

Community Bible Church

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 42

The next four chapters (**Genesis 42-45**) deal with the topic of **reconciliation** as this dysfunctional family of Jacob (Israel) is **reunited**. It is important to keep in mind God's overall plan and purpose at this point in history which is to unite the twelve sons of Jacob as they ultimately will form the nation of Israel. From this nation would come the Messiah. While Jacob's sons were in a state of disarray at this time, God would use Joseph and his leadership in Egypt to **restore** and **reunite** this family. While Joseph plays a prominent role in this narrative, this story is really about God and His will for the nation of Israel and ultimately about His grand redemptive plan for all of history.

God has taught Joseph many lessons during his time in Egypt. It is now time for God to teach his brothers many of the same lessons. In God's plan, a great famine in the middle east is leading Jacob's entire family to settle in Egypt, where their offspring will remain for 400 years before returning to Canaan to establish Israel as a nation. Recall that God prophesied to Abraham the following: "**Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.**" (**Genesis 15:13**). In **chapter 42**, God is preparing His people for this very prophecy. The outline of **chapter 42** is as follows:

"The First Trip to Egypt"

The Reason (the famine)	42:1-6
The Recognition (by Joseph)	42:7-8
The Rebuke (you're spies)	42:9-14
The Result (in prison)	42:15-20
The Remorse (about Joseph)	42:21-24
The Return (to Canaan)	42:25-38

1. Throughout these chapters in **Genesis** that deal with Joseph, God appears to be teaching him a number of lessons regarding his character and spiritual life. These are preparing him for the leadership roles in which God will place him. These lessons include dealing with: contentment, temptation, bitterness, revenge, humility, trusting God, unjust treatment and others. What lessons can you identify that God may be teaching you recently in your own sanctification process?
2. The opening paragraph in **42:1-5** sets the drama for the remainder of this chapter. Write a brief summary of this passage.

3. In **42:6**, the geography of the narrative changes suddenly from Canaan to Egypt. What dramatic and ironic information is given in this verse?

4. The drama intensifies in **42:7-17**. In your own words, write a brief description of Joseph's response to his ten brothers. Describe how he must have felt and what his motives probably were.

5. Does it now seem that God, through Joseph, may be convicting, teaching and even sanctifying these brothers? Recall that the future of the nation of Israel will proceed from these sons of Jacob. Do you sense remorse and regret in **42:21-22**? How does Joseph respond in **42:23-24**?

6. What new twist in the story occurs in **42:25-28**? How might **42:28** indicate that the brothers may be sensing that God is now working in their lives?

7. The final paragraph of this chapter describes their return to Canaan and the re-telling of what had occurred, to their father in **42:29-35**. Briefly describe this scene. What was the response of Jacob (Israel) as this chapter concludes in **42:36-38**?

