

## Genesis 43

**Read Genesis 43:1-10:** It is always better for the LORD to take vengeance; and not from us. God tees up a situation for Joseph to see his family repent for what they did to him. Joseph received no mercy from his brothers; and now he can extend to his brothers what they did not do for him. This is *an echo* of Christ for his selfless grace to his persecutors. Joseph is God's anointed servant with giftings in administration and foresight.

God specializes in *poetic justice*. There is no such thing as karma; but what goes around comes around. This is a world that has daily conflicts with ongoing tension. We will have to make sacrifices and U-turns to live right. These inconveniences cannot all be outmaneuvered. Faith is developed under a certain temperature and pressure. We are like *Thanksgiving turkeys*. Some need more heat or time to cure. Famines are a pressing event that forcefully change people's lives.

*Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, (Psalm 32)*

Famines have dictated a number of significant life-changing events. Abraham had to go to Egypt twice. The sons of Jacob had to go to Egypt twice as well. It is not because God cannot feed his people. God's people needed to live in a different setting to re-develop their faith. Egypt is biblically symbolic for hard life circumstances in this world.

We are heaven-bound, but we have some flaws to *grind down and burn off*. Egypt symbolizes a place where we are loaded down with burdens. For some of us, it's mental; while others respond to physical testing.

Trials are generally not desirable or optional. They can be imbedded into life and death situations. They tend to be the opposite of the path of least resistance. We really do not get to live a trouble-free life no matter how faithful we are. These hassles and hazards seem extremely inconvenient, but they are necessary and developmental to their faith. We have to be forced pretty hard to face unpleasant realities.

*Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, <sup>2</sup> that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (1 Peter 4)*

**Read Genesis 43:11-23:** Joseph agonized over the prospect of risking Benjamin's safety. Once he became resigned to the necessity of moving forward with the return to Egypt, it became the re-focus on the best plan for success. The prospect and anticipation of the hazard is usually worse than its reality.

If Joseph is symbolic of Jesus the savior and judge, then his steward could be compared to the Holy Spirit. Joseph's anonymous steward assured Joseph's brothers. A steward by definition is a helper. This steward is not a critic. He's a comforter offering reassurances and peace. Similarly, Abraham's unnamed servant works with the good father to find and escort a willing bride for his only begotten son, Isaac.

**Read Genesis 43:24-34:** This scene is a little like the millennial 1,000-year period on earth, after the tribulation. The lifetime of failures and infighting is now behind them. At first they still do not recognize him from before. They are sitting at the feet of their king sharing in a banquet feast. The riches of the kingdom are shared by all.

*And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'*  
(Zechariah 13:6)