

(Gen. 41:57) - There was a famine not only over Egypt but all lands and all people. This pictures our natural spiritual condition - a famine of sin and spiritual death which is over all of Adam's race, even the elect of God (*Rom. 5:12; 3:23*). This is why God's elect have to be reconciled to God by the death of Christ whereby He established the righteousness that God has imputed to us. By nature, we are alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works (*Col. 1:21*), but we are reconciled to God through the death of Christ from Whom we gain spiritual life and the fruitfulness of life in Christ. The salvation of God's elect is illustrated in these verses by Joseph's dealings with his brethren, the natural sons of Jacob. God says, "*For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*" (*Mal. 3:6*). This refers, not to the natural sons of Jacob, but to the elect of God in Christ. Christ identified the elect as His brethren (*Matt. 12:46-50; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:9-18*). All for whom Christ died, all whom He brings to believe in Him and to walk by and in the grace of God, are His spiritual family.

(Gen. 42:1-2) - Jacob heard good news and called his sons together to tell them. "*There is corn in Egypt*" - We can liken this to the good news of the Gospel preached to weary, hungry, and dying sinners. We do not have to continue in spiritual poverty, hunger, and death. There is life, mercy, and grace in Christ Jesus. Christ is "*the bread of life*" (*John 6:48-50*). "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*" (*Matt. 5:6*). We can be sure the bread of life and the water of life in Christ is true because we have the sure word of God (*1 John 5:9-11*). We know that God is always faithful to fulfill His promise of salvation with all of its spiritual blessings and benefits to all who come to Him begging for mercy in Christ (*John 6:37*). We know that God is powerful enough to fulfill His promise of spiritual life and food in Christ (*2 Cor. 1:20*). We know that our Lord's grace is sufficient to save to the uttermost ALL who come to God by Him (*Isa. 1:18; 1 John 1:7-9; Matt. 11:28*). Jacob sent money to Egypt to buy corn, but God's grace is free to all who come to Christ (*Isa. 55:1-3*).

Jacob asked his sons, "*Why do ye look one upon another?*" i.e. "Why do you hesitate? Get down to Egypt and buy food that we may live and not die!" This is the urgent command of the Gospel. We are sinners who have no life or righteousness in ourselves. If we remain where we are in our sins, we will perish. There is life in Christ Who of God is made unto us "*Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*" (*1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 2:9-10*). Come to Christ and believe on Him (*Isa. 45:20-25; John 5:39-40*).

(Gen. 42:4) - Jacob sent all of his sons to Egypt except Benjamin, being the youngest and special to Jacob as he was the only son Jacob had left of his wife Rachel. Jacob named him "*Benjamin*," meaning "the son of my right hand" (*Gen. 35:18-19*). From here we read of Joseph dealing with his brothers who had hated him without a cause, sold him into slavery, and dealt so harshly and cruelly with him. Their sin must be revealed to them, and they must be brought to confess their guilt (*Gen. 42:21-23*). These proud brethren must be humble before Joseph, bow down, and beg for mercy (*Gen. 44:14*). There must be evidence of genuine repentance (*Gen. 44:33-34*). This is a great picture of God's dealing with all whom He saves by His grace freely through the Lord Jesus Christ. He reveals our sin and depravity to us, showing us that we have no righteousness and nothing to earn or deserve God's favor (*Rom. 3:10-20*). This causes us to confess our sins before Him. He shows us our need of His grace in Christ and His righteousness for all salvation and brings us to beg for His mercy in Christ (*Rom. 3:21-26*).

(Gen. 42:6) - Joseph's brethren bowed to him according to the dream he had of them earlier (*Gen. 37:5-8*). Joseph's dream was given to him by God to show how he would be their savior to whom they would bow. This is a great picture of Christ to Whom all His people bow as their Savior from sin.

(Gen. 42:7-8) - Notice that Joseph knew His brethren, but they did not know him. This is the way it is with God's chosen people. Because of our fall in Adam and natural birth in sin and death, we do not know or recognize the Lord Who chose us and gave us to Christ. Our knowledge of Him is a gift of His grace that comes to us in the power of the Holy Spirit under the preaching of the Gospel wherein He reveals Himself to us. We find out, then, that He knew us in His covenant purpose and grace all along. Our names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world began (*2 Tim. 1:9; Rev. 13:8; 21:27*).

(Gen. 42:9–43:14) - Joseph devised a plan to save his family and bring them to himself. In *42:25* Joseph gave them corn AND restored their money. This shows the grace of God in salvation as an abundance of what we need (*Rom. 5:20*), AND it is free to sinners in need. Joseph's plan involved bringing Benjamin to him, but Jacob refused. In *43:8-9* Judah convinced Jacob to send Benjamin to Egypt with them. Judah was willing to stand surety for Benjamin. This is a picture showing the great truth of the suretyship of Christ for God's chosen people. This is one of the most foundational of all Gospel truths. A surety is one who stands responsible for the safety and well-being of another. The surety agrees to fulfill whatever conditions are required to insure the safety and well-being of the ones for whom he stands. Before the world began, the Lord God devised a plan to accomplish His goal of saving His family and bringing them to Himself (*Eph. 1:1-13*). In the everlasting covenant of grace, God the Father appointed His Son to be Surety for His chosen people. The Son agreed to be their Surety and to do for them what was required to save them and bring them to eternal glory. This required Christ to pay their sin-debt to the justice of God by His death. Their sins were imputed to Him, and His righteousness is imputed to them. This required Him to be their Substitute and to fulfill the righteousness of the law by His obedience unto death in their place. He had to become incarnate to dwell in sinless human flesh to redeem them from their sins (*Gal. 4:4-6*). The assurance of our whole salvation was (and is) in Christ, our Surety.

(Gen. 43:15–44:34) - This is the account of Joseph meeting his brothers the second time, and Benjamin was with them. Joseph sent his servant to fetch them. They were afraid, but the servant spoke peace to them (*43:23-24*). We can liken the servant to a Gospel preacher preaching the good news of salvation to sinners who deserve nothing but God's wrath. Peace between God and sinners comes by the righteousness of Christ freely imputed and received by God-given faith (*2 Cor. 5:19-21*). In *chapter 44* we read of Joseph's scheme to bring his whole family to Egypt by placing his silver cup in Benjamin's sack, accusing him of stealing, and insisting that Benjamin be held. This is where Judah speaks up as surety for Benjamin (*44:32-34*). As our eternal Intercessor, Christ speaks for us as our Surety (*1 John 2:1-2*), therefore, our sins cannot be imputed to us and we cannot be condemned (*Rom. 8:33-34*).

(Gen. 45:1-5) - Joseph revealed himself to his brethren and spoke peace to them. Christ will in due time reveal Himself to His brethren (God's elect, chosen before the foundation of the world and given to Christ) (*Heb. 2:9-17*). The Lord seeks them out and brings them to seek Him sincerely in His Word of truth, the Gospel wherein He is revealed as "*the righteousness of God*" (*Rom. 1:16-17*). They are made by God to be sincere seekers of salvation by God's grace in Christ, and the Lord speaks peace to their hearts (*Psalms 85:7-13; John 6:37-45*).