

**A Brother Who Comforts Us**  
Genesis 45:1-24  
*Halifax: 15 January 2017, 10:30 AM*

**Introduction:**

Today in our Genesis sermon series,

- we are going to see the beautiful example of Joseph who comforted his brothers when he not only had a just reason to utterly destroy them,
  - but also had the power and the authority to do whatsoever he wanted with them.
- Of course, we are interested in One who is much greater than Joseph.
  - In seeing Joseph, we are able to see Jesus who is *our* brother and who has all authority to destroy us even in hell, and who has every reason to do so,
    - but who instead speaks gracious words of comfort by which He invites us into gracious life-giving fellowship with Himself so that we may share His own inheritance.

Please turn to Genesis 45 and we will get underway with our Scripture reading.

- But before I begin, let me remind you of what has already occurred in the previous chapters.
  - Eleven of the twelve sons of Jacob (who is also Israel) are standing before the great Zaphnath Paaneah of Egypt, having come to him to buy grain in famine.
- Their encounter with this vizier of Egypt, who is second only to Pharaoh, has been very distressing and terrifying—and strange.
  - Initially, he had accused the ten brothers of being spies and had held one of them hostage until the others returned with their youngest brother Benjamin who had remained at home on their first journey.
    - The ten brothers had seen all of this trouble as God’s judgement upon them for having sold their brother Joseph into slavery some 22 years before.
      - They were very guilty and they knew that God was calling them to account.
  - When they returned home, telling their father that Simeon had been kept and that Zaphnath Paaneah had demanded that they to bring Benjamin, Jacob at first refused because he did not want anything to happen to Benjamin.
    - But when the famine continued and the family was running out of grain, he finally conceded, in part because Judah pledged to be responsible for Benjamin.
- Upon returning with Benjamin, it at first seemed that all had gone very well—as Zaphnath Paaneah received them and even showed them extraordinary hospitality, letting them eat with him—and showing special favours to Benjamin.
  - However, no sooner do they set out to return to their father with an ample provision of grain and a happy report, than they are overtaken by one of Zaphnath Paaneah’s men and accused of stealing Zaphnath Paaneah’s silver cup!
    - They had not done it, yet a search is made and the cup is found in Benjamin’s sack—the brother they had promised to guard with their lives!
- And now as we find them in Genesis 45, they are all standing before Zaphnath Paaneah, and Judah has just done a very remarkable thing—so much like Jesus—

- and pled that Zaphnath Paaneah would let him take Benjamin's place! He has offered to be a slave so that his father will not lose Benjamin!

We stopped last time at this dramatic point—at the end of chapter 44—marvelling at what Judah had done, and waiting to hear what Zaphnath Paaneah would do.

- And what he does is utterly unexpected!
- Listen as I read to you—this is God's holy Word, beginning in Genesis 45 verse 1:

**Genesis 45:1-24:** Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Make everyone go out from me!” So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. <sup>2</sup> And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard *it*. <sup>3</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I *am* Joseph; does my father still live?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I *am* Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. <sup>6</sup> For these two years the famine *has been* in the land, and *there are* still five years in which *there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting. <sup>7</sup> And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. <sup>8</sup> So now *it was* not you *who* sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph: “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. <sup>10</sup> You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children’s children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. <sup>11</sup> There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are* still five years of famine.’ ” <sup>12</sup> And behold, your eyes

and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is* my mouth that speaks to you. <sup>13</sup> So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.” <sup>14</sup> Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. <sup>15</sup> Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him. <sup>16</sup> Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, “Joseph’s brothers have come.” So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. <sup>17</sup> And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. <sup>18</sup> Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. <sup>19</sup> Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. <sup>20</sup> Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt *is* yours.’ ” <sup>21</sup> Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. <sup>22</sup> He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver and five changes of garments. <sup>23</sup> And he sent to his father these *things*: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey. <sup>24</sup> So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, “See that you do not become troubled along the way.”

May the Lord add His blessing to the reading of His holy Word.

**I. See first of all that Joseph's brothers are in desperate need of comfort, just as we are when we are brought before the exalted Lord Jesus as sinners!**

A. Truly, they had thought their situation was desperate before!

1. It had been bad enough that Zaphnath Paaneah had demanded that Benjamin be kept as a slave because of allegedly taking Zaphnath Paaneah's silver cup...
  - The brothers had been made by this to feel more deeply than ever the terrible crime that they had committed against Joseph and against their father.
  - They had been reminded by all that had happened to them of their true guilt before God and man.
  - They had come to see more than ever the deep love that their father had had for Joseph whom they had separated from him...
    - What wretches they had been!
    - Judah's willingness to now take Benjamin's place testified of how deeply they had felt their guilt.
2. This is the way it is with sinners when the LORD begins to awaken them.
  - We can be so good at minimising our sin—at justifying it and making excuses for it.
    - But when the LORD starts to deal with us by His Spirit, all of our excuses and all of our justifications and blame shifting start to melt away.
  - We begin to say as Joseph's brothers had that we are truly guilty for what we have done.
    - It is very disturbing, and we anticipate that we will be punished for what we have done.
    - We used to think we were okay, but now we see that we were not at all okay.
3. Have you experienced this? Have you been gripped with your own guilt before God?
  - Do you recognise that you are part of a whole race, the human race, that has departed from the living God who created us?
    - Do you see how offensive your lack of care about others is?
    - Do you see the wrong in your selfishness and your pride?
    - Do you see how guilty you are for your ingratitude to God—and even for cursing Him when you ought to have been praising Him?

TRANS> Joseph's brothers were not just *feeling* guilty, they knew that they *were* guilty—not of stealing Zaphnath Paaneah's cup, but of a much greater offense.

B. But if they thought themselves desperate before, now they are all the more desperate!

1. Imagine the horror of their experience here!
  - a. This strange ruler of Egypt suddenly sends everyone out except them and begins to weep uncontrollably!
    - He weeps so loudly that all of the Egyptians can hear him.
    - Surely the eleven brothers are befuddled—what could all this mean?
  - b. And then he pulls himself together and speaks words that they never expected to hear!

- Suddenly, in their own language, without an interpreter, this Zaphnath Paaneah whom they so rightly fear says:
  - **v. 3: “I am Joseph; does my father still live?”**
- It is not at all surprising that they are completely unable to speak.
- c. What a dreadful thing!
  - Here they are standing before this august person who can do whatever he wants to them,
    - And discovering that he himself is the one they had so cruelly treated 22 years before!
    - It is bad enough for a criminal to have to face the victim of his crime—but how much worse it is when he is lord of all—
      - when he is the judge and the jury and you are completely defenseless before him!
  - We are told that they are dismayed and unable to speak.
    - It is as if Joseph has been raised from the dead.
    - If only they could disappear through the floor—but they cannot!
- 2. Is this not what happens to sinners who are brought before Jesus?
  - a. We may have come to realise our sin and our guilt before God...
    - But it is not until we see Jesus as risen and exalted Lord and realise that it was our sin—the sin of mankind—that exiled Him from His Father and put Him on the cross that we really begin to see our guilt.
    - Our sin is such that to pay for it, He had to leave His Father and come to this world, and then in our flesh, He had to be cut off for our crimes.
      - The sin of the world was laid on Him, and He felt all the wrath of God upon Him—
  - b. In our reading from Acts 2, we saw how the Jews to whom Peter preached who had literally delivered Him over to be crucified were cut to the heart...
    - when they realised that He whom they had crucified was the one that God has exalted to be Lord and Christ.
      - As Peter says, “you crucified him with your wicked hands but God raised Him up to be Lord and Christ.”
  - c. As fellow sinners, we are all in league with them.
    - Even if you are a covenant child, do you not see that your sin put Him on the cross as much as anyone else’s?
      - Your sin is a rejection of Him, and that rejection is a delivering over of Him to be crucified.
      - Sin is no light or trivial thing—it is a rejection of God the Father and of God the Son and of God the Spirit...
    - When we see what was done to Jesus by His own people, we see what we would do too if given power over Him.
      - Apart from God’s grace, we would all crucify Him because He is righteous and we are not.
    - The Jews represent all of us—they do what we would all have done.

- And when through God's word it is declared to us that this one that we despised and rejected has been raised up by God and made Lord over all things in heaven and earth...
  - When we truly see who He is, we are cut to the heart—we are the ones who are dismayed and unable to speak.
3. I hope with my saying this that you are not busy trying to excuse yourself...
- a. I hope that you are not saying, "but I would never have gone that far."
    - I tell you, if there is sin in you, you would go that far.
    - Let me ask you, even since you became a believer if you are one, have you ever done anything that would require Him to be crucified?
      - Indeed you have!
      - Many things!
      - Do not deny it—you continue to do even against your friend whom you know and love as Saviour what would send Him to the cross.
    - Do not deny it. Rather be like Joseph's brothers who stood entirely speechless before their Lord who was also their brother.
  - It is a very good thing for you to see your desperate need before Him...
    - It is a very difficult thing, but let me tell you why it is also a very good thing.
  - b. It is seeing you in your great need that touches the heart of Jesus and causes Him to make Himself known to you in your sin.
    - When He sees you in your distress about your sin and guilt—realising how much you need to be saved—it moves Him to stop speaking about your sin and guilt and to start comforting you in His grace!
    - Robert Candlish puts it like this: "It is great need that touches Joseph's heart. It is thy great need that touches thy Joseph's heart, poor sinner, fainting soul! Thy sin is terribly finding thee out; and all is very dark! The very Lord of grace and glory, on whom thy fate hangs, keeps an ominous silence;—or is about to deal out to thee a rigid measure of inexorable justice. Still cleave to him, thou guilty one, with guilt of deepest dye on thy conscience, —cleave to him, thou of little faith, sinking in a stormy sea. Cry to him; plead with him; wrestle with him! Refuse to let him go until he bless thee. Lo! he smiles,—he weeps. That dark brow unbends. Those withdrawn arms are stretched out. Thou art in his embrace. He cannot refrain himself. He makes himself known to thee,—to thee, the chief of sinners—to whom he rejoices affectionately to say,—I am Jesus, thy Saviour, thy friend, thy brother."

## **II. Let me now show you how Joseph comforts His brothers—which illustrates for us the comfort the LORD Jesus gives to us!**

- A. First, there is the comfort that comes from way he presents himself to them.
  - 1. Even as he was revealing himself to them, he was weeping.
    - He was speaking not as an angry Lord, but as a tender brother.
    - Though he says, "I am Joseph whom you sold into Egypt," he also says, "Come near to me" and they do—they go to him.
  - 2. So with those who crucified our Lord who heard Peter at Pentecost...

- They were struck to the heart—
  - And Peter tells them that He is the Lord of glory whom they crucified, there is graciousness in Peter’s words.
  - He invites them to come near...
    - He has been speaking of God pouring out the Holy Spirit for His people—of God’s care for them who had rejected Him...
- 3. When God lays open our sins before Him, there is a tenderness that draws us, even though He may have been very stern with us before...
  - Now, even though our conviction of guilt is worse than it ever was, there is in His manner a welcoming spirit...
    - It makes you want to listen to Him.
    - He bids you to come nearer and you go—with rising hopes.
  - Sinner, do you know Jesus this way?
    - Do you know Him as a welcoming saviour who calls us to come to Him even when we are weary and heavy laden with true guilt before Him?
    - This is no time to run away—to go into your denials—come with hope and see what He has to say to you.

TRANS> It is no time to run away—there is a ray of hope!

B. The next thing he does is to proclaim God’s purpose to you in all that has happened—even in all that you have done!

1. Joseph tells his brothers that their deed against him, as wicked as it was, was all designed by God to fulfill God’s gracious purposes for them!
  - In v. 5 he says: **“But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.”**
    - He certainly does not mean that it was not sinful on their part—they know that very well and there is no need to harp on it...
    - He is showing them that God had a higher purpose in the event—a gracious purpose.
  - He explains that as far as the famine—that it has only just begun—it is going to be much worse...
    - **v. 6: “For these two years the famine *has been* in the land, and *there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.*”**
    - The Lord shows us that our situation is even worse than we had thought.
  - But God knew that and He has made provision for it already...
    - In verse 7, Joseph goes on to explain that he, Joseph, was sent to Egypt by God to save them:
      - **“And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.”**
    - The language here relates to God’s covenant promise to Israel—to this family of Israel—that He is going to preserve them as He has promised.
      - It uses the language of a remnant of survivors—persons that are spared from destruction—in this case, to fulfill God’s purpose for them.

- Remember, this is the family that was to bring forth Christ for the world.
  - But the point is that God was in the whole matter of sending Joseph to Egypt so that though He used their wicked deed, it was ultimately His doing.
    - Verse 8 says: **“So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.”**
2. What an incredible message of grace!
- a. God used their wicked deed against Joseph—just as He used our wicked deed in crucifying Christ—to bring about salvation!
    - It actually enabled Jesus to be in a position to rescue us with a great salvation.
    - In Acts 2:23 Peter speaks of Christ as Him who: **being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death.**
      - And in verse 36 that **God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.**
  - What an extraordinary thing that the greatest sin of mankind is the very deed that brings about our salvation!
    - It was all planned by God that Jesus would be crucified that He might save us by being crucified.
  - b. This may be hard to understand, but it is still true!
    - Our actions are fully our own and we are responsible for them all, but at the same time, they are precisely what God has planned.
      - God is big enough and great enough to carry out exactly what He has planned with people who freely act according to their own will.
    - Reformed theology does not attempt to pit God’s sovereignty over against human responsibility...
      - It rather bows humbly to the scripture which consistently declares that both function at the same time.
      - God accomplishes just what He has planned and purposed through human agency.
3. But what comfort there is in this!
- Even though Joseph’s brothers had done a very wicked thing—and even though Israel who represented us all crucified Christ...
    - in both cases God purposed these wicked actions to bring about our salvation.
    - If Christ had not been crucified, there would be no atonement to cover our sins—no redemption—no one to set us free from condemnation.
      - God was working the whole time while we were sinning to bring about a great deliverance for us!
      - Glory be to His name and to our Lord Jesus Christ!

TRANS> But the comfort does not stop with that!

- C. Next you can see that Joseph assures his brothers that he is fully committed to carrying out God's plans to be their saviour!
1. Despite what they have done to him, he is not interested in revenge.
    - a. God sent him to save them from the famine, and that is just what he is minded to do.
      - Who is he to fight against the purposes of God for him?
      - It is his delight to do the Father's will.
    - b. This, of course, is just like our dear Lord Jesus Christ.
      - He does not come to us to condemn us, but to save us.
        - He tells us over and over that He was sent by God the Father and has come to do His will.
        - And it was the Father's will that Jesus should be offered for our sins that we might be saved—so Jesus delights to do just that!
          - There is no bitterness in Him toward those who crucified Him—He rather pleads with them to repent and be converted.
  2. Look at how Joseph's willingness to save his brothers is presented to us in verses 9-13...
    - a. He shows himself to be very eager to bless them with this salvation—he gives you the impression that it has been too long already...
      - He is especially desirous of his father—he speaks of his dear father Jacob whom he has still not seen as the one he is especially eager to bless with the salvation God has provided through him.
        - In verse 9 he says: **“Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph: ‘God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry.’”**
      - In the same way, Jesus does not tarry when calling sinners to come to Him.
        - In Acts 2, under His direction, Peter calls upon those who have been cut to the heart to repent and be baptised that very hour!
          - He promises that they will receive the Holy Spirit.
          - There need be no delay.
    - b. See further how Joseph goes on to assure his brothers that he will provide for them...
      - verse 10: **‘ “You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. <sup>11</sup> There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine.” ’**
      - Joseph assures them, as Jesus also assures us, that this is his own promise...he himself has spoken it and will not fail to do it.
        - **12 “And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you.”**
      - The apostles were eyewitnesses of Christ and they do not speak their own words, but His Word...



- They speak only what they have heard from the mouth of Christ, so that their words are God-breathed—and Christ breathed.
  - The covenant promises as from His mouth.
    - In the matter of our salvation, He has not left it to speculation, but He speaks to us Himself and assures us that if we come to Him, He will not cast us out!
- c. And now Joseph makes his brothers to be his witnesses to convey this message to his father and to their father...
- They have the privilege of carrying the good news to him.
    - Joseph is alive and he is calling for you and God has appointed him as the lord of Egypt that he might save us all!
      - In verse 13, He says: **“So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here.”**
  - My brothers and sisters, you who know Jesus Christ as Saviour, you have the blessing of declaring the wonderful news to others that Jesus lives and that He calls all people everywhere to come and be saved.
    - It is His own mouth that has spoken it.

TRANS> How great is this comfort—but there is still more!

- It is wonderful to know of God’s purposes to save us and of Christ’s assurances that He will do the Father’s will...
- D. But how these comforts are enhanced by the personal declaration of our saviour’s love for us!
- He is not content only to tell us what He is going to do for us without also declaring to us His personal love for us.
    - Does He really love us after what we have done to Him?
1. See the testimony in Joseph...in verse 14 & 15:
- **Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. <sup>15</sup> Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.**
- a. It is not just love for his father or only for Benjamin who was not involved in the cruelties that had been done to him...
- His love extends to all of them.
  - He expresses it with tears and kisses!
- b. And notice at the end of verse 18—that his brothers talk with him now!
- He does not stop kissing them and weeping over them until they begin to talk with him.
    - Remember, when Joseph still was at home, his brothers were so bitter that they could not speak a kind word to him.
    - Now, in this account, they could not speak because of dismay—their shock and their guilt and their terror silenced them...

- But now that they have received his tears and his kisses of affection, they are able to talk with him—brothers talking—perhaps something that had *never* been done.
2. So our LORD Jesus tells us of His love for us—until we talk with Him.
    - a. As Joseph had his kisses, so Christ kisses us in our very hearts as it were.
      - He gives us the Holy Spirit—His Spirit—to be with us.
      - And the Spirit is called the comforter because one of His jobs is to testify to us in our spirits of Christ’s love for us.
      - In Romans 5:5, we are told the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit—to testify of Christ’s love for us.
    - b. And the Spirit does this until we talk to Jesus.
      - In Zechariah 12:10, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of grace and supplication...
        - He is the one who stirs up prayers within us—
        - He gives us boldness to come to our mighty exalted Lord and pour out our desires, to speak of our love for Him, to praise Him, to lay our burdens on Him.
        - We start talking to this mighty Lord that we had been cut off from—first by bitterness and then by terror.

TRANS> But this is still not the end of the comfort that He gives to us who are in such desperate need of it...

- E. Our Lord who is our brother also brings us to His Father and our Father to show us that the Father is behind all the promises that He has made.
  1. Have you ever noticed that about the ministry of Christ?
    - He always speaks about His Father and very often of His Father’s love for us... He says things like, “it is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”
    - But even more than that, the same Holy Spirit who testifies of Christ also works in our inmost being to convey to us the Father’s love...
      - In Romans 8:15, we are told: **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”** <sup>16</sup> **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,** <sup>17</sup> **and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ...**
    - He assures us that we are adopted and that we have an inheritance in glory.
  2. Joseph introduces his brothers to Pharaoh who confirms all that Joseph has told them—and does so with eager delight.
    - a. You can see this in verse 16-20:
      - **Verse 16: Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, “Joseph’s brothers have come.” So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.** <sup>17</sup> **And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. <sup>18</sup> Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. <sup>19</sup> Now you are commanded—do this: Take**

**carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. <sup>20</sup> Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’ ”**

- He not only seconds the promise, but this thoughtful grateful pharaoh assures them that they will be given all that Egypt has to offer.
  - They do not even need to worry about bringing everything with them because they will be richly provided for.
- b. This is so much like our heavenly Father when Christ brings us to Him.
  - He tells us that we are heirs with Christ.
    - It is His delight to give us the kingdom!
  - It is so mistaken to think that Jesus is somehow persuading Him to receive us—no no—it is the Father who so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son.
    - Do you see Him that way? Do you know Him that way?

TRANS> And so the comforts just keep rolling in...

- that the LORD speaks tenderly to us and calls us to come near and hear in our terror...
- that He tells us that God used even our sin to make Him our Saviour...
- that He is delighted to be our Saviour despite the wrongs we have done to Him...
- that He dearly love us...
- that the Father loves us too and desires to give us a glorious inheritance in the land...
- And now, last of all...

F. He provides us with all that we need to come to Him for our salvation—to come to our inheritance that we have with Him.

- You can see this with Joseph’s example in verse 21-25...
- 1. He gives his brothers provisions and carts for the journey...v. 21
  - Does Jesus not give us His word and His grace, and even His sacraments to sustain us on our journey—
    - so that we do not lose heart but follow through with coming to Him?
    - We are even told that He draws us to Himself—He does not allow us to be overcome with discouragement but maintains our faith so that it does not fail.
      - That is the difference with Judas and Peter.
        - Judas was not His, and his faith failed...
        - But Peter, though he denied Christ, yet Jesus prayed that his faith would not fail, and it did not—so that Peter was restored.
- 2. And you see in verse 22-23 how Joseph also gives them clothes and silver and good things from Egypt...
  - **V. 22: He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. <sup>23</sup> And he sent to his father these things: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey.**
    - These were as a down payment to assure them of Joseph’s intent to give them their full inheritance in Egypt that he had promised.

- So we are told that Holy Spirit is given to us as a down payment of the good that our LORD has promised to us in glory...
  - He has begun a work in us—so that we have a heart of love for God and love for our brethren—
    - there is much more to come—the work is begun and it is a seal and pledge to us that He who began a good work in us will complete it.
- 3. And finally, Joseph provides his brothers with counsel...in particular that they are not to quarrel.
  - Most commentators understand that to be the meaning of verse 24: **So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, “See that you do not become troubled along the way.”**
    - Joseph knew that as they made their journey, it would be very easy for them to fall out with one another—
      - to begin to reproach one another and to contend.
      - Maybe they would quarrel about who had the greatest guilt in what they had done to Joseph, or about which of them would be the greatest in Egypt...
        - Joseph simply says, “see that you don’t fall out!”
  - My brothers and sisters, has our Lord Jesus not given us similar counsel?
    - It is not appropriate for those who have been so gloriously pardoned to allow bitterness and contention to rise up among us.
      - It is a shame and a disgrace for us when our brother Jesus has been so gracious and kind to us despite the wrongs that we have done to Him.
      - Should we continue to add to His grief by quarrelling among ourselves?
        - Far be it from us!

### **Conclusion:**

Indeed, what a wonderful brother we have in Jesus Christ!

- In His wisdom, He first meets us with hard words to bring us to conviction,
  - but then He breaks out in tender love to comfort us when He sees that we are broken and ready to receive His mercy.
- Robert Candlish says:
  - “Ah! truly, Joseph is the model of what a brother ought to be, *a brother born for adversity!* He is the sort of brother you need in your deep grief, ye sin-sick, sin-laden, sorrow-laden children—the fitting type of the brother you have in the well-beloved Son of the Father!”