

Through the Bible - Genesis 42-46

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores Joseph's journey from slavery to power and the themes of guilt, repentance, and God's providence during a time of famine.

Scripture: Genesis 42:1

Topics: "God's Providence", "Repentance"

Description

Chuck Smith discusses the story of Joseph in Genesis 42-46, focusing on how Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and prepares Egypt for a coming famine. He emphasizes Joseph's rise to power and the eventual reunion with his brothers, who initially sold him into slavery. The sermon highlights themes of repentance, God's providence, and the importance of recognizing God's hand in our lives, even in difficult circumstances. Smith draws parallels between Joseph's story and the future revelation of Christ to Israel, showcasing God's mercy and grace. Ultimately, he encourages believers to trust in God's plan and see beyond their immediate struggles.

Transcript

The Pharaoh in Egypt had had two dreams with similarities because they had one interpretation. The first dream involved the seven fat cows grazing by the river and seven lean cows rising up and eating up the fat cows and still being lean. And then a wheat with seven stalks or corn of wheat upon them and fat and full followed by seven lean blasted wheat. And the lean and blasted wheat ate up the fat wheat.

The dream bothered Pharaoh. He called for his wise men and his astrologers for an interpretation which they were not able to give. And at that time the Lord jolted the memory of the butler who two years earlier had had a dream in the prison that was interpreted by Joseph. And he informed the Pharaoh that there was a young Hebrew boy in prison who is able to interpret dreams.

And so Joseph was brought before the Pharaoh to interpret for him the meaning of the dreams. And Joseph said your dream is actually one. For the Lord has shown to the Pharaoh what is going to happen. There are going to be seven good years; years in which you're going to have a surplus, years in which there will be bumper crop. But they will be followed by seven very lean years, so lean that the drought of the seven years will eat up all of the surplus of the good years.

Now he said, "let the Pharaoh find a wise man within his kingdom that during the seven years of abundance he might gather together the surplus into barns and granaries and all of the cities of Egypt,

store it up so that when the lean years come, you'll be able to survive". And the Pharaoh said, "There is no wiser man than you in the kingdom because no one else was able to tell me what the dream means. So I make you second in command to me. Of all of those in Egypt, none will be greater than you except myself." And he puts Joseph in royal robes. He gave him his own royal chariot. As he would go down the street in his chariot the people would cry out, "Bow your knee". And the people thus did obeisance unto Joseph and he was exalted there in Egypt.

And during the seven good years he stored up in the granaries huge amounts of surplus. Actually used to be that the people gave ten percent of their crops to the king but they ordered them during this time to give twenty percent. And so a sort of taxation of twenty percent during these good years. And Joseph laid up so much wheat that they just left off counting it. They just didn't measure it anymore. It was just such a great abundance during the seven years. But then the seven lean years began. Now the famine or the drought that came was not local, that is, it extended beyond Egypt. And it extended into the area of Canaan where Jacob was living.

And as we come now into chapter forty-two:

Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, Why do you look one another, [why do you look at each other] (Gen 42:1)?

Now they heard there's plenty of corn down in Egypt. And the boys started looking at each other, probably guilty conscience. Egypt, yeah, that's where we sold Joseph to, you know. What if we go down there, what if we should see him as a slave? What would we do? What would be our reaction? We sold him as a slave and what if in going to Egypt we saw this guy laboring out in the field and, you know, being mastered over and, what would be the reaction? And probably just a little bit of a tinge as they thought of Egypt. They're looking at each other thinking, "Oh man", you know, "what would happen if", you know; that kind of a thing.

Jacob said, Why are you looking at each other?

He said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: now go down, and buy from there; that we may live, and not die (Gen 42:2).

And so Jacob is ordering his sons now to go on down to Egypt to buy the corn from Egypt.

And Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's full brother (Gen 42:3-4),

His brethren went down but Joseph's full brother Benjamin.

Jacob did not send with the brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him (Gen 42:4).

Now Rachel, the one that Jacob was dearly in love with, had two sons. I don't know that we can really fault Jacob too much for his love for Rachel. Leah was, you know, just put on him in a dirty switch by her dad. He had labored for Rachel and his great love was always for Rachel. It was really a dirty thing that Laban pulled on Joseph switching the bride at night, all veiled and all, so that he didn't even know who he was married to until the morning light. And he looked across the bed and instead of seeing Rachel, it was her sister. And he could not help but sort of resent the dirty trick. His love originally and always was first for Rachel.

So though Leah bore many sons, when Rachel finally bore him a son, the son of Rachel, the one he truly loved became a favored son in Joseph's eyes. He was the son of his wife who he truly loved. She also had a second son, Benjamin, but while she was in childbirth with Benjamin, she died. And so she first called him "Benoni", the child of my grief or sorrow and Jacob graciously changed his name to Benjamin. It would be a sad tag to put on a kid all his life, "son of sorrow". And so his dad changed the "son of my right hand". But he also loved Benjamin because of the fact that it was Rachel's son.

So when Joseph was sold by his brothers, Benjamin no doubt replaced Joseph in the affections of his father. And that place that Joseph once held was now held by Benjamin, a place of favoritism, a place of sheltering. He was the youngest son and as the youngest son had, of course, advantages of that which the youngest child so often has when all of the brothers and sisters are older. And then they come along; they're the baby of the family. And you usually by that time have more maturity in your raising your kids. You're easier on them; you don't crack the whips so hard. And so had that favored position now that was once held by Joseph.

So that when his brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain, Benjamin was kept home. You don't know what problems might befall you on a journey like that, about two hundred and sixty-five miles through wilderness area. And so Benjamin was kept home, "lest peradventure mischief should befall him." In case they got any trouble, at least he still has Benjamin there at home.

Now the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan (Gen 42:5).

So many people were coming down from Canaan to buy corn in Egypt or to buy wheat, actually.

And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land (Gen 42:6):

So Joseph was over the land and it seems that when you would come from another country, that you had to sort of clear through Joseph in order to buy your wheat.

and so Joseph's brothers came, and they bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brothers, and he knew them, but he made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Where are you come from? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brothers, but they knew him not (Gen 42:6-8).

Now no doubt when they bowed down before him, his mind flashed back to his dreams. His dreams that had made his brothers so mad. When he was at home he said to his brothers, "I had a dream last night. I dreamed that we were all out in the field and we were binding our sheaves and my sheaves of wheat stood upright and yours all bowed down to mine". Oh, did they get mad! "Bow down to you, you runt, no way", you know. And now here is Joseph and he sees his brothers all bowing down and probably a flashback on that dream that he had had.

It was twenty-one years since his brothers had seen him. He was only seventeen years old when they sold him to the caravan going to Egypt and now it is twenty-one years later, he is thirty-eight years old. He has matured. He is dressed as the Egyptians. And they just didn't recognize him. Who would expect to see their brother, you know, in this position in Egypt anyhow? And so he made himself strange to them and though he recognized them. He has the advantage. He recognized them but they didn't recognize him.

And Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed of them, and he said to them, You are spies; you've come to see the nakedness of the land. And they said unto him, Oh no, my lord, but to buy food that's why we have come. We're all one man's sons; we are true men, the servants, thy servants are really not spies. And he said unto them, Oh no, to see the nakedness of the land is the reason why you've come. And they said, Thy servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. And Joseph said unto them, That's it, I've said it unto you from the beginning, You are spies (Gen 42:9-14):

And so he's just really giving them a rough time, you know, as they are there and he said.

Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh you will not go from here, except your youngest brother come on down (Gen 42:15).

In other words, we'll send one of you back to get him and you're going to have to bring him down before I let you go from here.

And so we'll,

Send one of you, let him fetch your brother, and you will be kept in prison, that we may prove your words, whether there's any truth in what you have to say: or else by the life of Pharaoh you are surely spies. And so he put them all in jail for three days (Gen 42:16-17).

Now they had not had much mercy on him. They had thrown him in the pit and he had spent a lot of time in jail because of what they had done to him. And so he figured a few days in jail won't hurt them, you know, they caused me to experience several years in that jail. And so he just acted tough and rough to them and accused them of being spies. Finally just threw them in jail.

And Joseph after three days said unto them, I'll tell you what, this you can do, and live; for I fear God (Gen 42:18):

Now it is interesting as part of his disguise he was swearing by Pharaoh. You know, I swear by Pharaoh you're not going to see me and all. But now he calls them. He says, "Look, I fear God".

And if you are true men, let one of your brothers be bound in the house of your prison: and you go, and carry corn for the families of your houses: But bring your youngest brother unto me; and thus your words will be verified, and ye shall not die. And so they did. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he begged us, and we wouldn't listen; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them and said, Didn't I tell you don't sin against the child; and you wouldn't listen to me? therefore, behold, also his blood is required (Gen 42:19-22).

You know time of recrimination. "I told you so. Why didn't you listen to me?" You know. "Didn't I tell you?" But it is interesting that twenty-one years later they are still feeling the guilt of their misdeed. You cannot cover guilt. Your guilt will out. Sooner or later your guilt is going to out. A guilty conscience is something that continues to nag.

The US Treasury Department has what they call "The Conscience Fund". Every year they receive thousands of dollars, not checks because it's sent in anonymously. People who have cheated on their taxes and they feel guilty and so they send in the amount to cover that which they cheated the

government. And they just have what they call "The Conscience Fund".

They say that neurotic behavior patterns are often subconscious desires or created by subconscious desires for punishment. I know I have done wrong. I have this sense of guilt. I desire to be punished. I'm too big, my dad isn't around anymore to take me into the other room and to relieve me of my guilt complex. And so I start some weird little behavioral pattern, an anti-social kind of a behavior pattern where people start saying, "What's the matter with him? Man, he's crude". And I hear them saying these things and I think, "Aha, yes, I'm being punished now", you know, and it gives me a sense of relief from guilt. Guilt will out in neurotic behavior or somewhere or other, guilt is going to out.

Twenty-one years they carried the guilt of what they had done to Joseph and now when they are really in trouble, what do they think about? When they are really in a tight place, what do they think about? We did wrong to our brother. We didn't listen to him when he was begging with us and asking us and pleading with us to, you know, to not sell him and all. Oh, we did wrong.

Now Joseph can understand what they're saying. They don't know that he can, but he understands everything they're saying and he's probably learning a lot about the whole conspiracy. As Reuben says, "Yeah, didn't I tell you not to hurt the kid and you wouldn't listen to me" and all? "I told you don't lay your hand on him." And thus he realizes, "hey, Reuben was standing up for me". And perhaps Reuben was looking at Simeon when he said it. Somehow or other, Joseph got the idea, and of course he was there when the thing happened, too, and he could hear them talking above the pit when he was down inside, and no doubt Simeon was sort of the henchman in the whole thing.

Now Simeon was cruel. He was hot-tempered and cruel. Later on as Jacob was giving the patriarchal-kind of prophecies over his son, he said to Simeon, "Cursed be thy cruelty." So Joseph chose Simeon to stay in jail while the brothers took the corn on back to their father.

Now Joseph, of course, was concerned with his father's welfare and the family welfare. He knew that the famine was going on and he didn't want them to run out of food and so after the three days of letting them all sit in jail, he called them out and he said, "I'll just keep one of you as hostage. The rest of you go on back and take the supplies back for your families and all. But don't bother to come again unless you bring your youngest brother."

They didn't know [verse twenty-three] that Joseph could understand them; for he spoke unto them through an interpreter. And so he turned himself about from them, and cried (Gen 42:23-24);

Actually he couldn't take it. He heard them talking saying, "Oh, you should have listened to me. Oh, don't you remember the way he was begging", and all. And talking about Joseph and realized that they were now really repenting for what they had done to him. I believe that this whole thing of Joseph's was a design to really test his brothers to find out where they really were after this length of time.

Joseph knew that the purposes of God were to be accomplished through these boys. That God's providential plan was all wrapped up in this family. Jacob had no doubt shared with Joseph many times the visions that he had had and the dreams that he had and God speaking with him and telling him the destiny of the family. That the nation was going to come forth from them and the various tribes from each of the brothers and knowing God's destiny was involved with these boys.

He was wondering, "Are they now ready for God to work in them?" And really just sort of putting them unto the test. And here's the first sign that things have changed; there's a repentance here. "We did wrong", a confession of their sins, no longer an attempt to justify it.

The Bible says "he who seeks to cover his sins shall not prosper but whoso confesseth his sin shall be saved". We many times make a mistake in trying to justify or cover our guilt. It's not until we come to the confession that we can really get rid of it. "As we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

And so here is a confession of sin, here is a repentance of sin, they are good signs.

Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with wheat, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for their ways: and thus he did unto them. And as they laded down their asses with the wheat, they departed. And as one of them opened his sack to give provender to his donkey in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in the sack's mouth. And he said to his brothers, My money is here in the sack: and their hearts failed them, for they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God has done unto us (Gen 42:25-28)?

I imagine that Joseph had a sense of humor, too. And he just knew, you know, what this is going to do to them when they open their sacks and they find their money that is there.

And so they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, and they told him all of the things that had happened: saying, The man, who is the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us, and he took us as spies. But we told him that we were just true men; we weren't spies: That we were twelve brothers, sons of our father; and one was not, and the youngest was still with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that you are true men; leave one of your brethren here, and you take the food for the famine for your households, and be gone: And bring your youngest brother unto me: and then I will know that you are not spies, but that you are true men: and so will I deliver your brother, and ye shall be able to come and go in the land. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid (Gen 42:29-35).

Jacob figured that the boys had ripped them off and was really shook now over this whole affair. And so at this point,

Jacob their father said unto them, Me have you bereaved of my children (Gen 42:36):

I wonder if Jacob began to--suspicion something concerning Joseph by this point. And he is accusing them of bereaving him of his children.

Joseph is not, Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me (Gen 42:36).

Jacob allowed fear to come in his heart because he was looking at the outward circumstances. He saw the money in the boys' sacks. He heard their story of the roughness of the lord of Egypt. He heard the demand made by the lord of Egypt. And because of fear taking over, he despaired.

Fear usually leads to despair. And when you despair, you often do foolish things. First of all, he lashed out against his own sons. When a person has come to a point of despair, quite often he'll lash out at his own friends. It's hard to go to comfort a person who has come to the point of despair because a lot of times

they get to the place they don't even want to be comforted. And if you go to say some kind words, they'll just snap at you and they'll just, you know, come right back at you because in despair you do foolish things. Because of his despair, he exaggerated his situation. And it is interesting that when we become filled with despair or fear, fear has a way of exaggerating a situation.

When we were first pastoring, well our second church, we were pastoring in Tucson and we were hardly more than kids; I was in my early twenties. And we were having a meeting with our youth leaders where we were going to lay out our plans for our youth program, because this is what we've been taught to do. And so we had a couple girls that were twins. They were real rowdies. They were spoiled and they have been used to sort of running things. And so they sort of got a conspiracy of, you know, and time for the meeting to start and they just--before the meeting should start, took off and went up to the drugstore to buy some chewing gum 'cause they were always popping gum.

And so I figured, "All right, young ladies, I'm not going to just sit here and wait for you to get back. I'm going to teach you when 7:30 comes and we've called a meeting for 7:30, we want to start at 7:30. So I called one of the fellows that was there and I said, "Let's go up to the drugstore". And just about half a block from the drugstore, there was one of these in Tucson they have these rain runoff areas they called washes and the wash came under the road. And there was a corrugated pipe that ran under the road and so we went and hid in this wash. And as the girls got to the wash, I said, "Grab 'em". And I took a big boulder and I rolled it down this corrugated pipe underneath the road and it rumbled, you know, and these girls screamed and took off across the street running and screaming.

Well, the other fellow and I headed back to the church real quick and we just sat down in the room like we were waiting for them. And pretty soon a police car came up and let the girls out and they came in and told us their story; how that at least fifteen guys tried to grab them and they went on with their wild story, you know. But their fear magnified the whole thing tremendously. It's amazing how fear can exaggerate a situation.

And so Jacob's account was an exaggerated account, as fear so often exaggerates the problem. "All things are against me." Oh, that isn't so. It just looked like all things were against him. But we should never measure the problem by that which we can see. That was his mistake.

Paul said we don't "look at those things which are seen, but the things which are not seen: the things that you're seeing are temporal; the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Jacob, that isn't true. All things are not against you. In fact, Jacob, if you only knew the whole truth, instead of crying out in despair and fear, you would be rejoicing and jumping up and down if you only knew the whole story. Despair so often comes from just half of the truth. Just that which I can see and not taking God into account. It's when I take God into account that I begin to endure and have that staying quality and fear begins to subside when I consider God is on the throne. God is still working. God hasn't abandoned me. And then I can have confidence.

But the cry, "All things are against me", it was a false cry based upon fragmentary knowledge. The Bible tells us that all things are not against us. The Bible tells us that "all things are working together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). All things. What do "all things" include? "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Famine, persecution, nakedness, peril, sword? Nay, in all these things"(Romans 8:35).

These things may include famine. They may include nakedness. They may include peril. They may include sword. But if I have to endure these kinds of afflictions, whatever comes it's working together for good because I love God and they cannot separate me from the love of God. For "in all these things I am more than a conqueror through Him who loves me. For I am persuaded, that neither depth, nor height, nor principalities, nor angels, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, is able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:37-39).

Do you have that kind of confidence in God's love tonight? If you do, you are a happy, peaceful man. I am so persuaded of God's love. I'm so persuaded of God's plan. I'm so persuaded of God's overruling providential care of my life, that I do not fear of what might happen to me or anything else. Because whatever comes it can only come to me as God allows it to come. And God loves me and He'll only allow those things to come that can work out to my good. He won't allow anything that would come that would destroy me, only those things that will work out for my good will God allow to come to me.

I have that kind of confidence in God and thus I am persuaded that in all of these things I can be more than a conqueror because God loves me. And if you have that kind of confidence in God's love, you can go through the darkest night and it's life about you because of His love and that confidence that He gives.

So Jacob's cry was a false cry. It was a cry that was based upon fragmentary knowledge. "All things are against me." That isn't true. Jacob, if you only knew the whole truth instead of crying out in despair, you would be rejoicing in victory. How many times do we cry out in despair and moan and complain unto God when God says, "Oh, if you only knew what I was doing. Wait; let Me finish this story. Let Me finish this chapter." The end comes out good. It's just a beautiful mystery. "But wait until the whole thing unravels and you're going to be so excited over the good plan that I have." But oh, think of the hassle God has to go through to get us there.

Oh, I don't think You love me anymore, God. I don't know about--I don't know if I'll serve You or not. If You can do this to me, I don't know. I think maybe I'll just quit and all. God has to go through all this guff and mouthing off and hassle that we give to Him as He's trying to do something good for us. Sometimes I feel sorry for God. The things He has to endure in order to show His goodness to us, all of the accusations and all that we cast upon Him. And all the while in His mind, He is thinking good and He sees the good fruit and the good results that's going to come.

Here's Jacob. "All things are against me." And complaining. And he doesn't know, he doesn't know the whole story.

So Reuben spoke unto his father, and he said, Kill my two sons, if I bring him not to thee (Gen 42:37):

In other words, you know, Benjamin is not going to go down. I won't let him go. He said, "Hey, kill my two sons if I don't bring him back". Now what good will that do? That's sort of a stupid thing to say but Reuben was unstable as water. He just didn't have very much smarts anyhow. And so he makes this kind of a rash thing, a statement. What comfort would that be to a grandfather to kill his two grandkids? You know, it's just you want to say something but that's the danger of saying something when just for the sake of saying something. Better that you have something to say. "Slay my two sons if I bring him not to thee."

deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to you again. And Jacob said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, he is left alone: and if mischief would befall him by the way in the which you go, then you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave (Gen 42:37-38).

Chapter 43

So that was it. But time went on. The famine continued and they used up all of the grain that they had purchased in Egypt.

And so it came to pass, when they had eaten up the wheat which they had bought, their father said to them, Go on down and get us a little food. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly swear to us, saying, You're not going to even see my face, unless your brother is with you. Now if you will send our brother with us, we'll go down and buy the food: But if you will not send him, we'll not go down: for the man said unto us, You're not going to see my face, unless your brother is with you (Gen 43:2-5).

Judah is just squaring off with his dad now and saying, "Hey, look, you don't understand that guy down there. He meant it. He swore to us. He's mean. He's rough. And if you want to send your son, fine. We'll go. If you don't want to send him, then no way are we going to go down there and face that guy again 'cause he swore to us we're not going to see his face unless we have our brother."

So Israel said, Why did you deal with me like this, why did you tell the man that you had a brother? And they said, The man asked us plainly how our dad was, and if we had any other brothers at home. And he said, what could we do? We didn't know he was going to say bring your brother down here (Gen 43:6-7).

If you've ever seen these people and their arguments, it must have been a very animated thing. They can't even trade sheep with a lot without a lot of screaming and yelling and waving of hands and the whole thing. You think they're going to kill each other. You're waiting for them to pull their knives as they're bartering over sheep. And so here was a real issue. Oh, it would have been fun to have seen them going through this one as they were really going at it with each other.

And so 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 you, and our little ones. And I will be surety for him; of my hand you will require him: and if I bring him not to you again, and set him before you, then let me bear the blame for ever: Now look, if we hadn't lingered so long, we could have been back already (Gen 43:8-10).

In other words, you know, we're getting low. It's time we go. We've been messing around too long. We could have been back by now if we hadn't had all this hassle. So I'll be the surety for him. I'll take full responsibility. If I don't bring him back to you, then require it at my hand.

And so their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this (Gen 43:11);

But then Jacob still the old schemer. You know, the wise old shrewd Jacob. He said,

Now take of the best fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down to the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, and some spices, and myrrh, and nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight (Gen 43:11-12):

So Jacob being the shrewd fellow that he was sends now some presents and all to the man in Egypt to sort of, you know, appease him and to cause him to think well of them. And then double money, plus the money that was returned in their sacks; in case that it was an oversight that they put it in the sacks.

And take also your brother, and arise, and go again unto the man: and God Almighty (Gen 43:13-14)

Using now the covenant name of God, El Shaddai , God Almighty.

give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. And if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved (Gen 43:14).

Jacob had to come to that place of a commitment. It's more or less the same commitment of Esther, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16). If that's the way, you know, if I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved. It's the facing of your circumstances as you commit yourself to God. All right, we'll just trust in God Almighty to have the man give mercy unto you and if I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved. Facing up to the facts of life.

That's a position that many people just can't come to. They refuse to face up to the facts of life. They refuse to accept things. They continue to fight. But there comes a time when what can you do? You've just got to take and commit yourself into God's hands and say, "Well, whatever; it's in God's hands. And whatever comes, I just am going to have to accept it because I belong to Him and my life belongs to Him and thus, whatever happens I just must accept it."

And so Jacob came to this place of commitment. It is an important place to come. And notice when he came to this place of commitment, they didn't call him Jacob but they called him Israel, governed by God. Okay, this is it. I'm Israel again. It's interesting how he jumped from Jacob to Israel and Israel to Jacob. He had his moment. Jacob said, "Now take a little fruit" and on and on and on. And Israel said, "Well, if I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved". I mean, it's that difference of taking things into my own hands and then committing my ways unto God. Now God Almighty give you mercy, if I'm bereaved, I'm bereaved.

And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and they rose up, and went down to Egypt, and they stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready a feast; for these men will dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bid him; and the man brought Joseph's brothers into his house. And the men [that is, Joseph's brothers] were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was in our sacks at the first time we've been brought in; that he might seek an occasion against us, and fall on us, and take us all for his slave (Gen 43:15-18).

So they start figuring out, you know. They start fearing again. "Oh-oh, it's because of the money in the sacks. Now he's just going to take us to his house and then he's going to accuse us and just make slaves out of all of us."

And so they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, and they said, Sir, we came indeed down the first time to buy food: and it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that when we opened our sacks, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we've brought it again in our hands. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. And the steward said, Peace be unto you, don't be afraid: your God, and the God of your fathers, has given you treasure in your sacks: I have your money. And so he brought Simeon out to them (Gen 43:19-23).

Now the mystery thickens. You know, they figured they had it all figured out, they thought. It's because of money and all. And the guy says, "What are you talking about? I've got your money. Your God must have given you some treasure. I don't know. I've got your money." And so it immediately dispels what they had figured out and so must be something else.

And so they made ready the present to give to Joseph as he came in at noon: for they heard that he was going to eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand, and they bowed themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, he said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he still alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is still alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance (Gen 43:25-28).

So they were just bowing down before him and doing this obeisance.

And he lifted up his eyes, and he saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and he said, Is this your younger brother, of whom you spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son (Gen 43:29).

Actually he was starting getting carried away now. He said, "Is this the brother?" Before they could answer, say "yeah", he said, "God be gracious unto thee, my son". Again sort of carrying off a thing, not that I'm your older brother, sort of a father and you're still a kid kind of a thing. "And God be gracious unto you, my son."

But Joseph made haste; for within him he was yearning to just grab his brother and hug him: and he sought where to weep; and so he entered into his chamber, and wept there (Gen 43:30).

He just couldn't take it. Emotions were just ripping him up. Here's his brother Benjamin. He thought he'd never see him again and here he is. Oh, he yearns so much to just take hold of him and grab him and all. And he just started weeping and so he turned and ran out of the room into his own private chamber. And he just wept for the joy and the excitement of the reunion.

And so he washed his face, and he went out, and he was able to control himself, and he said, Set on the bread. And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves (Gen 43:31-32):

So there were three tables. Joseph because of his position had his own table by himself. The Egyptians that were eating there had their separate table and his brothers had their separate table because the Egyptians did not want,

it was an abomination for them to eat with the Hebrew. And so they sat before him, and so they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled at one another (Gen 43:32-33).

So he set them in order around the table from the oldest right around to the youngest. And they noticed that he had set them in the order of their birth. And they marvelled because there was only one chance in thirty-nine million, nine hundred and seventeen thousand that this could have happened. You can figure that out mathematically. The chances of laying all ten in order to their birth only one in about forty million; thirty-nine million, nine hundred and seventeen thousand. So the mathematical probabilities are really against his doing it. So they're looking around saying, "Wow, what's going on here?" All set in order to our birth around the table from the oldest to the youngest.

Chapter 44

And so he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks (Gen 44:1)

Well, let's see. "And he sat them before him according to birthright."

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 43:34).

So they had a big party and they were merry. But he showed favoritism towards Benjamin. Sort of like family, you eat more than all the rest. And so he gave to Benjamin five times the portion that he gave to his other brothers. "And he 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 the sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his wheat money also. And the steward did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. And as soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. And when they were gone out of the city, they were not yet very far off, Joseph said to his steward, Up, and follow after the men; and when you overtake them, say unto them, Why have you rewarded evil for good? Is not this in it which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? And you have done evil in so doing (Gen 44:1-5).

In other words, the steward was to follow them and say, "Hey, you guys, he did you a favor, he was kind to you. You ate in his house. Why would you rip off his silver cup? Don't you know this was his divining cup?"

Now the Egyptians were very skillful in the arts of magic. In fact, they still have some of the ancient books of the magic of Egypt and so forth. And you remember at the time of Moses when he went in before the Pharaoh, the Pharaoh had his Egyptians that were able to pull off some pretty shrewd tricks. And so they were gifted in arts of magic and one of the things that they have were divining cups made of pieces of silver and gold. And it was sort of like reading the dregs in the cups, like tea leaves are read and so forth. And so Joseph said, "Hey, you". They were accused of stealing his divining cup, his silver cup. "Don't you know that he divineth in that thing?"

And so the steward went out and he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. And he said unto them, Why saith my lord (Gen 44:6-7).

And so they said,

Why saith my these words? God forbid that your servants should do according to this thing: Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought it again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: why should we steal out of my lord's house silver or gold (Gen 44:7-8)?

So the brothers are protesting. "Hey, we haven't stolen anything. What do you mean? Why would we want to do that? We brought back the money that was in our sacks the first time and we have no intention of ripping off your master."

With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondsmen. And so he said, [All right], let it be according to your words: with him with whom it is found he will be the servant; and you will all be blameless (Gen 44:9-10).

In other words, they all promised to be bondsmen and kill the one that you find it with. They said, "No, we'll take you at your word but we'll just let the one that we find it with, let him be the servant. The rest of you are blameless. You can go on home." Joseph was trying to keep his younger brother down there that he might have a great time with him and let him know who he was.

And so they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and he opened every man his sack. And they searched, and they began with the eldest, and they finished with the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. And they tore their clothes, every one of them and they loaded back up their donkeys, and they returned to the city. And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was still there: and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that you have done? Don't you know that such a man as I can divine (Gen 44:11-15)?

You think you could get away with that? Don't you realize that the position I'm in I'm able to divine these things? You know, I'm able to see these things that are taking place and all.

And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? How can we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and also him with whom the cup is found (Gen 44:16).

Judah is saying, "Hey, what can I say? How can I clear myself? God has found us out." In other words, the iniquity. Again going back to their selling of their brother Joseph. Now they had the bags of silver that they have brought down the first time, ten brothers. They came, they had come back with that silver plus more silver. The ten brothers that came back again because Simeon was still there, twenty sacks of silver. I wonder if that maybe rang a bell. They had sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver. And so they said, "What can we say? Our iniquity has been found out. We can't clear ourselves. And so we'll be your servants and the boy here will just be your servant."

And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he'll be my servant; and as for the rest of you, go in peace back to your father (Gen 44:17).

I believe that Joseph is still testing. I believe that he is really anxious to see what their attitude is, their true attitude towards Benjamin. Are they jealous of Benjamin, as they were jealous of Joseph? Would they like to get rid of Benjamin like they got rid of Joseph? Does that deep jealousy still burn in their hearts? If it does, how can the purposes of God ever be accomplished through them? And I believe that Joseph is just really testing his brothers at this point to see the attitude that they have towards Benjamin.

I think the whole thing was set up by Joseph. He wants to see, "are they willing to dump him?" You see, here's an easy opportunity. All right, we'll go home and you know, you just keep the little guy and we got rid of the other brother that was a trial to us and now we get rid of Benjamin. Now we all inherit the old man's goods. And so the old man dies, we become the heirs anyhow. So sure, keep him.

Testing their attitude to see if time has changed their attitude. Now he has already received the confession of guilt from them. This is a good sign. "Our iniquity has caught up with us." And here they're saying, "Hey, we'll all be your servants". And he says, "No, no, you don't have to all be my servants, just the one with whom we found the cup. The rest of you go on back in peace."

Then Judah came near unto him, and he said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for you're even as Pharaoh (Gen 44:18).

You're as great as Pharaoh.

My lord asked his servants, saying, Have you a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him (Gen 44:19-20).

You see, the love that was that he had for Joseph was now being lavished upon Benjamin. Did they hate Benjamin for it? Did they have the same animosity towards Benjamin?

And you said unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set my eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die. But you said unto your servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, you're not going to even see my face again. And so it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We can't go down: if our youngest brother is not with us, then we will go down: for we pray for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. So thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bore me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: and if you take this also from me, and mischief befalls him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; It shall come to pass, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not again unto thee, then I will bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad not be with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come upon my father (Gen 44:21-34).

And so Judah, beautiful intercession. An offering to take the place of Benjamin. Oh, what a change of attitude and a change of heart. Notice how he speaks of the love of Jacob for Benjamin. Our father's life is bound up in this kid. And if we don't bring him again, our father will just die. It'll bring the death to my father and it shows a love still for the ancient Jacob that Judah had and it shows really no animosity at all. Willing to take the place of Benjamin in becoming a bondman instead of Benjamin. The final test is being passed. Joseph now knows that the brothers truly have repented. He now knows that the feelings of bitterness and animosity are gone. He knows that that's all in the past. And they are passing the test royally; Judah offering to take the place, to take the guilt and to suffer in the place.

Now it is interesting that from Judah Christ was to come. The Lion of the tribe of Judah who offered to take our guilt and our place and took our punishment for us. Here Judah offering to do that for his brother.

Chapter 45

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before them that stood by him; and he cried and he said, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard him (Gen 45:1-2).

Actually he said, "Get out of here all you Egyptians". And then he let his brothers know who he was and he was crying just aloud, saying, "I'm Joseph, I'm Joseph". And they were standing outside the door; they all heard him. And they ran to Pharaoh and they said, "Hey, Joseph's brothers are here, having a big party, a reunion and all".

And Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph; does my father still live? And his brothers couldn't answer him; they were speechless, they were troubled at his presence (Gen 45:3).

It wasn't such a happy occasion for them yet. They didn't know what he was going to do.

And Joseph said to his brothers, Come near to me, I pray you. And so they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold to Egypt. Now therefore don't be grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me: for God did send me before you to preserve life (Gen 45:4-5).

Don't be grieved. Don't be upset with yourselves because you sold me, God's hand was in it all.

We should never be upset with secondary causes that God uses to bring His primary purposes into our lives. Their selling of him was a secondary cause. "Don't be grieved over that. Hey, don't you realize God's hand was in the whole thing? He sent me down here in order to preserve the family." Joseph could see he had the advantage of hindsight, he could see how God's hand was in this whole thing. "God sent me before you. Don't be upset over yourselves and grieve."

For these two years have the famine been in the land: but there's going to be five more years, in which there will be neither earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives alive by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me here, but God: and he has made me a father to the Pharaoh (Gen 45:6-8),

Man, it's far out what I've got down here, you know. And God's done it. You didn't do this. God is the One that did this. Seeing the providential hand of God in the whole experience. Oh, how glorious when we can see beyond secondary causes and see the hand of God's providence working in all of the circumstances of our lives. "You didn't do this, God did it. And God just sent me down to providentially spare the family."

Now hurry, and go back to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith your son Joseph, God has made me the lord of all Egypt: come down and don't waste any time: And you will dwell in the land of Goshen, you and all will be near me, and all your children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that you have: And I will there nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest you, and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty (Gen 45:9-11).

Five years more could wipe him out. So come on down. I'll take care of you. I'll nourish you. You'll be near me and all.

And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, you can see that it's my mouth that's speaking to you. And tell my father of my glory in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and ye shall make haste and bring down my father. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and he wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. And moreover he kissed all of his brothers, and wept on them: and after that his brothers talked to him (Gen 45:12-15).

Finally, they said, "Well, I guess the guy's serious". He's crying and weeping and he doesn't intend us harm and so they were finally able to speak. They were so shocked. It was just a wipe out. They didn't know what had happened to Joseph. And now all of a sudden here is a guy. He's the lord in Egypt and all. "I'm Joseph, I'm your brother. You can see it's me. It's my mouth. I'm talking to you, man." And they just were wiped out over the whole experience. They just could hardly answer.

Now in this you remember Jesus said to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, He said, "Are you blind? Do you not understand the scriptures?" And He began with Moses and went all the way through and showed them where the scriptures spoke of Christ. To the Pharisees He said, "You do search the scriptures, in them you think you have life. But actually they testify of Me." Now the scriptures testify of Christ plainly and then in allegories and in analogies and in types and in various ways. The scriptures

testify about Jesus Christ.

And Joseph as we pointed out before is a beautiful type of Christ. A type of Christ being sold, rejected by his brothers. They refused him. They rejected him and sold him into slavery. But now at their second coming, he makes himself known to them. He's revealed at the second coming who he really is. And as He is revealed unto them, He has great mercy upon them.

The Bible tells us that when Jesus comes again, that the Jews--it says they are going to look on Him whom they have pierced. They're going to weep and travail over what they have done. How could we have rejected our Messiah? How could we have rejected God's plan? And they will look upon him whom they have pierced. They said, "What are the meaning of those wounds in your hands?"

And rather than being vindictive and all, He said, "These are the wounds that I received in the house of my friends". But He's going to receive them. There's going to be a glorious acceptance of the Messiah and Christ accepting them and the grace and the mercy that He'll bestow upon them. And the riches of God's grace that shall be bestowed upon these people when they are brought back again and they receive the gracious forgiveness of their Brother whom they rejected, whom they despised, whom they destroyed.

And so Joseph's revealing of himself as a type of the future when Christ will come again to the nation Israel and will reveal Himself to them and they will recognize Him in truth and will be accepted and forgiven. The whole thing is just a beautiful picture of that which is yet future. Now go tell your dad, my dad, all the things God has done for me. Tell him how I'm lord down here in Egypt. I rule over the country and man, I just really have it made.

And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, as they said, Joseph's brothers are come: and it pleased the Pharaoh well, and his servants. And the Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto your brothers, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get unto the land of Canaan; And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat of the fat of the land. Now command this; that you take wagons out of Egypt for the little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also don't worry about your stuff (Gen 45:16-20);

Your utensils and all.

for the good of the land of Egypt is yours (Gen 45:20).

We'll replace anything you've got to leave.

And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and he gave them provision for the way. And to all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but unto Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner; ten donkeys loaded down with the good things of Egypt, ten she donkeys laden down with wheat and bread and meat for his father by the way (Gen 45:21-23).

His father had sent down a few little bits of dried fruit and some almonds and all. And so Joseph loads down twenty donkeys and sends it back full of stuff for his dad.

So he his brothers departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way (Gen 45:24).

In other words, have a safe journey.

And they went up out of Egypt, and they came into the land of Canaan and Jacob their father, and they told him, saying, Joseph is still alive, he is the governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not (Gen 45:25-26).

He thought, "Oh, come on, what are you guys come to now?" And he was just weakened by the words that they say. It just sort of wiped out.

And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived (Gen 45:27):

The spirit of Jacob. He saw all the loot and the spirit of Jacob revived. But it ends,

And Israel said, It's enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die (Gen 45:28).

And so in the next chapters we find the glorious reunion of the father and the son down in Egypt, and we'll finish the book of Genesis next Sunday night. So read on ahead; the story gets exciting and I'm sure you'll enjoy it thoroughly.

Shall we stand? May the Lord be with you and watch over you through the week. And may you experience the hand of God upon your life and may you recognize the work of God in your life, not just in the blessed things, in the good things, but even in the adverse things.

And may you realize that truly all things are working together for good to those who love God. And thus, as we walk according to His purpose, help us that we might accept, as from God the adverse secondary causes that are bringing to pass God's primary will within our lives. And may we see beyond the obvious. May we see those things, which are not seen by the normal person; God's hand working in and behind the scenes of our lives to bring forth His will, His plan. God bless you and watch over you and keep you in Jesus' love.

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