

## GENESIS 42:1-7, 13-20 LOOK WHO'S COMING FOR DINNER

<sup>1</sup> When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you just keep looking at each other?" <sup>2</sup> He continued, "I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die."

<sup>3</sup> Then ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. <sup>4</sup> But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with the others, because he was afraid that harm might come to him.

<sup>5</sup> So Israel's sons were among those who went to buy grain, for the famine was in the land of Canaan also.

<sup>6</sup> Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the one who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. <sup>7</sup> As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. "Where do you come from?" he asked. "From the land of Canaan," they replied, "to buy food."

<sup>13</sup> ... "Your servants were twelve brothers, the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and one is no more."

<sup>14</sup> Joseph said to them, "It is just as I told you: You are spies! <sup>15</sup> And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. <sup>16</sup> Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!" <sup>17</sup> And he put them all in custody for three days.

<sup>18</sup> On the third day, Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: <sup>19</sup> If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. <sup>20</sup> But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die." This they proceeded to do.

Joseph's older brothers are indeed seeing what became of his dream as they experience bowing down before him (Genesis 37:5-8). What they had taken for the arrogance of their spoiled little brother turned out to be a prophesy indicating how God was going to provide for them in their time of need; a need that was both physical and spiritual. Their families were not only facing starvation, but their family was also dis-eased by the guilt surrounding their dispatch of their brother and deception of their father. Through Joseph, God is meeting their need for food and reconciliation.

We have a tendency to jump to conclusions based on our past experience and emotions. We have to wonder how many times we have missed the opportunity to see the direction of God in our lives because we have dismissed the vehicle of that revelation. It may be our ego, bias, desire or lack of trust that prevents us from truly hearing from God. It is easy to see how this might happen when the messenger is a homeless person, a foreigner or an enemy. But how often have we reacted negatively to some statement of Jesus that we find hard to understand or inconsistent with the way we believe things should be? What are we missing? God is sovereign so his will is going to be accomplished. However, when we dismiss the prophetic witness we eliminate God's peace from our lives and must live in turmoil until his providence is realized.

**Lord Jesus, blunt my biases and arrogance so that I might see and hear your promises clearly. Save me from myself so that I might know your peace in my life. Strengthen me to proclaim your promises with my life even before they are fulfilled. Amen.**