

# Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,  
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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## When the Money Fails

As Jacob and his family arrived in Canaan, they were realizing the promise that Yahweh had made to Jacob's father, Isaac, and to his grandfather, Abraham. Giving Jacob a new name called "Israel," Yahweh blessed him:

- 10 And God said unto him, Your name *is* Jacob: your name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be your name: and he called his name Israel.
- 11 And God said unto him, *I am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of you, and kings shall come out of your loins;
- 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to you I will give it, and to your seed after you will I give the land. -Genesis 35

However, as Jacob began to live in the promised land, it was not long before jealousy arose among his sons and they teamed up against Joseph:

- 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* colors.
- 4 And when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. -Genesis 37

Joseph's brothers sold him to travelling merchants who were the descendants of Ishmael, the Egyptian son of Abraham:

- 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt. -Genesis 37

They took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to an officer of the Pharaoh:

- 1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down there. -Genesis 39

Even though Joseph was a slave, he prospered:

- 2 And Yahweh was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. -Genesis 39

Joseph was eventually wrongly accused and put into prison. Even so, Joseph continued to prosper:

- 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatever they did there, he was the doer *of it*.
- 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to anything *that was* under his hand; because Yahweh was with him, and *that* which he did, Yahweh made *it* to prosper. -Genesis 39

The Pharaoh eventually had two dreams that only Joseph could interpret. The first was about seven fat cows, which were eaten by seven lean cows. The second was about seven good ears of grain that were devoured by seven thin ears. The dreams, said Joseph, were God's way of saying that there would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine:

- 30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;
- 31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it *shall be* very grievous.
- 32 And for that the dream was doubled to Pharaoh twice; *it is* because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. -Genesis 41

The years of prosperity would be followed by times of economic hardship.

Joseph continued, telling the Pharaoh that one-fifth of the production during the seven years of plenty should be saved for the seven years of hardship that were to follow:

- 34 Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.
- 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.
- 36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. -Genesis 41

The Pharaoh put Joseph in charge:

- 41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt. -Genesis 41

After the seven years of plenty ended, the seven years of famine began. Because they had saved a portion of what they had produced each year, Egypt continued to have bread while all the other lands were in a famine:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8

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- 53 And the seven years of plenty, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.  
54 And the seven years of famine began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the famine was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. -Genesis 41

The other countries, which had not prepared for the famine, found themselves dependent upon Egypt for survival:

- 56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine became severe in the land of Egypt.  
57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn; because that the famine was so severe in all lands. -Genesis 41

Even Jacob, who was also named Israel, was among those who looked to Egypt for survival:

- 2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down there, and buy for us from there; that we may live, and not die. -Genesis 42

Travelling to Egypt, Jacob met with the Pharaoh and blessed him:

- 10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. -Genesis 47

Jacob and his family left the land that Yahweh had promised in exchange for the economic security of Egypt:

- 11 And Joseph placed his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.  
12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brothers, and all his father's household, with bread, according to *their* families. -Genesis 47

Soon, the severity of the famine spread. As the Egyptians and the Canaanites sought to buy food, they gave all of their money to the Egyptian Pharaoh:

- 13 And *there was no bread in all the land*; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and *all* the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.  
14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. -Genesis 47

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Finally, the “money failed!”

- 15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in your presence? for the money fails. -Genesis 47

Without money, they traded their livestock for bread:

- 16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fails.  
17 And they brought their cattle to Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year. -Genesis 47

Then they traded themselves and their land for bread:

- 19 Why shall we die before your eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants to Pharaoh: and give *us* seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.  
20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. -Genesis 47

Joseph had not only bought the land for the Egyptian Pharaoh, *he had also bought the people!*

- 23 Then Joseph said to the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: behold, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land. -Genesis 47

Thankful that they were saved from starvation, the people willingly became slaves to the Pharaoh:

- 25 And they said, You have saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. -Genesis 47

Jacob soon died. Then Joseph died. A new Pharaoh began to rule and Israel found themselves in total slavery in Egypt:

- 13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor: -Exodus 1

Daniel tells us about a powerful end-time king who will have power over the treasures of Egypt:

- 43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians *shall be* at his steps. -Daniel 11

Prophecy also tells us that money will again fail:

- 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. -Revelation 13

When the money fails, what will we trade to buy the things that we need? Will we give our souls by trusting in the name of the powerful king who controls the global economic system? Or will we continue to trust in the name of Yahweh?

- 12 I will also leave in the midst of you an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of Yahweh. -Zephaniah 3