

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

AN OVERVIEW OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

JN. 5:39



Jn. 5:39 “**Search the scriptures....they are they which testify of me.**”

Jn. 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for **he wrote of me.**

Rom. 15:4 For whatsoever things were **written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.**

Luke 24:27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, **he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.** ...

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and **while he opened to us the scriptures?**

Luke 24:45 **Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,**

Gen. 42-43

## Review

We began in Genesis with the beginnings of the human race.

I. THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY: BEGINNINGS OF THE HUMAN RACE, 1:1—11:32

II. THE PATRIARCHAL HISTORY: BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW RACE, 12:1—50:26

A. The Progenitor: Abraham, 12:1—25:11

B. The Pilgrim: Isaac, 25:19—27:46

C. The Propagator: Jacob, 28:1—36:43

D. The Provider: Joseph, 37:1—47:26

1. Joseph's Background, 30:24-25
2. Joseph's Boyhood, 37:1-11
3. Joseph's Betrayal, 37:12-36
4. Joseph's Brother, 38:1-30
5. Joseph's Bondage, 39:1—40:23
6. Joseph's Blessing, 41:1-44
7. Joseph's Bride, 41:45-52
8. Joseph's Brethren, 41:53—47:10
  - a. The Mystery Phase, 41:53—44:34
    - (1) How Joseph's Brethren were Burdened, 41:53—42:34
      - (a) A Predicted Famine, 41:53-57
        - i. Its Severity, 41:53-55
        - ii. Its Significance, 41:56-57
      - (b) A Perplexed Family, 42:1-5
      - (c) A Pointing Finger, 42:6-34
        - i. Simple Ignorance, 42:6-9
        - ii. Subtle Implication, 42:10-17
        - iii. Self-Incrimination, 42:18-23
        - iv. Sore Intimidation, 42:24-34

Tonight, we continue to observe how the famine affects Jacob and his family. He sent ten of his sons to Egypt, keeping Benjamin at home. After twenty years, Joseph and his ten brothers met again, the brothers were accused of being spies, Simeon was kept in prison while the other nine returned home with supplies, but also a mandate to return with Benjamin. In tonight's passage, Jacob wants more grain and acquiesces to send Benjamin on the return trip.

We continue with "*The Mystery Phase*" of Joseph dealing with his brethren who are not cognizant of all that is going on with them during the initial contact with Pharaoh's right-hand man. During this time, the brothers' consciences are awakened to the wrongs they had done to Joseph 20 years ago. Now a return trip is required, but so is Benjamin's presence.

Later, Gen. 45:1-24, “*The Majesty Phase*” will be a time that Joseph reveals to his family all the glory that is now his in Egypt. Then “*The Ministry Phase*” will be a time that Joseph brings his father and families to the best land in Egypt for shepherds. All these phases are symbolic teachings to the Lord’s future dealings with the nation of Israel, as well as practical lessons for us today.

(2) How Joseph’s Brethren were  
Bewildered, 42:35—43:34

(a) Jacob’s Plight, 42:35-38

Gen. 42:35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack: and when *both* they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, *Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away:* all these things are against me.

37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

- ❖ According to the law of Hammurabi, stealing from a king was a capital offense. Joseph's brothers were concerned about the ramifications.
- ❖ Reuben tried to alleviate Jacob's concerns and intervened to offer his own two sons as collateral: v. 37.
- ❖ Reuben reminded his brothers of his failed intervention regarding Joseph:

Gen. 42:22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

- ❖ Reuben tried to intervene, but Jacob rejected the proposal.
- ❖ Perhaps Reuben's past caused Jacob to question his.

Gen. 35:22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that **Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it.** Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

## (b) Judah's Pledge, 43:1-15

### i. Its Sanity, 43:1-8

Gen. 43:1 And the famine *was* sore in the land.

2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.

3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you.

4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

5 But if thou wilt not send *him*, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you.

6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, *as* to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, *Is* your father yet alive? have ye *another* brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, *and* also our little ones.

- ❖ God used hunger to force a blessing upon Jacob and his family.
- ❖ After Joseph was sold into Egyptian bondage, Judah visited his friend Hiram, the Adullamite (Gen. 38:1.)

Gen. 38:2 And **Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite**, whose name *was* Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.

- ❖ Judah made unspiritual decisions, similarly to Reuben, then apparently returned home.

- ❖ Now, Judah intervened with Jacob regarding Joseph's request to bring Benjamin.
- ❖ Judah appealed to Jacob's logic and the seriousness of the situation.

## ii. Its Sincerity, 43:9-10

Gen. 43:9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, **then let me bear the blame for ever:**  
10 For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

- ❖ Judah placed himself as being personally responsible for Benjamin's welfare.
- ❖ Accepting blame precedes access to life changing events.
- ❖ Judah expressed frustration at the delay in returning to Egypt.

iii. Its Success, 43:11-15

Gen. 43:11 And their father Israel said unto them, If *it must be* so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:

12 And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry *it* again in your hand; peradventure it *was* an oversight:

13 Take also your brother, and arise, **go again unto the man:**

14 And **God Almighty give you mercy before the man**, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved *of my children*, I am bereaved.

15 And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and **stood before Joseph**.

- ❖ Jacob listens to Judah's reasoning and developed a plan for a return trip to Egypt.
- ❖ Jacob sends fruits, has his sons “and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:”
- ❖ Jacob instructs the sons to take “double money” and Benjamin, to “go again unto the man:” emphasizing a focus upon the yet unknown Joseph.
- ❖ Jacob expresses a revived dependence upon the “...God Almighty...” – “El Shaddai” – for God's blessings on the dire situation.

## Summary

- ❖ Jacob's life is a perpetual picture of a believer's battle between the spirit and the flesh.

Mt. 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: **the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.**

- ❖ The famine forced Jacob's attention and action to confront the challenge.
- ❖ God's chastening/correction forces believers to confront reality.

Prov. 3:11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For **whom the LORD loveth he correcteth**; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.

Heb. 12:5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For **whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth**, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

❖ As Jacob was confronting reality, his sons were confronting reality in a different perspective.

## Conclusion

- ❖ Many of life's challenges begin inauspiciously.
- ❖ Reuben and Judah had to repent and overcome their sinful pasts.
- ❖ Joseph's brothers had to confront and overcome their wicked pasts.

Mt. 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed **appear beautiful** outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also **outwardly appear** righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

❖ Every believer needs to confront personal sins, repent, and return to fellowship with the Lord:

1 Jn. 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.