

# The Book of Genesis

## Chapter Forty Two

### *Dream Fulfilled*

#### Lesson Verse:

#### I. Lesson Introduction

- A. Nothing has been said of the tribes of Israel since Joseph was sold into slavery. It has been a number of years since the events of *Genesis 37*.
1. Allowing that Joseph was 17 when he was sold, *Gen. 37:2*, that he was 30 when he stood before Pharaoh, *Gen. 41:46* would put him being a slave for 10 years.
  2. Then for the next 3 years, in prison
  3. Then 7 years with plenty of food growing
  4. Consider now that by the time the events in *Genesis 42* happen the seven years of plenty are history. It has now been 20 years since he was sold by his brothers and he has not had any contact with his family.
  5. Then 2 years of famine passed before Joseph meets and then reveals himself to his brothers!
- B. The famine ravages the earth, and \_\_\_\_\_ was not exempt. Jacob had a large number of children, grandchildren, husbands and wives living with him in Canaan, *Gen. 46*. The Bible only lists the direct descendants of Jacob which are about 70, *Acts 7:14*, as going into Egypt. What is not counted in these narratives are the wives of the children and grand children or the possibility of some widowed in-laws living in the clan. Thus the number of souls wanting something to eat from the table of Jacob could have been about 300. The Bible does not say exactly. What is told by the Holy Ghost is the small nation of Israel is getting hungry.

#### II. Lesson

##### A. “Why stand here looking at one another?”

1. Verse one of *Genesis 42* reminds the reader of the words of the angels the day the Lord ascended into heaven, *Acts 1:10-11*. The angels told the men to quit standing around gazing off into space with your mouths open. Get out into the world and spread the gospel for this same Jesus is coming back in like manner.
2. Jacob gives a similar command and told his sons to quit staring at one another and to get out of the house and go to Egypt and buy something to eat before we starve.

##### B. Old \_\_\_\_\_ Die Hard, Jacob Still Shows Favouritism *Gen. 42:4*.

1. Jacob still played favourites. He failed to realize that although he was not responsible for the actions of his son, he was instrumental in feeding their jealousy concerning Joseph. For the past 20 years their jealousy was probably aimed at Benjamin since Joseph was gone. How do we know this? Because the brothers have not repented of their evil deeds towards Joseph. Jacob favours Benjamin.
2. If there was no food in Canaan, and if the nation was about to die of starvation, why was Jacob afraid to let Benjamin out of his sight? He would be just as dead whether he died of starvation or fell into mischief along the way. There is one possible explanation and that is, Jacob did not believe the report made 20 years about the death of Joseph.
3. Perhaps if he had not manifested favouritism to Joseph and Benjamin over his other children, he would not have so much worry. His worry was a direct result of him controlling the situations instead of allowing God to control
4. Many times we think we are living by faith where our children are concerned. They leave and go out for the night and we whisper a prayer asking the Lord to take care of them. Then we sit and worry until they are back home. Once they are under our roofs we feel better. This is a false sense of security parents use. God protects just as well in the world as He does under our roofs when we really trust in Him.
5. What parents must realize is if we are afraid to let them out of our sight, if we do not allow them the opportunity to make decisions, if we do not ever correct them, if we are always giving them soft places to fall, are we living by faith or by fear?

**C. Joseph Dispensed Food (6).**

1. The whole world seems to come to Joseph to buy food. He is indeed the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world. He probably had developed a method for dispensing the grain during the seven years of plenty. Allowing that the world was coming to Egypt to buy grain, it would be nothing short of a miracle for his brothers to report directly to him to buy grain.
2. Joseph knew his brothers (8, *Acts 13:26-28*).
  - a. The brothers did not recognize their long lost brother Joseph. The thought of meeting him again was probably the farthest things from their minds. Joseph knew them though. Although it had been many years, his love for them had not diminished. He yearned for them as only Jesus could for the lost.
  - b. What a sad picture this is of the nation of Israel and Jesus. The nation missed His first coming because they did not recognize Him when He walked among them. Their minds were blinded by the gods of the world. Sad it is that many today will miss His second coming for they do not recognize Him either. Their eyes have also been blinded.
3. Joseph's accusations.
  - a. What do you say after 20 years absence from your family? Outside their common blood line what do they have in common? The brothers are there to buy food, willing to use all their resources to remain alive. Joseph has the resources of Egypt at his disposal.
  - b. It was then that Joseph remembered his dreams, and little did the 10 brothers realize that they had now fulfilled the prophecy in v. 6. They actually did kneel before Joseph just as he predicted. If they had known it was him, I believe they would rather starve than be proven wrong.
  - c. It is amazing even today that folks would rather die and go to hell than bend their knees and confess that Jesus is Lord. If we do not confess willingly, we will bend, bow, and confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father, *Phil 2:9-11*, unwillingly.
  - d. As the blood was the only thing at this time they have in common, and that Benjamin is a grown man and should have made the journey if he was able, Joseph is immediately concerned.
  - e. Thus he makes his accusations. It was and remains a serious offense to be caught as a spy. He could not just walk up to them and begin a conversation about dad and home. These men tried to kill him 20 years ago. He must first find out if they have repented. Joseph has the upper hand and plays it all the way. If they can produce Benjamin alive, then he can believe they are different men. The only way to prove their word is for Benjamin to come into Egypt.
4. Poetic justice.
  - a. There was a time in the past when Joseph was cast into a dry well against his will. Now the reverse is true and the very 10 that kept him against his will are now kept against their will! Joseph is much nicer to them than they were to him. His accommodations are much more comfortable.
  - b. The brothers had cast him in a well and sat down to eat bread, *Gen. 37:25*. The brothers came to buy bread but now upon finding themselves in prison, their appetite is gone.

**D. CONTRAST.**

1. Observe how the lives of the 10 changed very little over the past 20 years. They are doing the same things today they did 20 years ago: arguing! One is trying to convince the others of what they ought to do or should not have done. Of the 11 brothers which one has seen the most, done the most, been his own man, lived a forced life of servitude, yet even as a servant, slave, and prisoner was a much more free man than the others? There is not but one answer: \_\_\_\_\_. He was his own man. He was God's man.
2. So it always is with those who live their lives out of the will of God. Their lives seldom change for they have no life, they just live. There is a big difference in making a living and making a life. The brothers have been making a living for the past 20 years. Joseph has been making a life.
3. Apart from Jesus, we have no life to live, *Psa 104:33*. The Christian life is anything but boring. It would be far more boring to be 60-80 years old and still be living with your father and having him treat you as a child. Joseph had more respect as a slave than his brothers did at home.
4. There is never a dull moment when one is living their lives for the honour and glory of the Lord. If your life is boring, you should seriously examine it and come to understand how and for whom you are living it. Joseph's life was anything but boring. Oh, but just stop and think of how the 10 brothers that sold Joseph lived the last 20 years.

E. “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” (18).

1. How that remark must have cut to the quick? Here was a man in a supposedly heathen nation, a ruler of men, and he had the nerve to tell these 10 brothers of the chosen nation of Israel that he feared God. He knew they did not fear God. Or else they would have long ago repented.

F. **If Your Words Be True (19).**

1. Bring back the youngest brother or else you are liars and spies.
2. What is needed is a two-fold witness. They already said Benjamin was living with their father in the land of Canaan. Now they must prove it. Joseph came to them with a proposition. One must remain while the others return.
3. Things have really gotten out of hand for the brothers. All they wanted to do was buy some grain and return home.
4. Simeon is bound. Simeon is the one that is bound and must remain behind. Joseph sent his men in and had Simeon bound before their eyes. Observe the steps God used to get to the hearts of these men:
  - a. The words of Joseph: I fear God (18)
  - b. The demand that they Prove their words (20).
  - c. Their confession amongst themselves (21).
  - d. Simeon bound before their eyes (24).
5. Instant replay.
  - a. Here was a flashback to 20 years ago when they did the same thing to Joseph. They cast him into a dry well.
  - b. Simeon is bound before their eyes and whisked away. Now they are responsible for \_\_\_\_\_ brothers disappearing. The big difference this time is they had not planned on Simeon.
  - c. It is almost as if God is saying, “*Well you all get such a big kick out of having a brother bound and in prison, I will let you go through it again. Only this time you do it MY way. Let us see what you tell your father this time.*”
  - d. Jacob takes the news very badly. He has not let go of Joseph and now he must deal with the loss of Simeon. Before he can get Simeon back, he must let go of Benjamin. He looked at the brothers and told them they were responsible for all these things being against him (36).

G. **We Are Guilty (21).**

1. Even though this was long before God issued the Ten Commandments, each of these brothers was aware of the commandment they violated: *Gen 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.* That sin had hung over their heads for over 20 years. It would not go away.
2. How did such a small sin end up so enormously big? Well it did not get that way overnight. It started with envy, grew into jealousy, manifested itself into hatred, and was only satisfied with the death of the innocent. It did not stop there. The longer the deed was hidden, the more people became entangled in its clutch. The deed had to be covered by lying to their father. Once Jacob begin to mourn, the rest of the family was aware that something dreadful happened to Joseph. From the family it spread to the surrounding community. Each time Joseph’s name was mentioned guilt flooded the heart and mind of those 10 brothers. One sin will affect the lives of hundreds of innocent people.
3. Joseph had begged his brothers to not do him evil (21).
  - a. The moment the brothers laid their hands on young Joseph and acted out what was in their hearts, his soul filled with anguish. They saw it and instead of having compassion they had only hatred. Joseph pleads with them to not harm him. They would not hear. After all Joseph was the source of all their problems. Get rid of Joseph and the problem is resolved.
  - b. About 1,500 years later the brothers of the Lord, the nation of Israel, vented their anger on the innocent again. The rulers of the synagogue, the scribes, the elders and anyone else that could be bought with a price unloaded a world of sin on Jesus. If they could just get rid of the Beloved Son, the problem would go away. They were so blind to sin that they could and would not see that the problem was not Jesus. He was the cure. The problem was Satan and self.

- c. Jesus did not plead with them. Jesus did not cry out. They would not listen to Him. They did not believe the miracles. They would not believe if Jesus stepped down from the cross. They did not even believe when he rose from the grave.
  - d. Reuben was probably walking around the room telling his brothers, *“I told you so,”* v. 22, *“but no, none of you would listen. Now his blood is required at our hands. We thought we would not be held accountable, but look at us now! God is going to extract revenge for the wrongs we done!”*
4. Unconfessed sin, ***Psa. 66:18.***
- a. How we wish that unconfessed sin(s) would just disappear. How simple it would be to hold our hands under the faucet and allow the water to wash our sins away. However, it will not go away by washing it in physical water. It is always there in front of us. No matter where we go, we must sooner or later deal with it. The longer we harbour it, the harder it is to confess.
  - b. No nation will be blessed with unconfessed sin. No saved person can grow into the full Christian soldier they ought to be with unconfess sin. No church will ever reap a spiritual harvest collectively as long as the members have sin in their lives. The church at Corinth is a living example of what sin in the church body does to the power of the Holy Ghost within the body.
  - c. The secret of growing into an aged man or woman of God is to confess our sins, ***James 5:16*** and then forsake it. God does not want us to clean up our lives and then come to Him. He wants us just as we are. Then He will do the cleaning, ***Isa 55:7.*** The word forsake means to give up or abandon. The truth of the matter is it is difficult, if not humanly impossible to forsake something or someone we love. If we did not love sin so much we would let go of it. If we did not have so much pride, we would let go and admit we were wrong.
  - d. There is one problem we have in our thinking that we must be aware of it and deal with it. The problem is we think God is like us, that He will forget. If we just ignore that besetting sin, the sin will go away and God will forget that I have not set it aside. God does not forget. (*Psa 50:21 KJV*) *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.* We had best deal with that sin our God will make it an open spectacle.
  - e. King David thought he and Bathsheba could sin in private and keep it that way. God told him, *2 Sam 12:10-12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.* It took a famine to bring the brothers face to face with their deeds. If God would use a famine to bring these men to confess their sins, why do we think He will forget about us? Do we believe He loves us more of us than He did them or King David? Do we want our sin to be made publicly?

### III. Conclusion