

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, and the background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. The Bible is open to a page that appears to be Genesis 43, based on the text overlay.

“2nd Visit”

Judah’s Pledge

Scripture text: Genesis Ch 43

Genesis 43:1-6 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.**" But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, '**You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.**'" Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?"

Verses 1–7. The famine continued and Jacob's family needed more grain. This time, however, Benjamin had to go with them to Egypt. Judah reminded his father that without Benjamin their long trip to Egypt would be in vain. Jacob was, of course, reluctant; his scolding (why did you tell the man you had another brother?) was an effort to escape the decision he dreaded to make. Yet he must release Benjamin so they could return to Egypt. Otherwise they would all die from starvation.

1 Timothy 5:8-12 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, and **having a reputation for good works:** if she has brought up children, has **shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.** But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur condemnation for having abandoned their former faith.

1 Timothy 6:6-11 Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. **But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.**

Genesis 43:8-10 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.** If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

Psalms 119:122 Give your servant a pledge of good; let not the insolent oppress me.

Philemon 1:17-21 So if you consider me your partner, **receive him as you would receive me.** If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, **charge that to my account. I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it--to say nothing of your owing me even your own self.** Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. **Refresh my heart in Christ.**

Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

Hebrews 7:20-25 And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" **This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.** The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, **he is able to save to the uttermost** those who draw near to God through him, since **he always lives to make intercession for them.**

Verses 8–14. Judah broke the deadlock with a warmly personal initiative, offering to take the blame if Benjamin were not returned. Judah (Jacob's fourth son; 29:31–35) succeeded where Reuben had failed (42:37), and Benjamin went down to Egypt with his brothers.

Interestingly Judah was the one who had come up with the plan to sell Joseph to Egypt (37:26–27). Now he had to negotiate with his father in order to get Benjamin to see Joseph.

Genesis 37:25-28 Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. **Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites,** and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him. Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

Jacob suggested that they take some of their best products ... to the man as a gift, including balm ... honey ... spices and myrrh ... pistachio nuts, and almonds. Apparently these delicacies were not available in Egypt (cf. 37:25).

They also took double the amount of silver, returning what they had found in their money pouches before. Jacob resigned himself to the high risk involved in possibly losing a third son—first, Joseph; then Simeon; and now perhaps Benjamin too.

Genesis 43:15-18 So the men took this present, and they took double the money with them, and Benjamin. They arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph. 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.**" The man did as Joseph told him and brought the men to Joseph's house. And **the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house,** and they said, "It is because of the money, which was replaced in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, **so that he may assault us and fall upon us to make us servants and seize our donkeys.**"

Verses 15–30. The brothers hurried to Egypt. When they arrived, they were taken to Joseph's house. They were frightened, thinking they were going to be captured.

When they told Joseph's steward about the silver they found in their sacks when returning from their first trip, the steward told them not to be afraid because their God had given them that money.

Perhaps Joseph had talked with the steward about the true God.

Genesis 43:19-22 So they went up to the steward of Joseph's house and spoke with him at the door of the house, and said, "Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food. And when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was each man's money in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it again with us, and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."

Genesis 43:23-26 He replied, "Peace to you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has put treasure in your sacks for you. I received your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. And when the man had brought the men into Joseph's house and given them water, and **they had washed their feet, and when he had given their donkeys fodder,** they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there. 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.**

Simeon was returned to them (v. 23), and a noon meal was prepared for Joseph's 11 guests. **When they presented their gifts to Joseph ... they bowed down before him in fulfillment of Joseph's dream (37:7).** Joseph, seeing his brother Benjamin, could not hold back his tears of joy. Benjamin, of course, was his full brother; the others were half brothers.

As before when he talked with the 10 (42:24), **he went aside and wept.**

Verses:31–34. At the dinner, **Joseph demonstrated something ominous to them.** The **mysterious accuracy of the seating (from the firstborn to the youngest)** would increase their **uneasy sense of exposure to divine intervention.**

Yet in all the events of this visit the brothers were confronted with gracious dealings from God through this “Egyptian” (vv. 16, 27, 29, 34). The chapter is a foretaste of future things for, as Joseph said later (45:5), God sent him down before them to provide for them in the midst of famine.

Genesis 43:31-34 Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, "**Serve the food.**" They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. And they sat before him, **the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth.** And the men looked at one another in **amazement.** Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but **Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs.** And they drank and were merry with him.

Verses 1–13. Joseph, already brilliantly successful in creating tensions during their two visits, now produced his master stroke. **He tested their concern for Benjamin in order to get them to recognize their evil.** If they failed this test, if they had no compassion for this second son of Rachel, then they would have no part in the fulfillment of the promises. God could start over again and make Joseph into a great nation if the others proved unworthy (cf. Ex. 32:10).

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The test involved the men's silver in their sacks (as had been done on the first return trip) and placing Joseph's own silver cup in Benjamin's sack and then pursuing them to arrest Benjamin. When the steward ... caught up with them and accused them of theft, he deliberately created tension among them by opening the sack of the oldest first and ending with the youngest. He knew, of course, that the silver cup was in Benjamin's sack. **The sudden threat to Benjamin was like a sword thrust through their hearts** (cf. Solomon's plan, 1 Kings 3:16–28).

All the conditions were present for another betrayal when Benjamin was accused.

Yet this time their response shows how well the chastening had done its work. They tore their clothes in grief (cf. Job 1:20), a response which they had earlier caused their father to make over Joseph's loss (Gen. 37:34).

Verses:14–17. The brothers returned and bowed again before Joseph (v. 14; cf. 37:7; 43:26, 28). Joseph probably did not actually use divination in discovering their treachery (44:5, 15). He may have simply referred to it to enhance his brothers' awe of him. Judah, again the spokesman, **confessed that God had found out their iniquity and declared that they were all Joseph's slaves.** But Joseph announced that as the steward had said (v. 10), **only the “guilty”** one would be his slave. The others could return home.

Verses:18–34. **Judah interceded for the boy;** his lengthy plea to be imprisoned in place of Benjamin is among the finest and most moving of all petitions. It demonstrated his concern for his father who would surely die if Benjamin did not return with them.

Thus the brothers demonstrated that they had repented of their sin against their brother Joseph (**“God has uncovered your servants’ guilt,”** 44:16). Also they demonstrated concern for their father and their youngest brother Benjamin. So Joseph then (45:1–15) made himself known to them and brought them and their families to live in Egypt where there was food (45:16–47:12).

God made Jacob's family hungry again, and like the prodigal son of Luke 15, these men had to go back or starve to death. We see here other indications of their change of heart: Judah's willingness to be surety, to bear the blame for young Benjamin; their willingness to return the money; and their confession of the truth to Joseph's steward (43:19–22). However, they were making some mistakes too—**taking a present to Joseph and confessing their sins to the servant instead of to Joseph himself.** We cannot help but see in this whole episode **the way God deals with the lost sinner.**

God controls circumstances to bring the sinner to himself and to the end of himself. But, **sad to say, too many convicted sinners try to win their salvation by offering a present, or by confessing to a human servant, or by making some great sacrifice** (as Judah did when he offered his own life as surety for Benjamin).

The only way Joseph could excuse their sins was by receiving **their honest confession and repentance.**

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, **did we not** prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I **declare to them, 'I never knew you;** depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

What a beautiful spiritual lesson we have here. Judah thought that Joseph was actually dead (44:20), and therefore, that he himself was guilty of murder. What he did not realize was that Joseph was alive—and was his savior! The lost sinner stands before God's bar of judgment and confesses his guilt, thinking that his confession will mean certain wrath. But Jesus Christ is alive, and because He is alive, He is able to save to the uttermost. Christ does not expect us to be surety for our sins, or for the sins of another, for He Himself is our surety before God (Heb. 7:22). As long as Christ lives, God can never condemn us. And He will live forever!

It was not their confession of guilt, their sacrifices, or their gifts that brought salvation to the brothers. It was the gracious forgiveness of Joseph, a forgiveness purchased by his own suffering on their behalf. What a picture of Jesus Christ!

Before you leave this place, breathe an earnest prayer to God, saying, “God, be merciful to me a sinner. Lord, I need to be saved. Save me. I call upon Thy name ... Lord, I am guilty, I deserve Thy wrath. Lord, I cannot save myself. Lord, I would have a new heart and a right spirit, but what can I do? Lord, I can do nothing, **come and work in me to do of Thy good pleasure.**

Thou alone hast power, I know
To save a wretch like me;
To whom, or whither should I go
If I should run from Thee?

But I now do from my very soul call upon Thy
name. Trembling, yet believing, I cast myself
wholly upon Thee, O Lord. I trust the blood and
righteousness of Thy dear Son ... Lord, save me
tonight, for Jesus' sake.”

Go home alone trusting in Jesus. “I should like to go into the enquiry-room.” I dare say you would, but **we are not willing to pander to popular superstition.** We fear that in those rooms men are **warmed into a fictitious confidence.** Very few of the supposed converts of enquiry-rooms turn out well. **Go to your God at once, even where you now are. Cast yourself on Christ, at once, ere you stir an inch!**