



**A**ND God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.<sup>23</sup> And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach:<sup>24</sup> And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son. (Genesis 30:22-24)

Notice it was God who opened the womb of the beautiful Rachel so that she could conceive a son; and this son was a very special son who would come to be an example of Christlike living and salvation for his brothers. Lest we forget, EVERY child conceived in a mother's womb comes by the gift of God. This is true even of the animal kingdom. God made the beautiful Creatures of Eden just as He made you and me to have dominion and care of them. Our beautiful pets are creatures made by God at Eden. At conception, the DNA stamp of every creature (including humans) immediately determines its personality, its talents, its physical dimensions, its tastes, and every other detail of its existence. To murder a child in its mother's womb is to co-opt the very Will of God Almighty.

Rachel was the beautiful daughter of Laban. She was the second daughter which presented a problem. Jacob fell in love with Rachel at first sight. He sought the hand of Rachel in marriage of her father, Laban. Laban was a conniving man. He said that Jacob could have Rachel's hand in marriage if he would work for Laban for seven years. Jacob immediately assented to purchase his bride for seven years of labor. When the seven years were up, the marriage was arranged. His bride appeared in a veil, and Jacob married her – only it was not Rachel, it was the older daughter Leah. Jacob had been tricked in the same way that he had tricked his father, Isaac, in granting the favored blessing. Even today in the East, it is a disgrace for the younger daughter to marry before

the elder. This was Laban's purpose in tricking Jacob. Jacob then agreed to work another seven years, which he did, for the hand of Rachel. Rachel was his FIRST LOVE which we must never forget. Christ spoke to the Church at Ephesus in these terms, *I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

Not all churches today conform to the model of First Love. I hope the reader does not belong to any such church that has not remained faithful to the Word of God.

Now the Lord opens the womb of Rachel and she gives birth to Joseph – a type of Christ in his faithful example. Joseph was a shepherd somewhat after the example of the Good Shepherd. *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.* (John 10:11) Joseph, like Christ, was a willing and obedient son. *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* (Philippians 2:8) He was especially loved of his Father just as Christ was the dearly beloved Son of the Father. Joseph was hated by his brothers just as Christ was hated by his brothers.

*After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him. They knew death awaited the Lord in Jerusalem, yet, they urged him to go there.*

Joseph was hated by his brothers without cause. So was Christ. Christ did only good to all with whom He had any dealings, but they hated Him without reasons. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.* (John 15:24-25)

In spite of Joseph's witnessing to his brothers they hated him more. They envied and slandered him.

One day, after his brothers had been gone for what seemed too long a period for their labors, the father, Jacob, sent Joseph to seek their well being. *And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, **Here am I.*** (Genesis 37:12-13)

I will briefly review the events that follow. Joseph finds his brothers wearing the coat of many colors. The color of the robe of Christ is WHITE. White is all colors of the rainbow combined. So that coat of Joseph represents the Robe of Righteousness Christ offers to all who believe. The brothers were outraged with jealousy. Most desired to kill him, but Reuben resisted. He suggested they throw him into a well and was later sold as a slave into Egypt. They intended this for evil for Joseph, but God was right in the middle of that decision for good to Joseph. When events of great sorrow happen in our lives, just remember: God is right in the middle for you if you believe. *And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him;* (Genesis 37:23) Likewise, they stripped Christ. Please consider the burning shame Christ felt in being stripped naked before the multitudes. *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.* (John 19:23)

The brothers sold Joseph into bondage to a passing caravan of Ishmaelites. He was taken into Egypt. He suffered many injustices, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife of seduction. He was imprisoned which was, again, in total accord with God's plan. He gained release by interpreting the dream of Pharaoh. Pharaoh appointed Joseph the second ruler in Egypt.

In the meantime, Jacob believed Joseph was dead just as the disciples believed Christ was dead in the Tomb when He came among them in the Upper Room.

Joseph's brothers were sent by Jacob into Egypt during Joseph's prophesied famine. They were given provender by Joseph. In the provender of grain was a hidden cup belonging to Joseph. It was used to bring the younger brother of Joseph, Benjamin, down to Egypt for a total salvation of the Tribes of Israel.

Joseph knew his brothers, but they did not yet know Him. There are souls about us everyday whom we consider to be lost; however, our Lord knows those with whom He has kinship and they know it not presently. He will, in time, reveal Himself.

Christ is our Savior, our Redeemer, our Lord, our King, and, also, our Elder Brother. When He considers our plight, He may weep tears of compassion; yet, He knows what He will do to open our eyes to His presence. It was by way of the Cup (Blood of His sacrifice) and the GRAIN (Bread of His Body) that we are made aware of that Presence.

All people were compelled to bow the knee to Joseph in Egypt. So, to Christ. *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* (Romans 14:11)

Joseph became savior to the full and physical House of Israel just as Christ is Savior to Spiritual Israel today. By the way, those who are of the flesh are no necessarily of Israel – only those who have believed the promise made to Abraham – these are the true Israel of today.

Egypt is a simile for sin, or the land of sin. After 430 years, there arose a king in Egypt whose memory of Joseph was non-existent. He placed hard burdens on the Hebrews. This, too, was God's will to get them out of that land of sin and into the Promised Land. We suffer in bondage to sin, but Christ came to set the captive free from Egyptian-type bondage to sin. So, we must likewise 'get out' of Egypt just as God's people did millennia ago. God will not leave our souls in Hell. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* (Psalm 16:10) The Christian does not want to leave anything in the Egypt sin. We depart that wretched life without a gaze back. Even our bones shall not remain there for God will have use of them in centuries to come for He will raise them up from the grave. *And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.* (Exodus 13:19) Joseph had requested that his bones be carried back to Canaan. So, He was buried in Shechem. Gods Word continues to speak of Joseph in the present tense for all *who believe in me while they yet live shall never die.*

Do you so believe?