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Genesis 43

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Genesis 43.

Topics.

- Jacob tells his sons to return to Egypt a second time to buy more grain.
- The man of Egypt said they will not see him unless he sees Benjamin.
- Judah tells Israel his father he will be a pledge for Benjamin's safety.
- The brothers' father Israel allows his sons to take Benjamin to Egypt.
- Jacob tells his sons to take Benjamin and double the money to Egypt.
- The brothers are brought into Joseph's house.
- Joseph servant tells the brothers God put the money in their sacks.
- Joseph arrives home and the brothers' bow down to the ground to him.
- Joseph sees Benjamin and seeks a place to weep and they eat a meal.
- It is an abomination to the Egyptians to eat with the Hebrews.
- The brothers sat before Joseph according to their birthright.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

The previous chapter: in chapter forty-two, ten of Jacob's sons go to Egypt to buy grain, they bowed before Joseph, but he accused them of being spies. He bound Simon and told them to take the grain he had given them and bring Benjamin to him. Joseph secretly placed the brother's money in their sacks of grain. They returned to Jacob and told him all that happened. The chapter ended with Jacob refusing to allow the brothers to take Benjamin back to Joseph in Egypt.

1

GENESIS 43:1-2

Jacob Tells His Sons, return to Egypt to Buy More Grain.

- **Genesis 43:1-2:** Now the famine was severe in the land. ²And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little food."

It is certain by now that what little food was remaining was being rationed by all those in the twelve households. Jacob seeing that what food they did have would not last much longer urges his sons to return to Egypt to buy more grain.

GENESIS 43:3-4

Joseph said they will Not see Him unless He sees Benjamin.

- **Genesis 43:3-4:** But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. ⁵But 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.'"

Judah uses the title, the man (not knowing it was Joseph), it carries the idea that he was a great man, an honourable man, the lord of the land. Then he reminds Jacob that they had told the man that their father was alive and they had a younger brother and that the man had spoken with the authority of Pharaoh of Egypt warning them they would not enter his presence, receive his favour, purchase any corn from him: or receive Simon back unless they return with Benjamin.

NOTE: why, we might wonder was it, Judah that spoke, when Reuben was the oldest, Simon the next in line and then Levi. Maybe because Jacob had previously accused Reuben of bereaving him of Benjamin (Gen 42:36). Simon was at this time bound in Egypt (Gen 42:24) and perhaps Levi remained in the background, because he did not yet stand well in his father's favour and affection, because he and Simeon slaughtered all the men of the city of Shechem. (Gen. 34:25). Therefore, Judah being next in line spoke on behalf of all his brothers and with their consent.

GENESIS 43:6-7

Jacob accuses His Sons of Treating Him Badly.

- **Genesis 43:6-7:** Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?" ⁷They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?"

Notice, Jacob is now called Israel, he accuses his brothers of treating him badly, because by their honesty to Joseph they had brought upon him such overwhelming heartfelt grief and trouble and mental bewilderment and distress that he could not make a decision. It is as if he already sees in his mind the loss and death of Benjamin and because of this deep emotional pain his mind is so clouded with darkness he cannot think straight.

2

GENESIS 43:8-10

Judah Tells Israel He will be a Pledge for Benjamin's Safety.

- **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. ⁹I 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. ¹⁰If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

To encourage his distort and ailing father Judah tells him that if he does not bring Benjamin back to him safely, he will bear the blame forever. This carries the idea that he would be as an offender to his father and himself bear the guilt, the shame due to such an offender. Such a promise is no light matter as it would be an enormously grievous pain to stand the rest of his life in his father's presence as one guilty of a grievous crime and one that had brought such deep pain to his father. Judah's motivation to take upon himself such a great responsibility would have stemmed from the fact he was fully aware that for them to have any success upon their arrival in Egypt, they must return with Benjamin otherwise instead of buying corn they would be cast into the prisons of Egypt or even worse. But he may also have been motivated by conscience concerning the wicked way he had treated Joseph and now desired to do all he could do to make things right (a much as was now humanly possible) by doing all he can to protect Benjamin Joseph's full brother. (Joseph and Benjamin were the only two sons born to Rachel who Jacob loved) and of course because he loved his father.

Israel Allows His Sons to Take Benjamin to Egypt.

- **Genesis 43:11:** Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry a present down to the man, a little balm and a little honey, gum (myrrh in KJV), myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.

Jacob realising the reality that if his family is to survive the famine, he has no choice but to allow Benjamin to go to Egypt. He therefore resigns himself to this and tells his sons to take the best of what the land of Canaan was famous for and that was unique to it as a present to give to the man at Egypt to give them the best chance of success and win the governors of Egypt's favour. It was a common custom in Oriental countries never to approach a man of power without a present and in the book of proverbs it is written:

- A gift in secret averts anger, and a concealed bribe, strong wrath. (Prov. 21:14).

Honey: the land of Canaan in general is called a land flowing with milk and honey; and some parts of it were famous for its bee honey. Even in modern times three hundred camel loads used to be exported annually from there into Egypt. It was diluted with water to make refreshing drinks, but mostly eaten with bread as we eat butter. The honey of Hebron is still valued and considered superior to that of Egypt.

Balm honey, and oil: (v11) while Joseph's brothers were sitting down eating bread, after putting him in a pit they saw a company of Ishmaelite's travelling from Gilead to Egypt with camels loaded with spices, balm and myrrh. (Gen. 37:25). Amongst the precious gifts the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon was a very great and abundant store of spices (1 Kings 10:10). In Chronicles we read, "Neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon." (2 Chron. 9:9). Balm itself was a rare perfume and used medicinally it was of such high value that the expression, "the balm of Gilead," has figuratively come to signify a universal cure when used in speech. During the final years of the Kingdom of Judah Jeremiah asks, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" (Jer. 8:22) and later we read of merchants trading honey oil and balm in the markets in the land of Israel and Hebrew merchants carried an abundance of honey, oil and balm to the market of Tyre. (Ezek. 27:17).

Myrrh: (v11) refers to a natural gum or resin extracted from the myrrh tree. It has been used throughout history as a perfume, incense and medicine. When people harvest myrrh, they wound the trees by penetrating through the bark repeatedly to bleed the tree of its gum like resin. Myrrh is also mentioned in the New Testament as one of the three gifts the magi presented to Mary when she gave birth to Jesus (Matt. 2:11). Jesus was offered wine and myrrh before his crucifixion (Mark 15:23). Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea brought a 100-pound mixture of myrrh and aloes to wrap Jesus' body (John 19:39).

Pistachio nuts and almonds: (v11) the pistachio tree flourishes in dry, rocky situations and does not grow well in Egypt. It has an oily kernel, both palatable in itself and also used for making savoury meats. The almond tree is abundant in Canaan it buds or flowers earlier in the spring than other trees. It is a native of Palestine, Syria, and Persia. The smallness of the present (normally they would give much more) does not mean that Jacob had little respect for the man of Egypt, but that the famine was great and all things were scarce. It is most likely that trading in them had ceased and therefore any quantity of them would be greatly welcomed regardless of the quantity.

NOTE: kings, princes and the wealthy of the world value and treasured balm and myrrh, but it is not that which is most valued in this world that keep us alive in times of famine, but plain food. We should all be grateful

to God that what is most needed for our mortal survival is generally the cheapest and most common. Likewise, we should also be grateful that Jesus said:

- You received without paying; give without pay. (Matt. 10:8).

And Paul wrote:

- We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 1 Cor. 2:12

All things needed for our eternal survival are free, no one needs this world's money to purchase salvation. Though the wealthy highly value their gold and silver and worldly luxuries, yet in a time of famine they willingly barter them for common bread and when they stand before the judgment seat of God would gladly give them all up to be granted eternal life. The moral is, "Choose this day who you will serve, the flesh, worldly pleasures and wealth and inherit the darkness of eternal death or God and inherit the light of eternal life the true wealth that mankind was created for.

GENESIS 43:12-13

Jacob tells His Sons to take Benjamin and Doubles the Money.

- **Genesis 43:12-13:** Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks. Perhaps it was an oversight. ¹³Take also your brother, and arise, go again to the man.

Jacob tells his sons to take Benjamin and an amount of money equivalent to what they took the first time to pay for the first supply of grain they brought back from Egypt and pay for the second supply of grain they were going to purchase.

4

GENESIS 43:14

May God Almighty Send Back Benjamin, if I am Bereaved.

- **Genesis 43:14:** May God Almighty 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."

God Almighty: this title comes from the Hebrew words (*'el and Shadday*) the word *el* means strength and might while the word *Shadday* means Almighty. It is the name of the true God that made the covenant with Abraham.

- When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me. (Gen. 17:1).

Later, God Almighty renewed this covenant with Jacob.

- God said to him (Jacob) "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. (Gen. 35:11).

Jacob prays that the Almighty God will by His Spirit influence the man of Egypt to show his sons mercy when they stand before him. Jacob finally resolves to submit to God's will and commit all his sons to the care of God and prays that God will overrule the governor of Egypt for his sons' good.

If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved: (v14) this is an expression mixed with heartfelt anguish signifying Jacob's submission of himself and his children to God's will whether it be good or bad. Jacob is basically saying, "I have already been bereaved of some of my children and if it is my portion to be bereaved of the rest and left solitary let God's

will be done." This is what it means to submit to God's will, after doing all we can to heal a relationship or change our circumstances and things still remain beyond our control, then the only way to find mental and emotional peace after having done all that is in our power to do, is to say as Jacob did, "Let God's will be done," and submit to it and accept it regardless of whether it is what our will wants or not. Then move on in life putting those things that have troubled us behind us. Kealy, a beautiful joyful ten-year old girl who suffers with a disease that prevents her from growing in size beyond ten years old is now a very small, but joyful and inspiring twenty-year old. After years of painful hospital visits, she courageously and joyfully summed this principle up in the following way, "I just live day by day, yesterday's in the rubbish and today is the future."

GENESIS 43:15

The Brothers Go to Egypt with the Present and with Benjamin.

- **Genesis 43:15:** 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.

Jacob's sons go down the second time into Egypt to buy corn.

GENESIS 43:16

Joseph sees Benjamin and tells His Stewart to Prepare a Meal.

- **Genesis 43:16:** 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."

Dine at noon: (v16) this was the usual time of dining in eastern countries, while the normal time for dining with the Romans was at evening. Joseph sees the brothers with Benjamin from some distance away, (they have not yet entered his house). Though Joseph had not seen Benjamin for around twenty- years he would have immediately recognised him when he saw him with the other nine brothers. Ponder for a moment the excitement Joseph would have felt in this moment when he saw that his brothers were speaking the truth when he interrogated them and sees that even though his younger brother Benjamin was the favourite of his father, he had not incurred the envy, jealousy and hatred of the older brothers or been treated cruelly as they had treated him. What a great relief it must have been for him to have all his fears concerning Benjamin proven to be groundless.

Slaughter an animal and make ready: (v16) Joseph tells his steward to prepare a feast and bring his brothers into his house so they can dine at midday. It is possible that the steward of Joseph's house may not have been aware that these men were Joseph's brothers, but should this be the case it would certainly raise the question in his mind, "Why is Joseph preparing a meal for these Hebrew strangers?" It is far more likely that Joseph had told the steward they were his brothers since he would have known that Joseph was a Hebrew and Joseph openly worshipped the God of the Hebrews which the Pharaoh allowed him to do.

GENESIS 43:17-18

The Brothers Are Brought into Joseph's House.

- **Genesis 43:17-18:** The man did as Joseph told him and brought the men to Joseph's house. ¹⁸And 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."

The brothers are being brought to Joseph's house, (most likely to its courtyards as they have not yet entered his house). Keep in mind Joseph is the governor of the entire land of Egypt so his house would be more like a palace than a house as we think of houses. The feelings of awe on entering Joseph's stately mansion would not only have increased the anxiety and fear of the already frightened brothers as they were led to his house, but also strongly increased the power of their thoughts that they might be accused of stealing the money of the governor of Egypt.

GENESIS 43:19-22

The Brothers speak with Joseph at the Door of His House.

- **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, ²⁰and said, "Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food. ²¹And 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, ²²and we have brought other money down with us to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."

The brothers have still not yet entered the house they are standing at the door talking to Joseph's steward. They address the steward as lord, meaning master, and explain to him what happened the first time they came to Egypt to buy grain.

GENESIS 43: 23

Joseph Servant tells the Brothers God Put Money in their Sacks.

- **Genesis 43:23:** 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.

The brothers have still not yet entered the house, but are still standing at the door talking to Joseph's steward.

Peace to you, do not be afraid (v23) this expression carries the idea that no harm will come to them, it is an expression of comfort meaning that they can lay aside all their fears no injury will befall them while at Joseph's house. It is the same as saying, "Fear not," which means, be at rest you are in no danger and have nothing to fear. The steward's statement, "Peace to you, do not be afraid," (v23) would signify that Joseph had brought him to the knowledge of the true God, the God of the Hebrews.

Your God and the God of your father: (v23) Joseph had either instructed his steward what to say, or he had trained him in the truths of the Hebrew faith. The steward would have been fully aware of Joseph history, his dreams and how the Pharaoh of Egypt had exalted him and allowed him to continue to worship his God. Therefore, it is most likely Joseph had taught him all things concerning the God of Abraham and this is why he expresses himself as one who fears and trusts God, the God of the Hebrews who had displayed his omniscience and omnipotence in the ten plagues, the exodus of Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea and in Joseph dreams.

Your God has put treasure in your sacks for you: (v23) it is interesting to note here that the word treasure comes from the Hebrew word (*matmown*) which literally means a secret storehouse, and carries the idea of something valuable (especially money) being secretly hidden or buried. Since the money was put in the brother's sacks upon the orders of Joseph it is right and proper to say, "God put it there." It is the same principle that applies when a Christian gives a starving person food, they

can rightly say, "God gave that hungry person food." This is because when one of God's children do a good deed it is as if God Himself is doing that deed. All who belong to the Kingdom of God are as it were God's hands on earth, we can be good hands or bad hands, because whatever we do reflects upon His Holy Name and His Holy Character. It can be said that God gave it to us if whatever we get, we get by honesty, in contrast to this, it can never be said God gave us something if we acquired it by deceit and dishonesty. The steward's statement, "Your God has put treasure in your sacks," clearly expresses to them that the Steward had no suspicion that they were guilty of dishonesty, guile or theft.

He brought out unto them Simon: (v23) while they still lingered at the entrance of Joseph's house the steward brings Simon out to them, which would have reassured their hearts and removed their worst fears so they enter the house no longer in fearful trepidation, but in joy. The following verses show that once inside the house the steward then proceeds to bestow upon them the usual attentions of Eastern hospitality.

GENESIS 43:24-25

Joseph Steward Washes the Brothers Feet and Prepare a Present.

- **Genesis 43:24-25:** 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, ²⁵they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they should eat bread there.

During these early generations washing the feet was a common custom before entering a house or tent. This was because they did not have concrete and grass paths to walk on as we do today, but dusty sand or wet muddy soil of the desert and therefore it was an act of courtesy to wash the feet before entering another person's house or tent. The brothers have entered Joseph's house, but Joseph is not home (v26). They are told that they will be dinning with Joseph at midday so while waiting for him to arrive they unload their donkeys and prepare the present of honey, balm, myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds (v11) to present it to Joseph it in a proper manner when he arrives home at noon to dine with them.

7

GENESIS 43:26-28

Joseph arrives Home and the Brothers' Bow Down to und to Him.

- **Genesis 43:26-28:** 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. ²⁷And he inquired about their welfare and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" ²⁸They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves (made obeisance in KJV).

Bowed: (v26) comes from the Hebrew word (*shachah*) it literally means to. prostrate bow (self) down, to crouch or fall down (flat) and to stoop (especially in homage to royalty or to God). To humbly beseech, to make obeisance, to do reverence and to humbly worship. The word, prostrated (obeisance in KJV) (v28) comes from the same Hebrew word as bowed and therefore means the same thing. Now the brothers are in Joseph's house and he is home (v26). They in the most prostrate and humble manner again fulfil Joseph dream more completely than before, for now all his eleven brothers were together, signified by the eleven stars in the dream, that made obeisance to him.

- He dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." (Genesis 37:9).

The brothers answer all Joseph's questions, he shows them kindness, and without any troubled thoughts they give to him their present from their father and from themselves and then sit down ready to eat the feast with joy and peace knowing they were on good terms with the governor of the land, but still not knowing that he was actually Joseph.

GENESIS 43:29-30

Joseph sees Benjamin and Weeps and they Eat a Meal.

- **Genesis 43:29-30:** 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!" ³⁰Then Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there.

It is possible Joseph's endearing statement to Benjamin, "God be gracious to you, my son!" May have been deliberately said to reassure the brothers that no harm would come to Benjamin.

Joseph hurried out: (v30) for many years Joseph had yearned to see his full brother Benjamin (he and Benjamin were the only two sons born to Rachel who Jacob loved). During the little conversation Joseph had with Benjamin he was so emotionally moved that his passions and affections and love for Benjamin grew so overwhelmingly strong that he was ready to burst into deep cries of heartfelt, but joyful weeping. Had he done this he would have revealed himself and therefore he immediately left the room to be on his own where he could not only allow his tender and joyful passion to flow in tears without being heard or seen, but also allow himself to momentarily collapse from the countenance he had maintained as a harsh, powerful Egyptian governor while with his brothers.

GENESIS 43:31-32

It is an Abomination to the Egyptians to Eat with the Hebrews.

- **Genesis 43:31-32:** Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, "Serve the food." ³²They 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.

Egyptians eating with the Hebrews is an abomination to the Egyptians: (v32) following are two possible reasons this may have been:

1. An inherited disdain for the Hebrews had most likely been passed down from generation to generation, because of what the Hebrew God did to the Pharaoh and the people of Egypt during the exodus, the ten plagues and especially the killing of all their firstborn. These things were probably still deeply engrained in the memory of the Egyptians and therefore they had an inner level of hatred toward the Hebrew people.
2. The Hebrews proclaimed that there was only one true God and all other gods were false gods, which would obviously imply that the gods of the Egyptian people were no gods; that all their worship was vain and that the Hebrew God was superior in every way to Egypt's gods. Therefore the Egyptians being a superstitious people could not eat with the Hebrews because of the vast difference in their religions.

The feast was laid out upon three different tables as follows:

1. A separate table was set for Joseph for the sake of grandeur and to signify his rank, honour and dignity he being the most powerful man in Egypt's kingdom next to Pharaoh
2. A separate table was set for Joseph's brothers by themselves

3. A separate table was set for other Egyptians guests and for those who usually dined with Joseph.

GENESIS 43:33-34

The Brothers Sat Before Joseph According to their Birthright.

- **Genesis 43:33-34:** 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 (marveled in KJV). ³⁴Portions 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.

They sat at their own dining table in Joseph's presence (i.e., in his sight and them in full view of him) and seated according to the order of their birth (i.e., the oldest to the youngest) everyone according to their age, the first being, Reuben the firstborn and so on to Benjamin the youngest.

The men looked at one another in amazement: (v33) (marveled in KJV) following are two possible reasons the brothers (not the Egyptians) were amazed and marvelled.

1. The honour that the Egyptian governor had bestowed upon them, by having his steward prepare for them such a great feast was so unexpected and such a great surprise that they could not conceive of any reason that they would be chosen from all other travellers to enjoy the grandeur of such hospitality and therefore they were amazed and marvel especially since they were Hebrews.
2. The eleven brothers not knowing the Egyptian governor was actually Joseph were amazed when they saw that the table had been set according to their birth being the oldest down to the youngest and having no idea how he or anyone else could know their ages marvelled that they were seated according to their seniority. It is possible they may have thought he used divination since this was a common practise amongst the Egyptians and in the following chapter Joseph's steward tells his brothers that the silver cup Joseph drinks from give him the powers of divination. (Gen. 43:5).

It is pointless to debate which of these two would be the correct one since both scenarios would have caused them great amazement, confusion and bewilderment. There are also different views concerning the arrangement of the brothers seating. Following are the two most common.

1. Some think it was the common custom of the brothers to place themselves in the order of their birth being the oldest down to the youngest to show respect to the oldest and so they placed themselves in this order.
2. Most believe that either Joseph himself or his steward according to Josephs command arranged the brothers in the order of their birth, being the oldest down to the youngest, since they did not know it was Joseph and this is why they were amazed and marvelled.

Benjamin's portion was as five times as much: (v34) when at special and unique feasts it was common practice to honour the distinguished guest by giving them a larger portion of the feast. Normally this would be a double portion, but perhaps the fivefold division was prominent in Egyptian or based upon the following verses by this action Joseph was in some small way signifying that Benjamin was as important to him as was the Pharaoh 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. (Gen. 41:34).
- At the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh (Gen. 47:24).

- Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth (Gen. 47:26).

They drank and were merry with him: (v34) they drank freely, because their fearful anxieties were dispelled by the presence of Simeon and by the care the Egyptian governor showed to Benjamin and by the kindness they were receiving during the feast.

NOTE: The Bible does not teach total abstinence, nor does it teach that drinking alcohol is a sin, but many verses do strongly warn against drinking an excess of alcohol for the following reasons: -

- It weakens the will and can lead to a lack of moral fortitude.
- It can be dangerous since it often leads to self-indulgence, immorality, shamelessness, violence and drunken driving.
- It has the potential to lead to alcoholic addiction and destroy marriages and lives.
- It results in behavior that is often regretted when the drunken state of the mind sobers up and returns to normality.

Clearly excessive amounts of alcohol can lead to many sins and drunkenness can result in behavior that is often regretted the next day, even the secular world understands these truths. For these reasons it is obviously better to abstain altogether, nevertheless those who do drink in moderation cannot be accused of committing any sin.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
