

I Connect Sunday School Class Notes

October 10, 2021

Meet in Building B, Room 1

Praises and Concerns

Genesis 40

Commentary

Joseph interprets the Dreams of Pharaoh's Officers, leading to his being brought to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, and resulting in his elevation over Egypt and salvation of the masses.

1 Some time later, both the wine steward and the baker for Egypt's king offended their master, the king of Egypt. **2** Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief wine steward and the chief baker, **3** and he put them under arrest with the commander of the royal guard in the same jail where Joseph was imprisoned. **4** The commander of the royal guard assigned Joseph to assist them. After they had been under arrest for some time, **5** both of them—the wine steward and the baker for Egypt's king who were imprisoned in the jail—had dreams one night, and each man's dream had its own meaning.

Commentary

Ancient Egyptians believed dreams were encoded revelations, leaving one in need of a specialist in the science of dream interpretation.

6 When Joseph met them in the morning, he saw that they were upset. **7** He asked the officers of Pharaoh who were under arrest with him in his master's house, "Why do you look so distressed today?" **8** They answered, "We've both had dreams, but there's no one to interpret them." Joseph said to them, "Don't interpretations belong to God? Describe your dreams to me." **9** The chief wine steward described his dream to Joseph: "In my dream there was a vine right in front of me, **10** and on the vine were three branches. When it budded, its blossoms appeared, and its clusters ripened into grapes. **11** Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, so I took the grapes, crushed them into Pharaoh's cup, and put the cup in Pharaoh's hand." **12** Joseph said to him, "This is the dream's interpretation: The three branches are three days. **13** After three days, Pharaoh will give you an audience and return you to your position. You will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just the way things were before when you were his wine steward. **14** But please, remember me when you are doing well and be loyal to me. Put in a good word for me to Pharaoh, so he sets me free from this prison. **15** I was stolen from the land of the Hebrews, and here too I've done nothing to be thrown into this dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "It was the same for me. In my dream, there were three baskets of white bread on my head.

17 In the basket on top there were baked goods for Pharaoh's food, but birds were eating them out of the basket on my head." **18** Joseph responded, "This is the dream's interpretation: The three baskets are three days. **19** After three days, Pharaoh will give you an audience and will hang you from a tree where birds will peck your flesh from you."

Commentary

The Egyptians held that after a stay of 3000 years in the unseen world, the soul re-entered its former body, and commenced a fresh existence on the earth. They therefore took the greatest pains to preserve the bodies of the dead. For a body to be devoured by the birds, as Joseph foretold, would be regarded as a terrible doom.

20 The third day was Pharaoh's birthday, and he gave a party for all of his servants. Before all of his servants, he gave an audience to the chief wine steward and the chief baker. **21** He returned the chief wine steward to his position, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. **22** But the chief baker he hanged, just as Joseph had said would happen when he interpreted their dreams for them. **23** But the chief wine steward didn't remember Joseph; he forgot all about him.

Genesis 41

1 Two years later, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing near the Nile.

2 In front of him, seven healthy-looking, fattened cows climbed up out of the Nile and grazed on the reeds. **3** Just then, seven other cows, terrible-looking and scrawny, climbed up out of the Nile after them and stood beside them on the bank of the Nile. **4** The terrible-looking, scrawny cows devoured the seven healthy-looking, fattened cows. Then Pharaoh woke up. **5** He went back to sleep and had a second dream, in which seven ears of grain, full and healthy, grew on a single stalk. **6** Just then, seven ears of grain, scrawny and scorched by the east wind, sprouted after them, **7** and the scrawny ears swallowed up the full and well-formed ears. Then Pharaoh woke up and realized it was a dream. **8** In the morning, he was disturbed and summoned all of Egypt's religious experts and all of its advisors. Pharaoh described his dreams to them, but they couldn't interpret them for Pharaoh. **9** Then the chief wine steward spoke to Pharaoh: "Today I've just remembered my mistake. **10** Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker under arrest with the commander of the royal guard. **11** We both dreamed one night, he and I, and each of our dreams had its own interpretation. **12** A young Hebrew man, a servant of the commander of the royal guard, was with us. We described our dreams to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us, giving us an interpretation for each dream.

13 His interpretations came true exactly: Pharaoh restored me to my position but hanged him."

14 So Pharaoh summoned Joseph, and they quickly brought him from the dungeon. He shaved, changed clothes, and appeared before Pharaoh.

Commentary

He shaved himself so as to be ceremonially clean in Pharaoh's presence, a distinctively Egyptian trait. 'The Hebrews regarded their beard with peculiar pride, cultivated it with care, touched it at supplications, often swore by it, and deemed its mutilation an extreme ignominy (deep personal humiliation and disgrace): hence, in mourning, they shaved their beards and hair' (Kalisch). The Egyptians, on the other hand, never allowed the hair to grow unless they were in mourning, or prisoners, or belonged to the poorer classes. To be shaved was regarded as essential to ceremonial purity, as well as to cleanliness:

15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, but no one could interpret it. Then I heard that when you hear a dream, you can interpret it." **16** Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It's not me. God will give Pharaoh a favorable response." **17** So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile. **18** In front of me, seven fattened, stout cows climbed up out of the Nile and grazed on the reeds.

19 Just then, seven other cows, weak and frail and thin, climbed up after them. I've never seen such awful cows in all the land of Egypt.

20 Then the thin, frail cows devoured the first seven, fattened cows. **21** But after they swallowed them whole, no one would have known it. They looked just as bad as they had before. Then I woke up. **22** I went to sleep again and saw in my dream seven full and healthy ears of grain growing on one stalk. **23** Just then, seven hard and thin ears of grain, scorched by the east wind, sprouted after them, **24** and the thin ears swallowed up the healthy ears. I told the religious experts, but they couldn't explain it to me." **25** Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh has actually had one dream. God has announced to Pharaoh what he is about to do. **26** The seven healthy cows are seven years, and the seven healthy ears of grain are seven years. It's actually one dream. **27** The seven thin and frail cows, climbing up after them, are seven years. The seven thin ears of grain, scorched by the east wind, are seven years of famine. **28** It's just as I told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. **29** Seven years of great abundance are now coming throughout the entire land of Egypt. **30** After them, seven years of famine will appear, and all of the abundance in the land of Egypt will be forgotten. The famine will devastate the land. **31** No one will remember the abundance in the land because the famine that follows will be so very severe.

32 The dream occurred to Pharaoh twice because God has determined to do it, and God will make it happen soon.

RK Commentary

The bible was written in a time of a primarily oral culture. Repetition is often used for emphasis or to drive home a point (as Seeker of Truth mentioned), and to make things easier to remember.

33 "Now Pharaoh should find an intelligent, wise man and give him authority over the land of Egypt. **34** Then Pharaoh should appoint administrators over the land and take one-fifth of all the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. **35** During the good years that are coming, they should collect all such food and store the grain under Pharaoh's control, protecting the food in the cities. **36** This food will be reserved for the seven years of famine to follow in the land of Egypt so that the land won't be ravaged by the famine."

Commentary

Joseph's suggestion was that a fifth part of the corn crop should be required of the people for the next seven years to be stored up by the government; this would keep a quantity in the country which would otherwise have been sold to other lands. The corn tax was already an important part of Egyptian revenue, and its increase in years of such abundant plenty would be no hardship.

37 This advice seemed wise to Pharaoh and all his servants,
38 and Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man with more God-given gifts than this one?" **39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, no one is as intelligent and wise as you are. **40** You will be in charge of my kingdom, and all my people will obey your command. Only as the enthroned king will I be greater than you." **41** Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Know this: I've given you authority over the entire land of Egypt." **42** Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, he dressed him in linen clothes, and he put a gold necklace around his neck. **43** He put Joseph on the chariot of his second-in-command, and everyone in front of him cried out, "Attention!" So Pharaoh installed him over the entire land of Egypt. **44** Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh; no one will do anything or go anywhere in all the land of Egypt without your permission." **45** Pharaoh renamed Joseph, Zaphenath-paneah, and married him to Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera the priest of Heliopolis. Then Joseph assumed control of the land of Egypt.

Commentary

Zaphnaph-paaneah, meaning, perhaps, 'God, the Living One, has spoken.' It is a word of Egyptian origin, 'One belonging to the goddess Neith, the Egyptian Minerva, goddess of wisdom.'

Poti-pherah, 'One given by Ra the sun-god.'

46 Joseph was 30 years old when he began to serve Pharaoh, Egypt's king, when he left Pharaoh's court and traveled through the entire land of Egypt. **47** During the seven years of abundance, the land produced plentifully. **48** He collected all of the food during the seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt, and stored the food in cities. In each city, he stored the food from the fields surrounding it. **49** Joseph amassed grain like the sand of the sea. There was so much that he stopped trying to measure it because it was beyond measuring. **50** Before the years of famine arrived, Asenath the daughter of Potiphara, priest of Heliopolis, gave birth to two sons for Joseph. **51** Joseph named the oldest son Manasseh, "because," he said, "God has helped me forget all of my troubles and everyone in my father's household." **52** He named the second Ephraim, "because," he said, "God has given me children in the land where I've been treated harshly." **53** The seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt came to an end, **54** and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. The famine struck every country, but the entire land of Egypt had bread. **55** When the famine ravaged the entire land of Egypt and the people pleaded to Pharaoh for bread, Pharaoh said to all of the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. Do whatever he tells you." **56** The famine covered every part of the land, and Joseph opened all of the granaries and sold grain to the Egyptians. In the land of Egypt, the famine became more and more severe.

57 Every country came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because in every country the famine had also become more severe.

Commentary

Wesleyan thoughts on “Steward:

Stewardship, for Wesley, emerged out of a sense of indebtedness to God for all we have. Unlike God, we are limited; we must constantly rely on God for sustenance and saving grace. Wesley understood the moral command behind good stewardship as a quality of life that gives back to God, not for the sake of personal merit, but out of responsibility and gratitude. In his sermon, “The Use of Money,” Wesley urges his readers to gain all we can, save all we can and give all we can. Faithful stewardship extends beyond the use of money. Wesley expected the totality of the Christian life, in speech, conduct and influence over others, to reflect the same careful consideration of the gifts that God gives to each person.

Genesis 42

Commentary

The first trip to Egypt, in which the famine forces Jacob’s family to turn to Egypt to buy food.

1 When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why are you staring blankly at each other? 2 I've just heard that there's grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us so that we can survive and not starve to death." 3 So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. 4 However, Jacob didn't send Joseph's brother Benjamin along with his brothers because he thought something bad might happen to him. 5 Israel's sons came to buy grain with others who also came since the famine had spread to the land of Canaan. 6 As for Joseph, he was the land's governor, and he was the one selling grain to all the land's people. When Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him, their faces to the ground. 7 When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he acted like he didn't know them. He spoke to them with a harsh tone and said, "Where have you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food." 8 Joseph recognized his brothers, but they didn't recognize him. 9 Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them, and said to them, "You are spies. You've come to look for the country's weaknesses."

Commentary

Ye are spies - Egypt was always liable to attack from Asia, and fortresses were built along that frontier to repel invasion.

By suggesting that they were foreigners who were spying out the nakedness of the land, i.e. how far it was open to attack from hostile nations, Joseph had an opportunity of enquiring about his family.

10 They said to him, "No, Master. Your servants have just come to buy food. **11** We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants aren't spies."

Commentary

This was a strong argument. No father would have risked the lives of all his children at once on such dangerous work as that of spies.

12 He said to them, "No. You've come to look for the country's weaknesses." **13** They said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, sons of one man in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, but one is gone." **14** Joseph said to them, "It's just as I've said to you. You are spies! **15** But here is how to prove yourselves: As Pharaoh lives, you won't leave here until your youngest brother arrives. **16** Send one of you to get your brother, but the rest of you will stay in prison. We will find out if your words are true. If not, as Pharaoh lives, you are certainly spies."

Commentary

Joseph perseveres in this charge in order to have a pretext for getting Benjamin to Egypt. He hoped too, perhaps, that his father would follow when his favourite son had left him.

17 He put them all in prison for three days. **18** On the third day, Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I'm a God-fearing man. **19** If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay in prison, and the rest of you, go, take grain back to those in your households who are hungry. **20** But bring your youngest brother back to me so that your words will prove true and you won't die." So they prepared to do this. **21** The brothers said to each other, "We are clearly guilty for what we did to our brother when we saw his life in danger and when he begged us for mercy, but we didn't listen. That's why we're in this danger now." **22** Reuben responded to them, "Didn't I tell you, 'Don't do anything wrong to the boy'? But you wouldn't listen. So now this is payback for his death." **23** They didn't know that Joseph was listening to them because they were using an interpreter. **24** He stepped away from them and wept. When he returned, he spoke with them again. Then he took Simeon from them and tied him up in front of them. **25** Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to put back each man's silver into his own sack, and to give them provisions for their trip, and it was done. **26** They loaded their grain onto their donkeys, and they set out. **27** When they stopped to spend the night, one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey, and he saw his silver at the top of his sack. **28** He said to his brothers, "My silver's been returned. It's right here in my sack." Their hearts stopped. Terrified, they said to each other, "What has God done to us?"

29 When they got back to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they described to him everything that had happened to them: **30** "The man, the country's governor, spoke to us with a harsh tone and accused us of being spies in the country. **31** We told him, 'We're honest men, not spies. **32** We are twelve brothers, all our father's sons. One of us is gone, but the youngest is right now with our father in the land of Canaan.' **33** The man, the country's governor, told us, 'This is how I will know you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers with me, take grain for those in your households who are hungry, and go. **34** But bring back your youngest brother to me. Then I will know that you are not spies but honest men. I will give your brother back to you, and you may travel throughout the country.'" **35** When they opened their sacks, each man found a pouch of his silver in his sack. When they and their father saw their pouches of silver, they were afraid. **36** Their father Jacob said to them, "You've taken my children from me. Joseph's gone. Simeon's gone. And you are taking Benjamin. All this can't really be happening to me!" **37** Reuben said to his father, "You may put both of my sons to death if I don't bring him back to you. Make him my responsibility, and I will make sure he returns to you." **38** But Jacob said to him, "My son won't go down with you because his brother's dead and he's been left all alone. If anything were to happen to him on the trip you are taking, you would send me—old as I am—to my grave in grief."

Genesis 43

Commentary

The second trip to Egypt, ending in reconciliation between brothers.

1 The famine was severe in the land, **2** and when they had eaten all the grain that they brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go back and buy us a little food." **3** Judah said to him, "The man was absolutely serious when he said, 'You may not see me again without your brother with you.' **4** If you agree to send our brother with us, then we will go down and buy you food. **5** But if you don't agree to send him, then we can't go down because the man said to us, 'You may not see me again without your brother with you.'" **6** Israel said, "Why have you caused me such pain by telling the man you had another brother?" **7** They said, "The man asked us pointedly about our family: 'Is your father still alive? Do you have a brother?' So we told him just what we've said. How were we to know he'd say, 'Bring your brother down here?'" **8** Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the young man with me. Let's get ready to leave so that we can stay alive and not die—we, you, and our children. **9** I will guarantee his safety; you can hold me responsible. If I don't bring him back to you and place him here in front of you, it will be my fault forever. **10** If we hadn't waited so long, we would've returned twice by now."

11 Their father Israel said to them, "If it has to be, then do this. Take in your bags some of the land's choice produce, and bring it down to the man as a gift: a little medicinal resin, a little honey, gum, resin, pistachios, and almonds.

Commentary

Medicinal medicine is 'balsam,'with healing properties. Honey is grape-honey, a syrup made of grapes and diluted with water for a drink. It is still exported from Hebron to Egypt. Syria is famous for its pistachio nuts and almonds, which do not grow in Egypt.

12 Take twice as much silver with you, and take back the silver returned in the top of your sacks. It might have been a mistake. **13** And take your brother, get ready, and go back to the man. **14** May God Almighty make the man compassionate toward you so that he may send back our other brother and Benjamin with you. But me, if I'm left childless, then I'm left childless." **15** So the men took this gift. They took twice as much silver with them, together with Benjamin. They left, traveled down to Egypt, and received an audience with Joseph. **16** When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the manager of his household, "Bring the men to the house and slaughter an animal and prepare it because the men will have dinner with me at noon." **17** The man did as Joseph told him and brought the men to Joseph's house.

18 When they were brought to Joseph's house, the men were frightened and said, "We've been brought here because of the silver put back in our sacks on our first trip so he can overpower us, capture us, make slaves of us, and take our donkeys."

Commentary

The guilty conscience, which dreads every fresh event.

19 They approached the man who was Joseph's household manager and spoke to him at the house's entrance: **20** "Please, Master, we came down the first time just to buy food, **21** but when we stopped to spend the night and opened our sacks, there was the exact amount of each man's silver at the top of his sack. We've brought it back with us, **22** and we've brought down with us additional silver to buy food. We don't know who put our silver in our sacks." **23** He said, "You are fine. Don't be afraid. Your God and your father's God must have hidden a treasure in your sacks. I received your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. **24** The manager brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water to wash their feet and feed for their donkeys. **25** They prepared the gift, anticipating Joseph's arrival at noon, since they had heard that they would have a meal there. **26** When Joseph came into the house, they presented him the gift they had brought with them into the house, and they bowed low in front of him.

27 He asked them how they were and said, "How is your elderly father, about whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" **28** They said, "Your servant our father is fine. He's still alive." And they bowed down again with deep respect. **29** Joseph looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and he said, "Is this your youngest brother whom you told me about? God be gracious to you, my son." **30** Joseph's feelings for his brother were so strong he was about to weep, so he rushed to another room and wept there. **31** He washed his face, came back, pulled himself together, and said, "Set out the dinner." **32** So they set out his food by himself, their food by themselves, and the Egyptians' who ate with him by themselves because Egyptians don't allow themselves to eat with Hebrews; the Egyptians think it beneath their dignity.

Commentary

The distinctions observed here were due to the existence of various castes among the Egyptians. As with the Hindoos, it was unheard of for a man of one caste to eat from the vessels used by another.

33 They were seated in front of him from the oldest to the youngest in their exact birth order, and the men looked at each other with amazement.

Commentary

Only an insider would know so much about them, which hints that Joseph's resolve to conceal his identity is weakening.

34 Portions of food from Joseph's table were brought to them, but Benjamin's portion was five times as large as theirs. So they drank together and were at ease.

Commentary

To do this is an Eastern mark of honour: 2 Samuel 11:8. Sometimes the host personally puts a particularly choice morsel into the guest's mouth. Joseph's love for Benjamin is thus markedly shown.

Genesis 44

1 Joseph gave commands to his household manager: "Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they'll hold, and put each man's silver at the top of his sack. **2** Put my cup, the silver cup, on top of the youngest brother's sack, together with the silver for his grain." So he did just as Joseph told him to do.

Commentary

Joseph evidently did this as an excuse for keeping Benjamin with him.

Perhaps, too, it was a test of the brethren whether they would act as cruelly in deserting their youngest brother as they had dealt with himself. However, they came nobly out of the trial, and a complete reconciliation took place.

3 At dawn, the men and their donkeys were sent off. **4** They had left the city but hadn't gone far when Joseph said to his household manager, "Get ready, go after the men and catch up with them! Ask them, 'Why have you repaid hospitality with ingratitude? **5** Isn't this the cup (bowl) my master drinks from and uses to discover God's plans? What you've done is despicable.'"

Commentary

Divination by means of bowls of water was very prevalent among the ancients. They appear to have had a superstitious fancy that if one gazed long into a cup, he would see future events reflected in its contents. Bowls have been found in Babylon, inscribed on the inner surface with magical words and exorcisms against evil spirits. In the method of divination called hydromancy, 'water was poured into a glass or other vessel, and pieces of gold, silver, or precious stones might be thrown in; then observations were made of the results, of the figures, etc., which appeared, with the expectation of learning the future or the unknown by this means'.

6 When he caught up to them, he repeated these words. **7** They replied, "Why does my master talk to us like this? Your servants would never do such a thing. **8** The silver that we found at the top of our sacks, we've just brought back to you from the land of Canaan. We didn't steal silver or gold from your master's house. **9** Whoever of your servants is found with it will be put to death, and we'll be my master's slaves."

Commentary

Their decision to stand or fall together is ironic in light of their betrayal of Joseph many years before. The ruse is a final test of their character. Will they take the food and money, and Simeon – now that he is released into their custody – and run back to Canaan? Will the ten half brothers once again betray a son of Rachel?

10 He said, "Fine. We'll do just as you've said. Whoever is found with it will be my slave, and the rest of you will go free." **11** Everyone quickly lowered their sacks down to the ground and each opened his sack. **12** He searched the oldest first and the youngest last, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

13 At this, they tore their clothing. Then everyone loaded their donkeys, and they returned to the city.

Commentary

Although free to go, all ten half brothers return in solidarity to the Egyptian ruler to accept their punishment.

14 When Judah and his brothers arrived at Joseph's house, he was still there, and they fell to the ground in front of him. **15** Joseph said to them, "What's this you've done? Didn't you know someone like me can discover God's plans?" **16** Judah replied, "What can we say to my master? What words can we use? How can we prove we are innocent? God has found your servants guilty. We are now your slaves, all of us, including the one found with the cup." **17** Joseph said, "I'd never do such a thing. Only the man found with the cup will be my slave. As for the rest of you, you are free to go back to your father."

Commentary

Nothing could be more affecting and generous than Judah's words, especially if the brethren believed that Benjamin had stolen the cup, and yet refused to accuse him, and took the blame on themselves.

18 Judah approached him and said, "Please, my master, allow your servant to say something to my master without getting angry with your servant since you are like Pharaoh himself.

19 My master asked his servants, 'Do you have a father or brother?'

20 And we said to my master, 'Yes, we have an elderly father and a young brother, born when he was old. His brother is dead and he's his mother's only child. But his father loves him.' **21** You told your servants, 'Bring him down to me so I can see him.' **22** And we said to my master, 'The young man can't leave his father. If he leaves, his father will die.' **23** You said to your servants, 'If your youngest brother doesn't come down with you, you'll never see my face again.' **24** "When we went back to my father your servant, we told him what you said. **25** Our father told us, 'Go back and buy for us a little food.' **26** But we said, 'We can't go down. We will go down only if our youngest brother is with us. We won't be able to gain an audience with the man without our youngest brother with us.' **27** Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife gave birth to two sons for me. **28** One disappeared and I said, 'He must have been torn up by a wild animal,' and I haven't seen him since. **29** And if you take this one from me too, something terrible will happen to him, and you will send me—old as I am—to my grave in despair.' **30** When I now go back to your servant my father without the young man—whose life is so bound up with his— **31** and when he sees that the young man isn't with us, he will die, and your servants will have sent our father your servant—old as he is—to his grave in grief.

32 I, your servant, guaranteed the young man's safety to my father, telling him, 'If I don't bring him back to you, it will be my fault forever.' **33** Now, please let your servant stay as your slave instead of the young man so that he can go back with his brothers. **34** How can I go back to my father without the young man? I couldn't bear to see how badly my father would be hurt."

Commentary

Judah has become a representative for the family. Furthermore, Judah has changed. This is not the individual of Chapter 38.

Genesis 45

Commentary

Joseph makes Himself known to his Brethren. Pharaoh invites Jacob and his Family to Settle in Egypt

1 Joseph could no longer control himself in front of all his attendants, so he declared, "Everyone, leave now!" So no one stayed with him when he revealed his identity to his brothers.

Commentary

Having sent away the Egyptian interpreter, we are to assume that Joseph switches to Hebrew for the dramatic revelation.

2 He wept so loudly that the Egyptians and Pharaoh's household heard him.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I'm Joseph! Is my father really still alive?" His brothers couldn't respond because they were terrified before him. **4** Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me," and they moved closer. He said, "I'm your brother Joseph! The one you sold to Egypt. **5** Now, don't be upset and don't be angry with yourselves that you sold me here. Actually, God sent me before you to save lives.

Commentary

God's purposes are not thwarted by human sin but rather advanced by it through God's good graces.

6 We've already had two years of famine in the land, and there are five years left without planting or harvesting. **7** God sent me before you to make sure you'd survive and to rescue your lives in this amazing way. **8** You didn't send me here; it was God who made me a father to Pharaoh, master of his entire household, and ruler of the whole land of Egypt. **9** "Hurry! Go back to your father. Tell him this is what your son Joseph says: 'God has made me master of all of Egypt. Come down to me. Don't delay. **10** You may live in the land of Goshen, so you will be near me, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everyone with you.

Commentary

This was a fertile district of N. Egypt, lying to the E. of the Nile, NE. of Cairo. The railway from Alexandria to Suez now runs through it. There have been discovered in this neighbourhood the remains of a town, called on its monuments Gesem. The land of Goshen was probably the same as the 'field of Zoan' (Psalms 78:12) and the 'land of Rameses' (Genesis 47:11). 18, 19.

11 I will support you there, so you, your household, and everyone with you won't starve, since the famine will still last five years.' **12** You and my brother Benjamin have seen with your own eyes that I'm speaking to you. **13** Tell my father about my power in Egypt and about everything you've seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." **14** He threw his arms around his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. **15** He kissed all of his brothers and wept, embracing them. After that, his brothers were finally able to talk to him. **16** When Pharaoh's household heard the message "Joseph's brothers have arrived," both Pharaoh and his servants were pleased. **17** Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Give your brothers these instructions: Load your pack animals and go back to the land of Canaan. **18** Get your father and your households and come back to me. Let me provide you with good things from the land of Egypt so that you may eat the land's best food.

19 Give them these instructions too: Take wagons from the land of Egypt for your children and wives, and pick up your father and come back.

Commentary

Those depicted on the monuments had two wheels and were drawn by oxen.

20 Don't worry about your possessions because you will have good things from the entire land of Egypt." **21** So Israel's sons did that. Joseph gave them wagons as Pharaoh instructed, and he gave them provisions for the road. **22** To all of them he gave a change of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing. **23** To his father he sent ten male donkeys carrying goods from Egypt, ten female donkeys carrying grain and bread, and rations for his father for the road. **24** He sent his brothers off; and as they were leaving, he told them, "Don't be worried about the trip." **25** So they left Egypt and returned to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. **26** They announced to him, "Joseph's still alive! He's actually ruler of all the land of Egypt!" Jacob's heart nearly failed, and he didn't believe them. **27** When they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the wagons Joseph had sent to carry him, Jacob recovered. **28** Then Israel said, "This is too much! My son Joseph is still alive! Let me go and see him before I die."

**The Lord bless us and keep us;
the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace.**