Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 1 – 2

* Jacob and the sons that had returned, think about it, they had no idea how long the famine would last. Joseph knew, though. How much grain had they returned with? Enough for a month, 6 months, a year? We don’t know. But we do know that it wasn’t enough for the severity of the famine that would last seven years. ***Joseph knew it though.*** He knew it when he ordered the amount of grain they were to be given…***he knew it***…he knew that they didn’t have enough and that intrigues me.
* There is all kinds of applications here but I’ll just ping on this one...Joseph knew they were coming back…he fashioned the circumstance that would ultimately, **over time**, give them an opportunity…***a choice***…***return to him or perish.*** I’m intrigued because I see that situation time and time again in the lives of so many people. Faced with a circumstance, an issue, a situation…and ultimately, deeply seeded in it…***a choice.*** Choose God and live or keep doing what you’ve done and perish.
* ***What has got you here will not get you there!*** The life you want, the reality you want to wake to each day is waiting for you on the other side of a choice (or a series of choices) to give your **whole life** to the Lord! And even in the trial, God’s had of grace, mercy and love is fully extended to receive you back to Himself. ***He knows you don’t have enough on your own!***
* To me, its kind-of like the five year old that gets all uppity and proclaims, *“That’s it! I’m moving out!”* What do the parents say to the five year old? ***“Well, here, let me help you pack!”*** Why? What if they did the Christmas Story routine, “*Ohhhhhh, why are we such bad parents!? Please, please, don’t leave!”* That kid would be **double the nightmare!** Help them pack! And by the time you get to the third shirt they’re ready to stay… God is a good Father and in His ***perfect parenting***…He presents situations to me, opportunities to me…to wake up and choose Him. I’m just intrigued by this scene…but OH ***the tragedy and often horror of folks and lives that stay asleep…***
* Deuteronomy 30:15-18a, *“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that you shall surely perish…”* **The promise is His, the choice is yours.**

Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 3 – 9

* *(Notice the difference in Judah’s offering compared to Reuben’s offering…Reuben offered the lives of his sons…Judah offered his own life)*
* Judah steps forward and his statements are ***remarkable.*** He says, if Benjamin doesn’t go with us, not only will we not return with any food…**we won’t return at all!** But what he proposes harkens to the heart of the Savior. Now, up until this point, we have no indication of Judah being the tribe, the son, through which the Savior will come…you and I know that Jesus is indeed the Lion of the tribe of Judah, but contextually we don’t know that yet.
* Judah says, *“I myself will be surety for him.”* That word in the Hebrew means, ***the exchange, the pledge, the occupant, the intermeddler***…there is a man stuck in prison, he will never be freed…there is a man that has been asked for and if he does not come, the lives of the entire family, the whole nation, hang in the balance. **It’s a fascinating parallel!**  A provocative picture and a thought-provoking type!
* God revealed through Abraham in Genesis 22:8, *“God will provide Himself the Lamb…”* and if Jesus had not come, the ***man*** demanded by the law…the ***perfect man*** to fulfill the law once and for all for all men, for all women…the whole nation, the entire family, **all mankind** would perish. But Jesus came forward, *“I will be the pledge, the intermeddler…I will complete the exchange…”*

Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 10 – 18

* *(He could be* ***hedging his bets here****…if he sends them all then he surely will receive them back in accordance with God’s earlier promises to him…)*
* You may find this curious. Israel has told them to take back **double** the silver. The word for *money* and *silver* are the same. Ten brothers are traveling to Egypt…two of them are there…and with them is not 10 units of silver, but 20. It was 20 pieces of silver, 20 units of silver…that was Joseph’s price some 20 years ago…and here his brothers who sold him, return to him with…***20 pieces or units of silver.***
* What’s the point? It’s a puzzle…a picture….***They are paying back what sin paid them years ago***…they are *reversing*, they are *returning*, they are *countering*, they are *overturning*, they are *rectifying and repairing*…they are **giving**…in the same amount and even more…as they **took** years before…why? ***In obedience at the command and guidance of their father***…and it will be the same with anyone who chooses faith…the harm and hurt of the past that was caused by you…the price sin paid you…will become overwhelmed and overcome…ultimately forgotten by the grace God can flow through you today…grace will have the victory…***if*** you choose it.
* And even embedded in this scene is an *eschatological type*…at mid-day…at noon, the ten brothers, the sons of Israel some to dine in the presence of Joseph…and it will be at the mid-way point of the Great Tribulation…the *time of Jacob’s Trouble*, that the Anti-Christ will proclaim himself to be God…committing the Abomination that Causes Desolation…and the Jews will flee…where do they go…? They have nowhere to run but to God!
* And I love this, notice this, Joseph, a picture and type of Jesus…he welcomes them into his house to serve them, to feed them, to be with them…and yet…**they still know not who he is.** Just like that, even today Jesus loves Israel…Israel is the apple of His eye, according to Zechariah 2:8…He loves them, blesses them, His grace is upon them…even though…now, at this *time in time*…this time in history…they do not know Him. It’s the same for that lost soul…perhaps even you…

Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 19 – 23

* I love that! When the disciples were afraid, locked away in a room for safety after Jesus had been crucified and His body had vanished…He appeared to them there in John Chapter 20 and the first thing He said to them was, ***“Peace be with you.”*** My heart and approach to God is so *naturally* one of **fear** and of **unworthiness.** You disagree then you have never approached God…but He says to you and to me through what Jesus paid, *“Don’t be afraid…I had your money the whole time…I paid your way…because of Me, you are worthy…”*

Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 24 – 30

* What a picture…a revelation of God’s heart…Here his brother knows **zero** about him…definitely doesn’t know who he is…and yet Joseph is so overwhelmed just being there with them and with ***Benjamin specifically*** that he **weeps with joy and sorrow**…just like the blood mixed with water that flowed from Christ’s body as He paid my price on the cross…I mean they expected to be *accused and tried and jailed and killed*…and here he is, washing their feet and serving them with such joy that he bursts with emotion! I know God…that IS Him!!

Genesis Chapter 43 Verses 31 – 34

* **Five times the portion**…Joseph goes to the one that is his ***full family***…and gives him **five times the portion.** God loves you and will provide for you…even when you don’t walk with Him. Why? Because He is good…He is love and even in the midst of rebellion, His heart is constantly for you…*but the five portion*…the full measure of God’s amazing grace…awaits anyone who would come into His **full family…**
* These brothers were tested once before…when their younger brother Joseph received the favor…and they failed…just like you and I have been tested in this life time and time again…but here the test comes again…***what will they do when their younger brother receives the favor again***?
* This time they pass and *merriment* follows…*shakar* in the Hebrew…sounds like shocker…**is your life a shocker to evil, man!** Is the enemy shocked by your passing of a test that you have failed in the past? Same question asked a different way tonight…***are you walking in abundance of merriment through this life…are you walking with the Lord?***