

Joseph – part 7

Joseph shows favor to Benjamin

by Victor Torres

Last time we saw how Joseph made his brothers suffer. First he spoke harshly to them and accused them of being spies. We all start as Joseph brothers, we are enemies of the king but we of course would not admit that. No one in Babylon thinks that they are in false churches. Like Joseph's brothers, we claim to be "honest men".

Gen 42:9 (CEV) Joseph remembered what he had dreamed about them and said, "You're spies! You've come here to find out where our country is weak."

Gen 42:10 "No sir," they replied. "We're your servants, and we have only come to buy grain."

Gen 42:11 **We're honest men**, and we come from the same family--we're not spies."

In the lake of fire, no one will be able to hide any secrets. We would have to repent for every sin we have done. After three days in jail, Joseph's brothers finally got it. All these suffering they are going through is because of what they did to Joseph.

Gen 42:21 (CEV) and said to one another, "**We're being punished because of Joseph. We saw the trouble he was in, but we refused to help him when he begged us. That's why these terrible things are happening.**"

Gen 42:22 Reuben spoke up, "Didn't I tell you not to harm the boy? But you wouldn't listen, and now we have to pay the price for killing him."

Gen 42:23 They did not know that Joseph could understand them, since he was speaking through an interpreter.

Gen 42:24 **Joseph turned away from them and cried**, but soon he turned back and spoke to them again. Then he had Simeon tied up and taken away while they watched.

The Lord and His body, the elect are the ones who will make those in the lake of fire suffer. But is this suffering never ending? Of course not! Is this suffering for the Lord's enjoyment, of course not. Joseph is clearly not enjoying what he was doing, but he knows this is for his brothers' own good. In the same way, when we parents spank our kids, we don't enjoy that, but we know we must discipline you if we really love you.

Heb 12:5 (CEV) But you have forgotten that the Scriptures say to God's children, "When the Lord punishes you, don't make light of it, and when he corrects you, don't be

discouraged.

Heb 12:6 (GNB) Because the Lord corrects everyone he loves, and punishes everyone he accepts as a child."

Heb 12:7 (CEV) Be patient when you are being corrected! This is how God treats his children. Don't all parents correct their children?

Heb 12:8 God corrects all of his children, and if he doesn't correct you, then you don't really belong to him.

Heb 12:9 Our earthly fathers correct us, and we still respect them. Isn't it even better to be given true life by letting our spiritual Father correct us?

Remember these words kids. The Lord corrects you through us, your parents. Do not ignore us when we are giving you life lessons. And do not get discouraged when we discipline you.

After Joseph threw his brothers in jail for 3 days, he made a deal with them. They had to leave one of their brothers while they go back to Canaan to get their youngest brother Benjamin. On their stopover, one of them discovered that the money he was supposed to pay for the grain is still in the sack of grain. Then when they got back to Canaan, they discovered that the same is true for all of them. They were terrified, the governor of Egypt will now come after them as thieves also. They delayed their return to Egypt until they had eaten all the grain they brought. Finally, they had to go back with Benjamin or they will all starve.

Gen 43:11 (CEV) Their father said: If Benjamin must go with you, take the governor a **gift of some of the best things from our own country**, such as perfume, honey, spices, pistachio nuts, and almonds.

Gen 43:12 Also take along twice the amount of money for the grain, because there must have been some mistake when the money was put back in your sacks.

Gen 43:13 Take Benjamin with you and leave right away.

Gen 43:14 When you go in to see the governor, I pray that God All-Powerful will be good to you and that the governor will let your other brother and Benjamin come back home with you. If I must lose my children, I suppose I must.

You'll remember how Jacob also prepared gifts for Esau before their meeting. This preparation of gifts points to the works we must do. But the works that we do must come along with our faith. You'll notice Jacob's words "I pray that God All-Powerful will be good to you". Jacob knows that God's kindness will cause "the governor [to] let your other brother and Benjamin come back home with you".

These words are expressing Jacob's faith with God Almighty to save him and his family.

These gifts are some of the best things from Canaan, pointing to the kind of sacrifice God demands from His children. He wants the best from us. He doesn't want any half-hearted service.

Rom 12:8 (CEV) If we can encourage others, we should encourage them. If we can give, **we should be generous**. If we are leaders, **we should do our best**. If we are good to others, **we should do it cheerfully**.

Let's continue Joseph's story:

Gen 43:15 (CEV) The brothers took the gifts, twice the amount of money, and Benjamin. Then they hurried off to Egypt. When they stood in front of Joseph,

Gen 43:16 he saw Benjamin and told the servant in charge of his house, "Take these men to my house. Slaughter an animal and cook it, so they can eat with me at noon."

Gen 43:17 The servant did as he was told and took the brothers to Joseph's house.

Gen 43:18 **But on the way they got worried and started thinking**, "We are being taken there because of the money that was put back in our sacks last time. He will arrest us, make us his slaves, and take our donkeys."

It's going to be like this in the lake of fire also. People who teach that God will make sinners suffer forever will be scared that God will punish them without end. They don't see that God is punishing them for their own good just as these brothers don't see that everything that is happening to them will be good for them in the end.

Gen 43:19 (CEV) So when they arrived at Joseph's house, they said to the servant in charge,

Gen 43:20 "Sir, we came to Egypt once before to buy grain.

Gen 43:21 But when we stopped for the night, we each found in our grain sacks the exact amount we had paid. We have brought that money back,

Gen 43:22 together with enough money to buy more grain. We don't know who put the money in our sacks."

Gen 43:23 (ESV) He replied, "Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them.

Gen 43:24 (CEV) The servant took them into Joseph's house and gave them water to wash their feet. He also tended their donkeys.

This "servant in charge" that these brothers are talking to is a symbol of the elect, the people who compose the body of Christ. Another teacher has written beautifully about these servants and I want to quote him here:

"These stewards are mentioned several times in this interaction between Joseph and his brothers. They function as interpreters (Gen 42:23), they fill the sacks with corn and provisions (Gen 42:25; Gen 44:1), they are rulers of the house of Joseph (Gen 43:16), they are doorkeepers (Gen 43:19), they speak words of peace and comfort (Gen 43:23; Gen 44:4), and they are givers of water and food (Gen 43:24). These stewards expose the role and function of the elect of Christ within His household which is what spiritual glorification is all about".

Luk 12:42 (KJV) And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

Luk 12:43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Luk 12:44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

This servant comforted these brothers who are obviously still very afraid of his master. The servant knows that his master is a good man. By the same token, the elect knows their Master, the prince of peace (Isa 9:6) who sends them to bring the gospel of peace to the world.

Rom 10:15 (MKJV) And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful *are* the feet of those who preach **the gospel of peace** and bring **glad tidings [good news] of good things!**"

The Bible is a gospel of peace and good news of good things to come. All the evil and sufferings that you see in the world today will one day end!

All men of all time will bow down to our Lord Jesus Christ as these brothers had to humble themselves before Joseph again and again.

Gen 43:25 (CEV) The brothers got their gifts ready to give to Joseph at noon, since they had heard they were going to eat there.

Gen 43:26 When Joseph came home, they gave him the gifts they had brought, **and they bowed down to him.**

Gen 43:27 After Joseph had asked how they were, he said, "What about your elderly father? Is he still alive?"

Gen 43:28 They answered, "Your servant our father is still alive and well." **And again they bowed down to Joseph.**

Gen 43:29 When Joseph looked around and saw his brother Benjamin, he said, "This must be your youngest brother, the one you told me about. God bless you, my son."

Gen 43:30 Right away he rushed off to his room and cried **because of his love for Benjamin.**

This special love of Joseph to Benjamin, is the same love that Jacob has for Joseph. This love is a figure or symbol of God's love for the elect.

Joh 15:9 (CEV) I have loved you, just as my Father has loved me. So remain faithful to my love for you.

Joh 15:10 If you obey me, I will keep loving you, just as my Father keeps loving me, because I have obeyed him.

This is not to teach us that we should play favorites with our children or with our brothers and sisters. This is teaching us that God loves the new man in us and hates the old man in us.

Gen 43:31 (CEV) After washing his face and returning, he was able to control himself and said, "Serve the meal!"

Gen 43:32 Joseph was served at a table by himself, and his brothers were served at another. The Egyptians sat at yet another table, because Egyptians felt it was disgusting to eat with Hebrews.

Gen 43:33 To the surprise of Joseph's brothers, they were seated in front of him according to their ages, from the oldest to the youngest.

Joseph seated them according to their ages, showing them that he knows them more than they know. This is to show us that God knows us inside and out.

Gen 43:34 (CEV) They were served food from Joseph's table, and Benjamin was given five times as much as each of the others. So Joseph's brothers drank with him and had a good time.

By showing favor to Benjamin, he is also revealing to them that he knows their father Jacob, and that he favors Benjamin over them. His brothers surely hated Benjamin also for the love that their father have for both him and Benjamin.

The Lord warns us that anyone who follows Him will be hated by the world as He was also hated.

[Joh 15:18 \(MKJV\) If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you.](#)

Later, we will see that Joseph will scare his brothers further before he reveals his true identity to them.

Let's review the lessons we have learned today:

1. In the lake of fire, those who are being judged will repent for all their sins, as Joseph's brothers are now starting to regret all the evil things they had done to him.
2. As Jacob exemplified, our faith should be accompanied by works. The works that we do for God should be our best, like the gifts that Jacob prepared for the governor of Egypt.
3. The lake of fire is the method that God punishes evil people to turn them into His image. It has an end and it has a good purpose. People who teach otherwise will at first think that their punishment has no good end, like Joseph's brothers.
4. The elect of God will perform many roles as Joseph's servants performed many roles. These roles include bringing nourishment to those people who were starved of God's words and also bringing good news of peace and comfort to those whom they are bringing to God's house.
5. Joseph showed his brothers that he has a special love for Benjamin to show us that the Lord loves the elect for He has chosen them to suffer for Him and to rule with Him.