

In the Beginning

Genesis 42:1-38

- Joseph entered Egypt an outcast and a slave, now he is a Governor and ruler, but as we'll see although his circumstances has changed drastically his Godly character and heart for the Lord remained the same. This will again be tested over the next three chapter as God will intricately weave a scenario where Joseph will get to see his brothers after **20yrs** apart, but will it be a happy reunion or a bitter confrontation, let's take a look and see for ourselves.

V1-38

- **V1-4** just as God had said after the **7** years of plenty came the **7** years of famine upon the Middle Eastern world, but thanks to Joseph receiving instructions from the Lord there was abundant grain in Egypt. As you can see Jacob has still not learned about showing blatant favoritism concerning how he felt about his sons, for since Joseph his initial favorite is gone he has replaced him with Benjamin, sending all his sons save him to get grain from Egypt, fearing that something bad may happen during their journey and like Joseph he'd be lost to him.
- The Lord often works behind the scenes, its been twenty years and Jacob is still bitter and angry that Joseph is gone, but instead of seeking the Lord for answers he is protecting himself from ever being hurt like that again. Just as God revealed to Joseph what He wanted to do with him Jacob if he had been surrendered and submitted to the Lord like Joseph would also have heard from the Lord all these years but instead he has been in his feelings being led by them. Its been two years into the famine and notice we don't see Jacob praying or asking the Lord what to do instead he hears about Egypt and then does what seems to be the sensible thing to do.
- **V5-8** Joseph is carrying out business like he normally does when he notices some men who look familiar and recognizes that they are his brothers. Can you imagine the different types of emotions he must have went through, from excitement and happiness, in knowing their alive, to rage and anger for what they did to him, to curiosity as to if his father and brother Benjamin are still alive. **V9-12** Joseph remembered the dreams he had about his father and brother coming to him and bowing down and now it makes sense, they weren't bowing down to him in servitude but I gratitude, as God had sent him ahead not as punishment but as deliverance for His people.
- That doesn't stop him from having a little fun at their expense, as he accuses them of being spies looking for weaknesses in Egypt to exploit, also he wanted to see if they'd be honest about who they were since he hasn't seen them in twenty years. Some may see what Joseph does as wasting time, that he should have immediately revealed himself and hurried the reconciliation process along, but Joseph wasn't interested in a quick fix, as all that accomplishes is a truce, he wanted true reconciliation and that requires sincere repentance shown by humble confession of sin, and often for that to happen it takes time for a person's heart to get to that place.
- **V13-17** Joseph could have exposed them right here after they said in **V11** "**we are honest men**" that statement shows why God was bringing them to Egypt as they still were living in deception. So he puts them in prison but only for a short period especially in comparison to his **10yrs**. **V18-23**- they begin to speak in their Hebrew tongue to one another not knowing that Joseph could understand them and

Reuben of all people has the audacity to say "they should have listened to him" as we will see Jacob calls him "**unstable as water**" but again it shows where their heart is.

- What's interesting is Joseph tells his brothers "**That he fears God**" this shows that even in this perceived threat, Joseph clearly didn't want his brothers to fear him as much as he wanted them to trust him. For in their talking about what happened they made it seem more like "**Karma**" than it was "**The Lord**" as believers we should see the hand of God in and on everything that happens to us because if you don't you'll start to think you were just lucky or fortunate.
- **V24-28** Joseph becomes overwhelmed with emotion upon hearing them speak about him and so he leaves but then returns and takes Simeon as the brother to stay. He has their sacks filled with grain to prove that food and sustenance awaits them if they return, and why they journey one of them realizes that all their money was put back in their sacks meaning that all this food was given to them at no charge and notice the first time we read them mentioning the Lord is in the negative "**what is this that God has done to us**", this is so like man people isn't it!
- Instead of examining themselves they begin to blame God, what they were saying is when Joseph finds out they hadn't paid for the grain then he will believe they stole the food and have no intention of coming back. Again instead of looking at this from a spiritual perspective they can only see it from the natural and therefore it's the Lord's fault were in this position not ours.
- **V29-35** Thus far we've seen hunger, harsh words, confinement, and confusion, this is what follows us when we don't serve and follow the Lord but live life by our own terms. They tell Jacob everything that happened in Egypt as they are fearful and perplexed as to what they should do next, but Jacob is just as confused, as he is not seeking the Lord for His counsel nor is he praying for guidance.
- **V36-38** we see where the sons are getting blaming God from, Jacob first tells them how they've disappointed him in losing Joseph, and now Simeon, so its no way he's going to entrust his favorite Benjamin to them. Then he says "**all these things are against him**" remember Jacob had lived his early life as a schemer and scoundrel, not praying or seeking God but swindling people for what he wanted, and here we neither see him on his face praying to the Lord or is he seeking the Lord as to what he should do.
- Reuben's answer to Jacob is for Jacob to kill his sons if he doesn't return with Benjamin, what a foolish response, to keep from losing another son I'll threaten to kill two of my grandsons. People this is why its important to have a clear conscience because every time something unfavorable happens notice they go back to past sinful acts that they haven't repented of and then blame God for it. Satan will remind and torment you of past failures every chance he gets > **Acts 23:1, 24:16**- make every effort to have a clear conscience, as that will protect you from what we just read in **V21**.