

## In the Beginning

### Genesis 43:1-34

- After twenty years in Egypt Joseph is reunited with his brothers, the question is will it be a happy reunion or a painful reunion? Joseph upon seeing them instantly recognized who they were but they didn't know that it was Joseph who has been put in charge of feeding all of Egypt and the surrounding region, thus fulfilling a long ago and forgotten prophecy made in **Gen 37:7**.

#### V1-34

- **V1-2** upon meeting Joseph the brothers just think he is some tyrant that Pharaoh has placed over the grain who takes pleasure in making everyone's life miserable. Of course their not thinking or looking at the situation through the spiritual but only in the natural, and so after journeying to Egypt and coming back with food they stay in their encampment until the food is gone and that's when Jacob asks them to once again go back to get more.
- Remember Simeon was still in Egypt having been kept there by Joseph to ensure that they would come back and this time bring Benjamin with them. But they're not told to go back to get their brother in fact the only reason given for their return to Egypt was that they had run out of food, this proves once again that they hadn't learned to watch out for others just themselves.
- You can say well its their father Jacob who was keeping them back from rescuing Simeon, since it was Jacob who said in **Gen 42:38** > " that he would not send Benjamin to Egypt for "**Simeon**", but as we've seen the brothers don't always listen to their father when its something that they want to do, case in point after their sister Dinah was raped and then given to the King's son as bride what did they do? Stand pat and listen to their father? Absolutely not!
- They plotted an elaborate scheme that tricked the men into getting circumcised which immobilized them for three days, rendering them unable to defend themselves. Afterward the brothers went through the city of Shechem slaughtering the men and taking the women and children as captives, and when Jacob voiced his displeasure at their actions, instead of saying father were sorry for disobeying you they said > "**Shall we let our sister be treated as a harlot**".
- This is selfishness all the way around, its selfish on the dad's part as he's unwilling to risk one son who is his favorite in order to save another son, and instead of going to God for wisdom and guidance he has already made up his mind "**what this is**" and "**what he is going to do about it**". Sadly both of them are wrong > **Gen 42:36** – Jacob the heel catcher declares "**all these things are against me**" translation "**everything is against me**" God your doing this to kill me!
- But God has delivered "**Jacob**" from being heel catcher, schemer, and turned him into "**Israel**" governed by God, but it's not "**Israel**" that's declaring this its "**Jacob**". People when we go back and forth from our old nature to our new nature all that does is bring about confusion-chaos > **Jam 1:5-8**- Jacob has become "**double minded**" all he's thinking about is self preservation.

- Instead of seeking the will of God and what the Lord wants to do in the situation, he's thinking how best to avoid being hurt or disappointed > **42:36**- he says "**you've bereaved me**", you've hurt me, you've saddened me, you've disappointed me, so I have to protect myself from ever feeling this way again, and when we put up walls like this, not only do we block out others, but also we keep ourselves from truly hearing from God, and that's what's happened to Jacob.
- **V3-7** Judah reminds Jacob that they were not to return unless they brought Benjamin with them, Jacob who has been living in his own private dream world while everyone around him suffer, tells them that they handled the situation wrong by telling the man that they had another brother, and they tell Jacob that he asked us as if he already knew, because he did.
- **V8-10** now you see a little light shining in as to what God wanted to do in the brother's heart, Judah who previously was the one who proposed to sell Joseph to slave handlers in the first place > **Gen 37:26-27**, now puts his own life on the line and offers himself as surety for a guarantee for Benjamin, this is the first good thing we see that Judah did.
- **V11-14** Jacob relents but not in faith > "**if it must be so**" "**if I am bereaved, I am bereaved**" the only time he uses the Lord's name is to complain how sad God has made his life and his circumstances. This response is not the Jacob of Bethel who claimed the promises of God and brought his family back to Bethel for a new beginning with God, building an altar and worshipping, his feeling of grief and despair have almost extinguished his faith.
- **V15-18** on their way to Egypt they faced three problems > **1<sup>st</sup>** how to explain to the officials how they got food without paying, **2<sup>nd</sup>** negotiating Simeon's release from prison, **3<sup>rd</sup>** protecting Benjamin. When Joseph had them brought to his house they were afraid thinking his kindness was an act to bring them here and have them executed, again their thinking in the flesh and not in the spirit, instead of believing God is protecting them their trying to protect themselves and in doing so their missing all that God is showing them, which is the favor they prayed for.
- **V19-25** at first all goes well, they explain what happened with the money being honest about it, and unbeknownst to them because of Joseph's Godly lifestyle the entire household including the Butler knows Who Jehovah God is, this again proves that when we live for God then those closest around us can do nothing but surrender to God themselves. Simeon is brought to them unharmed and well, so things couldn't be going better for the brothers at this point.
- **V26-30** when Joseph comes home they greet him with their present and he asks about their health, their father, but when he sees Benjamin his little brother all grown up he loses it on the inside and has to leave their presence before breaking down in tears. I'm sure they were tears of joy at seeing him well but also of sadness upon missing so much of his life being in Egypt.

- **V31-34** Joseph doesn't eat with his brothers as it was customary for Egyptians not to eat with strangers because they believed that they had descended from the gods and therefore were better than everybody else. Remember even though Joseph technically wasn't Egyptian being second only to Pharaoh meant he represented all that Egypt was about and therefore was expected to carry out all of their traditions including not eating with strangers.
- Notice Benjamin received five times the amount of food than the others, this was a test Joseph gave, because remember how they resented him for being favored he wanted to see if they would respond in the same way, being the same men who threw him into a pit turning a deaf ear to his cries for help, and eventually selling him into slavery or have they had a change of heart not caring about trivial things but only looking out for their little brother.
- Lastly notice not only did Joseph test their loyalties but he also showed that he respects their position, as he arranged them by birth order showing that he desired to use his position to bring them together and not pull them apart. God had used the hardships, the painful separation in Joseph's life to humble him, and draw him closer to Himself, unlike Jacob who saw these things as meant to destroy him, Joseph used these things to bring him into a right place with God.