

Genesis 42: Facing the Felony on the Road to Reconciliation

- I. Parallels - the story of Joseph becomes at this point an allegory for the Christian life and the journey to Jesus:
 - A. Hunger from famine, separation from Joseph, the journey to Joseph
 - 1. Separated from God we hunger in the land of sin and must journey to Jesus to be fed and made whole
 - B. Jacob holds back Benjamin out of fear
 - 1. We hold back aspects of our life from the healing touch and journey to Jesus
 - C. They finally approach Joseph who questions his brothers' motives and their "conversion" and tests and proves them.
 - 1. Jesus calls us to further repentance when we seek him for healing (*cf* woman at well)
 - 2. Jesus tests and proves us and purifies us by his call to repentance etc.
 - D. Through Joseph's testing of them the brothers are led to sorrow for their past sin and deeper repentance.
 - 1. Jesus too leads us to a deeper knowledge of our sin and need for repentance through his preaching of the word and his grace in our hearts
 - E. By placing the money back in their bags Joseph gives his brothers increased freedom, realizing that they may repeat their sin (Simeon sold) and thus helps them to discover their true character.
 - 1. God too gives us freedom, which we frequently abuse but which nevertheless tests and develops our true character.
 - F. Jacob resists the plan and his brothers yield to Jacob showing they are not yet strong enough to do what Joseph says.
 - 1. Jesus too gives us clear instructions but we often yield to worldly voices out of fear or weakness.
 - G. Their hunger only increases as long as they resist and refuse to trust Joseph
 - 1. Our hunger only increases as long as we resist and refuse to trust Jesus
 - H. Finally Jacob relents and the brothers make the journey back to Joseph
 - 1. Finally if our hunger hurts enough we experience breakthroughs and journey back to Jesus.
 - I. After the purification and testing Joseph has a meal with them
 - 1. After his preaching, purifying and preparing them Jesus celebrates a meal with them and us.
 - J. A Further test awaits them. Joseph plants a cup in Benjamin's bag
 - 1. The disciples are test by the cup from which Jesus must drink. Will they be by the Lord's side or flee? Will they understand their need for this saving act of Jesus or resist his call to the cross.
 - 2. We too often resist the message of the cup: Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink? (Mat 20:22)
 - 3. Do we understand the truth that we are guilty of sin and must understand th need for Jesus' cross and our own share in that cross?

- K. The brothers accept the cup for themselves by acknowledging their overall guilt. They also show concern for their father that they did not before (when they sold Joseph)
1. The brothers, though innocent of this specific act (it was Joseph who willed it in a sovereign way) nevertheless acknowledge that they are guilty men. The cup symbolizes their sin.
 2. Though we have not personally crucified Jesus, (Jesus willed it and “others” performed the deed), we share in the guilt of that act through our sin. We through sin added to his suffering and need his grace.
- L. Joseph reveals himself to them and suddenly they realize who Joseph is and he comes back to them as if from the dead. Further, they now see Joseph in a way they never did before.
1. Jesus comes back to them and they (the disciples) realize for the first time who he really is: the LORD.
 2. We too have to come through the Eucharist and the paschal mystery in our life to realize more and more who Jesus really is.
- M. Joseph explains to them how God brought good from their act and allowed it to become a saving act.
1. Jesus explained to the disciples on the road to Emmaus why he had to suffer and so enter into his glory: Acts 24:26 *Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*
- N. The brothers are commissioned to go forth and declare the good news that Joseph is alive and lord of Egypt. They are reunite the whole family and bring them to Egypt.
1. The disciples are sent by Jesus to announce the good news to the whole family of God
 2. They announced that Jesus is alive and Lord of all creation
- O. The whole family now reconciled is reunited
1. In heaven Jesus reunites all the purified as one family.

II. Prescription

A. *42:1 When Jacob learned that there was grain 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 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.*

III. Protectiveness -

A. *4 But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might befall him.*

IV. Procession

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

V. Probation

A. *6 Now Joseph was governor over the land; he it was 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 knew 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 Thus Joseph knew his brothers, but they did not know him. 9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed of them; and he said to them, "You are spies, you have come to see the weakness of the land." 10 They said to him, "No, my lord, but to buy food have your servants come. 11 We are all sons of one man, we are honest men, your servants are not spies." 12 He said to them, "No, it is the weakness of the land that you have come to see." 13 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." 14 But Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies. 15 By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here. 16 Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain in prison, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." 17 And he put them all together in prison for three days. 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 in your prison, 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.*

VI. Penitence -

A. *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 besought us and we would not listen; therefore is this distress come upon us." 22 And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the lad? But you would not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood." 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; and he returned to them and spoke to them.

VII. Pity & proving -

A. *And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. 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. 26 Then they loaded their asses with their grain, and departed. 27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender at the lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack; 28 and he said to his brothers, "My money has been put back; here it is in the mouth of my sack!" At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"*

VIII. Performance -

A. *29 When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had befallen them, saying, 30 "The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us, and took us to be spies of the land. 31 But we said to him, 'We are honest men, we are not spies; 32 we are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.' 33 Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way. 34 Bring your youngest brother to me; then I shall know that you are not spies but honest men, and I will deliver to you your brother, and you shall trade in the land.'" 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 dismayed.*

IX. Phobia -

A. *36 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 upon me." 37 Then Reuben said to his father, "Slay 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." 38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he only is left. If harm should befall him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."*

X. Pressure -

A. *43:1 Now the famine was severe in the land. 2 And when they had eaten the grain which they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little food." 3 But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.' 4 If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food; 5 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." 6 *Israel said, "Why did you treat me so ill as to tell the man that you had another brother?"* 7 *They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions; could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"* 8 *And Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones.* 9 *I will be surety for him; of my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame for ever;* 10 *for if we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."*

XI. Permission -

A. *11 Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man a present, a little balm and a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.* 12 *Take double the money with you; carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight.* 13 *Take also your brother, and arise, go again to the man;* 14 *may God Almighty grant you mercy before the man, that he may send back your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."*

XII. Presents -

A. *15 So the men took the present, and they took double the money with them, and Benjamin; and they arose and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.*

XIII. Perceived peril -

A. *16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon."* 17 *The man did as Joseph bade him, and brought the men to Joseph's house.* 18 *And the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, "It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, to make slaves of us and seize our asses."* 19 *So they went up to the steward of Joseph's house, and spoke with him at the door of the house,* 20 *and said, "Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food;* 21 *and when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was every man's money in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it again with us,* 22 *and we have brought other money down in our hand to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."* 23 *He replied, "Rest assured, do not be afraid; your God and the God of your father must have put treasure in your sacks for you; I received your money."* Then he brought Simeon out to them. 24 *And when the man had brought the men into Joseph's house, and given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given their asses provender,* 25 *they made ready the present for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there.* 26 *When Joseph came home, they brought into the*

house to him the present which they had with them, and bowed down to him to the ground.

IV. Portrait

A. *27 And he inquired about their welfare, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" 28 They said, "Your servant our father is well, he is still alive." And they bowed their heads and made obeisance. 29 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? God be gracious to you, my son!" 30 Then Joseph made haste, for his heart yearned for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and came out; and controlling himself he said, "Let food be served." 32 They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. 33 And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked at one another in amazement. 34 Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.*

XV. Proving

A. *44:1 Then he commanded the steward of his house, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack, 2 and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain." And he did as Joseph told him. 3 As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their asses. 4 When they had gone but a short distance from the city, Joseph said to his steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you returned evil for good? Why have you stolen my silver cup? 5 Is it not from this that my lord drinks, and by this that he divines? You have done wrong in so doing.'" 6 When he overtook them, he spoke to them these words.*

XVI. Protest

A. *7 They said to him, "Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants that they should do such a thing! 8 Behold, the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan; how then should we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? 9 With whomever of your servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." 10 He said, "Let it be as you say: he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and the rest of you shall be blameless."*

XVII. Prosecution

A. *11 Then every man quickly lowered his sack to the ground, and every man opened his sack. 12 And he searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13 Then they rent their clothes, and every man loaded his ass, and they returned to the city.*

14 When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there; and they fell before him to the ground. 15 Joseph said to them, "What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can indeed divine?" Perception -

- A. *16 And Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how can we clear ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord's slaves, both we and he also in whose hand the cup has been found." 17 But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so! Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."*

IX. Proof -

- A. *18 Then Judah went up to him and said, "O my lord, let your servant, I pray you, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant; for you are like Pharaoh himself. 19 My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father, or a brother?'" 20 And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children; and his father loves him.' 21 Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes upon him.' 22 We said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 23 Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' 24 When we went back to your servant my father we told him the words of my lord. 25 And when our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food,' 26 we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother goes with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27 Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; 28 one left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces; and I have never seen him since. 29 If you take this one also from me, and harm befalls him, you will bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to Sheol.' 30 Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the lad's life, 31 when he sees that the lad is not with us, he will die; and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. 32 For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame in the sight of my father all my life.' 33 Now therefore, let your servant, I pray you, remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord; and let the lad go back with his brothers. 34 For how can I go back to my father if the lad is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would come upon my father."*

XX. Pity

- A. *45:1 Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him; and he cried, "Make every one go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.*

XXI. Presentation - (resurrection)

A. *3 And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. 4 So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, I pray you." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.*

XXII. Purpose

A. *5 And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.*

XXIII. Prescription -

A. *9 Make haste and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry; 10 you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have; 11 and there I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come; lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty.' 12 And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. 13 You must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Make haste and bring my father down here."*

IV. Peace -

A. *14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15 And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.*

XXV. Party -

A. *16 When the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, "Joseph's brothers have come," it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. 17 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go back to the land of Canaan; 18 and take your father and your households, and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land.' 19 Command them also, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20 Give no thought to your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'" 21 The sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. 22 To each and all of them he gave festal garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five festal garments. 23 To his father he sent as follows: ten asses loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey.*

XXVI. Proclamation -

A. 24 Then he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the way." 25 So they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. 26 And they told him, "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." And his heart fainted, for he did not believe them. 27 But when they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived; 28 and Israel said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive; I will go and see him before I die."