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# GENESIS: IT ALL STARTS HERE

## *AN ALLEGORICAL GOSPEL*

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A message presented by Pastor Marc Minter  
to First Baptist Church of Diana, TX on November 13, 2016

### INTRODUCTION

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There are many stories in the Bible. All of the historical accounts of other people who have gone on before provide us with much to consider. We may learn lessons from their victories and their defeats; and we may learn much about the nature of life under the sun. However, in the story of Joseph and his brothers, we may learn more than simple life-lessons. In this story we see a picture of the Gospel and the sinner's response to it. Here we have a real-life allegory for better understanding what it means that God offers grace and mercy to sinners in need. Let us watch the story unfold, and may God help us find ourselves in it.

### **GENESIS 42:1-47:31**

#### Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

42:1 When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" 2 And he said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die."

### MESSAGE OUTLINE:

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- (1) THE SINNER'S REALIZATION OF HOPELESSNESS**
- (2) THE KINDNESS AND ATTENTION OF THE SAVIOR**
- (3) THE CALL AND REWARD OF THE SAVIOR**

## (1) THE SINNER'S REALIZATION OF HOPELESSNESS

- Hopelessness unto death
  - Jacob said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?” ... “Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may *live and not die*” (42:1-2).
  - ***There is no greater danger to you than your sin.*** You and I do not think it, but this is true.
    - “the wages of sin is death...” (Rom. 6:23).
    - “Do you not know that the unrighteous (wrongdoer, sinner) will not inherit the kingdom of God?” (1 Cor. 6:9).
    - “Put to death what is earthly (sinful) in you... On account of these the wrath of God is coming” (Col. 3:5-6).
      - Spurgeon said, “in this matter it is thy soul, thy never-dying soul, that is hungering, and it is its salvation, its rescue from the flames of hell, which now demands thy attention. Oh! what a need is that,—the need of the soul’s salvation! Talk we of bread, and of skeleton bodies? These are frightful things to look upon; but when we speak of a lack of bread, and of dying, perishing souls, there is something more frightful here. See, then, your case, [you] who are without the grace of God; [you] have great necessity,—necessity for essential things.”<sup>1</sup>
  - We do not think it; **therefore, we entertain sin.**
    - We give sinful pleasures time in our day.
    - We offer attention to sin, and we do not run from it.
  - We do not think it; **therefore, we excuse sin.**
    - When we are convicted, we do not confess sin – we justify it.
    - We search for a guiltier comparison instead of dealing ruthlessly with our own sin.

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<sup>1</sup> Spurgeon, C. H. (1859). Corn in Egypt. In The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons (Vol. 5, p. 75). London: Passmore & Alabaster.

- We do not think it; **therefore, we indulge in sin.**
      - We make allowances for our sin.
      - We know that what we are thinking, saying, or doing is sinful, but we willingly continue on the sinful path.
- Pervasiveness of the famine
  - “the sons of Israel came to buy *among the others* who came, for *the famine was in the land of Canaan*” (42:5).
  - “the *famine was severe* in the land” (43:1).
    - So severe was this famine that a trip to Egypt was not enough (43:1-2).
  - ***This world is utterly devoid of spiritual resources.***
    - The “**wisdom of the world**” is “**foolishness**” (1 Cor. 1:20, 3:19).
    - The “**course of this world**” is “**disobedience**” and “**death**” (Eph. 2:1-3).
    - This world is “**dark,**” “**crooked,**” and “**twisted**” (Phil. 2:15).
      - And, yet... We have trouble remembering this.
        - We often place our **hope in worldly wisdom** (education, experience).
        - We often **rely on worldly power** (government, personal strength, wealth)
        - We often make **worldly success the highest goal.**
          - Which would you rather have?
            - Successful children or godly children?
            - Prestige or holiness?
            - Fame or faithfulness?

- Hopelessness before God
  - After Joseph (in disguise) demands that his brothers bring Benjamin to Egypt, “they said to one another, ‘In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. ***That is why this distress has come upon us***” ... and Ruben said, “now there comes a ***reckoning for his blood***” (42:21-22).
  - As their plight gets worse (they find their money in their grain sacks), they understand that “**God has done [this] to us**” (42:28).
    - ***Regardless of your circumstances, your chief fear*** (reverence, concern, solemnity) ***should be for God Almighty.***
      - Jesus said, “**do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell**” (Matt. 10:28).
      - The prophet Isaiah said, “**the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread**” (Is. 8:13).
- Resigned to God’s mercy
  - “***May God Almighty grant you mercy*** before the man, and may he send back your other brother and Benjamin. And ***as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved***” (43:14).
    - ***The only hope of any sinner is to resign him/herself to God’s mercy.***
      - Paul tells us that God saves, “**not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...**” (Titus 3:5).
      - Paul says elsewhere, “**God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.**” (Eph. 2:4–5). And this is what it means to be saved by grace.

## (2) THE KINDNESS AND ATTENTION OF THE SAVIOR

- Joseph knows his brothers really need new hearts – not just bread.
  - Joseph did not immediately fulfill their felt need.
    - “Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but **he treated them like strangers** and spoke roughly to them” (42:7).
      - **Christ is attentive to our actual need of righteousness.**
        - “And a ruler asked [Jesus], ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. 20 You know the commandments...’” (Lk 18:18–20).
  - Joseph exposed his brothers sin.
    - “Joseph said to [his brothers], ‘Do this and you will live, for I fear God: if you are honest men, **let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody**, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households’” (42:18-19).
      - **Christ, in His kindness, exposes our sin.**
        - “The woman (at the well) answered [Jesus], ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true’” (Jn. 4:17–18).
- Joseph blessed his brothers beyond their request.
  - “As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man’s bundle of money was in his sack” (42:35).
  - “When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, ‘Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon’” (43:16).
    - **Christ offers blessing beyond compare** – ever so much more than we can imagine.
      - Paul (quoting the prophet Isaiah) said, “**What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him**” (1 Cor. 2:9).

- Joseph pointed out that God was at work in/with him on their behalf.
  - “[Joseph] said, ‘I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life’” (45:4-5).
    - ***The kindness and attention of the Savior is chiefly seen in His work on our behalf.***
      - Christ “**offered himself [by His blood] without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God**” (Heb. 9:14).

### (3) THE CALL AND REWARD OF THE SAVIOR

- The Call of the Savior
  - “Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. ***Come down to me; do not tarry. 10 You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me...***’” (45:9-10).
    - ***The call of Christ is to come near to Him... and do not delay!***
      - “As it is said, ‘*Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.*’ For **who were those who heard and yet rebelled?** Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And **to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?** So we see that **they were unable to enter because of unbelief. Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.** For good news came to us just as to them, but **the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened**” (Heb. 3:15–4:2).

- The Reward of the Savior
  - “when [Joseph’s brothers] told [Jacob/Israel] all the words of Joseph, which he had said to them, and when [Jacob/Israel] saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 28 And Israel said, ***‘It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive.*** I will go and see him before I die” (45:27-28).
    - ***Christ Himself is the great reward!***
      - Paul said, “**For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that *I may gain Christ***” (Phil. 3:8).

## APPLYING THIS MAGNIFICENT ALLEGORY

There is something here, both for the sinner and the saint – the unbeliever and the believer.

### For the sinner:

- Open your eyes to the hopelessness of your condition.
- See your sin exposed before Christ, and see the kindness of the Savior.
- Listen to the call, and do not delay! Trust Him, and receive the great reward!

### For the saint:

- Open your eyes to the ongoing hopelessness of your condition apart from Christ.
- Do not forget that Jacob is the man God preserved through Joseph’s suffering.
- So too, you are preserved through the suffering of Christ!

A.W. Pink said, “It is not easy to decide which of the two is the more wonderful and blessed—the grace of God which has given the believer a perfect standing in Christ, or the grace which ever bears with the believer who fails so miserably in making his state correspond with his standing... **Which is the more remarkable**—that, judicially, my sins are all put away forever, or, that in His governmental dealings God treats so leniently with my sins as a saint?”<sup>2</sup>

Still further, Pink said, “And why is it that God sees no sin on believers? It is because ‘the Lord hath laid on Him (on Christ) the iniquities of us all’ (Isa. 53:6).”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Pink, A. W. (2005). *Gleanings in Genesis* (p. 309). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>3</sup> Pink, A. W. (2005). *Gleanings in Genesis* (p. 309). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

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*The Sunset of Jacob's Life* by A.W. Pink

[https://www.biblebelievers.com/Pink/Gleanings\\_Genesis/genesis\\_37.htm](https://www.biblebelievers.com/Pink/Gleanings_Genesis/genesis_37.htm)

*Corn in Egypt* by C.H. Spurgeon

<http://www.spurgeongems.org/vols4-6/chs234.pdf>