

**Monday, January 21**

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**Genesis 42:18 - 43:34**

**42 18** On the third day Joseph said to them, "I am a God-fearing man. If you do as I say, you will live. **19** If you really are honest men, choose one of your brothers to remain in prison. The rest of you may go home with grain for your starving families. **20** But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. This will prove that you are telling the truth, and you will not die." To this they agreed. **21** Speaking among themselves, they said, "Clearly we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his anguish when he pleaded for his life, but we wouldn't listen. That's why we're in this trouble." **22** "Didn't I tell you not to sin against the boy?" Reuben asked. "But you wouldn't listen. And now we have to answer for his blood!" **23** Of course, they didn't know that Joseph understood them, for he had been speaking to them through an interpreter. **24** Now he turned away from them and began to weep. When he regained his composure, he spoke to them again. Then he chose Simeon from among them and had him tied up right before their eyes. **25** Joseph then ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, but he also gave secret instructions to return each brother's payment at the top of his sack. He also gave them supplies for their journey home. **26** So the brothers loaded their donkeys with the grain and headed for home. **27** But when they stopped for the night and one of them opened his sack to get grain for his donkey, he found his money in the top of his sack. **28** "Look!" he exclaimed to his brothers. "My money has been returned; it's here in my sack!" Then their hearts sank. Trembling, they said to each other, "What has God done to us?" **29** When the brothers came to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan, they told him everything that had happened to them. **30** "The man who is governor of the land spoke very harshly to us," they told him. "He accused us of being spies scouting the land. **31** But we said, 'We are honest men, not spies. **32** We are twelve brothers, sons of one father. One brother is no longer with us, and the youngest is at home with our father in the land of Canaan.' **33** "Then the man who is governor of the land told us, 'This is how I will find out if you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take grain for your starving families and go on home. **34** But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. Then I will know you are honest men and not spies. Then I will give you back your brother, and you may trade freely in the land.'" **35** As they emptied out their sacks, there in each man's sack was the bag of money he had paid for the grain! The brothers and their father were terrified when they saw the bags of money. **36** Jacob exclaimed, "You are robbing me of my children! Joseph is gone! Simeon is

gone! And now you want to take Benjamin, too. Everything is going against me!” **37** Then Reuben said to his father, “You may kill my two sons if I don’t bring Benjamin back to you. I’ll be responsible for him, and I promise to bring him back.” **38** But Jacob replied, “My son will not go down with you. His brother Joseph is dead, and he is all I have left. If anything should happen to him on your journey, you would send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave. ”

**43** **1** But the famine continued to ravage the land of Canaan. **2** When the grain they had brought from Egypt was almost gone, Jacob said to his sons, “Go back and buy us a little more food.” **3** But Judah said, “The man was serious when he warned us, ‘You won’t see my face again unless your brother is with you.’ **4** If you send Benjamin with us, we will go down and buy more food. **5** But if you don’t let Benjamin go, we won’t go either. Remember, the man said, ‘You won’t see my face again unless your brother is with you.’” **6** “Why were you so cruel to me?” Jacob moaned. “Why did you tell him you had another brother?” **7** “The man kept asking us questions about our family,” they replied. “He asked, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ So we answered his questions. How could we know he would say, ‘Bring your brother down here?’” **8** Judah said to his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will be on our way. Otherwise we will all die of starvation—and not only we, but you and our little ones. **9** I personally guarantee his safety. You may hold me responsible if I don’t bring him back to you. Then let me bear the blame forever. **10** If we hadn’t wasted all this time, we could have gone and returned twice by now.” **11** So their father, Jacob, finally said to them, “If it can’t be avoided, then at least do this. Pack your bags with the best products of this land. Take them down to the man as gifts—balm, honey, gum, aromatic resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds. **12** Also take double the money that was put back in your sacks, as it was probably someone’s mistake. **13** Then take your brother, and go back to the man. **14** May God Almighty give you mercy as you go before the man, so that he will release Simeon and let Benjamin return. But if I must lose my children, so be it.” **15** So the men packed Jacob’s gifts and double the money and headed off with Benjamin. They finally arrived in Egypt and presented themselves to Joseph. **16** When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the manager of his household, “These men will eat with me this noon. Take them inside the palace. Then go slaughter an animal, and prepare a big feast.” **17** So the man did as Joseph told him and took them into Joseph’s palace. **18** The brothers were terrified when they saw that they were being taken into Joseph’s house. “It’s because of the money someone put in our sacks last time we were here,” they said. “He plans to pretend that we stole it. Then he will seize us, make us slaves, and take our donkeys.” **19** The brothers approached the manager of Joseph’s household and spoke to him at the entrance to the palace. **20** “Sir,” they said, “we came to Egypt once before to buy food. **21** But as we were returning home, we stopped for the night and opened our sacks. Then

we discovered that each man's money—the exact amount paid—was in the top of his sack! Here it is; we have brought it back with us. **22** We also have additional money to buy more food. We have no idea who put our money in our sacks.” **23** “Relax. Don't be afraid,” the household manager told them. “Your God, the God of your father, must have put this treasure into your sacks. I know I received your payment.” Then he released Simeon and brought him out to them. **24** The manager then led the men into Joseph's palace. He gave them water to wash their feet and provided food for their donkeys. **25** They were told they would be eating there, so they prepared their gifts for Joseph's arrival at noon. **26** When Joseph came home, they gave him the gifts they had brought him, then bowed low to the ground before him. **27** After greeting them, he asked, “How is your father, the old man you spoke about? Is he still alive?” **28** “Yes,” they replied. “Our father, your servant, is alive and well.” And they bowed low again. **29** Then Joseph looked at his brother Benjamin, the son of his own mother. “Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?” Joseph asked. “May God be gracious to you, my son.” **30** Then Joseph hurried from the room because he was overcome with emotion for his brother. He went into his private room, where he broke down and wept. **31** After washing his face, he came back out, keeping himself under control. Then he ordered, “Bring out the food!” **32** The waiters served Joseph at his own table, and his brothers were served at a separate table. The Egyptians who ate with Joseph sat at their own table, because Egyptians despise Hebrews and refuse to eat with them. **33** Joseph told each of his brothers where to sit, and to their amazement, he seated them according to age, from oldest to youngest. **34** And Joseph filled their plates with food from his own table, giving Benjamin five times as much as he gave the others. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

### **Matthew 13:47 - 14:12**

**13 47** “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a fishing net that was thrown into the water and caught fish of every kind. **48** When the net was full, they dragged it up onto the shore, sat down, and sorted the good fish into crates, but threw the bad ones away. **49** That is the way it will be at the end of the world. The angels will come and separate the wicked people from the righteous, **50** throwing the wicked into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **51** Do you understand all these things?” “Yes,” they said, “we do.” **52** Then he added, “Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old.” **53** When Jesus had finished telling these stories and illustrations, he left that part of the country. **54** He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, “Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?” **55** Then they scoffed,

“He’s just the carpenter’s son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.**56** All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things? **57** And they were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. Then Jesus told them, “A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his own family.” **58** And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief.

**14 1** When Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, heard about Jesus,**2** he said to his advisers, “This must be John the Baptist raised from the dead! That is why he can do such miracles.” **3** For Herod had arrested and imprisoned John as a favor to his wife Herodias (the former wife of Herod’s brother Philip). **4** John had been telling Herod, “It is against God’s law for you to marry her.”**5** Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of a riot, because all the people believed John was a prophet. **6** But at a birthday party for Herod, Herodias’s daughter performed a dance that greatly pleased him, **7** so he promised with a vow to give her anything she wanted. **8** At her mother’s urging, the girl said, “I want the head of John the Baptist on a tray!” **9** Then the king regretted what he had said; but because of the vow he had made in front of his guests, he issued the necessary orders. **10** So John was beheaded in the prison, **11** and his head was brought on a tray and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. **12** Later, John’s disciples came for his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus what had happened.

### **Psalm 18:16 - 36**

**18 16** He reached down from heaven and rescued me; he drew me out of deep waters.**17** He rescued me from my powerful enemies, from those who hated me and were too strong for me. **18** They attacked me at a moment when I was in distress, but the LORD supported me. **19** He led me to a place of safety; he rescued me because he delights in me. **20** The LORD rewarded me for doing right; he restored me because of my innocence. **21** For I have kept the ways of the LORD ; I have not turned from my God to follow evil.**22** I have followed all his regulations; I have never abandoned his decrees. **23** I am blameless before God; I have kept myself from sin. **24** The LORD rewarded me for doing right. He has seen my innocence. **25** To the faithful you show yourself faithful; to those with integrity you show integrity. **26** To the pure you show yourself pure, but to the crooked you show yourself shrewd. **27** You rescue the humble, but you humiliate the proud. **28** You light a lamp for me. The LORD, my God, lights up my darkness. **29** In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall. **30** God’s way is perfect. All the LORD ’s promises prove true. He is a shield for all who look to him for protection. **31** For who is God except the LORD ? Who but our God is a solid rock? **32** God arms me with strength, and he makes my way perfect. **33** He makes me as

surefooted as a deer, enabling me to stand on mountain heights. **34** He trains my hands for battle; he strengthens my arm to draw a bronze bow. **35** You have given me your shield of victory. Your right hand supports me; your help has made me great. **36** You have made a wide path for my feet to keep them from slipping.

#### **Proverbs 4:7 - 10**

**4 7** Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment. **8** If you prize wisdom, she will make you great. Embrace her, and she will honor you. **9** She will place a lovely wreath on your head; she will present you with a beautiful crown.” **10** My child, listen to me and do as I say, and you will have a long, good life.