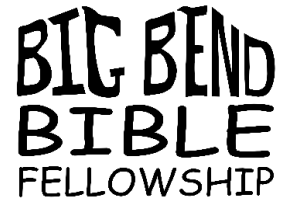


# The Brothers in Canaan

Joseph 7; Genesis 42:18 – 43:14

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## Genesis 42:18-24, Joseph Tests the Brothers

<sup>18</sup> On the third day, Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: <sup>19</sup> If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. <sup>20</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.” This they proceeded to do. <sup>21</sup> They said to one another, “Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.” <sup>22</sup> Reuben replied, “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood.” <sup>23</sup> They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter. <sup>24</sup> He turned away from them and began to weep, but then came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

## How did Joseph conduct the test of his brothers?

He released the brothers to take grain back to Canaan and bring back the youngest brother in order to verify their words and not die. Simeon was chosen by Joseph to be held as a hostage.

## v18 – What is the significance the brothers being released from prison on the third day?

As the brothers were released from prison on the third day, so too was Jesus released from the prison of the tomb in His resurrection [91]:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 – *Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures*

## v18 – What prophetic significance is there of the sons of Jacob being released from prison on the third day?

As the sons of Jacob were released from prison on the third day, so too would Israel be delivered from the confinement of their nation to the sin of not recognizing the Messiah during the Millennial Kingdom [92]:

Hosea 6:2 – *After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.*

It is interesting that a day is often equated with a thousand years in the sight of God, 2 Peter 3:8 and...

Psalm 90:4 – *For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.*

Scholars say Hosea recorded his prophecy in about 725 B.C. It has been 2,000 years or 2 God-sized days in 1276 AD. So, we are in the third day which would be about 1277 to 2277 AD. We are in the era of the Lord’s return and have been for more than 7 centuries!

## v21 – Why did the brothers express remorse over what they put Joseph through?

Because they saw the connection between what they were now experiencing and the anguish Joseph must have experienced when they were threatening to kill him.

## v21 – What is the significance of the brothers feeling remorse over how they treated Joseph?

As brothers felt remorse over their treatment of Joseph, so too did Judas feel remorse over betraying Jesus [93]:

Matthew 27:3 – *Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders*

The 30 pieces of silver fulfilled the prophecy of the three shepherds in Zechariah 11 as the wages to be paid to a betrayer then returned to the House of the Lord.

## Why did Judas betray Jesus?

- Judas didn’t really believe Jesus was the Messiah... he never once called Jesus Lord but always referred to Him as Rabbi.
- Judas must have been disillusioned when it became clear that Jesus was not there to deliver Israel from the tyranny of Rome.
- Judas was greedy, he kept the money bag for the disciples and complained when Mary anointed Jesus with very costly Spikenard.

**Given the foreknowledge of Jesus who was God as well as man, why did He pick Judas to be a disciple?**

- Jesus came to die in our place so our sins may be forgiven.
- Having a betrayer among the disciples was necessary to fulfill prophecy:  
Psalm 41:9 – *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.*

**v22 – “Now we must give an accounting for his blood”  
– Why did the brothers think Joseph was dead?**

- They represented him as being dead to their father Jacob so they made him dead to their family.
- They so embraced the lie that they believed it.
- Slaves often had a hard life and died prematurely

**v22 – What is the significance of Joseph’s betrayers recognizing they were responsible for his death?**

As sons of Jacob recognized they were responsible for the death of Joseph, so too did the Jews when they called for the crucifixion of Jesus [94]:

Matthew 27:25 – *And all the people said, “His blood shall be on us and on our children!”*

**Why did the Jews cry out for the death of Jesus?**

They believed their religious leaders that Jesus wasn’t the Messiah and people falsely representing God had to be killed per the Law of Moses...

Deuteronomy 18:20 – *the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die*

**v23 – How was Joseph able to conceal his identity from his brothers and listen in on their conversation?**

He certainly looked like an Egyptian prince. And he spoke through an interpreter so they did not know he understood them when he heard them talking among themselves in Hebrew.

**v24 – Why did Joseph weep?**

Perhaps he remembered the pain he felt when they betrayed him. Or he wept over their not seeing him for who he was. More likely he recognized the hand of God in bringing them to this day, fulfilling the vision he was given.

**v24 – What is the significance of Joseph weeping here?**

As Joseph wept over the sons of Jacob not accepting him, so too did Jesus weep over the sons of Jacob not accepting Him as their Messiah [95]:

Luke 19:41 – *When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it*

**What does this reveal about God that Jesus wept?**

We could write this off as Jesus weeping in His humanity but there are other instances in Scripture where God displays emotions. People are made in the image of God and one aspect of that is that we have emotions as God does. There is nothing wrong with having emotions, the danger comes when we allow ourselves to be controlled by our emotions.

**v24 – What is the significance of Joseph selecting Simeon to be bound and held as a hostage?**

This reinforces the Jewish tradition that recognized that Simeon was the ringleader to do away with Joseph:

*Simeon and Levi, who were brothers in counsel, said each man to his brother, Behold, this master of dreams cometh. And now come let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits and say that an evil beast hath devoured him. (Jewish Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel On the Pentateuch, J. W. Etheridge, Gen 37:19, 1892 AD)*

This may be why Jacob on his death bed had this to say about Simeon and Levi when he prophesied about his sons:

Genesis 49:5-7 – *Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; let not my honor be united to their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.*

This came to pass... Simeon got the worst land in the Negev and was absorbed into Judah and Levi got no land at all.

As Joseph knew who betrayed him, so too did Jesus indicate to John that it would be Judas [96]:

John 13:26 – *It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot*

**Given that Reuben was the oldest and thus responsible for what the brothers did to Joseph, what is the significance of Joseph singling out Simeon for incarceration?**

As Joseph had the discernment to righteously judge his brothers, so too does Jesus [97]:

Matthew 25:31–32 – *But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one*

*another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats*

### **Genesis 42:25-28, The Brothers Return to Canaan**

<sup>25</sup> Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them. <sup>26</sup> So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there. <sup>27</sup> But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack. <sup>28</sup> So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?"

### **What happened as the brothers returned to Canaan?**

They discovered that the money they purchased the grain with was hidden in the grain.

### **Why did this make them afraid?**

It would look like they stole the grain.

### **Why did the brothers blame God for their misfortune of having it look like they stole the grain?**

God is in control... who else could be behind orchestrating the circumstances so that the brothers looked guilty. There was no-doubt lingering guilt over what the brothers had done to Joseph and, knowing God, there would eventually be consequences.

### **Does God want us to live with guilt over our past sins?**

No, Jesus died for all of our sins... He wants us to repent making the changes necessary to not sin going forward.

John 8:11 – *Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."*

### **Why did Joseph's brothers have lingering guilt?**

They had not repented of their sin because that means they'd have had to come clean before their father Jacob.

### **Why do we sometimes have lingering guilt for our sins?**

We too may need to repent but if we have and it still lingers, it can also be the result of demonic oppression... Guilt is a tool of demons to enslave us and keep us from doing the will of God...

Romans 8:1 – *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

### **What does it mean to walk according to the Spirit?**

To be responsive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and act in obedience to the will of God.

### **What is the significance of Joseph giving his brothers the bread of life for free?**

As Joseph bestowed unmerited favor on his brothers to their utter amazement, so too does the amazing grace of God bless those trusting in Jesus with salvation [98]:

Ephesians 2:8-9 – *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

### **Why do so many people embrace salvation-by-works rejecting salvation-by-grace?**

It appeals to their pride. It is also a worldly perspective that anything of value has to be worked-for. There is no free lunch.

### **Genesis 42:29-38, The Brothers Report to Jacob**

<sup>29</sup> Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: <sup>30</sup> "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. <sup>31</sup> But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies.' <sup>32</sup> We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.' <sup>33</sup> Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. <sup>34</sup> And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'" <sup>35</sup> Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. <sup>36</sup> And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me." <sup>37</sup> Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." <sup>38</sup> But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."

### **v29-35 – What did the brothers report to their father Jacob when they returned to Canaan?**

Exactly what happened and that they were being tested for being spies.

### **v36 – How did Jacob react to the news?**

That they were bringing bad news recalling that he had lost two sons and was about to lose a third.

### **v37 – How did Reuben try to appease his father?**

By offering up his two sons to die if he didn't bring back both Simeon and Benjamin.

### **v38 – What did Jacob decide to do?**

Nothing... he had written off Joseph and now Simeon so he refused to let them take Benjamin.

### **Genesis 43:1-10, The Food Runs Out in Canaan**

*Now the famine was severe in the land. <sup>2</sup> And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."<sup>3</sup> But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'<sup>4</sup> If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.<sup>5</sup> But if you will not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"<sup>6</sup> And Israel said, "Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?"<sup>7</sup> But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"<sup>8</sup> Then Judah said to 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 also our little ones.<sup>9</sup> I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.<sup>10</sup> For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time."*

### **v1-10 – What happened when the Israel clan ran out of groceries?**

Jacob wanted his sons to go back to Egypt to get more grain but they reminded him of the need to bring Benjamin to prove they weren't spies.

### **Why is Jacob being referred to as Israel in this chapter?**

Israel is the name that God gave Jacob in Genesis 32:28 after struggling with Him. So, at this point he is being the more decisive father that God intended him to be rather than the more passive father he was previously.

### **v8-9 – What is the significance of Judah becoming the surety or guarantee for the life of Benjamin?**

As Judah became the surety or guarantee for the life of Benjamin, so too did Jesus, the Lion of Judah, become the surety or guarantee of a new covenant for us [99]:

*Hebrews 7:22 – by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant*

### **How is the covenant of Jesus better than what Israel had under the Law?**

- Jesus represents a better covenant than the one made with Israel in that the provision God made for our salvation is more clear.
- The covenant of Jesus reveals the grace of God while the covenant of the Law was all too easily misinterpreted into a salvation-by-works mentality
- Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law for us.
- We also have the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### **v10 – What is the significance of the delay the sons of Israel had in returning to Joseph?**

As the sons of Israel delayed their return to Joseph, so too did the nation of Israel delay their coming to the true Messiah [100]:

*Romans 11:25 – For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

### **Genesis 43:11-14, Israel Decides What to Do**

*<sup>11</sup> And their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and carry down a present for the man—a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.<sup>12</sup> Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight.<sup>13</sup> Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man.<sup>14</sup> And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!"*

### **What did Israel decide to do?**

He agreed to send Benjamin with the brothers along with some of the local delicacies and double payment plus the previous payment (...so this payment would be 3x more).

**v11 – What is the significance of the gifts of the land that was to be taken to Joseph?**

As the brothers were to take gifts of gold, spices and myrrh to Joseph, so too did the Magi bring gold, frankincense and myrrh to Jesus [101]:

*Matthew 2:11 – when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

**v14 – What is the significance of hope for mercy?**

As Israel had hope in God that the boss of Egypt (Joseph) would have mercy to preserve the life of his sons, all faithful have hope in God's mercy for eternal life [102]:

*Titus 3:5-6 – not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior*

**What is the difference between grace and mercy?**

Grace is unmerited favor; mercy is withholding the punishment we deserve.