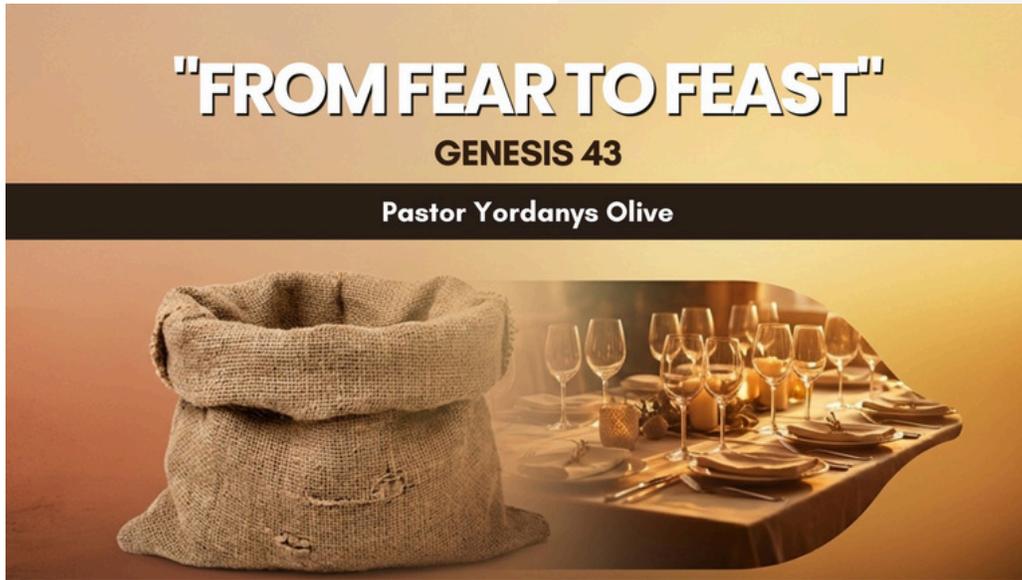


CCLEB SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY MARCH 15, 2026
GENESIS 43:1-34

PASTOR YORDANYS OLIVE

FROM FEAR TO FEAST



How many of you know what it's like to have money, and still not be able to get what you need? You go to the store. You're ready to pay. But the shelves are empty.



Every time a snowstorm is coming, what happens? Everybody runs to the stores to buy water, bread, milk, and for some reason, a lot of toilet paper. I still don't understand that one.

It's like people assume the storm is going to mess with their stomach first.

But think about that for a second. Something so normal, something you never even think about, suddenly becomes impossible to find.

You have the money. You have the willingness. But you can't get the supply.

And that kind of frustration, that pressure of wanting something and not being able to reach it, that's something we all understand.

That's exactly where **Genesis 43** takes us.

It has already been two years since the famine started. This wasn't a weekend inconvenience. This wasn't a temporary shortage. This was a full-scale famine across the land. Crops failed. Food ran out. People were desperate.

And the only place prepared was Egypt. Why? Because God gave Pharaoh a dream, and God used Joseph to interpret it and prepare the nation.

So now everyone else is suffering, including Jacob and his sons.

So, **Genesis 43** is not just about hunger. It's about surrender. It's about letting go. It's about trusting God.

Because when the famine doesn't stop, something must change.

This family is at risk. And remember, this is not just any family. This is the covenant family, and God has a plan for them. God made promises to Abraham, to Isaac, and now to Jacob.

If Jacob refuses to act, Simeon will continue sitting in that Egyptian prison. If Jacob refuses to act, the food runs out.

Jacob has to decide.

And in verses 1 through 10, we're going to see the pressure rise inside Jacob's house.

Let's read **Genesis 43:1-10**

In **chapter 42**, Reuben tried to convince his father to send Benjamin to Egypt. But the guarantee he offered was extreme.

He said his own two sons could die if he failed.

That doesn't comfort a grieving father. You're talking to the grandfather of those boys. That's not wisdom. That's desperation without discernment. Reuben was trying to lead, but he didn't understand his father's heart.

But now Judah steps forward.

Judah, the fourth son, takes the lead and tells his father that the ruler in Egypt was clear: "You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you."

You can't approach the ruler on your own terms. You must come according to his word.

This wasn't a casual statement. It was authority speaking. The message was simple: you cannot come on your own terms. You must come the way the ruler said.

And that reminds us of something about our relationship with God. We cannot approach Him on our own terms.

God sets the standard, and that is why we need a mediator, someone who fulfilled the law and stood in our place.

That is what makes this moment so important. Under the pressure of the famine, Judah offers himself as the guarantor for Benjamin. He tells his father, "Hold me responsible."

And in that moment, Judah gives us a picture of what Jesus would later do perfectly.



The Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.

Just as Benjamin could not go without someone standing for him, we cannot come before the Father without someone securing our place. That someone is Jesus.

And what makes this even more powerful is the change in Judah. Earlier in the story he acted out of self-interest. But now he steps forward in responsibility and sacrifice.

So Jacob finally lets Benjamin go.

The man who spent much of his life trying to control everything is finally learning to surrender.

Genesis 43:11-14

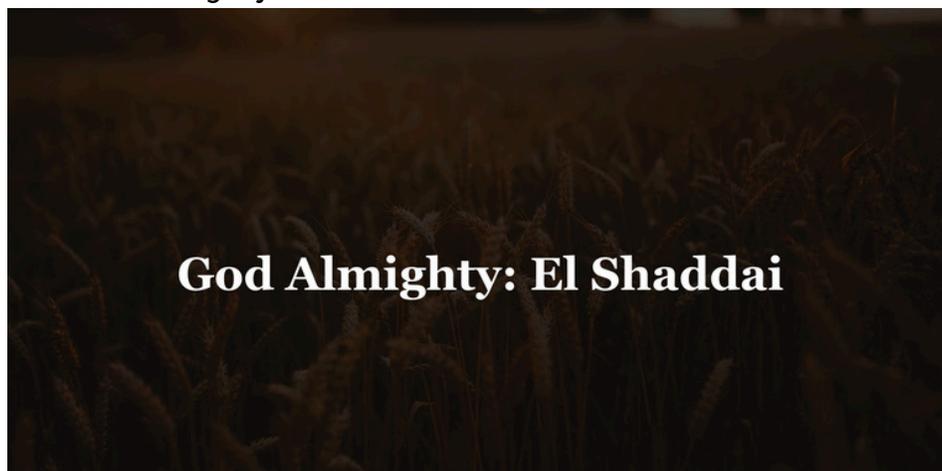
Before surrendering, Jacob first tries to manage the situation with human strategy. He tells his sons to take gifts from the best products of the land, honey, spices, nuts, and almonds, and to bring double the money.

In other words, Jacob is trying to solve the problem the way he always has. With careful planning and negotiation.

But the crisis is bigger than his strategies. And sometimes we do the same thing. We try to fix spiritual problems with human solutions, hoping that our effort, our generosity, or our planning will change the outcome. Yet there comes a point when human strategy reaches its limit.

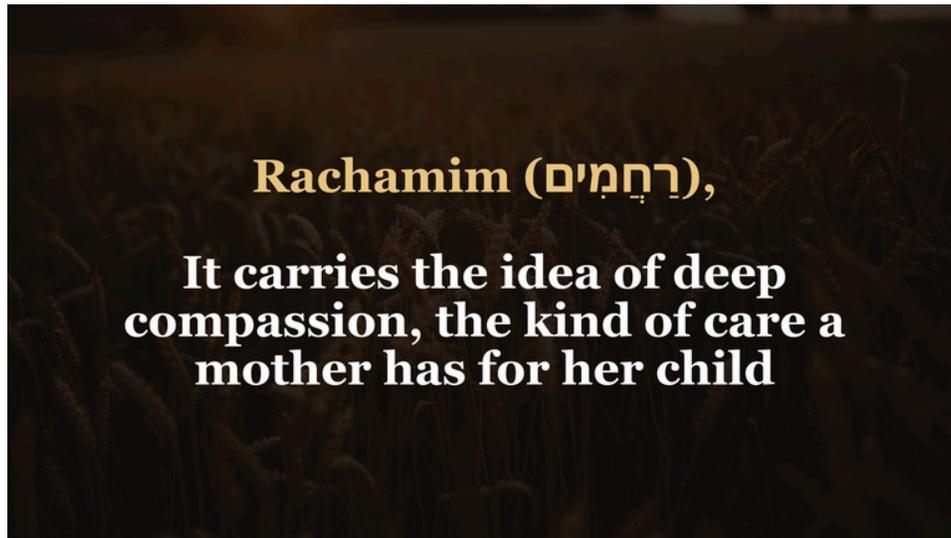
But then Jacob says something really important in **verse 14**.

The Hebrew here for God Almighty is El Shaddai.



Jacob says, "May God Almighty give you mercy." He stops looking only at the powerful ruler in Egypt and begins looking to God Almighty. True surrender begins when we stop trusting our strategies and start trusting God's power.

And notice, Jacob asks that the man in Egypt would show them mercy. The Hebrew word used here is Rachamim. and it carries the idea of deep compassion, the kind of care a mother has for her child. Mercy means that someone who has the power to punish chooses to withhold the judgment that an offender deserves.



And what is beautiful in this story is that the same Hebrew word Jacob uses for "mercy" in **verse 14** appears again in **verse 30**, translated as "compassion," when Joseph's heart is deeply moved. In other words, God answers Jacob's prayer by placing that mercy directly in Joseph's heart.

Brothers and sisters, mercy and grace are not the same thing.



Mercy is when God doesn't give us the punishment we deserve. Grace is when God gives us what we could never earn, like forgiveness and salvation.

Jacob ends his prayer with a powerful statement: "If I must lose my children, so be it."

Now at first, this might sound like resignation.

But there is an important difference between resignation and faith.

Resignation says, "There's nothing I can do, so I give up." Faith says, "I am releasing what I love into God's hands because I trust Him."



And this shows us something important. Sometimes we don't see God's provision until we let go of what we're trying to control.

But the moment Jacob opened his hands and said, "God, I trust You with what I love the most," that's when God began to move.

And that's exactly what we're about to see play out. Jacob has made his decision. He's surrendered.

Genesis 43:15-25

they would be eating there, so they prepared their gifts for Joseph's arrival at noon.

So the brothers do what Jacob told them. They pack the gifts, they take double the money, and they bring Benjamin with them. They finally arrive in Egypt.

Now watch what happens. Joseph tells the manager of his household, "These men will eat with me this noon. Take them inside the palace. Slaughter an animal and prepare a big feast."

The brothers came expecting judgment. But instead of punishment, they're being invited to a meal. They don't know it yet, but God is already answering Jacob's prayer.

But the brothers can't see it. When they see that they're being taken into Joseph's house, they're terrified. They say, "It's because of the money someone put in our sacks. He's going to accuse us of stealing. He's going to make us slaves." Even though Joseph is preparing a feast for them, they are thinking and worrying about the worst.

So they go to Joseph's servant and come clean. They tell him everything about the money. They bring it back. They make it clear they didn't steal anything. And that right there is growth. Twenty years earlier, these men lied to their father's face. But now, instead of blaming somebody else, they tell the truth. And for a situation they didn't even cause.

And then look at what the servant says. "Do not be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, must have put this treasure into your sacks. I know I received your payment."

This servant, who works in an Egyptian household, is pointing them back to their God. He's telling them, your debt is covered. Someone already took care of it.

And that is a picture of the gospel. One day, every one of us will stand before God. And we owe a debt we cannot pay. But because of what Jesus did on the cross, we don't have to be afraid. The debt has been paid. Not by us, but by His Son.

And the story doesn't end there. What comes next is one of the most emotional moments in the entire book of Genesis.

Genesis 43:26-34

When Joseph comes home, the brothers give him their gifts, and they bow low to the ground before him. This is the fulfillment of the dream Joseph had as a young man. And even though this is the second time they bow before him, the first time only ten were there. But now, all of his brothers are present.

And then Joseph locks his eyes on Benjamin. His only full brother. When Joseph was sold, Benjamin was just a little boy. And now he's a grown man. Joseph looks at him and says, "May God be gracious to you, my son." And in that moment, Joseph is overwhelmed. He hurries out of the room, goes somewhere private, and breaks down and cries.

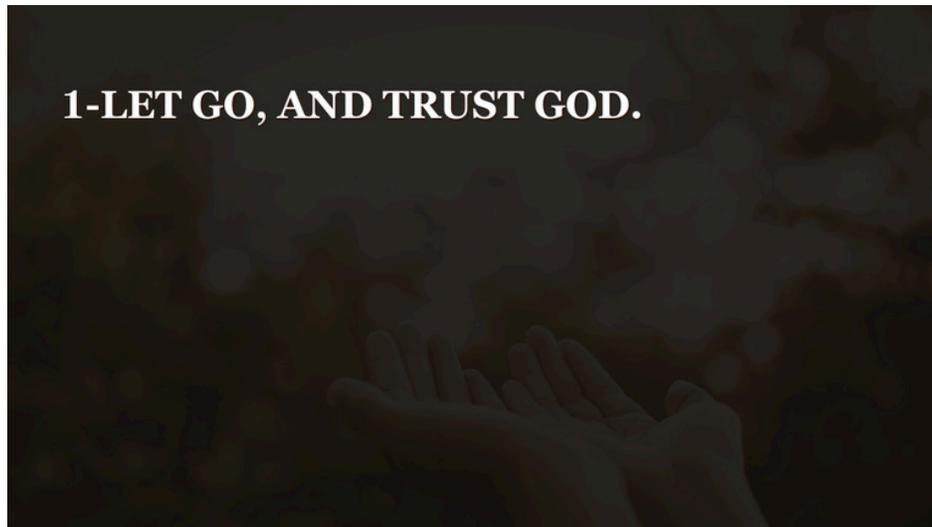
Now the text tells us there are three separate tables at Joseph's house. One for Joseph, one for the Egyptians, and one for his brothers. The Egyptians refused to eat with the Hebrews. And that might seem like just a detail, but God is going to use that very thing. Because in Canaan, this family was mixing with everyone around them. But in Egypt, that won't be possible. God will use that separation to protect them and to grow them into a nation.

Now look at one more detail. Joseph seats his brothers in the right order, from oldest to youngest. And they are amazed. How does this Egyptian ruler know their birth order? Then he gives them food from his own table. But he gives Benjamin five times more than everyone else. Right in front of his brothers. Why? Joseph is testing them. These are the same brothers who hated him because their father favored him. So now he wants to see, have they changed?

And look at how the chapter ends. "So they feasted and drank freely with him." No jealousy. No anger. These men are not who they used to be.

"They came in fear, but God had prepared a feast."

Applications:



Sometimes God's provision is waiting on the other side of our surrender.

The moment Jacob opened his hands and said, "God, I trust You with what I love the most," that's when God began to move. And when the brothers walked into Egypt terrified, thinking they were walking into a trap, the whole time Joseph was preparing a feast for them.

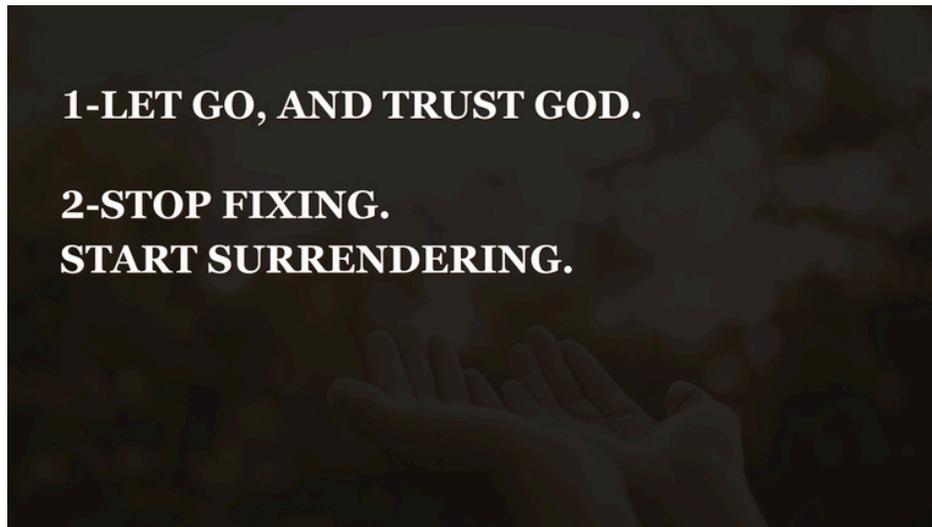
Some of us are in that same place right now. We are holding on so tightly to something, a plan, a situation, and we're afraid that if we let go, we'll lose it.

Some of us are so used to struggle, so used to bad news, that when God opens a door, we stand there afraid. We think, "This is too good to be true."

But what if God is waiting for you to open your hands?

And what if what you're afraid of is actually His provision waiting for you on the other side?

What is the one thing you are holding on to that you need to surrender to God today?

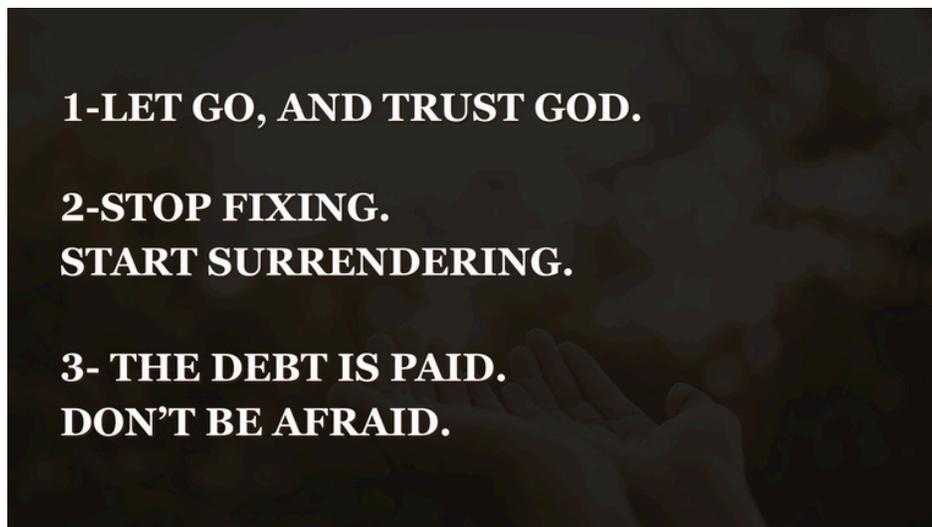


We try to fix spiritual problems with human solutions.

Jacob sent gifts, double money, the best products of the land. He was trying to solve the problem the way he always had. But he had to stop trusting his plans and start trusting El Shaddai, God Almighty.

And sometimes we do the same thing. We think if we just work harder, give more, or plan better, we can fix what only God can fix. But true surrender begins when we stop trusting our strategies and start trusting God's power.

Are you trying to solve something right now with your own effort that you need to place in God's hands?



When the brothers were panicking, the servant told them, "Don't be afraid. I know I received your payment." Someone had already taken care of it.

And that is the gospel.

Maybe you're here today carrying guilt over things you've done. But **Romans 8:1** tells us: "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus."

No condemnation. Not because of what you did, but because of what Jesus did. He went to the cross and paid a debt that wasn't His.

These brothers came carrying fear and guilt. And instead of rejection, they were invited to a feast. Not because they earned it. But because grace was waiting for them.

And that same grace is waiting for you today. If you have never given your life to Jesus, you don't have to clean yourself up first. You just have to come with an open heart. He's not waiting to punish you. He's preparing a table for you.

And if you're already walking with God but you've been living in fear, trying to earn what He already gave you freely, today is the day to let it go. The debt is paid. You are in good hands.