

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 1.

Joseph is given two dreams by The Lord (37:6-10). The issue in both dreams was power. This was the language of God. Joseph's life was lived out under the terms of this biblical symbolism.

This biblical symbolism turns out to be a continuum. The Lord, later in Genesis, put biblical symbolism into the mind of the king of Egypt. Life in Egypt was to be controlled by this symbolism. Biblical symbolism, thus, *launches a controlled history*.

The revealed symbolism has this profile: it steps into time, life and history without warning and it determines outcomes. This text teaches that events, situations, circumstances are effects; they are not causal. This means that all of Scripture is biblical symbolism. Joseph was an historical actor within the terms of revealed symbolism. His role was to obey God. Conventional wisdom is turned on its head-- The Bible is not history. It is the control document for the universe. The believer cannot step beyond this supernatural boundary. Incredible!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 2.

The two dreams of Joseph inherently contained a timeline. It is not mentioned, but the dreams require it. Many years will come and go before all the substance of the dreams comes to pass. There is a cognitive gap between the giving of the revealed symbolism \Rightarrow and the understanding of its meaning.

Many years later Joseph finally grasped the meaning behind those dreams (45:4, 5; 50:17-21). Exacting events on the timeline were a challenge to Joseph as well. But these scriptures reveal that biblical symbolism is dynamic. It works in what we could call the cognitive gap: when we do not know what "it's all about;" when there are more questions than answers. And it works through all events on the timeline as the controlling dynamic. The Bible is more than a history. It is a compendium of dynamic revealed symbolism. Joseph's life is a proof case.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 3.

A continuum of governance is presented in this text. This is an astonishing truth concerning God, The Word of God, belief and time. The axis of governance starts with

- (1) The Providence of God (it was *providence* and the Power of God that began everything and thus put into place) \Rightarrow
- (2) The Biblical Symbolism. In this case it was the dreams and their meaning which then then had a governing effect on \Rightarrow
- (3) Time. Biblical Symbolism governed events, situation and circumstance.

PROOF: Joseph's brothers could not kill him (37:23-28). The Ishmaelites appeared on the scene already headed to Egypt (37:28). Nor could the Ishmaelites kill or impair Joseph. Potiphar was obligated to buy Joseph (39:1). Prison could not have monopoly of power over Joseph (39:21-23). The history of Egypt was obliged to conform to revealed symbolism (41). Joseph would ascend to the upper reach of political power in Egypt (41). Jacob and the patriarchal brothers were to be saved and blessed. Egyptians themselves would be blessed.

This means that history, events, situations and circumstances are all governed by biblical symbolism. These things are effects. Time is an effect; it is not causal. The Bible is NOT mere history. The Bible governs time. It must be read that way: Amazing!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 4.

Biblical symbolism creates a supernatural unity between THE MIND OF GOD and \Rightarrow THE MIND OF A MAN.

In this case it was the mind of Joseph. Two minds are working together: The Word of God which is entirely revealed symbols, enters into the human mind and forms a *supernatural unity*. What Joseph learned from this unity was not subjectivism. His own mind, his personal opinions, his own habits of thought, his own cognitive limits had been transcended by biblical symbolism 37:5, 9-10.

Question: Why else do we read the Bible if it is not to transcend the self? Here is the exact issue that so troubled the Pharaoh in 41:1-8. In this supernatural unity, the Word of God is causal and the mind of the man is the effect.

This arrangement initiates a foundational principle: Appearances are deceiving. Joseph's brothers acted on the basis of appearances which fomented their sinful behavior. Pharaoh had to leave behind the universe of appearances behind to heed Joseph's wisdom. A great contradiction is there between biblical symbolism and the meaning we map onto appearances. That is good to know when times are hard. Joseph is teaching us to read the Bible.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 5. Biblical symbolism is a maneuvering force in the affairs of men according to this text. Potiphar (38:3), a pagan, comprehended this truth. This man observed the relation between GOD \Rightarrow JOSEPH \Rightarrow and SUCCESS.

There were a lot of people ultimately involved in the purpose of God in this text, and they were all maneuvered by this symbolism. Joseph was turned into a symbol of the reality of God. His success was not inherent in any of the circumstances of his life. He was maneuvered into it. Joseph's presence in Egypt, the Ishmaelite's coming along just when they did and headed to Egypt, Potiphar's purchase of Joseph as a slave, the imprisonment, Pharaoh's dreams, the subsequent years of plenty and want, the reunion of Jacob's family in Egypt -- all were supernatural effects.

So biblical symbolism is the maneuvering force in time. Joseph by faith came to see that personal circumstances are not determinant. We are dealing with God, the maneuvering force who dominates personal circumstances. Randomness and coincidence, thus, do not apply to any "fundamental" circumstance.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 6.

There is a profound truth and a profound fact in these Scriptures. Joseph was betrayed by his brethren, he was unjustly imprisoned, and he languished in prison for years. However, Joseph was finally elevated to great power in Egypt. He experienced both of these extremes.

This proves that there is a discontinuity between circumstance and determined outcomes. One cannot get from prison (a circumstance) to such a range of power. The determined outcome was fixed by God. By understanding biblical symbolism, we see that circumstances tell us nothing about outcomes. Between our personal circumstances and determined outcomes there is a discontinuity put there by the Lord.

This discontinuity tends to only one explanation: the power of God.

- This discontinuity was at the Red Sea. The circumstance: impossibility of escape. Determined outcome: escape.
- The desert. Circumstance: no way to survive. Determined outcome: manna and water from the rock.

Prayer in adverse situations is offered on the basis of this discontinuity. To live by faith means that circumstance is never a dead end!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 7.

Biblical symbolism is a supernatural dynamic. It acts with strength in ways apparently unrelated to the Lord's greater purpose—but in the end, we see it was indeed related. This was not obvious, not apparent to anyone.

Joseph was placed in charge of the baker and the cup-bearer (40:1-4). One night both men had dreams. Each dream was different (40:5). But each dream had only one interpretation (40:5)

and not multiples: Each dream had only a singular meaning. This is indicative of a third party mind behind all of this directing, moving, causal.

The situation was related to God's purpose with Joseph in Egypt, but at the time, that could not be detected. The baker and the cup-bearer were "dejected" and "sad" (40:6,7), because they did not know what was going on. Often we will not be able to detect what the Lord is doing in our circumstances. This is normal. But to live by faith means that biblical symbolism is in charge. The biblical student must think in terms of a representational manifold of such symbols—as we will see in the next segment.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 8.

The Word of God given to Joseph in dreams, the dreams of the baker, the cup-bearer, and those of Pharaoh, are all biblical symbolism. Thus this is a special category of ideas, thoughts, abstractions, representations. Add to that all the words of revelation, and we have in our possession a representational manifold (a collection of many things).

But this manifold is extraordinary: it is backed up by the power of God. In the days of Joseph, it reached into the geography of Egypt and its environs. This manifold overtook the biosphere of those places. It swallowed up lives, fortunes, the futures of thousands.

What are we dealing with here? The Bible is not a mere record of history. That book is a representational manifold. From its own self-witness, it engulfs us all! Naturalism, human reason, and human experience are ways of self-deception that started in Genesis 3.

This manifold teaches us about the active relation between THE ALMIGHTY \Rightarrow and TIME. "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account"-- Hebrews 4:13. Or in the words of Joseph: "God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do" --Gen. 41:25.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 9.

The dream of the cup-bearer and that of the baker held two things of particular interest.

- One was a time frame. Each case was settled in 3 days.
- Secondly there was an outcome -- 40:9, 10, 17-22.

Pharaoh's dreams (chapter 41) as well held these two features. Joseph's dreams would take years (time frame) to be fulfilled as outcome--chapter 37. It is clear that the time frame \Rightarrow

and the outcome are related one to another. But they are not causal. It is the Lord who is the Master of time frames and outcomes.

These two features and the relation of God to them eliminates

- randomness,
- coincidence, and
- meaninglessness from our situations.

Another way to say this is that time frames and outcomes are both relative to God. This tells me that our circumstances are manipulated in a way that is relative to determined time frames and determined outcomes. Joseph was betrayed by his kinsmen, falsely imprisoned, endured years in imprisonment and then elevated to great authority in Egypt. Those circumstances were manipulated relative to these two features.

Jesus' life indicates this same treatment of circumstance. So our personal circumstances are not self-contained dynamics. They must be subject to *determined time frames and determined outcomes*. And that produces hope!!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 10.

These verses disclosing the life of Joseph prove that the circumstance of the universe is obligated to God. That fact forces the conception that there must be a discontinuity between CIRCUMSTANCE \Rightarrow and FAITH. Joseph's behavior in trial demonstrates the duty of every believer to guard that discontinuity.

Faith is never to be obligated to circumstance, nor amended by it, nor circumscribed by it. The Pharaoh (chapter 41) had the same kind of faith as did Joseph. This man recognized and respected the necessary discontinuity between faith in God \Rightarrow and-Egyptian circumstance, culture, tradition, experience.

There is "a kind of faith" that observes no such discontinuity. So that circumstance is the limiting case for faith. Adam and Eve had that kind of faith (Genesis 3). The Israelites of the desert had that kind of faith (1 Corinthians 10). Often that "kind of faith" rules the churches and believers. True faithfulness cannot be realized without this discontinuity. But at any rate, this discontinuity imposes rules on faith.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 11.

Reading the Bible from the cocktail of

- naturalism,

- common sense, and
- human reason

violates the necessary discontinuity between circumstance and faith. Unfortunately, those three in the cocktail form the baseline for the usual reading of Scripture. Contrasted to that are what we see as at least 3 rules for faith noticeable in this text.

- RULE #1: The relation between Faith \Rightarrow and Scripture is closed to circumstance and experience. None of that is supposed to affect faith. Joseph observed this rule in his conduct.
- RULE #2: The mind is one thing but faith is a state of mind. Faith is the state of mind adopted by the mind. It is a willed way of reasoning.
- RULE #3: Faith as a state of mind lives in circumstance; however, it is not obligated to circumstance.

Therefore, faith actively, intentionally severs all obligation to circumstance. Faith does not try to satisfy circumstance. Pharaoh (chapter 41) decided to sever obligation to Egyptian circumstance. This king grasped that faith is obligated to God. All this is fundamental truth.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 12.

Pharaoh dreamed (41:1-6). He knew that someone or something was communicating with him. Pharaoh believed the dreams held substance in time. The cup-bearer spoke up about Joseph (41:8-13). This man informed the king what he learned from Joseph: which is that meaning precedes the dreams (41:11.)

Pharaoh set about trying to cross the cognitive gap between the dreams \Rightarrow and the meaning. He didn't know how. He was looking for a singular meaning. This tells us that the king drew a distinction between revealed meaning and rationalization or speculation.

The same cognitive gap runs between eternal meaning and scripture. Joseph was sent for. He gave Pharaoh the meanings (41:14-37). These are not at all in line with what we today might call the rules of interpretation.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 13.

Joseph presents the *Rules of Comprehension* in 41:14-37. He tells Pharaoh that if he wants to fully comprehend the dreams then there are rules that must be observed. Outside of these rules then the true meaning will remain screened from The King.

- RULE #1: Human reason is not the starting point for comprehension of biblical symbolism. "It is not in me," Joseph said (41:16). The human mind cannot come to bear upon biblical symbolism with any expectation of truth. That produces only the rationalization of revealed meaning. The true meaning is changed, amended or edited. Truth eludes us.
- RULE #2: God gives the revelation; only God gives the meaning. "God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer" (41:16). Revelation is thus *discontinuous from human reason*. Since The Lord gives it, He must explain it.

In contrast, current Interpretations try to bridge that discontinuity. It's a dead end.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 14.

The Rules of Comprehension (continued):

- RULE #3: Meaning precedes biblical symbolism (41:11). Absolute meaning, thus, and rationalization (interpretations) are discontinuous. Absolute meaning causes biblical symbolism; and that symbolism refers back to its source. This is a closed loop. Pharaoh and his magicians had no access into this closed loop.
- RULE #4: Biblical symbolism is not grounded, not rooted, in time, events, situation, circumstance nor history (41:25). It is grounded in God. Pharaoh believed that his dreams were not rooted in Egyptian culture nor circumstance. He understood that there was no historical context. The context was The Eternal Spirit.
- rule #5: biblical symbolism will come to bear upon time (41:26-31). The Lord was coming to bear upon Egypt and that entire geography. "What God is about to do" (41:25, 28) affected meteorology, agriculture, society, politics, government, security, economics, families, health.

The Axis in all this is the power of God.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 15.

The Rules of Comprehension (continued):

- Rule #6: All people are powerless against biblical symbolism (41:28). No human action can abate what is coming. It is immutable, unavoidable, ineluctable. Biblical symbolism, not Pharaoh, governs Egypt. God imposes His will upon Egypt. Biblical symbolism is not subject to human opinion. To the contrary-- it passes judgment on human opinion, human reason, and human erudition.
- Rule #7: The meaning of redundancy (41:32). The Lord is serious about what He makes known through biblical symbolism. And He fully intends to make it happen. This was not subject to debate, rationalization nor world opinion. This overturns years of psychology, philosophy, theology.
- Rule #8: Human reasoning and behavior must be dependent upon biblical symbolism (41:33-37). All that Pharaoh enacted depended on this: Put a wise man in charge of preparations. Appoint overseers. Collect 20% of the harvests. Create a storage system.
- Rule #9: It is all or nothing. There can be no amendments, no halfway measures. If one decides to live by the language manifold of Scripture, then it's all or nothing!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 16.

The rules of comprehension and the rules of interpretation are very different. Each belongs to a distinct manifold.

- Those of comprehension belong to the manifold of the Bible (biblical symbolism).
- Those of interpretation belong to the manifold of human reason.

Under the rules of comprehension, the goal is to understand the Word of God. Pharaoh was in a desperate need for this capacity. It is a learned capacity. Biblical symbolism carries its own rules. This was not observed in the Reformation nor in the Restoration.

In contrast, the intent of the rules of interpretation is to map human reason on to the text of scripture: Human wisdom comes to bear upon the Bible. This is a mistake. Its net effect is to screen out revealed meaning (2 Corinthians 4:1-6). That is rationalism.

Biblical comprehension is discontinuous from the rationalization of Scripture. The Lord's disciples had their trouble with understanding. The desert generation made the same mistake. Interpretation would never allow The Rules of Comprehension to be discovered.

The question is this: Do we really want to know what The Bible teaches or not? It is possible to be enamored with what we *think* it teaches.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 17.

Pharaoh recognized 3 qualifications that made Joseph his choice to guide Egypt through the impending 14 incomparable years.

- #1. He was one "on whom is a divine Spirit" (41:38). Joseph knew more than other men. He was the mouth piece for the Lord. Joseph represents a source of knowledge that transcends time, history, the future, Egypt, circumstance, humans, nature. Pharaoh knew that Joseph held the keys to survival. He was sent there as a kind of savior: Providence walked into the throne room.
- #2. He was "discerning and wise," as shown when he said, "God has informed you of all this" (41:39). Joseph's mind had transcended time and human lived experience. Biblical symbolism allows us that blessing, that gift, that enhancement. His mind had been entrusted with revealed truth. That is the position of the Church and every true believer.
- #3. He was responsible. It is not directly stated, but Pharaoh was going to trust Joseph with Egypt and with enormous authority. This king had to know that Joseph was the agent of the Almighty. Joseph was elevated to great power and eminence (41:40, 41). His dreams of years gone by were fulfilled.

This event on that day proved that time, history, circumstance, events, nature were and always had been in a state of contraction back upon biblical symbolism. This means that there are no such things as the so-called "Laws of History."

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 18.

Our personal circumstances must be contracting back upon the Word of God. The power of God and the word of God force this supernatural effect. The point is that TIME and HISTORY are compelled to contract back upon revealed symbolism.

The seven years of abundance and seven years of famine were to contract back upon previously revealed/determinant truth. This means that the universe of things and men is not independent; "castoring" wherever it desires.

Human intuition senses time as linear, moving forward in a progression. Scripture presents time rather as contractive, as seen in 1 Corinthians 7:29-31.

Egypt cannot escape this Contraction. Pharaoh knows it. The Pharaoh of the Exodus did not respect the state of enforced contraction until it was too late for him. On the other hand, the Land of Promise (that we see in the book of Joshua) was liable to this contraction: It will fall to

Israel in time. Biblical symbolism stands in contradiction to human intuition in this and almost all cases.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 19.

Joseph was "discerning" and "wise" (41:39). It is such men who lead the people of God in the pressures of such a contraction. Even the power of the throne of Egypt contracted back upon biblical symbolism (41:42-45). Joseph's reasoning and behavior contracted back upon discernment and wisdom which contracted back on the Lord and His revealed biblical symbolism.

Here, then, is the model of high order leadership. The leader's reasoning and behavior contracts back upon discernment and wisdom.

- STAGE 1 CONTRACTION. That knowledge contracts back upon biblical symbolism
- STAGE 2 CONTRACTION. Which then contracts back upon God Himself
- STAGE 3 CONTRACTION. This kind of leadership applies to empires, nations, business, politics, economics, churches, marriage and families

Here we have *the model for education*. To be educated is to contract in just this way. That is quite a rebuke of the well-documented biblical illiteracy in the churches. Families are not contracting back upon Scripture.

Thus this is as well *the model for learning*. If we want to grow in faith, we must bow to the fact that learning is contractive.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 20.

The axis of the universe is biblical symbolism. But it appears as habitual for human beings to elevate what we might call in contrast, "the number manifold," above the Word of God. For instance, Joseph was 17 years old when introduced to the reader (chapter 37). He was 30 at the point of ascension to power over Egypt. Time passed and circumstances coarsened. What was Joseph to think?

This is exactly the issue of 2 Peter 3, when people asked, "Where is the promise of His coming?" The question of time is ever before us as believers. Just how far shall we trust God or believe in revelation? This becomes acute in times of trial, because in it, the number manifold always begins to exert pressure upon reasoning and behavior.

What this means is that in such situations, we reach a point of contradiction between faith and anti-faith. Abraham and Sarai were at that point in Genesis 16. Israel was at that point many times (Exodus 14, 15-17; Numbers 13, 14). It turns out that a large part of our thinking lives is played out in this contradiction. No doubt the reasoning of believers is often constituted of faith and a certain amount of anti-faith.

However, there is no "balance" between these two. If circumstance protracts (by going on and on), and if it is clothed in hardship, then the number manifold (the anti-faith) will lean on us heavily—to seek a balance, or to rely on anti-faith alone.

Scripture records that Joseph mastered the anti-faith in his own life. Every day we fight hand to hand with this enemy of God (the anti-faith). The Lord's enemy is our enemy. Today as always we shall be tested! Let us resolve to stand to the enemy and take no thought of tomorrow.

From Genesis 37, 39-50 THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM. PART 21.

Joseph' life, being on record, poses an issue. What is the relation between

REASON---and---TIME?

Would Joseph have been right to expect that God would end his suffering after a reasonable amount of time? What then is a "reasonable amount of time"? There are two possible arrangements:

- The relation between FAITH and TIME. According to Scripture, time is always relative to faith.
- The relation between REASON and TIME. In this case, reason ends up being relative to time. Inherent in this arrangement is *the human demand that God be recognizably reasonable*.

Is He reasonable? I think not. The Lord has total experience. Past, present and future are immediately realized by God. Knowing all things, He has no need of reason. It appears that we cannot expect the Lord to be reasonable. We believers must reason on the foundation of biblical symbolism because we, unlike Him, do not know all things.

Then we must follow in faith. The Almighty is not like us. Biblical symbolism corrects one of the most persistent human errors about God: He is not reasonable. Consequently, what the Lord expects of us may not be reasonable either!

Joseph's life and the life of Job are studies in the unreasonable. Our being reasonable must not put a cap on revealed meaning; nor can it put a limit on the reach of faith; nor should it reduce the character of our behavior.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 22.

Perhaps it is uncomfortable to say this but it seems to me that believers often do hold God accountable for what happens to them in time. Time is relative to God, and faith is relative to God. Both are relativities in just that way.

Scripture reveals that the universe is a field of relativity. Joseph and Pharaoh believed in this truth (chapter 41). Their behavior proved that.

One can demonstrate a continuum of relativity:

God \Rightarrow Faith \Rightarrow Time (circumstance) \Rightarrow Behavior.

Our behavior is the final relativity. As such, it is proof of what we claim to believe.

We may nominate what we can call *the arrow of relativity*. It moves in only one direction (non-commutative). Since this is true, then faith holds God accountable for what happens in time.

There is however a kind of faith that does not hold God accountable. The reasoning in this kind of (lack of) faith is that what happens in time is not relative to God. Nor, such a faithless person might think, is time relative to biblical symbolism.

However, since reasoning and behavior are indeed relative to God, then a generalization takes hold: *I can properly hold God accountable for what happens in time, and He holds me accountable for how I think and behave.*

Therefore the issue for believers in this world is mutual accountability --not time and not circumstance. That changes all the rules.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 23.

Some of the terms of mutual accountability:

- #1. The circumstance in Egypt was between Joseph and the Lord. What happened in time in Egypt was not between Joseph and Potiphar, nor between Joseph and the Pharaoh (chapters 39, 41). Joseph's brothers were involved, but the developing situation was not between Joseph. and them (chapters 39, 40). In times of trial Joseph put the

correct axis. And so our circumstances are between God ⇒ biblical symbolism ⇒ and us.

- #2. I am responsible for reasoning and acting in a way that is discontinuous from my hardship and affliction. This was Joseph's hallmark. *How we think and behave is not relative to the circumstance.*
- #3. One remembers that Providence displaces time sensitivity. This truth influences us to disregard the relation between affliction and time.
- #4. One remembers and believes that Providence and trials are discontinuous. Trouble can in no way limit, deplete nor abrogate the Power of God (chapters 41, 42).
- #5. Wait on God in the terror and the unknowability of affliction. We do not act on what we do not know but upon what is revealed.
- #6. There are no "reasonable limits" on our suffering. Satan wants us to think that there are, and then to cave in when "reasonable limits" are exceeded (Matthew 4).

In crisis, affliction, and trouble, the issue is mutual accountability. The desert generation of Israel missed this truth. Joseph and Pharaoh, the man he led, laid hold of this. In this world, in our circumstances there is the threshold of salvation. We must draw the line right there.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 24.

An analogy: A watch has a reliable mechanism that is usually encased. It has 3 hands that indicate time of day. But if the hands are removed, then there is no way to tell time. The mechanism keeps grinding away--but without the hands there is no knowability.

God is the deepest of all reality (mechanism). Biblical symbolism is the hands on the watch. Joseph was the servant of biblical symbolism. His own dreams (chapter 37), those of the baker and cupbearer (chapter 40), the two dreams of the Pharaoh (chapter 41), all rendered hidden things knowable.

God was coming to bear upon Egypt. Nobody knew how "to tell time". As Joseph's brothers bowed before him, he began to comprehend coherence between biblical symbolism and time (chapter 42). The mechanism drives the hands not the other way around.

We believers are the servants of biblical symbolism, not its masters. Every human being mentioned in this text we are studying, and all of those implied, were being overwhelmed by the Word of God. There is no rational escape.

But we must be able "to tell the time". Some in the contemporary church believe they can stick with the mechanism and rip off the hands. Those people are wrong. This seems unimpeachable: when we are up to our necks in alligators we better know how "to tell time" because the mechanism keeps on grinding. An example of this was the siege of Jerusalem.

Next time you look at your watch or ask, "what time is it?" just grin and think.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 25.

Self-sufficiency had ended for Joseph's family in Canaan (42:1, 2). Jacob sent all but one of his sons to Egypt for food (42:3, 8). This errand was dangerous, but it was life or death. It must have seemed like a rational solution. However, it was in fact *the contraction of events*. The true engine of experience had remained hidden.

Suddenly, the brothers were standing in front of Joseph (42:7). At that point something we may call the spiritual ratio began to be recognized.

Here is the substance of the ratio: *Biblical symbolism exceeds circumstance*. There is a spiritual differential between the two. And since that is the case, then faith must exceed circumstance as well (42:9).

Joseph and The Pharaoh were fully agreed on this fundamental truth. This explains Abraham's understanding of the Word of God (it exceeds our circumstance). And it explains his faith (it had to exceed his circumstance): Genesis 22.

But there is a kind of reading of Scripture that insists that the Bible does NOT exceed circumstance. It further insists that faith has no obligation to exceed our circumstances. And so they do not! We can respond to God or react to circumstance: our choice.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 26.

The Spiritual Ratio.

- The only reason that Joseph was wrenched away from his family was because biblical symbolism exceeded personal circumstance.
- Potiphar's employment of Joseph was provoked by biblical symbolism.

- Fourteen extraordinary years over Egypt were strictly due to the nature of Biblical Symbolism exceeding national circumstance.

This truth is everywhere in Scripture. Consequently, it is necessary that faith must exceed personal circumstance. A weak or small faith does not exceed personal circumstance (Matthew 8), as proven by the Lord's disciples during the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

- In the same chapter, the centurion had a faith that clearly surpassed personal circumstance. Jesus called it "great faith."
- Peter was overwhelmed trying to walk on the water (Matthew 14). His faith did not exceed circumstance.
- Numbers 13 and 14 confirm that the desert generation did not believe—ever-- that biblical symbolism exceeded circumstance. And it is documented that their faith never exceeded their circumstance.

All of this is incontrovertible. To be holder of a faith that does not exceed personal situation is at the very least a weak or small faith. Such may effectively amount to no faith at all.

The Scripture firmly admonishes us to possess a faith that transcends the limits of the human and personal circumstance. Here we have the baseline assessment of biblical symbolism and of biblical faith. Miss this and we are in great jeopardy!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 27.

THE GENERALIZATION EFFECT. Generalizing from Scripture to material existence always has this exact effect: Generalization inherently carries the mind, and therefore faith, beyond the limit of circumstance. This effect never varies. Indicated here is the recognition that the effect is to transcend a material content of knowledge.

Upon reflection, every generalization obtained to date demonstrates this effect. Example: 1 Samuel 17, wherein one generalizes that material circumstances do not determine outcomes. To believe that is to go beyond circumstance.

Increasingly and patently clear is the negative reaction of some believers to this effect. To carry faith beyond circumstance can be frightening. Many do not like it. *The "generalization effect" is the most powerful contradiction to religious rationalism in the churches.*

Rationalism has long governed Biblical Interpretation. Joshua and Caleb confronted this precise issue at Kadesh-Barnea (Numbers 13, 14). The Israelites would not be moved.

Uniformly, generalization leads us to transcend circumstance by faith. There is no doubt that the generalization effect is the universal problem. It is not reasonable to live beyond circumstance, some believe.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 28.

Joseph suffered greatly and for a long time. Something remarkable emerges from the textual record: Joseph did not make his hardship circumstance the focus, the axis, the core of his reasoning. He did something else. Joseph understood his personal circumstance as part of a larger context. That means that he did not treat circumstance as outcome.

The differential between context and outcome supplies two different protocols for the treatment of circumstance and or hardship. Joseph considered his trials part of the context of biblical symbolism. One ventures the generalization that the psychology of suffering is changed by this.

Examples:

- Acts 16: imprisonment was part of a larger context, not an outcome
- John 9: blindness was treated as part of a larger context, not outcome
- 2 Corinthians 1: danger and risk of life were understood as part of a larger context not as outcomes
- John 11: even death was dealt with as part of a larger context, not as outcome

Perhaps the big difference is this: *Treating our affliction as part of the larger context of biblical symbolism means that it is about God, whereas treating affliction as outcome makes it about us.*

Jesus Himself used the protocol of context on all His suffering (Matthew 4; Luke 22:39-46). Peter at the point of The Lord's arrest inclined to the protocol of outcome (Luke 22:54-62).

Joseph believed how he suffered constituted a defense of biblical symbolism!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 29.

THE UNITS OF ENUNCIATION.

Joseph's delivered meaning of Pharaoh's dreams was not a rationalization; rather, it was an enunciation (a clear, precise expression) of the revealed truth.

Contemporary interpretation is nothing more than rationalization. The ancient prophets enunciated revealed meaning; they did not "interpret" it. Culture and society were not factors.

Joseph's example demonstrates that there are two units of enunciation.

- Unit #1. Reason. His reasoning was regulated by biblical symbolism, not by circumstance.
- Unit #2. Behavior. The shape of Joseph's behavior was formulated by biblical symbolism, and not by circumstance.

In other words, reason and behavior were enunciations of revealed meaning. This is summarized in Matthew 5:16. These two units of enunciation are often missing in the churches. Frequently we do not, nor are we expected to, enunciate the inherent meaning of biblical symbolism. That would be too strong, too unreasonable.

Instead, we "interpret," "qualify," or we might even say "plausify," revealed meaning. This means that reason and behavior *must be rebased in biblical symbolism* in order to be called units of enunciation.

For Christians, reason and behavior must be more than just human attributes. All believers are enunciators.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 30.

THE TERRIBLE DECISION.

Jacob, the father of Joseph, was in turmoil and in a kind of agony (chapter 43). We all have to face "*the terrible decision.*" In such a situation, no matter how you figure it no decision seems right. We face danger by day and terror by night.

This one is Jacob's:

#1. Starvation is confronting the whole clan. If Jacob doesn't get food from Egypt they all die.

#2. Preservation of life is the priority.

#3. If Jacob sends all his sons back to Egypt, they may all die.

#4. All hazards were steadily increasing.

#5. Jacob bore a great sense of loss: Joseph dead. Simeon most likely dead. Benjamin could die. Defacto mourning covered everything.

#6. There were few options. None of them good.

#7. Misunderstandings were thought to be involved: "Spies" and theft.

#8. Jacob had no control over events whatsoever.

#9. Desperation was seemingly driving Jacob's decision.

#10. The power of God was the only hope of a good outcome. But at this time, Jacob did not know that biblical symbolism had always been the supernatural context of the terrible decision.

What does this mean for us about such difficult times and decisions?

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 31.

Generalizations for THE TERRIBLE DECISION:

#1. Faith in biblical symbolism must precede the decision. We have to discover revealed truth about these things.

#2. The only pertinent decision to make is whether or not to trust God and His Word and to obey.

#3. The material and sociological (people) aspects involved with any given situation are overruled by biblical symbolism.

#4. Believe that outcomes CONTRACT back upon biblical symbolism by force of the power of God.

#5. Appearances, or "the obvious," do not apply.

#6. This is NOT a matter of life and death even though we will live or die. Rather it is a matter of trust in God.

#7. The outcome will be discontinuous from the particulars of the circumstance.

#8. The dimensions of every situation, circumstance, event or state of being will appear to expand or diminish according to the level of fear and uncertainty we have in any circumstance.

There is a kind of Faith that overrules fear and uncertainty. Genesis 43 invokes gratitude. What do you think; can we take it?!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 32.

In this text, biblical symbolism was bringing about a change in the reasoning and behavior of a great many people. These were not to remain just human attributes. Human reasoning and behavior were to be transformed into manifestations of biblical symbolism.

We can call this change *re-characterization*. Such a change comes about because Scripture brings with it its own inherent meaning. Rationalism, liberalism, and progressivism do also themselves re-characterize the Bible: To them, it is not the Word of God. This is the heart of apostasy (2 Timothy 4) and its political analog, liberalism.

The underbelly of all that is the belief that biblical symbolism has no self-meaning. Education is re-characterizing the nature of man starting in utero. Technology is re-characterizing freedom and privacy.

To the opposite, the Pharaoh re-characterized reason and behavior to be manifestations of biblical symbolism. Joseph was instrumental in this supernatural re-characterization. But in the churches, reason and behavior are left to business as usual. Pharaoh believed that biblical symbolism had its own inherent meaning. And, that meaning is to be pushed into time and circumstance.

Should believers decide not to re-characterize reason and behavior as extensions of revelation, they cannot cope with the world. Our business is to confront the world with biblical symbolism. It's the symbols of one world talking to the facts of this world. We have to be hard minded as were Joseph and the Pharaoh.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 33.

The world fell in on top of Joseph's brothers (chapter 44). Judah did the talking for them (44:14-34).

What Judah said in their defense amounts to a complete world picture, and the axis of this is v.16.

- #1. The universe is not vacant. God is there, present, active, watching --v.16.
- #2. Justice is not consensual nor sociological. It is a function of God --v.16.
- #3. Men are not the masters of their ends. They just think they are --v.16.
- #4. Time, life, and history are not independent of God and biblical symbolism-- v.16.
- #5. Belief in higher truth (higher than the self, higher than the collective) charges experience with supernatural meaning. Judah believed that higher truth was unfolding in their lives --v.16.
- #6. Men must comprehend a multi-dimensional reality. Heaven-Earth/Eternal-Temporal/God-Man/Revelation-Human Reason/Invisible-Visible/Creator-Created-- v.16. No monism allowed (the concept that matter is the only reality)-- v.16.
- #7. Sin is the ruination of men. Judah and his brothers are in that state of ruin -- v.16.
- #8. God is the maker of human circumstance -- v.16. It is purposeful.
- #9. Naturalism is concerned only with material content of circumstance --v.16. But it cannot reach beyond that.

This world picture of verse 16 supersedes a world view concept. Chapter 44 tells us that we live in that kind of world.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 34.

Chapter 45: HOW TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL GUILT, PERSONAL HARDSHIP and UNCONTROLLED CIRCUMSTANCE.

- #1. SHINE THE LIGHT OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM UPON ALL SUCH CONDITIONS (v.5.) This does not excuse guilt, but it does put it in a larger field of meaning. Revealed truth is precisely what Joseph's brothers needed; not just forgiveness. It's what we need in the dark times. Sense impressions and human reason will lock us into "the issues." "Talk therapy" is different than biblical symbolism, which changes the understanding of hardship. Joseph saw immediately what to do. He put biblical symbolism on the whole series of episodes to help his brothers and family close the door on human wisdom and intuition. Scripture connects God to our circumstance.

- #2. UNDERSTAND THAT BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM ABSORBS EVERYTHING (v.5-7.) People, places, things, guilt, hardship, uncontrolled circumstance, are all absorbed. It's a comfort to know that even one's weaknesses and human limitations are absorbed by the Lord's eternal purpose. We can live this!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 35.

HOW TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL GUILT, PERSONAL HARDSHIP and UNCONTROLLED CIRCUMSTANCE. Ch. 45.

- #3. Personal consequences and personal effects are direct results of biblical symbolism ("God sent me"-- 45:7).
- #4. There are stipulated supernatural intents and purposes ("before you to prepare for you" --45:7).
- #5. There will be specific outcomes ("a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive" --- 45:7). These people were not marked for death. Human wisdom and intuition would have never given this understanding.
- #6. In our circumstances the power of God is put into evidence ("by a great deliverance" --45:7). Direct causation of the Lord was involved. Human will (Egyptians) was being overruled by the power of God.
- #7. Biblical symbolism restarts the clock ("Now"-- 45:8).

From the point of revealed knowledge on, think according to what you have learned.

- Read the Scripture looking for truth, knowledge, answers.
- Recognize an answer when you read it.
- Allow the Bible to show us how to think and respond to hard experience.

Our circumstances are not disassociated from the Lord. Nor are our limitations.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 36.

HOW TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL GUILT, PERSONAL HARDSHIP and UNCONTROLLED CIRCUMSTANCE.

- #8. Revealed truth, not the experience itself, rules the heart, mind and soul ("Therefore" --45:8). In other words, because of this truth, in understanding the mind is not to be fed by the experience itself regardless of how delightful or how harsh the experience is or was.
- #9. Leave room for the undetectable dynamic ("it was not you who sent me here, but God" --45:8). God was the dynamic and He is no variable. Biblical symbolism is stronger than man, human circumstance and stronger than time.
- #10. Biblical symbolism turns everything on its head ("and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and Lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt" --45:8).
- #11. The true context of the circumstance was not the brothers' sin; it was, rather, the fulfillment of Biblical symbolism (45:8).
- #12. Joseph' time was not lost to him and his family. it was consumed by biblical symbolism.

And we remember that we were all baptized into this kind of experience. Biblical symbolism is a hard task master.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 37.

HOW TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL GUILT, PERSONAL HARDSHIP and UNCONTROLLED CIRCUMSTANCE.

- #13. Time, life, history, circumstance are *bent to the shape of biblical symbolism*. The brothers were sent on ahead to Egypt to prepare for the whole family. Pharaoh was pleased with this (45:19).
- (4) #14. That was not a strategy nor a plan. It was obedience to biblical symbolism. Obedience displaces and overrules strategies and planning. Biblical Symbolism anchors ⇒ Obedience ⇒ which shapes history (45:9-23).
- #15. Time unfolds in PHASES. Phase 1. Biblical Symbolism comes first. Jacob knew of Joseph' two dreams. Joseph was marked with promise. But then came Phase 2. Contradiction set in. Joseph was "dead". Jacob never "recovered." Finally Phase 3 took

hold. Resolution of circumstance became a fact. Jacob could not believe Joseph was alive nor ruler of Egypt (45:24-28). He was "stunned."

- #16. There will be revival of spirit and fullness (45:27-28). "The spirit of their father was revived" (v.27). Pain, loss, remorse were lifted from his mind. Jacob himself said, "It is enough" (v.28).

This is not recovery—it is knowledge. Jacob knew he had suffered all those years for biblical symbolism; for the purpose of God.

There was still time! Jacob and all his sons would be together in Egypt. Biblical symbolism can move the ground under our feet!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM PART 38.

THE PROMISES OF GOD CREATE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE. Chapter 46:1-4.

- #1. In "the night visions" (46:2), biblical symbolism was confirmed and upheld by the Lord. And He called Jacob by name. The Almighty asserted His identity "I am God"/"The God of your father" (46:3). The Lord identifies Himself as the sole architect of their experience for all of those difficult years. Jacob's house and thousands more were caught up in this supernatural manipulation of time. Thousands had to live through it.
- #2." Do not be afraid to go to Egypt" (46:3). Jacob had to change his perspective on all that transpired. Generalization: When dealing with the God who manipulates time, then adjustment of perspective is necessary. The Lord changes things at will. Meaning: The Lord is always ahead of men in His will, intentions, and machinations for carrying out His purposes. Things often hit us as shocks, unexpected, of unspecified duration, overwhelming. But our shock changes nothing. Nothing shocks nor surprises the Almighty.
- #3. THE KEY CHANGE IN PERSPECTIVE: As the Lord manipulates time we are all compelled to deal with it on His terms not ours.

From Genesis 37, 30-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 39.

THE PROMISES OF GOD CREATE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE. Chapter 46: 1-4.

- #4. Time is the material for the fulfillment of biblical symbolism. "I will make you a great nation there" 46:3. The power of God will be exerted in, through and over Egypt. Circumstance will not resist.
- #5. "I will go down with you to Egypt" 46:4. Israel did not choose this path. Their job was to be faithful. No strategies, rationalization, planning were required.
- #6. Their stay was a sojourn, not permanent. "And I will also surely bring you up again" 46:4. Egypt was a means to an end. In even bitter circumstance, we must enlarge our perspective to include the mind of God. One way to exclude the mind of God is to concentrate on the material content of circumstance and how it affects our experience.
- #7. "And Joseph will close your eyes" 46:4. The purpose of God transcends us in every way. Biblical symbolism transcended the lifetimes of Jacob, Joseph, the brothers and the interests of the Egyptians. Yet to be born Israelites, they had to be taught these truths while biblical symbolism contracted time, life, history, all materiality and all men to its completion.
- #8. There are two codas of perspective (concluding ideas) that we should recognize in those night visions. Coda A: to serve God, to pursue biblical symbolism in the world is to be in well over our heads! Coda B: do not be afraid "to go down to Egypt" 46:3! The Lord will be with us.

The generalization is: The promises of God alter perspectives on immediate experience. This must constitute a rule. *Perspective is derived from a discontinuous vantage point.* Comprehension is personal and experiential. Revealed perspective and comprehension are apparently different! Perspective overrules comprehension.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 40.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPLENDID ISOLATION.

Chapter 46:1- 47:31.

- #1. Seventy people entered Egypt. They were to be the material and sociological base for all subsequent generations of Israelites-- 46:27.
- #2. Joseph had thought about priorities of need. A Living space. Room to grow. Isolation from Egyptian influence.

- #3. Joseph understood the world picture of the Egyptians: A) Jews were despised 43:32. B) Shepherds were loathsome-- 46:31-34. These social conditions were to conduce to a splendid isolation.
- #4. The family entered "Goshen" --46:28. This was fertile pasture land. "Goshen" was the space the Israelites needed to increase and prosper-- 47:27. In addition, Joseph could meet the priorities of the Egyptians: A) Avoid the Hebrews and B) Stay clear of Goshen, their dwelling place.
- #5. Their introduction into Egypt was manipulated by the Lord. This was a supernatural transition. Biblical symbolism was still in superintendency of time.
- #6. The Hebrews did not arrive to become Egyptians. They came to be saved, to grow and to become a great nation.
- #7. The Hebrews were not to assimilate. There was to be no absorption of Egyptian ideology. Israel was to be a people apart.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 41.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPLENDID ISOLATION. Chapter 46:1-47:31.

#8. Isolation was a supernatural arrangement put in place by the Lord for the spiritual and material needs of His people and in conformity to biblical symbolism.

#9. Biblical symbolism is decidedly anti-cultural. Generalization: Those who march by biblical symbolism have no regard for cultural or sociological values.

#10. Biblical symbolism comes to bear on the people of the Covenant in irreducible ways-- 49:27. Goshen and the Hebrews were blessed by the "Splendid Isolation." While The Egyptians sold property and themselves into slavery to survive, the Israelites acquired land, prosperity and numbers.

#11. The supernatural arrangement of isolation had to carry with it the behavior and reasoning of Israel. This meant Isolation from paganism and anything that was anti-biblical symbolism. This might explain Exodus 1 and why the Pharaoh of that period was so concerned about the loyalty of the Hebrews. Israel developed in Splendid Isolation. But it was a threat to the Egyptians, and violence was the subsequent policy.

#12. Generalization: The space we live in is the space of isolation. a.) Our minds exclude world elements. b.) Our behavior excludes world obsessions. c.) Believers are to be a study in *splendid isolation*.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 42.

EXPECTATIONS BUILT ON TEMPORAL CONDITIONS ARE NOT RELIABLE:

- #1. Jacob recounted the Lord's appearance to him at Luz (48:3, 4). He was to become a "company of peoples.
- #2. Ephraim and Manasseh would become a tribe of Israel (48:5).
- #3. Jacob invokes the memory of Rachel (Joseph's mother) (48:7).
- #4. Jacob reveals to Joseph "I never expected to see your face" (48:11). Joseph was thought dead. "But God has let me see your children." Jacob's expectations in this world were exceeded by God.
- #5. Jacob had developed some expectations founded upon temporal conditions (facts). Joseph was dead and that was the end of it. Yet God had moved the boundary of expectations: Jacob not only sees Joseph but his children as well. Generalization: *Biblical symbolism overrides expectations founded on temporal conditions*. A sharp discontinuity exists between biblical symbolism and its meaning on the one, and expectations built on temporal conditions on the other. Such expectations do not tell us much.
- #6. Two phrases stand as guardians of faith: A.) "I will make you" (48:4). B) "God has let me" (48:11). Biblical symbolism and the power of God rendered such limited expectations devoid of meaning.
- #7. Jacob blessed Joseph's sons (48:12-20). Joseph expected Manasseh (oldest) to get the greater blessing, but instead it was given to Ephraim (youngest). Joseph was "displeased" by that (48:15-17). His expectations were based on the temporal condition of birth order.
- #8. Temporal conditions as a base of foundation for and pretext for expectations is degenerate. Those expectations will breakdown under the gravity of biblical symbolism.
- #9. Are you burdened with expectations built on temporal conditions? Well, take heart!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 43.

EXPECTATIONS BUILT ON TEMPORAL CONDITIONS ARE NOT RELIABLE:

- #10. Jacob uttered a remarkable prophetic statement to his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh: "By you" (48:20). Two boys Jacob never expected to know and thought beyond the range of possibility--because Joseph was "dead"--were standing in front of him; alongside his greatly lamented but not quite dead son.
- #11. Biblical symbolism works always beyond the range of the possible. With God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).
- #12. "Israel will pronounce blessing, saying" (48:20): a. "May God" = The causal Power; b. "make you" = Against the full range of expectations-- The Lord will set conditions, create reality in spite of the way things are. c. "like Ephraim and Manasseh"--Two boys who had had not done anything up to that time. They just existed because God, His word, His power made them to be.
- #13. We are dealing with the God who moves the boundary of expectations. And then we are left to marvel and to worship!
- #14. This is our heritage: Abraham believed in and trusted the God who moves the boundary of expectations (Genesis 22). So did Isaac and Jacob.
- #15. We today in the present are encouraged to put no trust in expectations founded on temporal conditions. We are to fully trust in the God who moves boundaries.
- #16. Why? Jacob gives the answer: a. "God will be with you" (48:21); b. "and God will bring you back to the land of your fathers."
- #17. Jacob might as well have told Joseph! "God will be with you as the causal force of your life and the Lord always keeps his word!"
- #18. Whatever circumstance we face from here on, let's do this: *Abandon the realm of expectations based on temporal conditions and follow Biblical Symbolism wherever it leads.*

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 44.

Chapter 49. A STARTLING IDEA: TIME, THE FUTURE WILL BE BRACKETED BY SUPERNATURAL BLESSINGS OR BY HUMAN NATURE.

- #1. The world's ills are fueled by fallen human nature. This bracketing will affect every aspect of time, of the future. Chapter 49 charts some manifestations of human nature:
 - ❖ sin, Reuben, 49:3,4 = "uncontrolled as water";
 - ❖ violence, Simeon/Levi, 49:5,7 = "swords implements of violence"
 - ❖ leadership, Judah, 49:8-12 = "lion";
 - ❖ commerce, Zebulun, 49:13 = "ships";
 - ❖ lust for comfort, Issachar, 49:14, 15;
 - ❖ stealth, Dan, 49:16-18, "serpent";
 - ❖ strife, Gad, 49:19;
 - ❖ lust for luxury, Asher, 49:20;
 - ❖ creativity, Naphtali, 49:21 = literary;
 - ❖ ravenous, Benjamin, 49:27 = "devours".
- All these attributes of Human Nature would become Culture Conditions.
- #2. Men try to bracket time/the future with these attributes. MISTAKE!
- #3. But Joseph as a tribe would enjoy supernatural blessings. Time/the Future would be bracketed by the blessings of God upon them 49:22-26. "From the God of your father" v.24, "May they be on the head if Joseph" v.26.

Apparently we have a choice. The entire human race has this choice; if they want it. Live in time bracketed by human nature or by supernatural blessings. Human nature does not appear to be doing well!

What then shall bracket our lifetime? One or the other will "befall" us. It is possible to transcend human nature!

JACOB'S UNDERSTANDING OF DEATH, Chapter 49.

- #1. "I am about to be gathered to my people" -- 49:29. Jacob "breathed his last, and was gathered to his people" --49:32.
- #2. Jacob ordered his sons to bury his body in the cave of Machpelah --49:30. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Leah were buried in that cave --49:31. Those remains, once supple flesh, were witness to the favor of the Lord and to the power of biblical symbolism.
- #3. The bodies were reduced to dust -- but the people were someplace else.
- #4. The people had been "gathered." A force, a power, had moved them beyond time, materiality and strife. They were still individuals, but they were together and in the same place. The impression is that they knew each other. Those people had been "gathered," put in that place by the Lord.
- #5. Jacob had learned that the body was an impediment to trust in God. Jacob lived all his days in fear, always afraid of what might happen to him. In fear of Esau (chapter 32), fear of Laban (chapter 31), fear of the great famine (chapte.42,) fear of the Egyptians (chapter42) -- always fear of events. Fear is something the body feels.
- #6. Death was the release from fear.
- #7. Real life is conserved, eternal.
- #8. Real life is discontinuous from the body.
- #9. The perspective that the body offers on death is limited. Jacob had come to reject that limited vantage point. He would be "gathered to his people." No other force could touch him.
- #10. Based on his understanding of death, Jacob "drew his feet into the bed;" breathed his last; "and was gathered to his people" -- 49:33. Biblical symbolism had overtaken Jacob's mind; fear had fled from his life. Jacob was taking a trip to the gathering place.

This imposes recognition: Men are important enough to be considered forever. Life begins here in time but it does not end here. In fact, it is greater than time! There will never be a "last meeting" for us! Ever!

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 46.

THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF TIME: Chapter 50

#1. Jacob had died --50:1-2.

#2. Pharaoh gave permission for Joseph to take Jacob's remains to Canaan --50:5.

#3. The funeral procession was "a very great company" --50:9.

#4. The Lord had brought all this and more into being. the Israelites were standing on the bedrock of biblical symbolism.

#5. Jacob and the patriarch brothers were only men. Biblical symbolism made them people of historical significance.

#6. The Lord, the administrator of time, was behind it all.

#7. The brothers feared the vengeance of Joseph upon them -- 50:15. These men never grasped the spiritual dimension of time; of what happened.

#8. Their fear was based on this false premise: Historical events rest on the belief that God was not, and could not be, causal in all this.

#9. Spiritual thinkers know that everything has a spiritual dimension. There is more than surface appearance.

#10. The brothers never had a true understanding of causation --50:16, 17. They believed what they saw. One cannot see the spiritual dimension of events. So these men did not trust in it.

#11. They were begging Joseph for their lives. The brothers did not trust God.

#12. Generalization: *As believers, our reasoning, thought and behavior must capacitate the spiritual dimension of time, life, history, events and states of being.*

This is the obligation of the church in the world. *Common sense and reliance on experience obscures the spiritual dimension.*

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 47.

JOSEPH'S REPLY TO THE FAITHLESSNESS OF HIS BROTHERS: Chapter 50.

#1. IMMEDIATE ASSURANCE. "Do not be afraid" --50:19. Their fear of Joseph's intentions had no foundation. These men did not really know their brother. He was spiritually beyond them.

#2. INVOKES THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF THE HISTORY BETWEEN THEM. "For am I in God's place?"-- 50:19. The spiritual dimension shaped his behavior. Joseph's greatest attribute: He is obedient. Obedience is causal. It rises above even the highest human attributes.

#3. IT INJECTS BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM INTO THE EXTENDED CIRCUMSTANCE. God "meant it for good" --50:20. Eternal motives overrule, control, shape, limit, human-derived evil.

#4. EXPANDS HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING. God is always at work in the temporal dimension. This understanding transcends mere facts, immediate outcomes and draws attention to the work of the Lord in time. There was a purpose: "To preserve many people alive"-- 50:20. Joseph cannot kill what God intends to preserve.

Joseph is a man of God and, that is how such a man behaves.

From Genesis 37, 39-50. THE ETERNAL GENIUS OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM, PART 48.

JOSEPH'S REPLY TO THE FAITHLESSNESS OF HIS BROTHERS -- Chapter 50.

#5. CONSECRATED TO COMPLIANCE WITH BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM. With "so therefore," Joseph introduces a logical argument: "Do not be afraid." Their fear was groundless in reality. It was founded in their weak faith. Instead, he said, "I will provide for you and the little ones." Joseph's behavior functioned within the context of the will of God and not within the context of the flesh -- 50:21.

#6. COMFORT. Joseph is not like his brothers. He is a man of the spiritual dimension at service in time. He "comforted them" and "spoke kindly to them" --50:21. The man of God does not go beyond the spiritual dimension in terms of thought, speech and behavior.

#7. Joseph was a leader among men. He served biblical symbolism all his days.

This person was not "a man of his times."

This one was "a man of the spirit." His life and service are a treasure to us forever!