

Chapter Four

An Emerging Nation Plunges into Bondage



AND SO JACOB'S NOMADIC LIFETIME comes to a happy end and upon his death the twelve brothers journey back to the land of Canaan and they bury their father in the family tomb, a cave in the field of Machpelah.

And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father. When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said,

"Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.'" And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. Genesis 50:14-21

In Joseph's response we see the measure of the man, always true to God always true to his fellow man. In a beautiful way his spirit of humility born of his inflicted slavery, shines forth through his honour of statesman with forgiving unconditional love.

Yes Joseph is God's man, a man that God can trust no matter what.

*He sent a man before them—
Joseph—who was sold as a slave.
They hurt his feet with fetters,
He was laid in irons.
Until the time that his word came to pass,
The word of the LORD tested him.
The king sent and released him,
The ruler of the people let him go free.
He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his possessions,
And teach his elders wisdom. Psalm 105:17-22"*

As This Man's voice fades into silent adoration we wonder at the trials Joseph has experienced in his life, enduring insult and affliction and yet never becoming bitter or resentful with his lot.

With a glimmer of understanding we see how the dangerous and often deadly times have instead deepened Joseph's faith, his dependence upon God. We begin to wonder if we too can ever attain to such faith and trust as we pass through temptations and trials of life?

This Man assures us that Joseph's faithfulness can certainly be our daily experience and in many ways, like Joseph's trustworthy life, God can work through our lives for the benefit of all.

Now gathering his comtemplative thoughts, This man unfolds the far reaching plan shadowed in Joseph's spiritual life. Yes indeed in a marvelous revelation of spiritual foresight Joseph, is a human Saviour in type foreshadowing the true Saviour to come into our destitute sinful world: At the appointed time the Son of God shall join himself to the sinful human race and become a man, sent by God.

For in the fullness of time God the Father sends forth His own Son, as the son of man. Galatians 4:4, Matthew 12:8

He who is the *bread of life* comes down from heaven and as a man sent from the Father, the Son feeds the famine stricken world with the sustenance of God's spiritual life. *John 6:35*

...God sent forth His Son...Galatians 4:4

Entering the rescue mission, He who created man becomes a humble servant to sinful mankind. But rejected by those He came to save, as if He were a wanted criminal, man sells Him out for a mere thirty pieces of silver. The price of a slave.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

"And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced..." Matthew 27:9

Like Joseph, the Son is seized, framed by lies and falsely accused. But it does not end there for bellowing with murderous intent the crowd hustles the Son of God out of the city and crucifies Him upon a cruel Roman cross. Suffering mankind's sentence of sin in mankind's sinful place He is thrust into mankind's prison of everlasting death.

...For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked... Isaiah 53:8-9

Yet in one miraculous step, the Son's innocent sinless life is freed from mankind's stronghold of everlasting death.

...whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. Acts 2:24

And now as the risen Saviour of sinful mankind the Son's righteous life rebounds through the universe exalted with glory and honour.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11

Yes, overflowing from Jesus' humility and honour, His promised gift of salvation is bestowed upon those who accept Him as their Lord and Saviour.

Then at the end of this sinful world when the Son of God comes in heavenly power as *KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS* the faithful dead shall be rased back to life and received up into heaven in fullness of everlasting life. *Revelation 19: 16*

"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6: 40

And so we see reflected in Joseph's noble coat of many colours, the noble hues of Jesus' humble sacrificial life, as the Son of God and the Son of Man. And reflected in the Son's honourable life we also behold the noble deed of God the Father in that He gave up his precious only begotten Son for each of us that we might be freed from the slavery of sin and become united to Him in newborn spiritual life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved John 3: 16-17

Meanwhile, in the land of Egpt the seven years of famine have come and gone and once again life is flourishing. Eventually Joseph's life time of *one hundred and ten years* comes to a victorious end. *Genesis 50: 26*

And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. Genesis 50:24-26

Now these are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt; each man and his household came with Jacob: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt already). And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation. But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them. Exodus 1:1-7

Thus from the extended family of fifteen Patriarchs - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his twelve sons - God's great nation, called Israel is now a living reality in the world. Do not let this point slip past you, because this is a piece of history for you and I today:

We must always remember: God led faithful men through terrible circumstances to establish his nation Israel in the world. And reaching down to our day in the midst of idol worship, pagan lifestyles, dishonesty, cruelty and deception, God has always had His faithful people scattered throughout the world. And shall have them always unto the end of our sinful world.

Abiding peacefully in Egypt the Israelites continue to multiply into a vast population, but along the way they encounter just how harsh life can be. For you see as time passes the Israelite people are forced into cruel bondage. A new Pharaoh rises to the throne of Egypt, a king who knows nothing of Joseph.

Joseph's wise management of the seven year famine is now forgotten history in the land and in the eyes of this new king the multitudes of Israelites living in the land of Goshen pose an ever increasing threat to Egypt's security.

And he said to his people, "Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; "come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. Exodus 1:9-11

And so after many years of prosperity, the Israelites are now chained in slavery to the inflicting power of the Egyptian empire.

But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. Exodus 1:12-14

And whom does this cruel inflicting power remind you of? Oh yes, the concealed power raging within the affliction of the Israelites is the tyrannical power of Satan; he who is king and master over the slavery of sinful mankind. Inflicting the Israelites with cruel bondage, Satan plans to sever their spiritual connection with God and destroy God's promised plan to free the world from the bondage of sin and everlasting death. But Satan's strategic ploy is no surprise to God.

For centuries ago in the land of Canaan the Son of God spoke to Abraham, the nation's birth father, and foretold of the Israelites inflicted slavery:

"Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Genesis 15:13-14

And so God's plan shall not be completely sabotaged after all.

STRENGTH FOR LIFE

VITAMIN D

THE SUNLIGHT VITAMIN

MANY PEOPLE have heard about “Vitamin D” and know our human bodies are so wonderfully designed by our Creator, that we can make our own Vitamin D simply by spending some time in the sun, with some of our skin bare to the sunlight!

If you ask these same people why Vitamin D is important, they may say, “If you don’t get sunlight, your bones will be weak.” And they would be correct. The disorder is called “rickets” in children¹ and “osteomalacia” in adults². Both disorders mean weakened and softened bones because Vitamin D is necessary to help calcium and phosphorous get into the bones of the skeleton to strengthen them.

So most people, and most medical practitioners until the last 20 years, thought the ONLY role of vitamin D was to push calcium and phosphorous into the bones of our skeletons. But recently, incredible time and energy has been invested by researchers to discover more about vitamin D. The discoveries have been shocking and controversial. And quite reassuring for people who seek natural health!

Firstly, this modern research confirms the Bible truth about the importance of sunlight. Secondly, I believe God wants us all to know and understand that sunlight and vitamin D could mean the difference between health and disease in these last days on earth. This is so important, one night I woke suddenly with the words “Vitamin D and the immune system” in my mind. And there started the research and prayer.

But first let’s break down that term, “Vitamin D”.

The first fact is a little confusing because Vitamin D is not really a vitamin.

The word “vit-amine” was coined around 1912 by Polish scientist, Casmir Funk, because he thought the substance he found in rice husks was an amino acid

(protein based), and he discovered this substance cured a disease called beriberi. So vita = life / amine = amino acid. ³

Funk's work was amazing for the time, and gave us the basis for understanding how specific substances in food contribute to good health. BUT, this also shows us that what is "truth" today in science, can tomorrow be history.

You see, the "e" on vitamine was dropped when scientists learned that not all vital substances were amino acids (protein based)!

Vitamin D was named as a vitamin, thanks to an experiment with dogs in 1920. The researcher raised these dogs without any sunlight, and fed them fish liver oil - and the dogs did not develop rickets.

The researcher thought that rickets were prevented by a substance in the fish liver oil, and so he naturally thought that the substance was a vital nutrient for mammals, and supplied by food. Thus, this substance was named Vitamin D.

Not long after the dog and fish liver oil experiment, researchers discovered that this mystery substance "Vitamin D" could be produced by the body, as long as the person's skin had been exposed to sunlight. But we still use the term, "Vitamin D".

But wait - there's more! ⁴

There are two forms of vitamin D that are known to be useful for people:

Vitamin D₂ also called ergocalciferol and manufactured from plants into tablets.

Vitamin D₃ also called cholecalciferol which can be manufactured from animal products, sheep wool for instance, or specific lichens or algae and made into tablets.^(ibid)

Yes, that's right. There are vitamin D tablets or capsules that can be bought and swallowed. Also, there are vitamin D creams which can be rubbed into the skin like a body lotion.

Most health practitioners agree that D₃ is the form of vitamin which is the best to take or use on your skin. ⁵

What about diet? Can we get Vitamin D from food? Well, a little maybe.

But you would have to eat like a sheep all day long, and eat specific foods, such as oily fish, egg yolks, sun exposed mushrooms, some people say almonds, to eat and absorb enough vitamin D!

But most natural health practitioners agree, the best way, all round, to have good levels of Vitamin D is the natural way: have time in the sun, with large body parts getting some sun time - not all day long! There are conditions we will look at soon. Safety always comes first!

Sunburning is not healthy sun exposure. Sunburn can damage the skin. As we know in my family, overexposure to the sun can contribute to two non-lethal forms of skin cancer (basal cell and squamous). There are many other factors involved, like too much stress, too little sleep and food quality!

If you want to get the best health value from the sun, work towards eating:

Many naturally grown, different coloured fresh, cooked, frozen and canned vegetables,⁶ and some fruit. Just do your honest best, praying for guidance and direction. Have faith and your prayer will be answered.

God simply knows best. We are His creation, and He designed us to absorb sunlight. We absorb the ultraviolet “B” rays, called UVB for short, and that’s where the Vitamin D journey begins.

As we go out into the warm sunlight, the sun’s rays hit our skin and a little bit of cholesterol in the deeper layers of our skin absorbs the sun’s rays and immediately a new substance is created! This new substance travels to the liver, and is chemically changed and sent to the kidneys for yet another modification. Finally! Your very own unique Vitamin D is ready to travel all over your body, ready to fit into receptors on the cells. Your body made that substance for you!⁷

It’s worth noting too that sunlight has other benefits, aside from vitamin D production. We will talk about some of those soon.

Now we have a little bit of understanding about vitamin D, I’m really excited to tell you more about Vitamin D and YOUR immune system!

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