



## The Book of Genesis

### Lesson Number 70



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

**TRANSLATION LEGEND:** ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1959), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

#### GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

**DISCLAIMER:** The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

# JOSEPH'S INITIAL RESPONSE TO THEIR RETURN

Gen 43:16 "And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. <sup>17</sup> And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. <sup>18</sup> And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. <sup>19</sup> And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, <sup>20</sup> And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: <sup>21</sup> And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. <sup>22</sup> And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. <sup>23</sup> And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them. <sup>24</sup> And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. <sup>25</sup> And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there. <sup>26</sup> And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth. <sup>27</sup> And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? <sup>28</sup> And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance. <sup>29</sup> And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. <sup>30</sup> And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. <sup>31</sup> And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread. <sup>32</sup> And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. <sup>33</sup> And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. <sup>34</sup> And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him."

Gen 43:16-34

## INTRODUCTION

### A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

As soon as the brothers returned, and Joseph saw Benjamin, he had them taken to his home, and preparations were made for a great feast. Seeing they were taken to

Joseph's house, the brothers were afraid, reasoning that because of the money, the ruler would seek an occasion against them and make them his bondmen. Coming near to the steward, the brothers told him they

had **really** come down to buy food. When they had discovered their money in their sacks the first time, they kept it. Now they had brought it back, and did not know it got in their sacks. The steward told them not to

As soon as the brothers arrived, Joseph saw Benjamin, sent them to his home, and prepared a feast. The brothers were afraid because of the circumstances. Given O. Blakey R

## CONTENTS

### ► INTRODUCTION

- BRING THESE MEN HOME (43:16-17)
- THE MEN WERE AFRAID (43:18)
- THEY COMMUNED WITH THE STEWARD (43:19-22)
- THE GOD OF YOUR FATHER HATH GIVEN YOU TREASURE (43:23A)
- HE BROUGHT SIMEON OUT TO THEM (43:23B)
- HE CARED FOR THEM AND THEIR ASSES (43:24)
- THEY BROUGHT HIM THE PRESENT (43:25-26)
- HE ASKED OF THEM THEIR WELFARE (43:27-28)
- HE SAW HIS BROTHER BENJAMIN (43:29)
- HE SOUGHT WHERE TO WEEP (43:30-31)
- THEY ATE SEPARATELY (43:32)
- THEY SAT BEFORE HIM (43:33)
- THE BROTHERS WERE SERVED (43:34A)
- THEY WERE MERRY WITH HIM (43:34B)
- CONCLUSION

fear, that the God of their father had given them treasure in their sacks. Then he brought Simeon out to them, also bringing them water to wash their feet, and providing food for their donkeys. When Joseph came home, they gave him their present, and he asked them about their father, if he was still alive. They said he was alive and well. Joseph then saw Benjamin and said, *"God be gracious unto thee, my son."* He then wept privately before they were fed.

Over the years, Joseph's brothers had not engaged in a search for him, or made inquiries concerning him. They were apparently glad to be rid of him, while giving little or no thought to the brokenheartedness of their father. Yet, in the neglected resource of their memory there was a vivid recollection of the dastardly deed they had committed in selling Joseph into slavery. Evidently, the normality of life failed to stir up that memory. But now, however, when things were becoming

very threatening and difficult for them, their memories had been stirred concerning Joseph.

Actually, this was the Lord readying them for the face-to-face confrontation of Joseph. He would so work in them as to produce fear at the awareness of Joseph's presence. As it is written, *"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD"* (Prov 16:1).

### NOT A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

The confrontation of Joseph by his brothers is not approached from a psychological point of view. Emotions, self-worth, and the likes are not how we are moved to think of this situation. **While emotions were doubtless involved, the activity of their minds was primary – what they thought, and how they reasoned.** This is because the image of God within men is not primarily one of feeling, emotion, or passion. That some of this may be involved is possible, but the rationality of man and the ability to assess and reason are set before us – whether it was done soundly or unsoundly. Notice the employment of rationality.

► When Joseph charged them with being spies, *"they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies"* (Gen 42:10-11).

*man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not"* (Gen 42:13).

► When the brothers heard Joseph's threat, *"they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us"* (Gen 42:21).

► Reuben responded to their assessment by saying, *"Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required"* (Gen 42:22).

► Upon their return to Canaan with the grain they had purchased, and when one of the brothers found that his money had been returned, *"their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?"* (Gen 42:28).

► When Jacob first refused to send Benjamin back with the brothers, Reuben replied, *"Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again"* (Gen 42:37).

► When the time came to return to Egypt, Judah said to Jacob, *"The*

**This is because the image of God within men is not primarily one of feeling, emotion, or passion. That some of this may be involved is possible, but the rationality of man and the ability to assess and reason are set before us – whether it was done soundly or unsoundly.**

► When Joseph reaffirmed they were spies, *"they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one*

*man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. If*

*thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you" (Gen 43:3-5).*

- ➔ When Jacob asked them why they had even made known that they had a brother, *"they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?" (Gen 43:7).*
- ➔ At that time *"Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones." I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second*

*time" (Gen 43:10).*

- ➔ Now that the brothers have returned to Egypt, and have been taken to Joseph's house, *"the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses" (Gen 43:18).*
- ➔ At that time they spoke with the steward *"And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks" (Gen 43:20-22)*

At these times, the brothers were not moved by fear to run away, or to hide, or to weep uncontrollably. **They**

**were not ruled by their emotion, but by their thoughts, even though some of them were not correct. This reflects the Divine imagery in men.**

It also suggests that **when it comes to speaking to men about the Lord and their souls, an appeal should be made to reason, not emotion.** With the advent of the praise and worship movement, there is a strong appeal to emotion. Thoughts are generally short and shallow. It is no wonder that it does not promote introspection and self-examination (2 Cor 13:5), a quest for a working knowledge of Scripture (2 Tim 3:15-17), and the comprehension of the magnitude of salvation (Eph 3:16-18; Col 1:9). Therefore, when speaking to Felix about eternal matters, Paul **"reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come"** (Acts 24:25). His speech called upon Felix to think, reason, and arrive at a satisfactory conclusion that would honor God and save his soul. In my judgment there is not enough of this kind of reasoning today. It appears to me the majority of professing Christians are simply too shallow – too childish in their understanding.

## BRING THESE MEN HOME

Gen 43:16 ***"And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. <sup>17</sup> And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house."***

**WHEN JOSEPH SAW BENJAMIN**  
*"And when Joseph saw Benjamin*

*with them, he said to the ruler of his house . . ."*

The record of Joseph's birth is found in Genesis 30:23. He was still with Laban at that time. After that, and before Benjamin was born, he increased his herds (Gen 30:27-31:12). Benjamin was born while Jacob and family were on their back to Canaan (Gen 35:18). It is generally thought that Benjamin was

ten years old when Joseph was sold into slavery. <sup>CONSERVAPEDIA</sup> That would make him seven years younger than Joseph, and about thirty-two at the time of our text. These are only estimates, but they substantiate that Benjamin was not a child at this time. If one wonders how Joseph was able to tell it was Benjamin, it was because he was the new and younger face among the brothers, with whom he had dealt with before.

### BRING THESE MEN HOME

*" . . . Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house."*

Having been satisfied that the brothers had done what he required,

**If one wonders how Joseph was able to tell it was Benjamin, it was because he was the new and younger face among the brothers, with whom he had dealt with before.**

Joseph proceeds to arrange for their feeding and refreshment.

"The man" of reference is the *"ruler of his [Joseph's] house."* Other versions read, *"steward,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"his house steward,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"his chief servant,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"household manager,"* <sup>CJB</sup> and *"man in charge of his house."* <sup>GWN</sup>

### CONCERNING THE WORD "STEWARD"

The word translated *"ruler"* literally means "HIM WHO WAS OVER HIS HOUSE, I.E. THE STEWARD (GENESIS 24:2; 39:4; 44:1), <sup>PULPIT COMMENTARY</sup> OR "ONE WHO MANAGES THE AFFAIRS OR SUPERINTENDS THE HOUSEHOLD OF ANOTHER, AS ELIEZER OF DAMASCUS DID THAT OF ABRAHAM" (GENESIS 15:2). <sup>MCCLENTOK & STRONG'S</sup>

The word means much the same thing in the Greek language – a "DOMESTIC MANAGER" (Matt 10:8; Luke 16:8; 1 Cor 4:1; Tit 1:7; 1 Pet 4:10). The lexical meaning of the word is, "STEWARD, MANAGER, ADMINISTRATOR," <sup>THAYER</sup> AND "OVERSEER, ONE ENTRUSTED BY GOD WITH SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY AND ADMINISTRATION," <sup>FRIBERG</sup>

This casts fresh light on the concept of being good stewards of the *"manifold grace of God"* (1 Pet 4:10), or being given *"spiritual gifts"* (1 Cor 12:1). Jesus said the Kingdom of God was like a *"a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods"* (Matt 25:14). This is a depiction of the various ministries distributed within the church, in which every member

**In this we learn something of what is involved in being a steward – whether it is Joseph's stewards, or those who are members of the body of Christ.**

participates (1 Cor 12:1-28). Being a *"steward"* over these various ministries to the body, is not a mere servile role. It is a management role – an area in which the members of the body have charge of a particular facet of Christ's work. They are responsible for the ministry assigned to them, and are given grace to be successful in their particular area. That is why believers are called, *"stewards of the manifold grace of God"* (1 Pet 4:10).

### The steward was told to:

- ➡ Bring the men to Joseph's home.
- ➡ Slay an animal.
- ➡ Make ready, or prepare a dinner.
- ➡ Prepare for dining with the brothers at noon.
- ➡ The 33<sup>rd</sup> verse tells us that the brothers were seated in order from the one with the birthright to the youngest.

**In this we learn something of what is involved in being a steward –**

**whether it is Joseph's stewards, or those who are members of the body of Christ.** Not only is **WHAT** the steward does important, but there is also the matter of **HOW** he fulfills his duties. As the steward had prepared the meal, serving it at the proper time, and seated the guests appropriately, **so the steward of the grace of God must go about his work with discernment, and at the proper time.** It is not necessary for us to develop a stereotyped approach to serving God, and that is not my intention. The Christian world has seen enough lifeless and mindless routine!

Rather, I seek to encourage consideration in the servants of God concerning **what** they are doing, and **how** they are doing it – or if they are fulfilling their assignment at all. **It is all to be done with an acute consciousness of the fact that we are handling the goods of someone other than ourselves.** There really is no room for a self-centered spirit in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## THE MEN WERE AFRAID

*"<sup>18</sup> And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses."*

### THE MEN WERE AFRAID

*"And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said . . ."*

This was not a fear that made the

men run – like facing a ferocious wild animal. **This was a rational fear that proceeding from thinking, as compared with seeing.** It was not the sight of going to Joseph's house that induced fear in his brothers, but the thought of what might happen there.

**The Scriptures record various responses of fear that gripped men.**

- ➡ **A SINNER CONFRONTING GOD.** After he had sinned, Adam responded when he heard the voice of God, *"I was*

*afraid"* (Gen 3:10).

- ➡ **UPON BEING REBUKED.** When Sarah laughed within herself, and was rebuked for it, *"she was afraid"* (Gen 18:16).
- ➡ **WHEN WARNED BY GOD.** When Abimelech was warned by God in a dream, and told his servants of the message, *"the men were sore afraid"* (Gen 20:8).
- ➡ **WHEN EXPOSED TO GOD.** When Jacob had a dream of a ladder set up on

earth, and awoke, *"he was afraid"* (Gen 28:17).

- ➔ **WHEN FACING A SUPPOSED OPPONENT.** When Jacob heard that Esau was approaching him with four hundred men, he *"was greatly afraid and distressed"* (Gen 32:7).
- ➔ **WHEN FACING THE UNKNOWN.** When the Lord appeared to Moses in a

*thy judgments"* (Psa 119:120).

- ➔ **AT REVELATION OF WHO CHRIST WAS.** When God responded to "Peter's suggestion at Christ's transfiguration *"they were sore afraid"* (Mk 9:6).
- ➔ **THREATS OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS.** The parents of a blind man Jesus had healed would not say how he was healed *"because they feared the*

**involves, thinking, reasoning, and drawing a conclusion.**

In the fear of Joseph's brothers, their thoughts were not founded on reality, but on imagination. That is why they drew wrong conclusions.

#### BECAUSE OF THE MONEY

*"Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in . . ."* Other versions read, *"because of the silver that was put back into our sacks the first time,"* <sup>NIV</sup> and *"replaced in our sacks."* <sup>NRSV</sup>

Their reasoning was that the ruler was somehow incensed because of the money, probably thinking they had stolen it. The thought itself was erroneous, but the fear that it produced was very real. **If men can be induced to think wrongly, they will act wrongly.** That is how powerful the mind is. For example, if Satan can provoke Eve to think improperly about the tree from which she was commanded not to eat, she will be able to violate the will of God without any qualms. If he can convince Achan that he can profit by stealing a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold, he will disobey the commandment of the Lord, fully persuaded he can get by with it (Josh 7:24). If he can convince Judas that he can profit from the betrayal of Jesus, he will do it before the very disciples with whom he had been identified, and while Jesus calls him *"friend"* (Lk 22:48).

The brothers thinking is so skewed they reason to a completely erroneous conclusion.

#### HE MAY SEEK OCCASION AGAINST US

*" . . . that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses."* Other versions read, *"so that he may make a case against us and fall upon us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Now the men were frightened when they were taken to his house. They thought, 'He wants to attack us and overpower us and seize us as slaves and take our donkeys,'"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"He*

**In the fear of Joseph's brothers, their thoughts were not founded on reality, but on imagination. That is why they drew wrong conclusions.**

burning bush, he *"was afraid"* (Ex 3:6).

- ➔ **OUTWARD MANIFESTATION OF GOD'S PRESENCE.** When God made a fiery appearance to Israel they *"were afraid"* (Deut 5:5).
- ➔ **WHEN HEARING THE THREATS OF AN ENEMY.** When king Saul and Israel heard the words of Goliath, they were *"greatly afraid"* (1 Sam 17:11).
- ➔ **WHEN INTIMIDATED BY AN ENEMY.** When Nehemiah's builders heard the intimidating statements of their enemies, they were made *"afraid"* (Neh 6:9).
- ➔ **WHEN EXPOSED.** When Esther charged Haman before the king with malicious intent, *"Haman was afraid"* (Esth 7:6).
- ➔ **THOUGHT OF DIVINE ABANDONMENT.** When Job thought God had forsaken him he said, *"the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me"* (Job 3:25).
- ➔ **OPPOSITION OF UNGODLY MEN.** David confessed *"the floods of ungodly men made me afraid"* (Psa 18:4).
- ➔ **DIVINE JUDGMENTS.** David also confessed to God, *"I am afraid of*

*Jews"* (John 9:22).

- ➔ **SEEING A SUPERNATURAL JESUS.** When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea during a storm, *"they were afraid"* (John 6:19).
- ➔ **HEARING REPORTS OF JESUS.** When Pilate heard the people say of Jesus, *"He made Himself the Son of God,"* *"he was the more afraid"* (John 19:8).
- ➔ **HEARING. BUT NOT UNDERSTANDING, JESUS.** When the men with Saul of Tarsus heard the voice of Jesus, yet did not understand it, they *"were afraid"* (Acts 22:9).
- ➔ **CONFRONTING A CONVERTED ENEMY.** After Saul of Tarsus was converted and attempted to become joined to the disciples, *"they were all afraid of him"* (Acts 9:26).

In all of these instances *"fear"* was not a mere bodily reaction, like hunger, illness, etc. It was more than an unintelligent emotion. Rather, this was a rational emotion – something that involved thought, consideration, and even conclusions. There is a proper fear, like *"the fear of the Lord"* which is *"the beginning of wisdom"* (Psa 111:10; Prov 9:10), *"the beginning of knowledge"* (Prov 1:7). **But this**

wants to pretend we stole it and seize us as slaves, with our donkeys," <sup>LIVING</sup> and "so that he may find occasion to accuse and assail us, take us for slaves, and seize our donkeys." <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Why did they think in such a manner? I suggest that it was because of the hardness of the times. These were not times when the mercy of God had been accented, and numerous public displays of the grace of God were known. God had not yet been made "manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim 3:16). There had been no new births (1 Pet 1:23), regeneration (Tit 3:5), or translation into the kingdom of God's "dear Son" (Col 1:13). No person had been "joined unto the Lord" (1 Cor 6:17). Sin had not been "put away" (Heb 9:26), Satan had not been "destroyed" (Heb 2:14), "principalities and powers" had not been plundered (Col 2:15), and the world had not been reconciled to God (2 Cor 5:18-20).

**Precisely what is the impact of the total absence of such things upon this world. How do men in general react without the influence these realities produce?**

They react like Joseph's brothers, and everyone else did, excepting those to whom the Lord appeared, or to whom He sent a special message. Even for those rare individuals who heard from God, they lived under comparatively great limitations. This

**However, where the Gospel is not known, and the accomplishments of the Lord's Christ are not chronicled in word and lived out in deed, the devil has certain advantages. Reasoning becomes more and more flawed where the truth is not known. Iniquity is more freely expressed in an environment of spiritual ignorance.**

does not excuse flawed thinking, but it certainly does account for it.

#### **The Practicality of It All**

In our time, the factualness of there being an end of sin, finishing the transgression, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, is very real (Dan 9:24). The effective death of Jesus, and His enthronement at the right hand of God are in the category of reality – ultimate reality! Through the exalted Christ we have access to God, grace, and unspeakable power.

These realities had an effect upon the world, even though they are largely unknown. They have not of themselves made people ideal. They have, however, dulled the sword of the devil. **There are influences in this world that hold the powers of darkness at bay so they cannot work as extensively as they did before.** Even this, however, is

made known by the presence and words of those who know the Lord.

However, where the Gospel is not known, and the accomplishments of the Lord's Christ are not chronicled in word and lived out in deed, the devil has certain advantages. **Reasoning becomes more and more flawed where the truth is not known.** Iniquity is more freely expressed in an environment of spiritual ignorance.

If one wonders how we can know whether or not great ignorance exists concerning the things of God, **it is made known in the manner in which people think.** When people – even Christian people – begin thinking like Joseph's brothers, it is because they are fundamentally unacquainted with the Lord and His Christ. However, for this to happen during "the day of salvation" is absolutely inexcusable!

## **THEY COMMUNED WITH THE STEWARD**

<sup>19</sup> **And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house,** <sup>20</sup> **And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food:** <sup>21</sup> **And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand.** <sup>22</sup> **And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks."**

#### **THEY CAME NEAR THE STEWARD**

*"And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house . . ."*

What do people with a limited understanding of God do when they face a crisis? Some simply fall apart, and are unable to do anything. But for those who are unwilling to tuck in their tails and run, they will take matters into their own hands, and try to resolve the problem as best as they can. That is

what the brothers now set out to do. They will attempt to resolve the matter.

#### **THE FIRST TIME WE CAME**

*" . . . And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food . . ."*

The flesh is valiant in the matter of offering explanations, so Joseph's brothers extend themselves to clear up the matter they are convinced is really an issue with Joseph.

The first thing is to clarify that they never were spies. The last thing that the ruler had said to them was, *"bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land"* (Gen 42:34). Therefore, they set out to do their best to prove they are not spies.

They affirm that they really did come to buy food. Furthermore, they

did not open any of their sacks until they came to *"the inn."* It was there that they discovered their money had been placed in their sacks. What is more, they had brought it back in their hand. Further, the money with which they would buy grain was additional money they had brought with them. Surely that will be enough to prove they were not spies, and did not steal the money they had paid for grain.

**WE CANNOT TELL**  
*" . . . we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks."*

Knowing that the money did not jump back into their sacks, and realizing their answer was something short of

sufficient, they added, *"We don't know who put the silver in our sacks."* <sup>NIV</sup>

**This confirms there is a border beyond which human knowledge, wisdom, and understanding cannot go.** The ability of men to reason, think, and discover, has limitations, and they are Divinely imposed upon men. There are realities and purposes that are hidden from men – reality that *"surpasses knowledge"* <sup>NIV</sup> (Eph 3:19); *"hidden wisdom"* (1 Cor 2:7).

With all of the ability that is inherent in the Divine imagery in man, there comes a time when every mortal must say, "I do not know!" That is exceedingly difficult for some to say.

## THE GOD OF YOUR FATHER HATH GIVEN YOU TREASURE

*"<sup>23A</sup> And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money."*

As we peruse the answer given to

*Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into*

*your minds at ease"* <sup>NJB</sup> *"All is well with you,"* <sup>TNK</sup> *"Don't worry about it,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"kindness be to you,"* <sup>ABP</sup> *"Relax,"* <sup>ISV</sup> and *"Everything's in order."* <sup>MESSAGE</sup>

The literal rendering of the text is, "shalown" – *"peace to you."* The translators took a lot of liberty in interpreting what they thought this meant.

To me, this indicates that Joseph had taught his steward concerning the God of the Hebrews. I do not believe this was a mere colloquialism. Judging from the remainder of his word, he was saying God was with them, and they could rest in His favor.

**FEAR NOT**  
*" . . . fear not . . ."* Because of the peace that comes from God alone, there was no reason to fear. I am sure that the saying itself did not allay their fears.

**YOUR GOD AND THE GOD OF YOUR FATHER**  
*" . . . your God, and the God of your father . . ."* Other versions read, *"your God, even the God of your father,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"your God, and the God of your fathers,"* <sup>SEPTUAGINT</sup> *"your God, even the God of your fathers,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"The God you and your father."* <sup>CEV</sup> The

**Again, this confirms that Joseph had tutored his steward concerning the Lord God Almighty, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was by no means one of the gods of the Egyptians, and it is not possible that he would have learned of this God – the "true God" (2 Chron 15:3) from the Egyptians.**

the brothers, we must remember that it is not coming from Joseph or another Jew. It is coming from an Egyptian man – the steward of Joseph's house. We know there were no other Jews in Egypt at this time. Later, when accounting for the seed of Jacob that entered Canaan, Joseph and his sons are the only ones said to have already been in Canaan (Gen 46:6-27) – *"All the souls that came with Jacob into*

*Egypt, were threescore and ten"* (Gen 46:26-27).

**PEACE BE UNTO YOU**  
*"And he said, Peace be to you..."*  
 Other versions read, *"Peace be with you,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Be at ease,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"It's all right,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"Rest assured,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"You are fine,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"May you be well,"* <sup>CSB</sup> *"God deal mercifully with you,"* <sup>SEPTUAGINT</sup> *"Calm down!"* <sup>NAB</sup> *"Everything is fine,"* <sup>NET</sup> *"Set*

overwhelming majority of the versions read, *"your God and the God of your father,"* with a very small number reading *"your God, even the God of your father,"* or *"Your God and the God of your fathers."*

Again, this confirms that Joseph had tutored his steward concerning the Lord God Almighty, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This was by no means one of the gods of the Egyptians, and it is not possible that he would have learned of this God – the *"true God"* (2 Chron 15:3) from the Egyptians.

Further, it had been several years since Joseph was removed from Canaan. According to the information provided in Genesis 45:6, which refers to the time of this very visit, the famine had been in the land for two years, and there were five years to go. *"For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest"* (Gen 45:6).

Joseph's Reign begins . . . .	30 years old
Seven years of plenty . . . . .	37 years old
Two years of famine . . . . .	39 years old
Less age when he left Canaan .	17 years
Years away from Canaan . . . . .	22 years

Joseph had now been in Egypt five years longer than he was in Canaan. **Yet, he was taught sufficiently during his first seventeen years for a strong faith to develop.** Now, in Egypt for twenty-two years, nearly thirteen of which were spent in prison, his faith was still in tact. He had no Bible, and no fellow-member of Abraham's seed. Yet, his faith was strong enough to make those around him aware of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to teach them about his God.

#### Contemporary Experience

Today, there are youngsters who have left home and departed from the faith within a year or two. Countless godly people have gone through this sorrowful experience with their children.

**One of the great handicaps of our generation is that a kind of religion has been introduced that does not require the total commitment of the people.**

It is not that we can guarantee this kind of experience will not happen to the godly. However, if it does it must not be because of the negligence of parents. **One of the great handicaps of our generation is that a kind of religion has been introduced that does not require the total commitment of the people.** The total lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were shaped around their identity with God. That is something that is not at all common among professing Christians of our time.

No person can legislate for others in this area. However, our children should obtain a clear and undiluted impression that our lives revolve around our identity with God, and things directly connected with that identity. This cannot be mere talk, but must be able to be seen in the activities we choose, the friends we make, and how we spend our time.

#### GIVEN YOU TREASURE IN YOUR SACKS

*" . . . hath given you treasure in your sacks . . . "* Other versions read, *"He replied, "the God of your father must have put treasure in your sacks for you,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"your God, even the God of your father, has put wealth in your bags for you,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"The God you and your father worship must have put the money there,"* <sup>CEV</sup> *"Your God, the God of your father, must have put the money in your sack as a gift,"* <sup>ERV</sup> and *"Your God, the God of your father, has placed hidden treasure within those sacks for you."* <sup>ISV</sup>

How is it that this Egyptian was able to reason in such a manner, and yet it is almost inconceivable that a modern-day Christian would do so? For one thing, however limited the information he had may have been, it was sound and correctly represented God. **When it comes to the knowledge**

of God, a modicum of correct knowledge is of greater significance than a warehouse filled with incorrect knowledge. Those who have improper concepts of God are at a significant disadvantage that extends from the experience of life to reading the Scriptures.

#### I HAD YOUR MONEY

*" . . . I had your money."* Other versions read, *"I received your silver,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"I received your money,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"I was the one who received it,"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"your money came to me,"* <sup>DARBY</sup> and *"I know I received your payment,"* <sup>NLT</sup> *"I got your payment."* <sup>TNK</sup>

It appears from the text that the steward did not know that Joseph had commanded that the brother's money be returned to their sacks. During that first trip, after Joseph had talked with his brothers for some time, he *"commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them"* (Gen 42:25). Apparently this was done after the steward had received the money for the grain.

By acting in this manner, Joseph was more thoroughly testing his brothers and their integrity. Their reasoning with the steward at this time would draw out of the steward his own awareness of the God of the Hebrews, thereby bringing the greater glory to the Lord.

Some versions put a different spin on the steward's reply, representing him as being satisfied with the money they had given him at **this** time. *"I have enough of your good money {1} q.d. I am satisfied with the money you have given me, both as to quality and quantity}."* <sup>SEPTUAGINT</sup> I do not believe this is a proper representation of the text. The money to which he referred was not the money he just received.



## HE BROUGHT SIMEON OUT TO THEM

*"<sup>23B</sup> And he brought Simeon out unto them." Other versions read, "then he brought Simeon out to them," <sup>NKJV</sup> "he led Simeon out to them," <sup>NAB</sup> "Then he released Simeon and brought him out to them." <sup>NLT</sup>*

Remember, Joseph has not yet joined them, yet the steward knew what to do, and was faithful to do it.

### ONE OF THE MARKS OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT

Jesus taught that one of the marks of a faithful servant is that he carries out the will of the master, even if he is

not present. *"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord **when he cometh** shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."* (Luke 12:43-46). There is also the parable of the talents in which, during the absence of the master, one

man buried his talent and did not fulfill his master's will (Matt 25:14-30). The parable of the pounds presents a similar account (Lk 19:13-27).

**The faithfulness of a servant is demonstrated during the absence of the master.** May you, like Joseph's steward, be faithful to carry out your role in the body of Christ as a good steward *"of the manifold grace of God"* (1 Pet 4:10). When the Lord returns, He will call you into account for the assignment given you when you were placed in the body where it pleased the Lord. Be faithful!

## HE CARED FOR THEM AND THEIR ASSES

*"<sup>24</sup> And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender."*

When Joseph first saw Benjamin he told his steward, *"Bring these men home,"* or *"take these men to my house"* <sup>NIV</sup> (Gen 43:16). At the point of our text, they have arrived at the house, but are standing outside of it. This was largely owing to the fear in the brothers that something adversarial was awaiting them in the house.

### THEY WERE BROUGHT INTO JOSEPH'S HOUSE

*"And the man brought the men into Joseph's house . . ."*

After allaying their fears, the steward now brought them into the interior of the Joseph's house. He will make the necessary arrangements for

them to prepare for the meal Joseph said to get ready for them (Gen 43:16).

### HE GAVE THEM WATER

*" . . . and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender."*

After a lengthy journey over desert terrain, it was customary for the one hosting the travelers to provide them water to wash their feet, bringing them refreshment. This is what Abraham did when three messengers came to visit him (Gen 18:4). Lot did the same for the messengers that visited him (Gen 19:2). When some messengers were sent from David to Abigail, she washed their feet (1 Sam 25:41). In an act of unparalleled humility, Jesus once washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:5).

This was an act of hospitality

which assured the visitor they were welcome in the home being visited.

### HE PROVIDED FOOD FOR THEIR BEASTS

The thoroughness of the hospitality should be duly noted. Even their beasts of burden were cared for, essential for the trip and for transporting the purchased goods back to Canaan.

When Abraham's servant was sent to find a wife for Isaac among his kindred, one of the assuring signs from God was that the proper woman, when found, would give his camels water to drink (Gen 24:24).

In our time and place, this would be equivalent to providing a tank of gas to someone who had traveled a distance, and were being hosted. Such consideration should not be rare.

## THEY BROUGHT HIM THE PRESENT

*"<sup>25</sup> And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon:*

*for they heard that they should eat bread there. <sup>26</sup> And when Joseph came*

*home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house,*

*and bowed themselves to him to the earth."*

#### THEY MADE READY THEIR PRESENT

*"And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there."* Other versions read, *"they made the present ready,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"they prepared their gifts for Joseph's coming at noon,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"Then they set out their gifts to await Joseph's arrival at noon"* <sup>NAB</sup> *"They arranged their gift while they waited for Joseph to come at midday"* <sup>NJB</sup> and *"They laid out their gifts to await Joseph's arrival at noon."* <sup>TNK</sup>

The "present" consisted of "a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds" (Gen 43:11). They took the gifts out of the storage containers they had prepared for travel, and arranged them so they might be properly seen and appreciated.

*over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."* (2 Cor 11:2).

God Himself addresses this matter of preparing to be before Him. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you"* (2 Cor 6:17).

#### THEY BROUGHT JOSEPH THEIR PRESENT

*"And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth."*

Apparently having completed his administrative duties for the day. Joseph returned to his home. Notice that he did not allow the visit of his brothers to interfere with his duties. He

The brothers hand-deliver the present they had brought to the ruler, also bowing themselves *"to the earth"* in obeisance to him. Other versions read, *"bowed to the ground before him,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"bowed down before him on the ground,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"went down to the earth before him"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"bowed low in front of him"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"prostrated themselves before him on the ground"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"bowed down with their face to the ground,"* <sup>DOUAY</sup> and *"bowed to him with their faces touching the ground."* <sup>GWN</sup>

This is now the second time the brothers have bowed before Joseph, the first being on the initial trip (Gen 42:6). This matched the number of dreams young Joseph had of his brothers doing obeisance before him: once as their sheaves bowing before his sheaf (Gen 37:7), and once as stars making obeisance to him (Gen 37:9). You see how precisely God made known what they would do – acknowledging that Joseph, by Divine appointment, was actually greater than they were, and would have authority over them. **It was further confirmed that men must ultimately yield to Divine appointments.**

The most precise depiction of this is every knee bowing to the exalted Christ (Isa 45:23; Rom 14:11; Phil 2:10). Men are assigned a lifetime to do this in order that they may be saved. This bowing, however, is not a mere formality. It is to be followed by consistent and total submission to Christ Jesus. If this is not done, they will at last bow down before Jesus, only to hear the chilling words, *"I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity"* (Matt 7:23). No person who fails to submit to Jesus now is in any way in possession of true knowledge. Their entire life is nothing but vanity.

**No person who fails to submit to Jesus now is in any way in possession of true knowledge. Their entire life is nothing but vanity.**

#### Presenting Things to God

This same protocol should attend any presentations we make to God. For example, we are to *"present"* our bodies a *"living sacrifice"* to God (Rom 12:1-2). In the case of that presentation our bodies are to be prepared: *"holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service,"* or *"spiritual act of worship."* <sup>NIV</sup> **An unholy body cannot be presented to God.** Such a presentation has not been properly prepared. Paul labored to make the people suitable for presentation to God: *"For I am jealous*

was gathering and appropriately storing the funds of the people of Egypt, as well as from representatives from other countries. He was overseeing the maintenance of the stored grain in Egypt, distributing it in appropriate measure to those procuring it, and seeing to it that the Egyptian supplies of grain were effectively protected.

Now he returns to his home to confront his brothers who are, as yet, unaware that he is the younger brother they sold into slavery.

## HE ASKED THEM OF THEIR WELFARE

*" 27 And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? 28 And they answered, Thy*

*servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance."*

How will Joseph speak with his brothers. Will he address them roughly as he did during their first visit (Gen 42:7)?

## HE ASKED THEM OF THEIR WELFARE

*"And he asked them of their welfare . . ." Other versions read, "their well-being," NKJV "how they were," NIV "if they were well," CSB "courteously saluting them again" DOUAY "asked them of their prosperity" GENEVA "how they were doing," NET "greeted them pleasantly," NJB "asketh of them of peace" YLT "how they had been getting along," LIVING and "about their health." GNB*

The word "welfare" is translated from a word that means, "COMPLETENESS, SOUNDNESS, WELFARE, PEACE . . . SAFETY, SOUNDNESS (IN BODY) . . . HEALTH, PROSPERITY . . . QUIET, TRANQUILLITY, CONTENTMENT . . . OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS . . . TO BE SAFE (IN MIND, BODY OR ESTATE)" <sup>STRONG'S</sup>

You see that "welfare" is a rather large word, encompassing the whole of life: seen and unseen, outward and inward, personal and public, individually and relationally. It is a word that would be classified, "summation."

I do not doubt that Joseph was being more than polite and considerate. **All of these facets of life are points at which God interfaces with men – especially those with whom He had chosen to be identified.**

### How Would You Sum Up Your Life?

It is a good exercise to ponder how you would summarize your life. Considering all of the stable and varying factors how would you respond to being asked about your "welfare?" Even when Paul was in stressful conditions over which he had no power, he said *"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death"* (Phil 1:19-20).

Some Scriptural summations of life are as follows.

- ➡ *"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* (Phil 1:21)
- ➡ *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in*

*Christ Jesus."* (Phil 3:14)

➡ *"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."* (Heb 13:14)

➡ *"I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."* (Acts

## OUR FATHER IS ALIVE AND IN GOOD HEALTH

*" . . . And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. . . ." Other versions read, "They replied, "Your servant our father is still alive and well." NIV*

**While Joseph no doubt had a great love for his father, the covenantal view of him took the precedence. That is the view that contributed to Joseph's understanding of God Himself. That is the view that undergirded all of the Lord's appearances and words to Jacob.**

23:1)

➡ *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* (Phil 4:13)

### IS YOUR FATHER WELL, YET ALIVE?

*" . . . and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? . . ." Other versions read, "How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?" NIV and "Is your father the old man, of whom ye told me, in good health? is he yet alive?" GENEVA*

Suffice it to say, this was not a casual question, or uttered out of mere politeness. Joseph had a keen interest in Jacob, for he was his father. More than that, he was the third of a holy trio to whom God made covenantal promises: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These three are mentioned together in thirty-three verses of Scripture spanning from Genesis 31:53 to Acts 7:32. The name Jacob is mentioned three hundred and sixty-three times in Scripture.

**While Joseph no doubt had a great love for his father, the covenantal view of him took the precedence–i.e. the covenant originally made with Abraham** (Gen 15:18-21). That is the view that contributed to Joseph's understanding of God Himself. That is the view that undergirded all of the Lord's appearances and words to Jacob (Gen 28:10-22; 35:10-13).

Notice, they refer to Jacob as *"thy servant."* During their previous visit, they referred to themselves as the ruler's "servants" three times (Gen 42:10,11,13). During this visit, the brothers will refer to themselves as the ruler's "servants" no less than eight times (Gen 44:7,9,16,19,21,23,31).

Solomon said *"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender"* (Prov 22:7).

### THEY BOWED DOWN THEIR HEADS

*" . . . . And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance."* Other versions read, *"And they bowed low to pay him honor," NIV "And they went down on their faces before him," BBE and "they bowed down again with deep respect." CEB*

This is the second time they have bowed down before Joseph during this visit (Gen 43:26,28). It is the third time counting the first visit (Gen 42:6). The first time they bowed to him, *"Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them"* (Gen 42:9). Once again, his memory must have been stirred concerning those dreams, awakening confidence and assurance in his heart. These were blessed confirmations that God was for him, and would bless him as He had promised – to be with him until He had done what He promised He would do (Gen 18:15; 31:3).

## HE SAW HIS BROTHER BENJAMIN

*"<sup>29</sup> And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."*

### HE SAW HIS BROTHER

*"And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? . . ." Other versions read, "your youngest brother," NASB "young brother," YLT and "your brother, the younger." ABP*

#### Notice how Benjamin is described:

- ➔ His (Joseph's) brother.
- ➔ By his personal name, Benjamin.
- ➔ His mother's son.
- ➔ The brothers youngest brother.

It had been twenty-two years since he had seen Benjamin. How his heart must have been warmed at the sight of him. He was the only full brother that he had – the sons born to Rachel.

*"How are you, my son? God be gracious to you," <sup>LIVING</sup> "God show mercy to you child," <sup>ABP</sup> and bless you, my son." <sup>CEV</sup>*

The lexical meaning of the word translated "*gracious*" is, "TO BEND OR STOOP IN KINDNESS TO AN INFERIOR; TO FAVOR, BESTOW; CAUSATIVELY TO IMPORE (I.E. MOVE TO FAVOR BY PETITION): — BESEECH, X FAIR, (BE, FIND, SHEW) FAVOR(-ABLE), BE (DEAL, GIVE, GRANT (GRACIOUS(-LY) . . . (BE) MERCIFUL." <sup>STRONG'S</sup> As used here, I understand it to mean "**be favorably inclined to show grace or mercy.**" <sup>STRONG'S</sup>

One might ask "What is the difference between God being inclined to show grace, and simply pronouncing the blessing?" Actually, there is a great deal of difference. Joseph did not have the power of himself to bestow a blessing, unless moved by the Spirit to do so – as when Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come (Heb 11:20), and when Jacob blessed his sons (Gen 49). Secondly, **God never does what He does not want to do.** He is primarily motivated by His own will, which is an expression of His nature.

*"the Lord be gracious unto thee" as a mere man – the older brother of Benjamin. While there was a deep affection for Benjamin, Joseph was speaking within the framework of the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

In Jewish history, God was gracious to the tribe of Benjamin. After the Babylonian captivity, they rose up with Judah to build the house of the Lord: *"Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem"* (Ezra 1:5). Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, noted for his revealed insight into the eternal purpose of God, was from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5). Although it was *"of the smallest of the tribes of Israel"* (1 Sam 9:21), the tribe of Benjamin was joined to the tribe of Judah, constituting the kingdom of Judah. Around 980 B.C., when the kingdom was taken from Saul, Benjamin joined Judah to form the kingdom of Judah (1 Kgs 12:21-23). The remaining *"ten tribes"* constituted the kingdom of Israel (1 Kgs 11:31,35) – Reuben, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim and Manasseh.

While Joseph probably was thinking of the welfare of Benjamin himself, his words were like a prophecy declaring God's future graciousness to Benjamin in joining his tribe to that of Judah. It thereby became formally affiliated with the kingdom of Judah, which was associated more directly with the coming Savior, and the capital city of Jerusalem, the place God chose to place His holy name (1 Kgs 11:36). As regarding the covenant, God was gracious to Benjamin.

**God never does what He does not want to do. He is primarily motivated by His own will, which is an expression of His nature. As it is written of Him, "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself"**

### GOD BE GRACIOUS UNTO THEE MY SON

*"And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son." Other versions read, "God be good to you, my son," <sup>BBE</sup> "God be merciful unto thee, my son," <sup>GENEVA</sup> God favor thee, my son," <sup>YLT</sup>*

As it is written of Him, *"according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in himself"* (Eph 1:9). And again, *"according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"* (Eph 1:11).

In this text, Joseph is not saying

## HE SOUGHT WHERE TO WEEP

*"<sup>30</sup> And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother:*

*and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept*

*there. <sup>31</sup> And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and*

said, *Set on bread.*"

### HIS BOWELS DID YEARN FOR HIS BROTHER

"And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother . . ." Other versions read, "yearned for his brother," <sup>NKJV</sup> "deeply stirred," <sup>NASB</sup> "deeply moved," <sup>NIV</sup> "overcome with affection," <sup>NRSV</sup> "heart went out to," <sup>BBE</sup> "feelings . . . were so strong," <sup>CEB</sup> "overcome with emotion," <sup>CSB</sup> "bowels burned for his brother," <sup>DARBY</sup> "his compassion grew warm," <sup>ESV</sup> "affection was inflamed toward" <sup>GENEVA</sup> "so strong was the affection he felt," <sup>NJB</sup> and "overcome with love." <sup>LIVING</sup>

**Joseph's hard experiences** — BEING SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS, BECOMING A SLAVE, BEING FALSE ACCUSED, AND BEING UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED — had not made him hard and insensitive. Often the hardness of people is traced to their experiences in life, as though that justifies being calloused, and even cruel. Now Joseph arises as a living contradiction of such fallacious reasoning. This also reveals that he had thought about Benjamin, and pondered his conditions and welfare. This was his only full-blood brother, being the only other son born through Rachel. The years that had passed had not made Joseph calloused, or allowed him to forget his brothers, especially Benjamin.

### The Capability to Yearn

Something should be said about the capacity to "yearn," feel tenderness, long for, have a strong desire, or hunger and thirst for. **This capacity is part of the Divine imagery that is found in mankind.** You may recall the incident where two women appeared before Solomon who both had new-born sons. One had died, and both women claimed the living child was theirs. To resolve the dilemma, Solomon "said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other" (1 Kgs 3:25). It is said of the real mother, "Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for **her bowels yearned upon her son**, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it" (1 Kgs 3:26).

This capacity to yearn, long for, hunger and thirst for, be tender and sensitive toward, and have a strong desire for, **is to be focused on the Lord Himself.** He is to be the primary Object of our affection. That is the reason for several salient statements in Scripture.

➔ "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with **all** thine heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy might" (Deut 6:5; Matt 22:37-38; Mk 12:30).

➔ "One thing have I desired of the

(Col 3:1-2).

➔ "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that **they seek a country.**" (Heb 11:13-14)

One of the great failings of institutionalized religion is that it has not awakened a preeminent desire for

**One of the great failings of institutionalized religion is that it has not awakened a preeminent desire for the Lord Himself and His righteousness. The quest for glory, and the a longing for the return of the Lord is barely discernible among professing Christians.**

*LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.*" (Psa 27:4)

➔ "Blessed are they which do **hunger and thirst after righteousness:** for they shall be filled." (Mat 5:6)

➔ "But seek ye **first** the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt 6:33).

➔ "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but **this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark** for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil 3:14)

➔ "If ye then be risen with Christ, **seek those things** which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set **your affection** on things above, not on things on the earth."

the Lord Himself and His righteousness. The quest for glory, and the a longing for the return of the Lord is barely discernible among professing Christians. They have embraced other priorities. It allows for too many competitive interests, and leads people closer to the world than to God. This is a most serious dilemma concerning which precious few souls are concerned.

### HE SOUGHT A PLACE TO WEEP

" . . . and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there . . ." Other versions read, "He looked for a place to weep," <sup>NIV</sup> "he went into a private room and wept there," <sup>NAB</sup> "he entered into the storeroom to weep there," <sup>ABP</sup> "He entered his personal quarters, wept there awhile," <sup>ISV</sup> and "Joseph hurried out into another room and had a good cry." <sup>MESSAGE</sup>

This is the second time Joseph has been moved to weep because of his brothers. The first time they came to Egypt, when unbeknown to the brothers

**Once again, I want to point out that a stereotyped religion dries the eyes and hardens the heart, so that weeping for situations that justify it is relatively unknown.**

Joseph heard and understood their conversation about their treatment of young Joseph, *"he turned himself about from them, and wept"* (Gen 42:24). Later, he will weep again because of them (Gen 45:2,14,15). Later, when he met his father, *"he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while"* (Gen 46:29).

Here we have a ruler with great power and authority, yet he is tender and sensitive of heart. We also have a group of brothers that caused Joseph to weep.

Jesus Christ, who was the acme of greatness, and the epitome of tenderness, is said to have wept on two occasions. The first was when He beheld the city of Jerusalem which had rejected Him, and considered the woes that were appointed to come upon it (Lk 19:41). The second was when He was surrounded by unbelief at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:33-35). The writer of Hebrews also alludes to Jesus weeping when he wrote of His last evening in Gethsemane: *"Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared"* (Heb 5:7).

Once again, I want to point out

that a stereotyped religion dries the eyes and hardens the heart, so that weeping for situations that justify it, is relatively unknown.

#### HE REFRAINED HIMSELF

*" . . . And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread."*

In the energy of faith, and in a display of personal moral and spiritual strength, Joseph ceased his weeping. He washed his face so he would not appear to have been weeping, and *"refrained himself."* Other versions read, *"restrained himself,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"controlled himself,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"controlling himself,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"controlling his feelings,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"pulled himself together,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"Regaining his composure"* <sup>CSB</sup> *"was in control of his emotions,"* <sup>GWN</sup> *"now having collected himself"* <sup>NAB</sup> and *"keeping himself under control."* <sup>LIVING</sup>

Here, before the Scriptures were written, and before redemption was accomplished, we find a man who could control his emotions. He did not allow his emotion to carry him, but ruled his own spirit.

Solomon wrote, *"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city"* (Prov 16:32). Other versions read,

*"controls his temper,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"has control over his spirit,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"have self-control,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"that ruleth his own mind,"* <sup>GENEVA</sup> *"governs his temper,"* <sup>SEPTUAGINT</sup> *"someone with self-mastery."* <sup>NJB</sup>

If it seems as though ruling ones' own spirit is well nigh impossible, we have been given the case of Joseph who did, in fact, keep control of that part of the human nature that tends to rage out of control.

In another example of this remarkable control, Paul addresses the matter of prophets prophesying. He postulates a prophet speaking, obviously charged up in the energy of the Spirit. Suddenly, his words occasion an additional word to be given to another prophet, who is constrained to speak at that very moment. Of that occasion Paul writes, *"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets"* (1 Cor 14:29-32).

Although the following text has a wider circumference than the one just quoted, this matter of self control is addressed: *"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"* (1 Cor 9:27).

The least productive part of our rather complicated makeup is our feelings or emotions. They must be managed by a the higher portion of our makeup, coupled with "the spirit of faith" (2 Cor 4:13). No believer is exempt from this responsibility.

## THEY ATE SEPARATELY

<sup>32</sup> *"And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the*

*Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians."*

#### FOR HIM BY HIMSELF

*"And they set on for him by*

*himself . . ."* Other versions read, *"they set him a place by himself,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"they served him by himself,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"put a meal ready for him by himself,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"they set out his food by himself,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"for Joseph*

apart" <sup>DOUAY</sup> "He was served separately from his brothers," <sup>GWN</sup> "Joseph ate by himself." <sup>LIVING</sup>

At this point Joseph had not yet divulged himself to his brothers. Because of that, and in order to accent the honorable position to which God Almighty had exalted him, he accented his dignity. This contributed to the continued sobriety of the brothers. I do not doubt that it caused fear to continue to grow within them.

#### FOR THE BROTHERS

"... and for them by themselves, . . ." The brothers were all seated together, separate from the others. The explanation for this arrangement follows.

#### FOR THE EGYPTIANS

"... and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians."

Considering the relative newness of the Hebrews people, this is a most arresting observation. At this point, Jacob's entire progeny numbers seventy (Ex 1:5). How is it that such a tradition was found among the Egyptians at this early juncture in the history of man?

Abraham is referred to as "the Hebrew" in Genesis 14:13). At that time, it seems apparent that the name was derived from an ancestor of Abraham: Eber, who was in the lineage of Shem. It is written, "Unto Shem also, **the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born**" (Gen 10:21). This was part of the Messianic lineage as outlined by Luke: "Which was the son of Saruch [GREEK FORM OF SERUG], which was the son of Ragau [GREEK FORM OF REU], which was the son of Phalec [GREEK FORM OF PELEG], which was the son of Heber [GREEK FORM OF EBER], which was the son of Sala [GREEK FORM OF SALAH], Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem [GREEK FORM OF SHEM], which was the son of Noe [GREEK FORM OF NOAH], which was the son of Lamech" (Luke 3:36).

The Hebrews were known as a people from the time of Abraham, who was not the first Hebrew, but the first person in Scripture to be referred to as a Hebrew. The Hebrews are to be associated with the offspring of Shem, through whom the Messianic lineage was established. They were a nation being developed by God through whom the Savior would enter the world.

#### An Example Seen in the Egyptians

The Egyptians had customs and manners that even impacted on the

company with whom they ate. They had adopted some principles of life that applied to every facet of life.

In this, they foreshadowed the manner of spiritual life. Those who are in Christ live in view of higher principles than mere personal likes and dislikes.

➡ **For example, on the matter of eating it is written, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat"** (1 Cor 5:11).

➡ **On receiving someone into our home, it is written, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds"** (2 John 1:10-11).

I understand that men can make unwarranted traditions based upon these texts, and that is something that is not to be encouraged. However, the people of God must learn to live within the constraints of the will of God, subordinating any desires that are to the contrary. Those in Christ Jesus live by principles they have not made. Rather they have received them.

## THEY SAT BEFORE HIM

"<sup>33</sup> **And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marveled one at another.**"

We are now provided with a detail that is most remarkable.

#### THEY WERE SEATED IN ORDER

"And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth . . ." Other versions read, "The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest," <sup>NIV</sup> and "they were all given

their seats before him in order of birth, from the oldest to the youngest." <sup>BBE</sup>

The brothers were meticulously seated according to their age – from the firstborn, who had the birthright, down to the youngest, who was Benjamin. Joseph is doubtless the one who arranged for their seating. It certainly was not a voluntary basis.

Considering how young Joseph was when he was removed from Canaan, and how long he had been away from his brothers, the recollection of the order of his brother's births is

worthy of notice. There were not large gaps between their births, which would have been more conducive the memory of their order. In my family, for example there were three children, with eight years between each of us. It is not at all difficult to recall the order of our births. In Joseph's case, his brothers were given birth by three different mothers, and some of them were rather close together. **Yet he did not forget their birth-order, who had the birthright, and who was the youngest.**

A covenanted people, with a blood lineage, thought differently. First,

the accent was placed on the man who beget, not the mother who gave birth. Second, the emphasis was placed on the firstborn. **All of this was intentionally a depiction of the manner in which the Messiah would enter the**

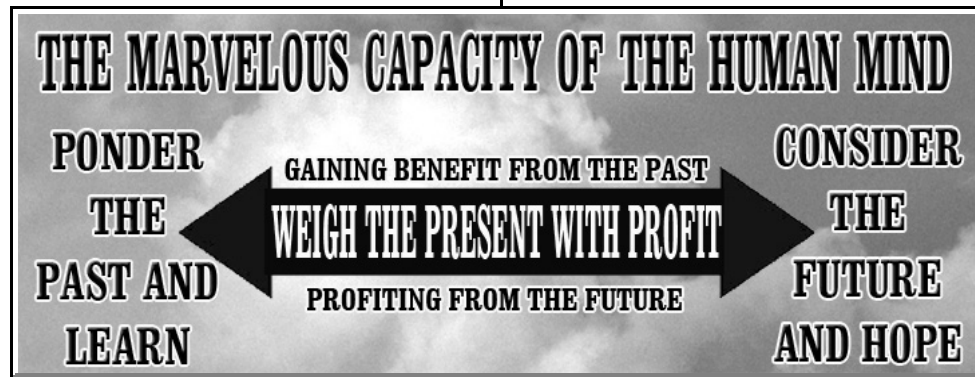
have been born again possess in a new way what is referred to as *"the law of my mind"* – a new propensity of thought (Rom 7:23). There is also *"the spirit of your mind,"* which is to be *"renewed"* (Eph 4:23), or in a state of

### THE MEN MARVELED

*" . . . and the men marveled one at another."* Other versions read, *"looked in astonishment at one another,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"looked at one another in amazement,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"wondered very much"* <sup>DOUAY</sup> *"marveled among themselves"* <sup>GENEVA</sup> *"much to their amazement!,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> and *"looked at one another amazed [that so much was known about them]."* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

When the brothers observed how they were seated, and the precision with which the seating was carried out, they *"marveled."* The word so translated means, *"TO BE ASTOUNDED, BE STUNNED, BE AMAZED, BE DUMBFOUNDED."* <sup>STRONG'S</sup> **That is, they could not reason it out.** They were once again confronted with something they did not understand. To this point, the following has **not** been understood.

- Why they were charged with being spies (Gen 42:9-11).
- Why they were required to bring back their younger brother, Benjamin (Gen 42:15-16).
- Why their money was returned in their sacks (Gen 42:35).
- Why they were being taken to Joseph's house (Gen 43:18).
- Why they were seated in the precise order of their birth (Gen 43:33).



**world.** The emphasis would be placed on His Father (Matt 3:17; 2 Pet 1:17; 2 John 1:3), and Him being the Firstborn of God's family (Rom 8:29; Heb 12:23).

### The Marvelous Capacity of the Human Mind

In this text, I cannot help but note the marvelous capacity of the human mind. This is owing to the Divine imagery in man. It is said of the mind of the redeemed, *"with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin"* (Rom 7:25). Those who

constant spiritual improvement.

In the case of Joseph, and before this event is completed, he will properly assess the past, evaluate and use the present correctly, and, considering the future, anticipate what the Lord will do. *"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good [THE PAST ASSESSED], to bring to pass, as it is this day [THE PRESENT PERCEIVED], to save much people alive"* [THE FUTURE DISCERNED] (Gen 50:20). What an all-encompassing statement!

## THE BROTHERS WERE SERVED

<sup>34A</sup> **And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs."**

Joseph sees to it that the meal is now served. He himself manages how and what is served.

### HE TOOK AND SENT MESSES

*"And he took and sent messes unto them from before him . . ."* Other versions read, *"Then he took servings to them from before him,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"Portions of food from Joseph's table were brought to them,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"they took their portions from him to*

*themselves"* <sup>SEPTUAGINT</sup> *"Portions were served them from his table,"* <sup>TNK</sup> *"he lifteth up gifts from before him unto them,"* <sup>YLT</sup> *"Their food was served to them from his own table."* <sup>LIVING</sup>

Three separated sections of people were eating: Joseph, the Egyptians, and the brothers of Joseph. **Considering the uniqueness of the ruler, one might think the brothers would receive their portions from their table of the Egyptians, who were servants to Joseph.** However, this is not what happened. The brothers received their portions from **the ruler's table**, which doubtless had the choicest foods and drinks upon it. No record is given of the

reaction of the Egyptians to this. In fact, they might not have known this. As when Jesus turned the water into wine, perhaps the servants who did the serving were the only ones who knew about the food distribution (John 2:9).

### A Type of Jesus

In this, we have a wonderful picture of the Lord Jesus Himself. Some people had Moses and the Prophets – and what Moses and the prophets had received from God was all that was given to them (Lk 16:29). However, notice how differently Jesus spoke to His disciples. *"All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall*



**show it unto you**" (John 16:15). In Jesus we receive from His table, being given His peace (John 14:27), his joy (John 15:11), His love (John 15:9-10), and His words (John 17:8).

#### FIVE TIMES AS MUCH

" . . . but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs." Other versions read, "Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs," <sup>NKJV</sup> "Benjamin's portion was five times as much," <sup>NASB</sup> "the portion for Benjamin was five times greater," <sup>NET</sup> "several times that of anyone else," <sup>TNK</sup> and "five hands more." <sup>YLT</sup>

➔ Two things can be seen here. First, the preeminent favor bestowed upon Benjamin. He was the only full-blood brother of Joseph, having the same father and the same mother as he. In this regard we also have a sterling

**So it is when men philosophize and speculate about the salvation of God. Such activity inevitably produces arguments and disagreements.**

example of the last becoming first (Mk 10:31).

➔ Secondly, this was doubtless a test – if not by Joseph, certainly by the Lord Himself. Would preference being given to one of them once again stir up envy, as it did with Joseph (Gen 37:11).

Of course, when we look at this from Benjamin's point of view, it was a

most blessed condition. So it is when men philosophize and speculate about the salvation of God. Such activity inevitably produces arguments and disagreements. However, when salvation is consider from the standpoint of those who are being saved and have **"tasted of the heavenly gift"** (Heb 6:5) – well, that is quite another story! The salvation of God, in all of its aspects, is not something that allows for the opinions of men.

## THEY WERE MERRY WITH HIM

<sup>34B</sup> **And they drank, and were merry with him.**" Other versions read, "they feasted and drank freely with him," <sup>NASB</sup> "they drank together and were at ease," <sup>CEB</sup> "drank and enjoyed themselves with him," <sup>CJB</sup> "They drank, and they got drunk with Joseph," <sup>CSB</sup> "they drank, and had of the best drink with him" <sup>GENEVA</sup> "they ate and drank with Joseph until they were drunk," <sup>GWN</sup> "drank with Joseph until they all became drunk," <sup>NET</sup> "drank their fill with him," <sup>TNK</sup> "they drink, yea, they drink abundantly with him," <sup>YLT</sup> "They had a wonderful time bantering back and forth, and the wine flowed freely," <sup>LIVING</sup> and "And they drank and became intoxicated with him." <sup>ABP</sup>

#### DID THEY ALL GET DRUNK?

Several versions represent this text as saying the brothers and Joseph drank until they were drunk (CSB, GWN, NET, ABP, ERV, GNB, GW, JUB, LITV).

Although the word translated "merry" can mean "drunk," it is not confined to that meaning. Lexically, the following meaning is given: "TO BECOME TIPSY; IN A QUALIFIED SENSE, TO SATIATE WITH A

STIMULATING DRINK OR (FIGURATIVELY) INFLUENCE: — (BE FILLED WITH) DRINK (ABUNDANTLY), (BE, MAKE) DRUNK(-EN), BE MERRY. <sup>STRONG'S</sup> It is translated "drink abundantly" (Song of Sol 5:2), and "filled with drink" (Hag 1:6). It is also represented as an obligation to drink, or being made to drink from the cup of God's indignation (Jer 49:15).

Although it does not add weight to the text, most commentators affirm here "merry" does not mean "drunk."

#### PULPIT COMMENTARY

" . . . THERE IS NO REASON TO SUPPOSE THAT EITHER JOSEPH OR HIS BRETHREN WERE INEBRIATED (VULGATE, ALFORD), OR THAT MORE IS MEANT THAN SIMPLY THAT THEIR HEARTS BECAME EXHILARATED "BECAUSE THEIR CARES WERE DISSIPATED BY THE KINDNESS THEY WERE RECEIVING, THE PRESENCE OF SIMEON, AND THE ATTENTION PAID TO BENJAMIN (MURPHY)."

#### JOHN GILL

" . . . AFTER DINNER THEY DRANK WINE LIBERALLY AND PLENTIFULLY, BUT NOT TO EXCESS AND INTEMPERANCE, YET SO AS TO BE CHEERFUL AND IN GOOD SPIRITS; THEIR FEARS BEING ALL DISSIPATED BY THIS GENEROUS ENTERTAINMENT THEY MET WITH.

#### JOHN CALVIN

"HERE, HOWEVER, NO INTEMPERANCE IS IMPLIED, (SO THAT DRUNKARDS MAY NOT PLEAD THE EXAMPLE OF THE HOLY FATHERS AS A PRETEXT FOR THEIR CRIME,) BUT AN HONORABLE AND MODERATE LIBERALITY. I ACKNOWLEDGE, INDEED, THAT THE WORD HAS A DOUBLE MEANING, AND IS OFTEN TAKEN IN AN ILL SENSE; AS IN GENESIS 9:21, AND IN SIMILAR PLACES: BUT IN THE PRESENT INSTANCE THE DESIGN OF MOSES IS CLEAR."

#### ALBERT BARNES

"THEY DRANK FREELY, SO AS TO BE EXHILARATED, BECAUSE THEIR CARES WERE DISSIPATED BY THE KINDNESS THEY WERE RECEIVING, THE PRESENCE OF SIMON, AND THE ATTENTION PAID TO BENJAMIN."

#### MATTHEW HENRY

"THEY DRANK AND WERE MERRY; THEIR CARES AND FEARS WERE NOW OVER, AND THEY ATE THEIR BREAD WITH JOY, CONCLUDING THEY WERE NOW UPON GOOD TERMS WITH THE MAN, THE LORD OF THE LAND."

But, I add one more consideration on this peripheral point. Immediately after they had eaten, Joseph **"commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put**

*every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken."* (Gen 44:1-2). They were then sent away the next morning (Gen 44:3).

Now, I maintain that those instructions could not have been given

by a drunken man.

- ➡ Fill the men's sacks with food.
- ➡ Give them as much as they can carry.
- ➡ Put every man's money in his sack.
- ➡ Put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest (Benjamin).

I conclude that being merry,

therefore, did not distort Joseph's thinking, and there is no reason to suppose it was not the same with the brothers. What is described in this text is what the Psalmist expressed: "*And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart*" (Psa 104:15). Joseph and his brothers were simply rejoicing.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 11/29/13. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The seventy-first lesson will cover verses 1 thru 34 of chapter 44: "JUDAH REASONS WITH JOSEPH." Joseph commands that their sacks be filled, their money returned in every man's sack, and that his silver cup be put in Benjamin's sack. As soon as it was morning the men were sent away. Before they had gone far, Joseph sent his steward after them and, after finding Joseph's cup, ask why they had rewarded evil for good. The brothers denied they had done anything wrong, and challenged the steward to make a search, If he found the ruler's cup, they said the man who had it would die, and they would be the ruler's bondman. The steward searched all of the men's sacks, beginning with their eldest and going down to the youngest. The men returned, and Judah reasoned extensively with Joseph. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.