unto me. So shall your words be verified.

[32 : 50] You shall not die. And they did so. Verified means to have support or be found faithful. We'll see if your words have support or weight behind them. These men now had an opportunity to begin building a new relationship.

I mean, not relationship, sorry, reputation. They could build a new reputation, one that was built upon the word of the Son of Favor. Instead of their reputation being something that Joseph looked at and said, you know guys, I know you are cruel men.

They have an opportunity now as they're building this new reputation, they're building it on something different than their own desires. They're building it on the word of Joseph, the word of the Son of Favor. And they said one to another, so instead of picking someone to stay, let's draw straws, rock, paper, scissors, they said one to another in his presence, they just kind of turned to each other and say, we are truly guilty concerning our brother.

Joseph is heavy on their minds right now. And that we saw the anguish of his soul, that means beyond emotion. We saw that this kid was so beyond emotion, he was so distraught when he besought us, when he begged for our favor and we wouldn't hear.

Therefore, has this distress come upon us? There was a point where Joseph was beyond emotion, begging us for favor. Man, we haven't thought about that in years. And now God is using this to bring it up.

[34 : 10] This is a horrible moment for them, remembering what they've done, having to own this guilt. It's not a fun moment. Jesus, that picture, or Joseph, that picture of Jesus.

Jesus, the substance. Joseph, the shadow. Jesus, our son of favor, was also in anguish. But not for himself. Joseph was in anguish because of what his brothers were doing to him.

But in the garden, as Jesus prayed in Luke 22, it says, being in agony, in anguish, he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.

Essentially, this human flesh containing the Son of God almost burst. It couldn't contain the heart and the passion that Jesus had. Not for himself. When he said, Father, if there be any other way, take this cup from me.

Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done. He wasn't saying that because he's like, I don't really want to go to the cross. What he was saying was, is there any other way that we could redeem humanity? No? Well, then I'll do it. I'll do it for them.

[35 : 09] Jesus, the Son of favor, he begged for favor, but not for himself. He begged for favor for us. As they were nailing him to the cross, as the hammer was hitting the nails into his wrists and into his feet, Jesus was saying over and over, is the way the text is.

Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. Father, forgive them. They know not what they do. Begging for favor, not for himself, but for someone else. Who could take a tragedy like that and make something good out of it?

Who can take a tragedy, the crucifixion of the Savior, the Son of God? Only God can take such tragedies of sin, selling your brother into slavery, hearing the anguish of his heart and having no care.

Only God can take such a tragedy and turn it into the hope of redemption. Ephesians 1, 7, In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

That blood that was so cruelly shed, look what it has become. It's become redemption. Only God could take such a tragedy and bring something so wonderful out of it.

[36 : 14] Now Reuben's going to speak. Reuben speaks twice in this chapter and it would have been better if he didn't. You just want to be like, bro, is this so cringy? Don't do it. And Reuben now answers them and says, Didn't I tell you, spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child and you wouldn't hear.

Therefore, behold, also his blood is required. Literally asked for it. Reuben's like, God is asking for his blood now. I told you. Is that really how it happened?

And right now we hear the dream sequence music. You know, kind of fade out. And then he's back and Reuben's a little thinner and, you know, one of them's got more hair. And here we are back in Genesis 37.

The ten of them and they look and they see Joseph coming. They said one to another, Behold, this dreamer comes. Come now, therefore, and let us kill him and cast him into a pit. And we will say that some evil beast has devoured him.

We will see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben heard it and he delivered them out of their hands. In Reuben's mind, as he replays this, he's riding in on the horse with his armor. He grabs Joseph, swings him into the saddle and rides off.

[37 : 21] Didn't I tell you we should? But you pulled him out of my arms. And Reuben heard it and he delivered him out of their hands. And he said, Let us not kill him. Way to go, Reuben. And he said, Do not shed blood.

Yes. Let's throw him in a pit. Good job, Reuben. That's in the wilderness and lay no hand upon him. What's the promise with that compromise? Reuben thought, Well, later I'll come and I'll get him out and I'll bring him back to dad and dad will be like, Good job, Reuben.

And I'll still be using him for my own advantage. Reuben thought, Well, I didn't go as far as them. But the problem with compromise was they recognized that in Reuben's eyes, Joseph's had no value as well.

If you're going to throw him in the pit, there's only one more step to kill him. Compromise just put Reuben in the same place as his brothers. He thought he was standing true, but all he did was prove that he did not value Joseph either.

And so here's Reuben now saying, Didn't I tell you? And Reuben is always ready. He's always one ready to take charge after the fact. He's always ready to say, Well, now that we're in this situation, I mean, I would have done it different if you would listen to me.

[38 : 23] He's always willing to take charge after the fact. And they knew not that Joseph understood them for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And so we find out all this time they're talking, Joseph's kind of standing there like he can't understand what they're saying.

But he does. He's just put them through this series of tests. And he said, All right, leave one here and the rest of you go. And instead they turn and they're in anguish over this as they begin to talk about him and say, We shouldn't have done that.

What were we doing? And it's too much for him. Joseph's just breaking down, realizing where his brothers are at. And he turned himself about from them and he wept. And then he returned to them again and he communed with them.

And they wouldn't even decide who to leave. So he took Simeon. He's like, Let's see. Eeny, meeny, miny Simeon. The cruelest of them all. And he took from them Simeon and bound him before their eyes.

Before their eyes they are bound. We don't find out in this chapter. But when they come back, Simeon will go, Guys, he treated me like a prince. I thought it was going to be over. I was bound. But he released me.

[39 : 26] What appeared to these men as if their sin was finally catching up with them was in reality God's grace laying a hold of them. 1 John 1.9, we know what that says.

But the two verses around it, 1 John 1.8 says that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. It's a barrier to the truth. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say we've not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. But they weren't saying that. The truth was in them. Joseph sees this. I think Joseph must be so excited right here.

But he still doesn't reveal himself to them. Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn and restore every man his money into his sack and give them provision for the way. And thus did he unto them.

And he laded their donkeys with corn and they departed thence. He's giving them another opportunity to leave and never come back. He's like, here's your food. And then he put their money in the sacks and he sent them back because now they're going to have to overcome that awkwardness.

[40 : 28] It's not just, hey, we ran out of food. It's time to go back because they're going to wait that long before they go back to get poor Simeon. But now there's this awkwardness of, how do I explain this? Oh, hey, I brought twice as much.

Well, why? Because somehow the money wound up back in our sacks and they're going to think he stole it, that we stole it. Romans 12, 19 says, Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place under wrath.

For it's written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. You leave that with me. Therefore, if your enemy hunger, feed him. If he thirst, give him drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. What does heaping coals of fire on someone's head mean? I don't exactly know how, but we know what it means because we're told in verse 21.

Do not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. We're the same in Christ, no matter what, right? Well, except when that guy comes and then I'm, no, no, no.

[41 : 31] Blessing and grace flows from us because that's what flows into us from Jesus. Jesus is the same, so we can be the same. These men were not under condemnation, but under blessing.

And as one of them now, they stop and they open their sack. They have no idea the blessing that's been built in to this trial. They stop at the end. They open their sack to feed the donkeys and oh my word, his money's in it.

For behold, it was in the sack's mouth. And remarkably, none of the rest of them open up their sacks because they think, well, that's just a one-off. I can't, what happened? Dad, I knew it was you. You totally didn't pay him.

No, no, no. I did pay him. Oh my word, you didn't. Something happened and somehow the money didn't get exchanged. The Vimeo didn't, the Vimeo, the, what's it called, guys?

Venmo. Thank you. Didn't go through. Oh, but they shipped the item and I didn't, they didn't. Oh no, now I'm going to have to go through that awkwardness. My money's restored and lo, it's in my sack and their heart failed them.

[42 : 32] That literally means went out of them. The heart went out of them and they were afraid saying one to another, what is this that God has done unto us? Guilt sees blessings as burdens. These men are so weighed down with the guilt.

They've lost Joseph. Now they've lost Simeon and they got to go back and tell dad and they can't see the blessings that God has through the fog of their guilt. And fear, fear also indicates our relationship with God is relying on something other than love.

When our relationship with God is based on love, well, 1 John 4 and verse 18 says perfect love casts out all fear because fear has torment. He who fears has not been made perfect, complete, whole in love.

So if I have fear, it shows my relationship with God is based on something else. Maybe I think it's based on my behavior. Maybe I think it's based on have I read my Bible enough?

Have I been sinning? Did I go to church? It's not based in God's love. It's based in my effort. And they came unto Jacob now. They travel back.

[43 : 32] Again, this doesn't seem like some long journey. They stopped at the inn and then they go back. That's like two days. So that's not very long. And they came unto Jacob, their father, into the land of Canaan and told him all that befell unto them, saying, The man who is the lord of the land, he spake roughly to us and he took us for spies of the country.

Man, Dad, you should have been there. He yelled at us. But they spoke the truth. No excuses. They didn't say, Well, Simeon got eaten by a wild beast on the way. Here's his coat.

Oh, we already tried that one. He drowned in the desert. No excuses. They spoke the truth and told him exactly what happened. And now they're just going to kind of reiterate everything we just looked at.

And we said unto him, We are true men. We are no spies. We be twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is not. And the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. Excuse me.

And the lord of the country said unto us, Hereby shall I know that you are true men. Leave one of your brethren here with me and take food for the famine of your households and be gone and bring your youngest brother unto me.

[44 : 38] And I think Jacob's heart just went dropped. I'm like, Guys, why didn't you lie? Why did you tell me you have a younger brother? Thank you for telling the truth. Oh, and now look what has got us.

And bring your youngest brother unto me. Then shall I know that you are no spies, but that you are true men. So will I deliver you, your brother, and you shall traffic in the land. You've got enough food, but if you want access, if you want a resource, if you want to come and receive the means of deliverance, man, the father is going to have to willingly give up his son if you want to receive the life that the son of favor has.

By one man, would they be sustained? And by the willingness of their father to give the son, would they have access to that again? For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believes on him is not condemned. We know, yes, God sent his son into the world, but what about when?

But what if God didn't send his son to condemn the world? We're already under condemnation. It's not going to do anything to put more condemnation. The father willingly sent his son. In Matthew 16, 16, Jesus saying to his disciples said, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me, willingly giving up life to receive life.

[46 : 10] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. It means whoever grabs tightly to his life, it's something that's not meant to be held on to. You'll lose it.

But whoever literally, without thought, flings it away, just like, okay, then he'll find it. Jim Elliot, before he was, went to the jungle and was murdered by the Akka Indians to bring them the gospel, he said, he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

You can't keep it, so why hold on to it? Give it to Jesus, and you get so much more back. As Jacob thinks, I am not sending my son, I will lose my son.

I'm not going to send him. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks that behold, every man's bundle of the money was in his sack. And when both they and their fathers saw the bundles of money, they were terrified.

Like, none of you paid for what we have? Well, we can never go back now. Jacob's like, I've lost two sons. I've lost Joseph.

[47 : 23] I've lost Simeon. I'm not sending Benjamin back. But little did he know, if he sends Benjamin, man, he's not going to lose his son. He's going to gain one. One to come back from the dead, or so he thinks.

And Jacob, their father, said unto them, man, guys, you have taken away two of my children. So see, he doesn't believe that it was an accident what happened with Joseph. Me, have you bereaved of my children?

Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and you will take Benjamin away? All these things are against me. Famous saying, which is 100% wrong.

Jacob, all these things are for you. They are not against you. We can never understand the blessings of the son of favor until we first understand the son of favor.

We can never understand his blessings. As they open the sack and they're like, it was a blessing. We're never going to understand that until we know who he is. Once they find out who he is, oh, it's going to make such perfect sense.

[48 : 25] But we have to know who he is. And secondly, we can never judge the work of God by natural perception. Jacob was so focused on the horizontal, he wasn't thinking about the vertical at all. He's only judging the situation through natural perception.

And he says, all these things are against me, where in reality, all of these things were for him. All the things that appeared against Jacob were actually proof that God was for him.

God's work may cause us to be uncomfortable, may cause us to be unsettled, but we are always under his watchful care. Psalm 37, 23 says, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delights in his way.

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds him with his hand. This is God's way, Jacob, and God will uphold you no matter how many times you fall. You are always under his care.

Be great if it ended there. Ah, let's pray and close. But no, Reuben has to say something. Reuben! Such a Reube. And Reuben spoke to his father and said, Father, kill my two sons if I don't bring Benjamin back.

[49 : 34] Slay my two sons if I bring him not to thee. Deliver him into my hand and I will bring him to you again. Reuben. And Jacob says, my son shall not go down with you. He's not going to do that.

Reuben, a true leader adds. A true leader doesn't subtract. A true leader doesn't cause more loss. A true leader adds. Reuben's idea of leadership was one that elevated himself at the expense of another, at the expense of his own children.

He was willing to look good in his father's eyes. And Jacob says, my son's not going to go down with you for his brother is dead and he is left alone. If mischief befall him by the way in which you go, then shall you bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Jacob is 100% wrong about everything God is doing in his life. His son is not dead. He will not be brought down to the grave in sorrow and he will see his son again.

In Genesis 28, Jacob falls asleep on his way to Haran. He takes the pillow and uses it. Remember, he used the rock for his pillow. He had a picture of the rock pillowcase. He slept on the rock and at that time, he had a dream where the angels of God were ascending and descending from heaven.

[50 : 48] He awakes and he says, surely I'm in God's living room. So he sets up a pillar there and the Lord speaks to him and he says, behold, I am with you and will keep you in all places whither you go and will bring you again into this land and I will not leave you until I have done that which I have spoken to you of.

And here, God was still this man who 130 years old, 20 years old, 120, God is still working in his life.

Romans 5.20 says, moreover the law entered that the offense might abound, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

It looks terrible. It looks awful. It looks like all these things are against me. I didn't even know, Paul would say, I had not yet known sin except the law came and then sin condemned me and slew me by it.

You know what? I was doing great until you pointed out to me that I'm a sinner. Now, it seems like everything's against me. But when it comes to God's grace, we must be willing to be wrong to be right.

[51 : 56] We have to first be wrong to be right. As Jesus says, I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Say, man, I'm the biggest sinner. Fantastic. You have great potential for God's grace to work in your life.

What are all the things against us? So much can seem against us. Our family, our circumstances, falsely accused. It seems like I take two steps forward and ten steps back.

Now I've lost Simeon. Now I've lost Benjamin. All of these things are against me. And in fact, not a single one of them is against us. Romans 8, 28.

We all know this. It's a good refrigerator verse. That God can take chaos, disorder, and he can turn into something beautiful. He can take sin and make redemption. He can take death and he can make life.

And we know that all these things work together for good to them that love God, to them are called according to his purpose. And then that goes on to say, so then what shall we say then to these things? If there is nothing against me, if nothing's actually against me, what can I then say to these things?

[53 : 05] If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, willingly sent his son. How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

And that's where the shadow, the picture, the type kind of stops. Jacob says, I'm not going to send my son willingly because he could die. Our father said, I'm going to willingly send my son so that he might die.

For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, nor family, nor time, nor false accusations, nor sin, nor death, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All these things that are against us, God's working them out for our good. What a blessing. As Joseph, he sent his brothers back back. Is he ever going to see them again? And they're going to be gone a while.

They're not going to come back until their food's all eaten up. And maybe he's thinking, all right, they're not going to come back. God has his time and God is working. Father, thank you so much, Lord.

[54 : 18] Lord, think of Joseph, Lord, that anguish beyond emotion. He had no, he had nowhere to put that emotion. He had no category for it.

As his own brothers sell him into slavery. And then to see them again 20 years later and the work you have already done, Lord.

Before he ever saw them again, two years, three years, four years, five years, it was during the seven years of plenty that he had his children and then it was two years after that when he saw them. So somewhere in there he has these children and he looks forward to what God is doing in his life.

He realizes he can release the past and in doing so, Lord, he has healing. So the next time he sees his brethren, it's with love, it's with grace, but it's with wisdom. He doesn't right away just say, yeah, let's just move forward.

He's like, I need to know where your heart is. I need to know if you've allowed God to do a work. I need to know if you've allowed yourself to be so wrong that God can make you so right.

[55 : 19] And Jesus, I thank you this morning that we sit here as those that have been made right by the blood of the Lamb, the most tragic event in all of history that you would give your life as your blood was spilled as turned for our redemption.

We remember the blood and we thank you for the healing and the cleansing that it brings. In Jesus' name, amen. And you know, all the things that are against us, they can seem like they could overwhelm us.

But hold tight because God has an end and it might not even be specifically for my deliverance. For all I know, the deliverance God does want to bring to my life, look at all the people that Joseph's deliverance affected.

Look at all the people that were delivered. It affected his whole family. So we don't know the timing. Only God does. But we can know that the things that feel against us, they're not against us. Don't let the enemy convince you that you've gone too far or God will take everything and we'll use it for redemption.

We'll all stand before him together one day and we're all going to look back with perfect clarity but perfect redemption and be like, do you remember that? God used that.

[56 : 34] The sting is taken out of it. Sin is gone. Death is gone. The guilt is gone. The shame. We'll see it in the light of redemption. It'll be a beautiful thing. So God bless you and have a blessed week and I'd love to pray with you if you'd like to pray or just talk.

But we'll see you next time. We'll see you next time.