

But Joseph's steward, the man who was over his house, treated the men kindly; and when they spoke of the money in their sacks, he would not take it again, saying: "Never fear; your God must have sent you this as a gift. I had your money."

The stewards received the men into Joseph's house, and washed their feet, according to the custom of the land. And at noon, Joseph came in to meet them. They brought him the present from their father, and again they bowed before him, with their faces on the ground.

And Joseph asked them if they were well, and said: "Is your father still living, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he well?"

And they said, "Our father is well and he is living." And again they bowed to Joseph.

And Joseph looked at his younger brother Benjamin, the child of his own mother Rachel, and said:

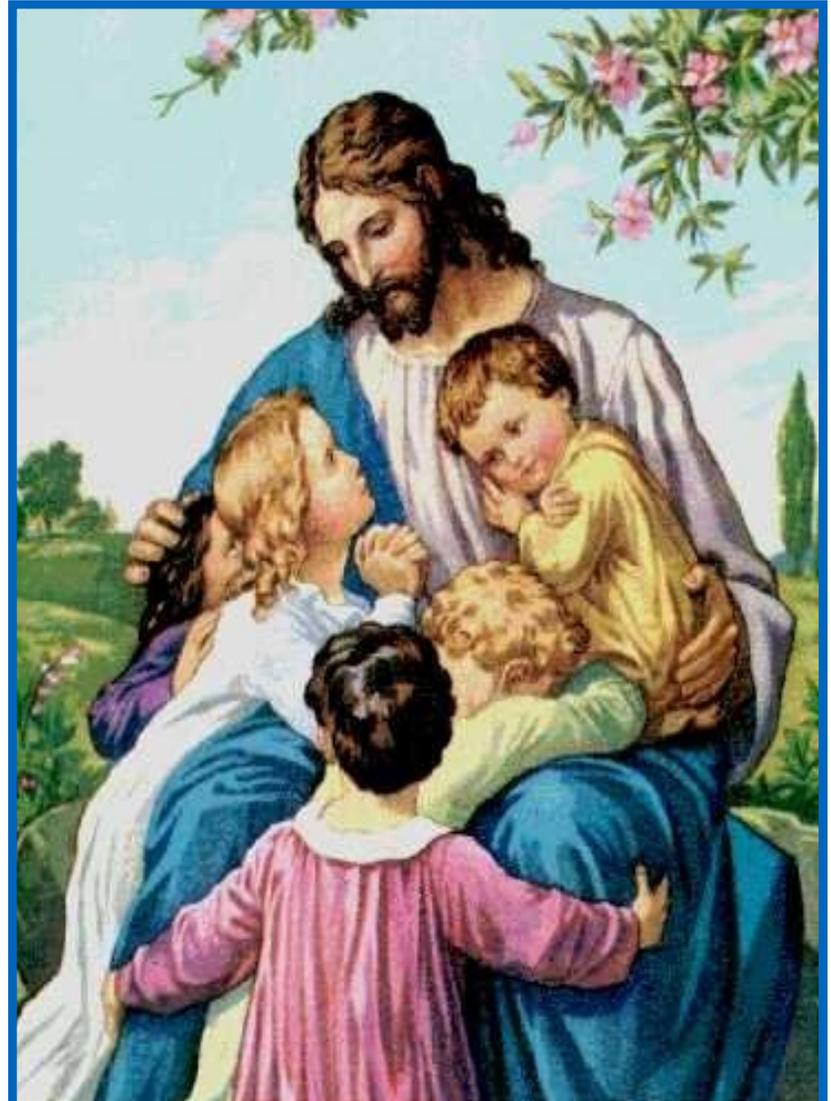
"Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious unto you, my son."

And Joseph's heart was so full that he could not keep back the tears. He went in haste to his own room, and wept there. Then he washed his face, and came out again, and ordered the table to be set for dinner. They set Joseph's table for himself, as the ruler, and another table for his Egyptian officers, and another for the eleven men from Canaan; for Joseph had brought Simeon out of the prison, and had given him a place with his brothers.

Joseph himself arranged the order of the seats for his brothers, the oldest at the head, and all in order of age down to the youngest. The men wondered at this, and could not see how the ruler of Egypt could know the order of their ages. And Joseph sent dishes from his table to his brothers, and he gave to Benjamin five times as much as to the others. Perhaps he wished to see whether they were as jealous of Benjamin as in other days they had been toward him. **(SEE PART III)**

**Eighth in the Series of Old Testament
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**The Story of The Lost Brother
Part - II of III**



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THE STORY OF THE LOST BROTHER

PART - II

Then Joseph gave orders, and his servants seized one of his brothers, whose name was Simeon, and bound him in their sight and took him away to prison. And he ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, and to put every man's money back into the sack before it was tied up, so that they would find the money as soon as they opened the sack. Then the men loaded their asses with the sacks of grain, and started to go home, leaving their brother Simeon a prisoner.

When they stopped on the way to feed their asses, one of the brothers opened his sack, and there he found his money lying on the top of the grain. He called out to his brothers: "See, here is my money given again to me!" And they were frightened, but they did not dare to go back to Egypt and meet the stern ruler of the land. They went home and told their old father all that had happened to them, and how their brother Simeon was in prison, and must stay there until they should return, bringing Benjamin with them.

When they opened their sacks of grain, there in the mouth of each sack was the money that they had given; and they were filled with fear. Then they spoke of going again to Egypt and taking Benjamin, but Jacob said to them:

"You are taking my sons away from me. Joseph is gone, and Simeon is gone, and now you would take Benjamin away. All these things are against me!" Reuben said: "Here are my own two boys. You may kill them, if you wish, in case I do not bring Benjamin back to you." But Jacob said: "My youngest sons shall not go with you. His brother is dead, and he alone is left to me. If harm should come to him, it would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

The food which Jacob's sons had brought from Egypt did not last long, for Jacob's family was large. Most of his sons were married and had children of their own; so that the children and grandchildren were sixty-six, besides the servants who waited on them, and the men who cared for Jacob's flocks. So around the tent of Jacob was quite a camp of other tents and an army of people.

When the food that had come from Egypt was nearly eaten up, Jacob said to his sons:

"Go down to Egypt again, and buy some food for us."

And Judah, Jacob's son, the man who years before had urged his brothers to sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites, said to his father: "It is of no use for us to go to Egypt, unless we take Benjamin with us. The man who rules in that land said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your youngest brother be with you'."

And Israel said, "Why did you tell the man that you had a brother? You did me great harm when you told him."

"Why," said Jacob's sons, "we could not help telling him. The man asked us all about our family, 'Is your father yet living? Have you any more brothers?' and we had to tell him, his questions were so close. How should we know that he would say, 'Bring your brother here, for me to see him'?"

And Judah said, "Send Benjamin with me, and I will take care of him. I promise you that I will bring him safely home. If he does not come back, let me bear the blame forever. He must go, or we shall die for want of food; and we might have gone down to Egypt and come home again, if we had not been kept back."

And Jacob said, "If he must go, then he must. But take a present to the man, some of the choicest fruits of the land, some spices, and perfumes, and nuts, and almonds. And take twice as much money, besides the money that was in your sacks. Perhaps that was a mistake, when the money was given back to you. And take your brother Benjamin, and may the Lord God make the man kind to you, so that he will set Simeon free, and let you bring Benjamin back. But if it is God's will that I lose my children, I cannot help it."

So ten brothers of Joseph went down a second time to Egypt, Benjamin going in place of Simeon. They came to Joseph's office, the place where he sold grain to the people; and they stood before their brother, and bowed as before. Joseph saw that Benjamin was with them, and he said to his steward, the man who was over his house:

"Make ready a dinner, for all these men shall dine with me today."

When Joseph's brothers found that they were taken into Joseph's house, they were filled with fear. They said to each other:

"We have been taken here on account of the money in our sacks. They will say that we have stolen it, and then they will sell us all for slaves."