

lean on Him, read His word, seek His love and guidance and peace, we can see why all of this is happening. It's so we'll be able to rule with Him forevermore.

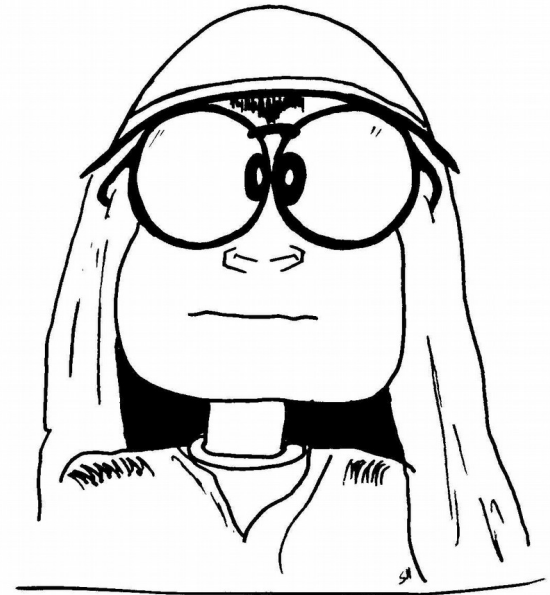
Would you like to be a ruler? It all starts by recognizing what Jesus Christ did on the cross, that He died there, shed His blood there willingly and that He fulfilled the law that says *"for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins!"* He shed His blood, the perfect Lamb, the perfect sacrifice; once and forevermore, just for me. His blood was shed for all of my sins, all that I've ever committed and all that I ever will commit. He shed His blood that my sins be forgiven, that I be able to be in fellowship spiritually, and then physically with Him in glory.

If you haven't trusted Jesus to be your personal Saviour, maybe you think that Christianity is for weaklings and sissies. No, it's for people who want to be rulers.

Why don't you right now, bow your head and confess your sins. That just means you say the same things about those sins that God does. Then, as God's Word directs you, confess your sins and recognize who He is. We tell Jesus we believe He is our personal Saviour and that He is the divine Son of God. As you invite Him into your heart, believe the Bible to be true in that He will do what He has promised. God is not a liar. Once He comes in, He comes in forevermore. So now you are saved because of what Jesus did, not for what you have done. You are saved eternally.

So why not do that right now!

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How to Become Boss

A Case History

Book 2 of 2

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enjoy while spending eternity with Him. Now you say, nothing could be better. This is fantastic! But let's put the frosting on the cake. Let's turn to chapter 47, verses 5-6 and read:

"And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle."

How about that! They have been brought to this land. But they won't just sit. They'll be busy. They'll be given the best, just like Pharaoh gave to Joseph. The best of the land will be theirs. Further, they would be made rulers. **THEY WOULD BE MADE RULERS!**

I think each one of us likes the feeling of control, of being able to influence, to be in charge of, especially when it can be done without Satan's intervention and we don't do it for selfish motives. But here, Joseph's loved ones will be put in charge of, made rulers over Pharaoh's property, the things that belong to Pharaoh. That is a perfect example I think of what we are saved for, why we are going to heaven, why the fellowship. We certainly can't be rulers with Jesus if we don't have fellowship with Him. And we certainly can't rule with Him unless we've been found righteous and honorable in ruling, in being good stewards of what God has given us down here on earth.

We are born in a pit of sin without our own choice that is true. But through all the circumstances of life, as we trust in God,

But that out of the way, and certainly of utmost importance to us, is that if we are to come to the knowledge of truth, if we are going to come to a point of full fellowship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are going to have to bring sin to the surface, confess it to the one we should confess it to, and then ask forgiveness for it. In verse 26:

"And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."

That would be tough for him to believe. But, can you imagine as more thought was given to all that the brothers had said, what an exciting place that was? Up in the land of Canaan we first had the brothers explaining to their dad that Joseph is alive. He's alive! What a miraculous thing that God must have done. "The one that we have wronged is alive!" Can you imagine the other relatives as they listen to all the events and things that have happened? Can you see them turning around and telling another relative next to them HE'S ALIVE? The one whom we thought was dead, is alive! Not only is he alive, but also he's in control. He's in charge of things. Not only is he alive and in control of things, but he's going to save us. HE IS GOING TO SAVE US! Not only is he alive, in control of things and going to save us, but also he's going to save us to be with him. And then you see another relative turn around and tell the one next to him, HE'S ALIVE. He's going to take us with him. He has been in control all along. Can you see that happening all over the countryside? He's alive! He's alive!

I'm looking forward to going to heaven. Why? Because I know He's alive. I know He's in control. And I know He has some wonderful things in store, things planned for me to

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I believe this also to be a picture of heaven. With all the heartache, planning and preparation to draw us to Him and bring us to heaven there are tears of joy. There is joy over each one of us who have come to repentance and inherited eternal life with Him in glory. Now I believe there is certainly going to be a lot of tears in heaven. Many of them will be tears of joy. But, I believe there will also be tears of another nature in heaven, tears of repentance, tears of shame. I think we begin to see a little bit of this in chapter 45 as Joseph sends his brothers back up to get their father, Mr. Israel in verses 25-26:

"And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."

I think there's a lot behind those two verses. Why is Joseph still alive? How did the brothers know about it? It was the brothers who brought this special coat of many colors that had blood on it, and let the father believe that Joseph had been eaten by a fierce animal.

And so, as the brothers are relating to and wanting to get to the point of telling their dad that Joseph is the lord over all of Egypt, they also have to bring to light the rotten deeds that they've done. They had to bring to light the shame that they had to bear, that they had been jealous and tried to destroy their own brother when they should have been the ones in the whole world to love him most. I believe there were some tough times in those two verses as each of those brothers related to their dad what part they had played in trying to do away with their own brother.

repentance, it just thrilled Joseph, giving him more joy each moment. In verse 30:

"And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there."

I've often wondered if Jesus doesn't have a chamber in heaven where He goes to be by Himself. He sees us reject Him, be independent and go our own way. We do our own things, be our own person and shun Him. Oh the heartbreak - knowing full well, as He comes out of His chamber, Satan will be right there before Him, accusing day and night the brethren. I believe there will be a day when there will be many tears in heaven, tears of joy, tears of rejoicing. When we go to heaven, when He takes us to be with Him, He's going to have saved us out of the holocaust, the continuation of the curse of the earth. But, it will be tears of joy because those who love Him will be with Him forever.

Isn't it thrilling to see that when Joseph first saw his brothers in chapter 42, verse 24 that he wept? A little later when his youngest brother Benjamin was brought before him, in chapter 43, verse 30:

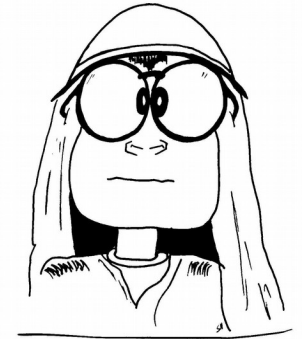
"...he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there."

In chapter 46, verses 28-29 we see weeping as Joseph and his father, Mr. Israel, are united again:

"...and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while."

Chapter 5 – Make a Spectacle of Yourself

We find that Joseph is in prison – again. We also find a statement we've seen a couple of times before, just at the right time. Verses 21-23:



"But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper."

When Joseph was a teenager, he was given dreams that revealed he would become a ruler; exactly over what he didn't know. But, he knew that he'd rule at least over his brothers. What do we have then?

- We have a teenager that has been keeping watch over sheep in chapter 37, verse 2.
- And then we have this young fellow who is given rulership, in charge of everything in Potiphar's house, chapter 39, verse 6.
- And now we see Joseph as the ruler over and in charge of every single event and person in this dungeon, chapter 39, verse 23.

Is it very hard to see a plan worked out, an increase in the responsibility of Joseph? Maybe God really is in control and this man. Joseph is being taught lessons he can't be taught anywhere else except in a prison, in a dungeon, in a pit.

Is it possible that some of the lessons we have to learn can't be learned in a Sunday school class, we can't learn from listening to mother and dad, or to a husband or wife? The only way we can learn the lesson and learn it well is in a prison, in a dungeon, in a pit. In chapter 40 verse 1:

"And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt."

You don't want to do that! Verse 3:

"And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound."

Now, isn't that a coincidence? Verse 4:

"And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward."

Remember, this is a mystery. There is death involved; there is cunning and craftiness; there is jealousy and hatred involved. Let's see how Joseph handles himself with these two men, the butcher and the baker. Verses 5-7:

"And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison. And Joseph came in unto

So the curse is still going to be here, yet the brothers have been saved out of this terrible time. They are now with the one they have loved, the one they have wronged. I believe that Joseph understood and believed the principle that would be included in the Canon, in God's Word, many years after he was gone. It's found in Psalms 126:5-6:

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

I believe that some of us don't witness like we ought to because we are afraid of failure. I don't like failure. I have difficulty coping with it. Maybe you do, too. You think if you go out and visit this person, they're going to slam the door in your face. If you talk to this fellow on the job and just mention a word or two each day at lunchtime, you'll get socked in the nose or reported to the boss. We don't like failure, do we? Look at that verse again. It doesn't even hint of failure. In fact just the opposite is true:

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, will doubtless..."

We all know what that means - no reservation, no hesitancy, it's going to happen.

"Will doubtless come again bringing his sheaves with him."

I believe that Joseph understood that. I believe in chapter 42, verse 24 it says: "that Joseph wept." I believe it was because his brothers were coming to the knowledge of truth as they exposed themselves and their sin more and more. I believe that just as his brothers came closer and closer to full

Let's real quickly sum up what has happened. Pharoah has put Joseph in charge of everything that he has and all the things that are made. Everything that is done is done by the hand of Joseph. Also, Joseph has been wronged, has been treated terrible by his loved ones. The ones that he loved most in the world, his brothers, have tried to destroy him. Through all these events involving the famine and everything, they again unite and each knows who the other is. Joseph reveals himself.

I picture this as a scene in heaven where God the Father is Pharoah, the supreme authority, yet Joseph is in the position of Jesus and is responsible for all the things that have happened. Joseph is crying. He's in tears because those that he has loved have now come to the truth, have now come to him. What joy, what excitement, what a relief to a heavy heart! At the same time he's saying to those whom he loves dearly, those who have wronged him in verse 5:

"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."

That is what Jesus has done for us. He's given us new life, even while we are here on this earth. He's given the promise that He will rapture us up out of this cursed land where there are still more terrors and curses yet to come which would be comparable to verse 6:

"For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest."

them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day?"

They were only in prison, put in there by the king. Joseph evidently thinks you aren't supposed to look sad in prison. But he's had more training. He's learned how to conduct himself in prison. He's been in enough different ones, hasn't he? Isn't it unusual that a man can find peace and joy while in prison? Joseph can because he's faithful and steadfast in serving God. Verse 8:

"And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you."

How about that! He's had dreams before and has been in some very important positions. Joseph could polish his fingernails on his collar and be able to say, "I can handle that. God's blessed me and given me some ability. I can interpret your dreams." No, he learned in the bottom of that pit and gave example of it to Potiphar's wife that his relationship for the events and the things that he did were not toward man but toward God. That's why he said:

"Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me then I pray you."

Verse 9 says:

"And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph and said unto him..."

The chief butler explained his dream and told about Pharaoh's cup to Joseph. Verses 12-15:

"And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."

Joseph wanted out of prison, too. Verse 16:

"When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head."

The chief baker goes on and tells his dream. Joseph then gives him the interpretation in verses 18-23:

"And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee. And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to

Chapter 8 – Tears

Chapter 45, verses 1- 5 and 7 says:

***T**hen Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him! and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life...And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."*



Great deliverance! Isn't that fantastic? In verses 9-11 we read:

"...Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty."

whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen."

That is the only revenge or out and out punishment that is mentioned regarding the money or the cup. Those statements were made by the brothers, not by Joseph or his servants.

Now in desperation the brothers don't know what to do or where to turn. They supposedly have been caught twice with goods and property that didn't belong to them. With nothing else to do, Judah begins a beautiful confession, a beautiful piece of literature in verse 18

"Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharoah."

He begins to explain all the circumstances and things that have happened, how old his father is, how much love their father has for the sons. He explains that because Jacob is very old, if he doesn't bring his brother back up to Canaan, the father will die. Something interesting the brothers have learned about security and about others is in verse 32:

"For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever."

Now what is happening is that the brothers are recognizing and understanding what it means to substitute one life for another, to make one life a guarantee for another. That is the goal that Joseph wanted the brothers to reach understanding.

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them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

Why do you suppose Pharoah hung the chief baker but restored the chief butler to his previous post? There really aren't any reasons given in God's Word. Have you ever found some people that are in positions of authority and rulership that make decisions and carry out different acts without any rhyme or reason?

You just wonder if maybe they did these acts for no other reason than to prove to themselves and to the people watching them, that they had the authority and the power to do it. When man raises himself to places of authority by his own power and his own efforts, there is still no confidence, no security there. He continues to prove to himself that he hasn't lost the power he's had.

What a comparison between these two men: Pharoah who has to destroy a man's life for no other reason than just to prove he has the power to, and this man in prison by the name of Joseph, whom God remembers. God blesses and remembers him and God puts him in places of power and authority. What a contrast!

There is however one other aspect to consider here - revenge. Someone has hurt your feelings. It's almost a reflex action to think of a way to hurt them back. Your character has been defamed. You begin to think of a plan to wreck their reputation, too. What would happen if I were a god for a day or if you were a god for a day? I'm glad I'm not. I think there are people I would burn to a crisp because of the hurt they've done to me.

Now remember our main character, Joseph. Look at the hurt that's been done to him by his brothers, by Potiphar's wife. Yet, he has at other times been put in places of authority, full authority. He's been made god for a day, at least in the lives of some of the people around him. Did he act like I would - like you would?

Would our response be, "Man, I'm going to burn that person to a crisp"? He could hang these people, destroy them, and send them off to years of hard labor. Yet, no mention of it. I wonder if that isn't one reason why God kept blessing him because of the lessons Joseph had learned down in that pit. All of the events and all the action are part of God's plan and my responsibility to those who do those things is in His hands. He didn't take revenge.

We see another person whom Joseph could have certainly been mad at if he'd made the assumption that God would put him in charge of something again. He could have said, "I'll get even with them, then." Well in chapter 40, verse 23:

"Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."

In chapter 41, verse 1 we read:

"And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and behold, he stood by the river."

He explained this entire dream. And in verses 8-9:

"And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them

"Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing. And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words."

So they're caught again with some things in their bags that certainly shouldn't be in there. In verse 9:

"With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen."

It's been well recognized by Bible scholars that the prayer, the begging if you will, of Judah for the life of his brother in chapter 44, verse 18 is a wonderful piece of literature.

You might want to accuse Joseph of sinning in that he wrongly accused his brothers of being spies. It sounds like he is sinning to me, doesn't it to you? Again without his brothers knowing it, he put the money they had bought the corn with in their sacks so that when they got back up to Canaan and opened them up, they found the money they had paid Joseph for the corn. That's a trick.

The next time they left to take corn back to Canaan he hid his cup in one of the sacks, Benjamin's sack. That is trickery. Isn't that sin? One thing we see that Joseph was very careful about was not to pass any judgment. He accused for a purpose, but with the accusation he didn't follow through with any punishment or anything like that. The only statement that is made concerning those things is in chapter 44, verses 8-9:

"Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With

All of a sudden they find themselves in a special seating arrangement. Somebody knows exactly how old each one of the brothers are, at least in relation to each other. Worse than that, one of the brothers is getting special treatment. What has gone wrong? What are the brothers going to do! Have they learned their lesson? How are they going to act in their crucible? Are they going to become jealous and angry because one brother is getting far more food than what the rest of them are? Are they going to get angry with Benjamin?

Well, Joseph is watching all of this. He wants to see if the brothers have learned their lesson. We now see that the brothers have their sacks of grain filled, as much as they can carry. Further, without them knowing it, the steward, who filled their sacks by instructions from Joseph, was told to put the men's money back in their sacks again. More than that, an intriguing event also happens. Joseph says in chapter 44, in verses 2-4:

"And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?"

Joseph is tricking them in a special way. Genesis 44 verses 5-6:

his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day."

Verses 10-13 say that the chief butler explained how he had met this man, Joseph. Verses 14-15 state:

"Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it."

Here is the chance of a lifetime. You are standing before a king and he hears you have ability - some talent over and above what somebody else has. What an opportunity to make a spectacle of yourself, to really be able to have the whole world at your feet. "Oh yes, I can do this, I have the ability to do that. Aren't I wonderful?" What an opportunity, especially before a king. The king needs something and only you have the ability to deliver it. But be careful! What does Joseph do? Verse 16 says:

"And Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

Every time there's a pit or a prison, there is a crucible. Remember our rule - they always come in pairs. God trains us in a prison or in a pit and then gives us an opportunity to perform. He gives us a chance to prove and show others and Himself that we really learned our lesson. Joseph had an opportunity to make a "spectacle" of himself, to be a show off, like I do and like you sometimes.

But "spectacles" are used for something else, too. There are the ones I wear to read the small print - glasses. Certainly we know that all glasses are used to make things clearer, to make things intelligible, more understandable, to make clear the way that's ahead. Well, that's the spectacle that Joseph made of himself; not a show off or someone that wants to be king for a day or god for a day. He wanted to make truth clear to those that God had brought him in contact with. That's the kind of "spectacle" we ought to be. That's the kind that Joseph was.

In verse 17 we read:

"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold I stood upon the bank of the river."

Pharaoh goes on to explain his dream in the following verses. Then in verse 25:

"And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do."

Joseph said "God" had showed Pharaoh. He didn't even mention himself. He mentioned two people: God and Pharaoh. That's almost like a picture of the Holy Spirit isn't it? The Holy Spirit is meant to be a helpmeet, to make things clearer. He's not to make a spectacle of Himself but to be a lens, to be glasses, to clear up the vision, the understanding of some truth that God is trying to get across to man. The Holy Spirit is rarely mentioned by name. That seems to be the position that Joseph is in at the moment. Joseph speaks not of himself but of God.

his arms around him, just to confess everything to him and share with him everything God had done. He wanted to tell about the prisons that he had spent time in, the places that he was in charge of. How he wanted fellowship with that brother Benjamin. But it wasn't God's timing yet and he couldn't.

I wonder how much time Jesus spends in heaven weeping for us; weeping because He wants fellowship with us and we've sought not to set our hearts toward Him. There's an interesting aspect in this fellowship in Joseph's house. Remember that none of the brothers know who Joseph is. They had no idea it was their brother who stood before them, whom they thought was dead and gone.

When they sit down to eat, the seating arrangement that was laid out by Joseph, had each one of these men sitting in an order from the youngest to the oldest. How could anyone in Egypt know how old they were? The brothers really became frightened then. How could anyone down in Egypt know what is going on? The brothers were worried. More than that, the brothers saw that the servants, as they brought food to the tables, set much more food in front of Benjamin. The servants, according to the orders of Joseph, seemed to play favorites, showing special attention to one of their brothers.

Remember how all of this started - by the father Jacob showing special attention to just one brother. You remember also that when we are in a pit and we have that prison type experience, what always comes next? We have a crucible, the examination, the opportunity to show ourselves, others and God what we really learned in the prison or in the pit. Well, here were the brothers' crucibles. They have been involved in a famine situation. People were going hungry. That's why they are back down in Egypt.

"And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in..."

He's going to do something to us. You see, according to recorded history, there is a truth that the Egyptians would never eat with Hebrews - with the Jews. It was some form of separation. Here these Jewish brothers who now have Benjamin with them, are brought right into the King of Egypt's house. Remember, they still don't know it's their brother, Joseph.

They explained about the money they found in their sacks the first time they were going back from Egypt to Canaan. They explained to the man of the house how they brought back this money and more to buy more corn. The brothers are brought before Joseph in his house. Simeon has been released from his bonds and is returned to the fellowship of his brothers. Then Joseph says in verses 29-30:

"And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there."

The love that Joseph had at seeing his brother, Benjamin! What love and compassion he had! How he wanted to throw

Then Joseph goes on to explain to Pharaoh the meanings of the dreams. Let's skip down to verse 28:

"This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh."

Joseph didn't even give himself credit for interpreting the dream. He just made reference to his God and to Pharaoh, the person in need. I hope that I can be in a position like Joseph; not to stand before a king, not being in charge of a prison, not in charge of a jailor's house, but just to be a lens, a spectacle in God's hands; a magnifying lens that would make His Word clearer to those that He loves. The dream Pharaoh had that was interpreted by Joseph was actually a prophecy of coming events that was to be very important in this mystery that we have begun.

The explanation of the dream is this - verses 29-32:

"Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: 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; And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."

Before Pharaoh himself, Joseph, then says in verses 33-35:

"Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 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. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharoah, and let them keep food in the cities."

So Joseph has not only been given the interpretation by God but also the plan by which they can live through this seven plenteous years and seven years of famine. The plan is simply to take out one of every five ears of corn or shovels of grain and store it away with a guard to protect it. In verse 37:

"And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharoah, and in the eyes of all his servants."

Remember we were talking about spectacles being able to give visions of truth, make clear the truth to those that God wants to bless. That's exactly what he did. Verses 37-38 states:

"And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharoah, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharoah said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"

How would you like to have someone who knows you intimately, who has been around you a long time, be able to say of you: "The spirit of God lives in you." It can happen and we can set a course for our lives to make it happen. But, we have to recognize there will be pits and prisons and also crucibles in our lives. How can we handle them? Are we going to learn from them? Verse 39:

"And Pharoah said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this..."

"And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever."

I think the brothers are learning the truth of love and substitution that God wants them to see. Verses 11-12:

"And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight."

The money that you fellows paid for the grain the first time, take back again in case it's a trap or a mistake of some sort. Take also that amount again to pay for new grain. Verses 13-14:

"Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Now the next intriguing step of this mystery comes about when Joseph saw Benjamin as they came back down to Egypt. Verses 16-18:

that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid."

Isn't that something; Joseph blessed the men by giving them their money back. They got free food. But it struck fear in their hearts. Genesis 42 verse 36:

"And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me."

It looked in Jacob's eyes, Mr. Israel's eyes, that things were getting worse all the time. He's lost one son, then another son, and now the third son is to be taken away. Verses 37-38:

"And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Look what these boys are learning. First they recognized that the relationships they built here on earth are not really their first priority. The first is to God, not to just each other. Look what Reuben said: "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again." Reuben is in effect saying: "I understand what a sacrifice is. I will sacrifice that which I love for the salvation and safety of another." There's hope for these boys, isn't there? I think that not only Reuben is learning this sacrifice, this substitute for another, kind of thing, but I also believe Judah has, too. In Genesis chapter 43, verses :8-9 it says:

Isn't that fantastic? Joseph's testimony is so strong. He has such convictions as to what God can do. He even has Pharaoh giving glory to God - "forasmuch as God." I wish I could get the people around me to look at life's circumstances and say "forasmuch as God hath." Let's go on in verses 40-44,46:

"Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. ...And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt."

God really did make Joseph a king and a ruler in the way that we think, on a level that we think a ruler to be. Look what has happened. Look what it took. It took a well pit and a crucible - another man's wife. Look at the heartache. All the different events, each one of them were just at the right time, just the right size, just at the right place to move Joseph another step up toward the privilege of being a ruler over all of Egypt.

There is one thing we need to look at here in verse 55 of chapter 41:

"And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do."

Here's something interesting in verse 56:

"And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt."

Do you see what's happening? We have a man trained in different levels of authority and look what he's responsible for now. He's responsible for ALL of Egypt. However, a famine is over all the earth. That means that everyone on the face of the earth who knows of Egypt and knows of Joseph, is to bring his or her sacks to him. If they don't, they will starve to death because the famine was over all the earth. It's clear to see that Joseph is the savior of the entire world, from a physical sense.

But, that is only part of this whole story. It's a small part in fact, because God has a plan. He's always had a plan. AND He's never had to deviate from that plan. We see clearly now from the Word of God that Joseph has a vital part in this plan. We see this because these events happened a long time ago and God has written down these truths for us to look at and internalize.

But, I wonder if we might be a part of that plan? I wonder if the hands that are holding this book right now are a part of that plan. I wonder if the person we loan this book to, the person we work with, could they be part of that plan, too? Wouldn't it be exciting to get them involved and find out? In verse 57 we read:

"And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?"

I see there is hope. I see that God's plan is working. The efforts and events that Joseph is setting about are already bringing fruit. The brothers are beginning to understand that their relationship is not based just primarily between themselves and other humans, but between them and God. The last part of verse 28 says:

"...What is this that God hath done unto us?"

Do you suppose it would help us any if we were to look at life and things that have happened to us, that we might consider if this is a blessing from God or something that He's given us to draw us closer to Him? "What is this that God hath done to us?" Verses 29-35:

"And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying, The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies: We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone: And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies...And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks,

righteousness if we accept it so we may be able to fellowship and rule with Him in sweet harmony and unity.

We have seen in chapter 42 of Genesis that the King of Egypt, set in that place by Pharaoh, is Joseph. He has just bound one of his brothers, Simeon, and has told the other brothers to take some corn and go back to Canaan to get their other brother, Benjamin. So, it's part of God's magnificent plan in all of this to reveal to Joseph that he's to give each of the men the money back they have paid for the corn. As they take the corn back to their father and relatives in Canaan, God is blessing these men already through Joseph, even though their hearts aren't where they ought to be, because there is still sin in their lives.

Isn't that something! Even though we don't deserve it, God still blesses us - beautiful sunshine and all the things of nature. He blesses us with meaning to our needs, meaning to our problems, why this is happening, why that is happening. Even when we haven't sought true and complete fellowship with Him, He still blesses us. It's kind of interesting in this situation that Joseph blesses his brothers with the money they have paid for the corn (remember the material is not corn but wheat or grain). Nevertheless, he blesses them by giving them their money back for their food. He puts it back into their sacks.

Remember, these brothers have unconfessed sin in their hearts. Isn't it interesting whenever we have sin in our hearts and aren't walking as close to the Lord as we ought to, that when God does bless us in some fashion, we think it's some kind of trick. That is exactly what the brothers thought. In verses 27-28:

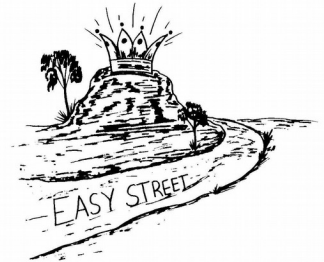
"And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands."

Now it really is correct to realize that corn is not a good term to use right here because it was grain that was being stored and used. But, we see where God has had a plan through all these diversities, through all these problems in Joseph's life. God's had this plan that has been working itself out. The plan continues. Now, the plan uses famine. Let's see if God truly is working out His plan again.

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Chapter 6 – Easy Street

If there was ever anyone who was on Easy Street, it certainly had to be Joseph. The man lacked for absolutely nothing. No one in all of Egypt did anything without his permission. Everyone obeyed him. He had all the riches, all the pleasures, all the possessions, anything he would want. That's Easy Street.



Have you ever dreamed about living on Easy Street? No more car payments, no more insurance premiums, no more worrying about hospital bills or paying taxes. Wouldn't it be great to be on Easy Street? What happens to Joseph when he's on Easy Street? We read in chapter 42, verses 1-3:

"Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt Jacob said to his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence! that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt."

Remember that Joseph, one of the twelve brothers is now the supreme ruler of all the land of Egypt. That leaves eleven brothers back in Israel. Verses 3-4:

"And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him."

Remember now that the father, Mr. Israel, still believes that a mountain lion or some fierce animal had killed his precious, favorite son Joseph, whom he'd given a coat of many colors. He's concerned that nothing happens to Benjamin, his youngest son. Verse 5:

"And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan."

Now, look what happens. You must picture this in your mind. Verses 6-9:

"And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph

We have our old spirit, the old nature that we were born with. Then we also have God's spirit, the Holy Spirit within us. As we listen to the Holy Spirit, as we go through life's experiences, we begin to understand the meanings of these trials and tribulations, these opportunities to experience joy. So we have a fellowship within this old body right here on earth. Then, when the Lord takes us home to be with Him, to spend an eternity with Him, we have real fellowship with Him.

We have fellowship because we have experienced the same heartaches and trials. When He uses the word forgiveness, we really know what He means by forgiveness. There is forgiveness in a time when we have every right to take revenge, to carry out our anger against someone. Instead, we forgive them. That is what He did for me and what He did for you. So, while we are in glory and He uses words like love and forgiveness, we know just what He means and then we can have sweet fellowship. Why is it important that we have fellowship, apart from the fact that we have a God that is pleased to have those around Him who love Him?

Another aspect of why we need to have fellowship and why we need to be trained to be in harmony with God is because He has given us the high privilege in eternity future to be able to rule with Him. We are going to rule with Him. Why are we given responsibilities here on earth to watch over children and guide them, protect and love them, and exhort them to do right? Why are we given responsibilities at work to guide and uplift in trying to make that metal part or do this particular service?

We are being trained to rule. Since God is righteous, God demands righteousness. Therefore, God provides

Why? Who cares? Why doesn't He just make us robots? We are certainly going to do just what He wants, when and how He wants us to. Wouldn't we be able to serve Him better being robots? The reason is because our God has put in us a trait He has. He is a social God. He doesn't want to live alone. He likes fellowship. There's an interesting aspect of fellowship.

Have you ever looked at couples that have been married for a number of years? It seems like they can communicate their feelings and needs without having to say any words whatsoever. Whenever there are words spoken, the one person understands clearly what the other person means. How is that?

That couple together has experienced much heartache, hardships and many joys. Together they have sought goals, been discouraged and experienced all the things like you and I have experienced, but they've experienced them together. So that whenever one uses a word like love or joy, the other person understands clearly what they mean. It's because they've been taught by the same experiences of life.

As we have trusted in Christ as our own personal Saviour, we believe He died on the cross and shed His blood for our own personal sins. All we have to do is accept that shed blood and that act on the cross as being just for me or just for you. We confess our sins, the ones we know about. At least we confess we are a sinner and there is nothing good in us, and that the only thing we can do is turn to Him for any kind of provision for eternity. He comes into our hearts like He promised He would. Now, we have two spirits.

knew his brethren, but they knew not him. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them..."

Remember those dreams where his brothers were going to serve him, to be ruled by him? Look how all of this has worked out. God really is in control. The dreams He had given to Joseph so many years ago, so many heartaches ago, so much suffering ago; it's really coming to be. His brothers are bowing to him, even though they don't know it's their brother. What Joseph does is continue with this mystery story. He accuses them of being spies. Verses 9-10:

"...Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come."

Now, we need to look at the statements that these brothers make. Here is the first in verse 11:

"We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies."

Step number one is they say we are great, we are doing what we ought to do, and we are where we ought to be. There is no sin in our camp. Verse 12:

"And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come."

The second statement they make, see if it's like the first. Verse 13:

"And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not."

Get those last four words. First they are saying they are true men. Now they are saying there is something wrong. One of them is gone. And Joseph kept accusing them of being spies. Verses 14-17:

"And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, You are spies: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies. And he put them all together into ward three days."

Remember Joseph's past. The man was an authority on prisons. He not only was jailed in them, but he knew what God could do with a man's heart in a prison. He knew that truth is sought and truth is found, if that's desired in a prison. What a logical thing for Joseph to do, to put these men in prison. Verse 18:

"And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live, for I fear God."

How about that! Even though Joseph is on Easy Street, even though he has everything and anything he wants for as long as he wants it, even though his dreams that God gave him as a teenager have come true, that his brothers are subject to him, he has placed them in jail. All these things are happening. He's not only on Easy Street but he's King of the Hill. He's

to be thwarted, God put Joseph in a position, faithful to Him that he would help his brothers to find the truth, find the truth about themselves, those around them, and about God. Certainly one truth is that "be sure your sins will find you out" as Numbers 32 says.

I wonder what went through Joseph's mind as he was wrapping the cords around his brother Simeon, especially when his brother Simeon didn't even know it was Joseph doing it. What a story! Won't it be exciting when we get to glory and can walk up to Joseph and ask him what went through his mind? How did Simeon look when he was being bound? So many questions I can think of to ask in heaven.

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Chapter 7 – It's In The Bag

If you had to sum up Christianity and Christian living, how would you do it in just a few words? Try this: Hold out your fingers in front of you. Hopefully, you have four fingers and a thumb. Point at one finger and state the truth God is righteous. Point at another finger - God demands righteousness. If God is righteous and God demands righteousness, only He then can provide righteousness. So the third finger would be designated God provides righteousness.



because He wanted them so desperately to come to know Him in a personal way and trust in the Maker of heaven and earth. Jesus wept.

It might be well to include at this point two other verses about weeping and tears. They are found in Psalms 126, verses 5-6:

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

There is something about weeping, especially in a man. We are taught at a young age to be masculine, to be macho. We don't cry. Tears are a sign of being a baby, of immaturity. I really think God has given us tears as an expression of deep emotion, to be an outward sign that we have been touched right down to our very being. If there are true tears, tears of joy and tears of sorrow, our emotions have been stirred right down to the very base.

We find Joseph here. We can almost call him King of Egypt, King of the Hill. He's on Easy Street.

Anything and all that he wants he gets. But, he's weeping. Verse 24:

"And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes."

Why was he weeping? I believe he was weeping for the same reason that Jesus wept. He loved these men in front of him. Yes, they were his brothers. Yes, they had sinned greatly in trying to destroy him. In God's providence and in His plan not

whatever position we've desired for our lives. He has arrived, hasn't he? Look at the statement he made in verse 18:

"...This do, and live: for I fear God."

He hasn't lost his standard for living, has he? Even though he's on Easy Street and King of the Hill, he still references all his relationships and interactions with other men, to God. Verses 19-20:

"If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses. But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so."

Now, what did it say in verse 19? - *"let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison."* He's treating these brothers in the same way, in many instances, the way he was treated. He's not using revenge because if he truly wanted revenge, he wouldn't involve his brother Benjamin. He would just go ahead and deal with those brothers right then and there. But, he wanted to see his younger brother. What were the statements the brothers had made? First of all, we are true men. Then they changed the story a little and said we are part of 12 brothers and one is not. Watch the third statement. They are in prison now. Verse 21:

"And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

First they said they were true men. Then they let out a little bit of truth that something was wrong and one is not. The

third thing, after they were put in the prison ward and had time to think, time to contemplate what was going on, they confessed to each other that they were sinners, they were guilty. They also recognized, because they were guilty, this problem had come up. Verses 23-24:

"And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept..."

Why did he weep? He's on Easy Street. He has anything he wants. He's King of the Hill. He can throw people in jail, which he did, his own brothers. He could have them hung if he wanted to. Anything he wants, he can do.

Remember the account in John, chapter 11, where there were two sisters, Mary and Martha? Their brother, Lazarus, was very sick. In fact, he died. They buried him. All the people were assembled around the grave mourning the death of Lazarus. Jesus had already been given news of Lazarus' sickness. In His own good time and according to His plan, He finally arrived to find Lazarus dead and buried. All the people were standing around. In verses 32-35 we read:

"Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept."

Why did He weep? Understand, this is the man that made the heavens and the earth. Nothing was made that He didn't do.

He had all the angels at His command. He had anything He wanted almost without lifting a finger. Yet, we find Him in a situation where He wept. Verses 36-40 says:

"Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

The people were all weeping because their dear friend Lazarus was dead. A couple of sisters were unhappy with Jesus because they knew He had the power to have prevented Lazarus' death. Yes, the same Jesus that had all this power was weeping. I believe the key to all of this is in verse 40:

"Jesus saith unto her, If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

The One Who made the heavens and the earth, the One to whom the Holy Spirit encourages us to worship and to seek salvation in, was in tears. There were tears because the people weren't seeing the lesson, weren't seeing the truth, but only looking upon physical happenings and events. Jesus was weeping because He loved Lazarus dearly. But He also loved all these people. He realized the only way for them to see the meaning of life, cherish it, and use it for His glory was to believe in Who and what Jesus Christ is, and what He can do. Jesus wept. He wept because the people hadn't seen the truth,