

MI'KETZ (At the End)

GENESIS (B'RESHIYT 41:1 – 44:17)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Like Toledot and a few other portions, Mi'ketz is pregnant with prophetic overtones.
 - a. The phrase מִי'כֶּתֶז *mi'ketz* literally means “at the end.”
 - b. Insinuating what transpires in this portion will happen “at the end (of days).”
2. This begins the last part of the prophecy given to Abraham – his seed would be subjugated.
 - a. Was important that Joseph was willing to submit to what God had ordained.
 - b. We perceive things as bad or good based on how they appeal to flesh.
 - c. Sometimes “bad” things are “good” things; the opposite is also true.
 - d. God used something “bad” to bring about something “good.”

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” – Romans 8:28

3. Because we are told Joseph is 30 yrs. old, rabbinical commentary makes these determinations:
 - Jacob would have been 120 years old.
 - Isaac died at 180 years about the time the seven years of plenty began.
4. Implications of this would be:
 - At Isaac's burial, Jacob and Esau attended to it.
 - Joseph was not there.
5. At the time it became possible for Esau to fulfill his vow to kill his brother, Joseph was absent.
 - a. Esau determined to kill Jacob after Isaac had died (Gen. 27:41).
 - b. Joseph was last of Jacob's sons to encounter Esau (Gen. 33:2).
 - c. Implying that Jacob's company had been divided into two to escape Esau.
 - d. Joseph would be reunited with Judah before the final victory over Esau.

“The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken.” – Obadiah 1:18

6. Before that could occur, the breaches between the two “brothers” had to be repaired.

“In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name, declares the LORD who does this.” – Amos 9:11-12

7. This prophecy foretells of a united kingdom under “one tent” and one King – Messiah.
 - a. The breaches, the rifts must be repaired first that Edom may be possessed.

“In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and those who harass Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim. But they shall swoop down on the shoulder of the Philistines in the west, and together they shall plunder the people of the east. They shall put out their hand against Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites shall obey them. And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt, and will wave his hand over the River with his scorching breath, and strike it into seven channels, and he will lead people across in sandals. And there will be a highway from Assyria for the remnant that remains of his people, as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.” – Isaiah 11:11-16

8. Isaiah describes the second time, modeled upon the first.
 - a. The seeds for both were sown when Joseph went down into Egypt.
 - b. In this *sidrah*, the seeds sprout and begin to shoot forth.
9. To accomplish this, God gave a dream to a pagan king but not the ability to understand it.
 - a. Two of the most prophetic dreams in Scripture: here and in Daniel 2.
 - b. Both to Gentile leaders unable to discern its meaning.
 - c. Forced to call upon man God had already positioned to be at right place at right time.
10. “Joseph” – those separated from family living among the nations – lives in the land of plenty.
 - a. That plenty will be consumed by the famine forcing reconciliation between brothers.

CHAPTER 41: PHARAOH’S DREAM

1. V 1: “It came to pass at the end (Heb. מִקֶּץ *miketz*) of two full years that Pharaoh dreamed.”
 - a. Two years since he asked the cupbearer to “remember me before Pharaoh.”
 - b. Either the cupbearer was purely wicked or very forgetful.
2. Considering that Joseph is a type of Messiah, how do the two years relate?
 - a. Interesting that Herod had male children two years and under killed.
 - b. This is, in fact, what forced Joseph to take the child Messiah “down into Egypt.”
3. V 1: “And behold he stood there by the river (Nile).” – source of Egypt’s prosperity.
 - a. Nile venerated with god-like status.
4. V 2-4: Bible relates first part of Pharaoh’s dream:
 - Seven healthy cattle coming up out of the river feeding on the reed grass.
 - Followed by seven lean and poor looking cattle standing by the healthy.
 - The unhealthy devoured the healthy cattle.
5. The fat, healthy cows – representing prosperity (ability to sow) – stand near River.
 - a. Hinting that the prosperity would be limited to Egypt.
6. The unhealthy cows did not stand by river bank, hinting they wandered off.
 - a. Suggested that the famine would go beyond Egypt and engulf other nations.
 - b. Yet, it would emanate from Egypt.
7. That they “ate” the seven healthy cows symbolized the plenteous years would be forgotten.
 - a. One commentator felt that the seven healthy being **swallowed** is basis for storing grain.
 - b. The dream not only revealed the future but how advice how to cope with the future.

- c. It is noteworthy that Joseph seems to offer unsolicited advice.
- d. Perhaps he did so because that was hinted at in the dream.
- 8. V 5-7: Pharaoh dreams again the second part of the dream:
 - Seven good, healthy ears of grain upon one stalk.
 - Followed by seven thin ears of grain “blasted by the east wind.”
 - The thin ears swallow the healthy ears.
- 9. This is the same message but told in a different way.
 - a. While cows represented the plowing of the fields, grain represented the harvest.
 - b. With good harvests there would be food for all including the animals used to sow.
 - c. With bad harvests, all would go hungry including the cows.
 - d. Recent events in the southwest.
- 10. V 6: “Seven ears, thin and blasted by the east wind, sprung up after them.”
 - a. “East Wind” believed to be the *sirocco* that comes from across Red Sea out of Arabia.
 - b. A wind that can last as long as two months killing all vegetation.
- 11. The Hebrew root term “blasted, scorched” is שָׂדֵף *shadaf* – “to blight, parch.”
 - a. Related to an Arabic term – ‘*asdafa* – which means “was dark.”
- 12. The Hebrew term “east wind” is קָדִים *kadim*, literally “easts” – “wind” is not present.
 - a. “Wind” is understood – it is something “dark” and “scorching” coming from Arabia.
 - b. The Hebrew term “after them (seven good ears)” is אַחֲרֵי *acharei*.
 - c. The root word can mean “after” but also “hindermost” or “at the end (of days).”
- 13. All that is described happens “at the end” – it is prophetic of the last days.
 - a. This sets up the restoration of the two “brothers” and the kingdom of Israel.

“So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’” – Acts 1:6-8

- 14. The “end of the earth” is the nations from which He will gather His people upon repairing the breaches.
 - a. Apparently, it takes a “famine” (crisis) of this magnitude to repair the breaches.
- 15. The East Wind plays a significant role in this process and shows up elsewhere in the Bible.
 - An east wind brings the locusts into the land of Egypt (Ex. 10:12-15).
 - Locusts are synonymous with the “people of the east” who swarm Israel (Jud. 7:12).
 - Locusts attack God’s people at the end, coming from wilderness (Joel 1 & 2).
 - These same locusts show up in Revelation to torment men for 5 months (Rev. 9:3-5).
 - Ephraim suffers when God stirs up the east wind against them (Hos. 13:15).
- 16. Because it comes from Arabia, east wind hints at radical Islam.
 - a. Consequently, alludes to its influence upon the world and its leaders, including the US.
 - b. קַדִּימָה *kadimah* – related to קָדִים *kadim* – is Hebrew for “forward.”

“So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.” – Genesis 41:8

17. Compare this to the prophetic dream given to Nebuchadnezzar.

“In the second year (“at the end of two years”) of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him. Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king....The Chaldeans answered the king and said, ‘There is not a man on earth who can meet the king’s demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.’ ” – Daniel 2:1-2, 10-11

18. V 9: “Then spoke the chief butler unto Pharaoh, ‘I make mention of my faults today.’ ”

- a. V 10-13: Cupbearer relates the story of his dream and Joseph’s accurate interpretation.
- b. By withholding this information, he would have put himself in grave danger again.
- c. Suggesting he “remembered” because of his own self interests.

19. He described Joseph in judgmental terms:

- A Youth – immature and ignorant.
- A Hebrew – despised by the Egyptians.
- A Slave – inferior class of people.

CHAPTER 41: JOSEPH CALLED OUT OF PRISON

“Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit [alt. “cistern”] And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh.” – Genesis 41: 14

1. Tradition states this occurred on 1 Tishri, 2230 (from Creation).
2. Notice the “dungeon, prison” is also called “pit.”
 - a. This is from same Hebrew word used to describe “pit” his brothers cast him into.
3. They brought him out “quickly” [Heb. *rutz*] – “to move quickly, run as if in a race.”
 - a. When salvation comes, it is quickly and unexpectedly.
 - b. They ate the Passover in haste (Ex. 12:11).
 - c. The coming of the Messiah will be sudden.

“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.” – Malachi 3:1

4. Joseph made himself [Heb. *galach*] – “to be bald.” – implies in manner of Egypt.
 - a. Some rabbinical commentary states that, out of respect to Pharaoh, shaved himself.
 - b. To be more palatable for the king’s court, he made himself to look more Egyptian.
 - c. It would have been unfitting to appear before the king unkempt and in rags.
5. Footnote: this suggests to me that some are mistaken about a biblical mandate to grow a beard.
 - Joseph shaved – made himself bald.
 - A cleansed leper was to shave off all his hair (Lev. 14:8-9).
 - A Nazir was to shave his head at the end of his vow (Num. 6:18).

- Ezekiel commanded to shave his head and beard (Ez. 5:1).
 - Leper healed by Y'shua told to offer the gift Moses prescribed (Mt. 8:4).
6. To "change clothes" hints at putting off defilement in preparation of encountering the Creator.
- a. Joseph not being summoned before the Creator, but is summoned because of Creator.
7. Other examples of this pertain to Israel and some allude to "Joseph."
- Jacob has those with him change their garments before going to Bethel (Gen. 35:2).
 - Israel told to wash their garments in anticipation of God's descent upon Sinai (Ex. 19:10).
 - The Priests had to change their garments when officiating in the Tabernacle.
 - Zerubabel made to change his garments (Zech. 3:3-4).
 - Returning exiles (Joseph) must be sprinkled and made clean (Ez. 36:25).
8. Thus, the imprisoned Joseph must shave off and change out of his "uncleanness."
- a. All in anticipation of stepping into the Creator's purpose which is, Israel's salvation.
9. V 15: "Pharaoh said, 'I have dreamed a dream and there is none who can interpret.'"
- a. Pharaoh believes, in sync with his culture, that Joseph is professional interpreter.
 - b. Joseph makes it clear that he possesses no such power; it is up to God to interpret.
 - c. Likewise, Daniel made it clear that his ability is not of his own making (Dan. 2:30).
10. V 17-24: Pharaoh related the dreams to Joseph with some added commentary.
- a. V 19: "ill-favored and lean such as I never saw in the land of Egypt for badness."
 - b. V 21: "it could not be known that they had eaten them; they were as at the beginning."

"Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, 'The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do.' " – Genesis 41:25

11. V 26-32: Joseph relates the symbolism and meaning of the dream; it is one dream:
- Seven good cattle and seven good ears are seven years.
 - Seven lean cattle and seven withered ears are seven years.
 - There will be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.
 - The years of famine will be "grievous" and "swallow up" the plentiful years.
 - Years of plenty will be forgotten; famine will "consume the land" (and its people).
12. Dream was doubled; indicating the "thing" (lit. דבר "word") is established by God.
- a. God will bring this about very soon.
 - b. Because it will ravage the land, steps must be taken.
 - c. No doubt there were areas where people did not take the proper steps.
13. Because it affects affairs of state the dream was related to the head of state.
- a. Because it was from God, it had to be interpreted by God's man – not pagan wizards.

"Now therefore let Pharaoh select a **discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years. And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine.' This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants."**

– Genesis 41:33-37

14. Pharaoh must select someone wise enough to understand HOW to do these things.

- a. Discerning enough to know how much food to store and how much to sell.
 - b. Wise enough to know how to store the food and prevent loss.
 - c. It is clear to me that Joseph's practicability is evident and Joseph knows that.
15. To collect one-fifth (20%) implies a tax of sorts; commentary suggests this doubled tax.
- a. Given the critical situation, would seem that it was enforced; against people's will?

CHAPTER 41: JOSEPH IS ELEVATED TO VICEROY OF EGYPT

“And Pharaoh said to his servants, ‘Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?’ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you.’ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.’” – Genesis 41:38-41

1. In a sense, the unthinkable and impossible happened – a young, foreign slave made ruler.
 - a. Egyptian law forbid a slave being appointed to a high position.
 - b. “With God all things are possible” regardless of culture and politics.
 - c. This can have positive consequences for God's people or negative consequences.
 - d. Thinking in terms of what is happening currently nationally and globally.
2. Pharaoh declares that Joseph is:
 - Full of the spirit of God
 - Discreet/discerning
 - Wise
3. In my opinion, Joseph obtained discretion/discernment, wisdom and spirit of God in prison.
 - a. Trials and tribulation provoked the innate qualities to come to the surface.
4. Joseph always rules wherever he finds himself.
 - Jacob's preferred son; to rule his house.
 - Ruled Potiphar's house.
 - Ruled the prison.
 - Ruled Pharaoh's house.

“Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck.” – Genesis 41:42

5. The signet ring symbolized Joseph was given royal authority – leader of the government.
 - a. Would have authority to seal decrees as he saw fit.
 - b. The gold chain is a gold collar showing that he is Royal Viceroy.
 - c. Pharaoh instinctively trusted him after hearing the interpretation.
 - d. Thus, the despised one was given all authority - hinting at the Messiah.

“He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our grief and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.” – Isaiah 53:3-4

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.” – Isaiah 9:6-7

6. Bestowing of the gold collar upon someone of distinction said to be a custom peculiar to Egyptian culture.

7. Thus, commentators make note of fact the one who wrote this narrative was familiar with Egyptian culture and protocol.

a. That person was Moses, raised in Pharaoh’s house.

8. V 43: “He made him ride in the second chariot; and they cried before him, ‘Abrech.’”

a. The Hebrew spelling is אֲבֹרַךְ - related to בָּרַךְ *barach* – “to kneel.”

b. Alt. from אב “father” and רַךְ *rach* “king” in Aramaic – “counselor to the king.”

c. This public demonstration was to show people Joseph had support of the crown.

“And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah (Heb. צַפְנַת פַּעֲנָח). And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphra priest of On (Heliopolis). So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.” – Genesis 41:45

9. Receiving a new name is not only Hebrew custom but apparently an Egyptian one.

a. Oshea was given the name יהושע *Yehoshua* (Num. 13:16).

b. Joseph is given an Egyptian name to conceal his Hebrew name and identity.

10. Tzaphnat comes from צָפַן *tzafan* – “to conceal” thus, “Revealer of secrets or hidden things.”

a. Other interpretations of the name are:

- “Food man of life” – i.e. chief steward in the face of the famine.
- One who provides the bread of life.

11. Given an Egyptian wife, daughter of the High Priest of On – not Potiphar.

a. On (Heliopolis) near modern Cairo was seat of sun worship.

b. Thus Joseph marries into family that leads in sun worship, further concealing him.

c. Also paints a picture of a) Messiah and b) body of Messiah.

d. All serving God’s purposes as it relates to the restoration of Israel.

12. After all is said and done, the Hebrew Joseph looks like the Egyptian Zaphnat Paneach.

a. Demonstrating that the “house of Joseph” looks like the nations.

b. Yet knows that “he” is the seed of Abraham.

“And if ye are Messiah's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.”

- Galatians 3:29

13. V 46: “And Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt.”

a. Meaning he had been away from Canaan for about 13 years.

b. Twelve of those were in prison.

14. V 46: “And Joseph went throughout all the land of Egypt” – touring the land.

a. To assess the situation and formulate a plan to prepare for the coming famine.

15. V 47: “And in the seven years of plenty, the earth brought forth in heaps.”

- a. Indicating that Joseph was a prophet.
- b. That God blessed Egypt for Joseph's sake as he had Potiphar.
- c. Yet, it was ultimately for the sake of Israel.
- d. V 49: He laid up grain (Heb. **בָּר** *bar*) as the "sand of the sea" and quit calculating.

"And unto Joseph were born two sons **before the year of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh (Heb. **מְנַשֶּׁה**) for, said he, God has made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second he called Ephraim (Heb. **אֶפְרַיִם**): for God hath made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." – Genesis 41:50-52**

- 16. The evidence seems to indicate that his sons conformed to Joseph's ideals, not Egypt's.
 - a. Would suggest that his wife was compliant with this as well.
 - b. Saying a lot considering she was the daughter of a pagan priest.
 - c. We could safely assume, though outwardly Egyptian, Joseph was seed of Abraham.
 - d. He did not forget the ways of his fathers' but passed them on to his family.
- 17. Yet, Manasseh – "making to forget" – represents forgetting the trials and his father's house.
 - a. Although likely didn't forget his father, thinking on this was painful.
 - b. Other matters concerning Egypt were on his mind.
 - c. God allowed him to forget the painful elements; it was part of God's plan.
- 18. Perhaps, being "to forget" is why Manasseh was not the "firstborn" according to Jacob.
 - a. We are to "remember" the fathers and our heritage – Malachi 4.
 - b. We are to be fruitful (Ephraim) even in the "land of my affliction."
 - c. Ephraim is "fruitful" in the plural form of the word – "doubly fruitful."

**"By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."
– John 15:8**

- 19. This is why Ephraim is multiplied in the nations (Gen. 48:19).
 - a. Choosing these names suggests that Joseph was loyal to his heritage.
 - b. To the best of his ability, he resisted being sucked into Egyptian culture and mindset.
 - c. Though second only to Pharaoh, it was still regarded as the "land of affliction."
 - d. Though we prosper where we are, as believers we are in "land of affliction" – Egypt.

"The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread." – Genesis 41:53-54

- 20. More than the years of plenty, the years of famine validated Joseph to the people of Egypt.
 - a. Famine swept across the region, including Canaan.
 - b. Perhaps Joseph suspected that one day his brothers would be forced to come to Egypt.
 - c. Perhaps he put things in place that would alert him to their arrival.
 - d. He had made sure there was bread and everyone would have to come to him.
- 21. V 55: "When Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread; 'Go to Joseph.'"
 - a. At first Joseph sold grain to the Egyptians.
 - b. This was followed by the people of the world coming to Joseph for sustenance.

“Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.” – Genesis 41:57

22. By selling grain to the world, Egypt amassed great wealth – this also part of God’s plan.

“The sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous.” – Proverbs 13:22

“The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.” – Exodus 12:35-36

CHAPTER 42: JOSEPH’S BROTHERS COME TO EGYPT

“When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, ‘Why do you look at one another?’ 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.’ So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.” – Genesis 42:1-3

1. This was in the second year of the famine according to rabbinic literature.
 - a. Jacob’s motive for sending his sons to Egypt is for survival.
 - b. He had no idea what was in store – God used famine (bad) to bring about good.
2. The verb used for “go down” is not typical for “go” but is word hinting at “descending.”
 - a. Hebrew is **רדו** *r’du* – numerically equivalent to 210; numbers of years Israel in Egypt.
 - b. “That we may live” is prophetically speaking of the nation coming out of Egypt.
3. Ten of the brothers went down to Egypt – Benjamin stayed with his father (v. 4).
 - a. Jacob didn’t want to risk anything bad happening to him.
4. Commentary says Joseph issued edict preventing anyone buying more than for household.
 - a. Supposedly, this is why ten brothers went; couldn’t have bought for all if a few went.
 - b. Suggesting Joseph ensured all his brothers would have to come to him.
 - c. Certainly, in midst of famine, it must have occurred to him that they might show up.
 - d. Did he plan for it? – He was the one who sold to all who came (v. 6).
5. V 5: “And the sons of Israel came to buy... for the famine was in the land of Canaan.”
 - a. God used famine to bring about his purposes here and in other situations.
 - In the days of Elijah – forcing the people to come to Mt Carmel (1 Kings 18).
 - In the parable of the lost son – famine brings him to his senses (Luke 15).
 - Famine will come in the last days (Amos 8, Revelation 6).

“And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. ‘Where do you come from?’ he said. They said, ‘From the land of Canaan, to buy food.’ And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them.”

– Genesis 42:6b-9a

6. V 7: Joseph acted like a stranger and spoke roughly with them – to test them.

- What was their relationship with Jacob?
 - How did they feel about Benjamin seeing he was a son of Rachel?
 - How did they feel about the crime committed against their lost brother?
7. At this point, only TEN brothers had bowed – in the dream it was eleven.
 - a. Could not reveal his identity at this point.
 - b. Had to contrive a way to get Benjamin there in fulfillment of dream.
 - c. Also had to get his father there in order for second dream to be fulfilled.
 8. As far as the second dream, how will the mother bow seeing she was dead?
 - a. Does this speak into the future? – the Messiah? the Body of Messiah?
 9. He recognized them immediately but they did not recognize him.
 - a. In dress, name, language and function, he was an Egyptian not a Hebrew.
 - b. Yet, he knew who he was – seed of Abraham, son of Israel.
 - c. Prophetically, speaks of those who know who they are in Messiah, yet not recognized.
 10. Admirable that Joseph was able to hold his emotions in check until he knew their motives.
 - a. When he was convinced of their devotion to Jacob and repentant heart, he forgave.
 - b. Remembering the dreams and his situation brought the purpose into focus.
 - c. Tribulation united the brothers and wrought humility.
 11. Accusing them of being spies might have been way to prevent them from asking questions.
 - a. They knew Joseph had gone down to Egypt; perhaps they intended to look for him.
 - b. If under suspicion of spying, they would be less likely to go around making inquiries.
 - c. Chance existed they might hear of the Hebrew who became Egypt's viceroy.
 12. V 10-11: "No, my lord; we are here to buy food; we are one man's son and are upright men."
 - a. As father of one man it is implied he would not send all his sons to spy.
 - b. To the contrary, our father is reputable and we are as well.

"And they said, 'We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more.'"

– Genesis 42:13

13. They acknowledge Benjamin and Joseph – they do not claim he is dead for they don't know.
 - a. Joseph avoids this issue entirely; but plans to have Benjamin brought there.
 - b. They are forbidden to leave unless the younger brother is brought to Egypt.
 - c. To accentuate the situation, he put them in a prison ward (pit?) for three days.
14. V 18-21: Joseph agrees to send them all away except one who will remain a prisoner.
 - a. This is so they will return with Benjamin.

"Then 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 Reuben answered them, 'Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.' They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes."

– Genesis 42:21-24

15. They spoke to one another in Hebrew and the interpreter is obviously not present.

- a. This communication was not intended for Egyptian ears.
- b. Joseph had communicated through an interpreter to obscure his identity.
- c. They had no idea Joseph could understand them and spoke freely.
- 16. As firstborn, Reuben would have been the logical choice so why Simeon?
 - a. Reuben was the one who tried to save Joseph and Joseph now knows that.
 - b. He also knows that they have come to regret their cruelty to him.
 - c. Tradition has it that Simeon was the one who suggested that Joseph be slain.
- 17. As far as they know, Joseph is the Egyptian Zaphnat Paneach who will show mercy.
 - a. They did not show mercy to their own brother despite his cries for mercy.
- 18. V 25: “Joseph commanded to fill their vessels, restore their money and give provision.”
 - a. On the trip one of them discovers his money is in his sack which prompts: “What is this that God has done to us?” (v. 28).
- 19. They thought that the Egyptian lord planted the money in order to charge them as thieves.
 - a. From their perspective, this would give him evidence to use to enslave them.
 - b. Upon return to Canaan, they related story to Jacob.
 - c. Informed Jacob that they could not return without bringing Benjamin along.
 - d. Discovered all had their money; this added to their fear and dread of returning.

“And Jacob their father said to them, ‘You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me.’ – Genesis 42:36

- 20. He was letting them know that it is his children, not theirs’ that they are endangering.
 - a. Their grief over Simeon can’t compare to that of his father.
 - b. Also suggesting that Joseph and Simeon have been taken while with them.
 - c. Why should he trust them to take Benjamin – something might happen to him too.
 - d. Also possible he blames himself for sending Joseph into a dangerous situation.
 - e. How can he possibly send Benjamin into a dangerous situation?
- 21. This provokes Reuben to say: “Kill my two sons if I don’t bring Benjamin back to you.”
 - a. His two sons for Joseph and Benjamin.
 - b. Jacob’s only reply to this knee-jerk reaction is: “Benjamin is not going with you.”
 - c. He is the only one left that is connected to Rachel.

CHAPTER 43: THE BROTHERS’ SECOND VISIT

“Now the famine was severe in the land. And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, ‘Go again, buy us a little food.’”

– Genesis 43:1-2

- 1. Implication of verse 1 is that the famine had gotten worse.
- 2. V 3-5: Judah, taking a leadership role, reminds Jacob of the need to return with Benjamin.
 - a. Refused to go unless Jacob permitted Benjamin to go as well.
 - b. Twice Judah tells Jacob:

“For the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.’”

– Genesis 43:5

3. This is a fascinating statement considering that Joseph is a type of the Messiah.
a. Y'shua told the people of Jerusalem:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! See, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'”

– Matthew 23:37-39

4. The context of Y'shua's statement is gathering the children together – the restoration.
a. This is why He came to die: e.g. John 11:45-52, Ephesians 2:11-19.
b. He tells them their “house” will be desolate – i.e. dispersed.
c. Will not see the Messiah (Joseph) until you say, “Blessed is he who comes...”
d. Taken from Psalm 118.

“The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us, we pray (Heb. הושיעה נא *hoshia na*), O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD.” – Psalm 118:22-26

5. Notice the context relates directly to the Messiah; He is the cornerstone bringing two together.
a. It was the LORD's doing that the stone was rejected; “let us rejoice in it.”
b. So who is the “he” who comes in the name of the LORD? – the Messiah?
c. What about that which the Messiah accomplishes? – bringing the two together?
d. You want see Him until all the brothers are together in one place.
6. Rabbinical commentary suggests that “this is the day the LORD has made” alludes to the set day of the Messiah's arrival – thus we will rejoice.
a. Thus, we cry out “save us” – *hoshia na*.
7. Rabbinical commentary also suggests that “Blessed is “he” refers to the exiles who will return to the land of the fathers and to the ways of their ancestors; i.e. all the brothers in one place.
a. That Judah repeats this to Israel twice is significant.
b. Judah was the one Y'shua was addressing when he said it.
c. Judah will play a significant role in the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel.
8. V 6-7: Jacob doesn't understand why they volunteered the information about Benjamin.
a. Judah explains that “the man” asked very direct questions that forced them to answer.

“And Judah said to Israel his father, ‘Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.’” – Genesis 43:8-9

9. Another important statement uttered by Judah at a crucial time – lives are on the line.
a. Judah has lost two children and is acquainted with grief Jacob feels.
b. Perhaps this is why Jacob is impressed with his words over Reuben's

- c. Judah will bear the blame - lit. "I shall have sinned against you forever."
- d. Judah makes himself responsible to see to it that the brothers are restored.
- 10. V 11-13: Jacob consents and instructs them to take unique gifts and double money.
 - a. He used this same tactic when approaching Esau unsure of what his response would be.

"May God Almighty (Heb. אל שדי *El Shaddai*) 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." – Genesis 43:14

- 11. Jacob consents with an expression reminiscent of Esther's: "If I perish, I perish."
 - a. Rabbinical commentary suggests "other brother" is actually hinting at Joseph.
- 12. V 15-16: They return to Egypt and are told to go to Joseph's house for a noon meal.
 - a. They fear that this will lead to them being accused of theft and then incarcerated.
 - b. V 19: Before crossing the threshold of the home, they explained themselves to steward.
- 13. V 23: "He (steward) said, 'Fear not; your God gave you treasure ... I had your money.'"
 - a. The brothers are reunited with Simeon.
 - b. They are brought into the house and provided for.

"When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground. And he inquired about their welfare and said, 'Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?' They said, 'Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.' And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves. And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, 'Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!'" – Genesis 43:26-29

- 14. With Benjamin present, this marks the first time all 11 bowed to him fulfilling prophecy.
 - a. Joseph, overcome with emotion, leaves the room to weep.
 - b. He sees his "mother's son" – perhaps Benjamin reminded him of his mother.
- 15. V 32: Joseph eats separately from his brothers; Egyptians also separate themselves.
 - a. Egyptians considered it an abomination to eat with the Hebrews.
 - b. As a nobleman, Joseph would have eaten alone apart from his stewards and servants.
 - c. He would not have eaten with his brothers because he was an "Egyptian."
- 16. V 33. "They sat before him; the firstborn to the youngest and they marveled."
 - a. Marveled that this arrangement had occurred.
- 17. V 34: "And portions were taken unto them but Benjamin's portion was five times more."
 - a. Joseph wanted to see if this would inspire jealousy toward Rachel's son.
 - b. Still testing them to see what was in their hearts.
 - c. To accentuate this, they "drank and were merry" – i.e. became intoxicated.
 - d. Being intoxicated typically brings emotions to the surface.

CHAPTER 44: THE SILVER CUP

"Then he commanded the steward of his house, 'Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack, and put my cup, the

silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain.’ And he did as Joseph told him.” – Genesis 44:1-2

1. Apparently he was satisfied they were not jealous of Benjamin, but would they fight for him?
 - a. To discover that, he needed to threaten to keep Benjamin as a slave.
 - b. Would they react the same they did when he was carted off as a slave?
2. They were given more food than what their money would buy – yet money returned again.
 - a. They left the next morning.
3. The silver cup was used for divination and considered sacred.
 - a. Pieces of silver or gold thrown into water; movement supposedly predicted future.
 - b. Does fact Joseph have one mean that he used it for that purpose?
 - c. Or does he continue the façade that he is an Egyptian lord using such devices?
4. V 3-8: Joseph instructs his steward to follow and overtake them – accusing them of betrayal.
 - a. He argues that they have destroyed their reputation for honesty.
 - b. They argued they wouldn’t do this especially since they had returned with money.
 - c. Money to pay for this purchase and the money to pay for the previous purchase.

“Whichever of your servants is found with it shall die, and we also will be my lord's servants. He said, ‘Let it be as you say: he who is found with it shall be my servant, and the rest of you shall be innocent.’ – Genesis 44:9-10

5. Jacob had said something similar to this not knowing that Rachel had Laban’s *teraphim*.
 - a. They commit all of them to become slaves confident the cup is not among them.
 - b. The man counters with only the guilty will be a slave; the rest are free to go.
 - c. This was designed to show whether or not they would leave Benjamin in Egypt.
6. V 11-13: The cup is found in Benjamin’s sack and the brothers rend their clothes.
 - a. An act that treated the situation as if Benjamin was dead.
 - b. Their actions years before had caused Jacob to rend his clothes.
7. Most importantly, they all return to the city and Joseph’s house.
 - a. Led by Judah, they fall on the ground before Joseph in utter despair.

“Joseph said to them, ‘What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me can indeed practice divination?’ And Judah said, ‘What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how can we clear ourselves? **God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also in whose hand the cup has been found.’ But he said, ‘Far be it from me that I should do so! Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my servant. But as for you, go up in peace to your father.’”
– Genesis 44:15-17**

8. From Judah and brother’s perspective this is a tragedy that is equivalent to death.
 - a. Their father’s death at losing all his sons and, thus, the promise God made to him.
 - b. Judah also acknowledged that this outcome was result of a sin committed long ago.
 - c. Joseph would have recognized that they were in acknowledgment of that sin.
 - d. Still, he gives them one more chance to be selfish and go home in peace.