

“The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.” Psa. 34:18,19. “Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines; be they better than these kingdoms? Or their border greater than your border? Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; BUT THEY ARE NOT GRIEVED FOR THE AFFLICTION OF JOSEPH. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.” Amos 6:1-7.

The afflictions of Joseph were notable, and they stand as symbolic afflictions of God’s Elect, such that it is customary to say that this or that hypocritical reprobate who thinks he need bear no cross and can reach Heaven anyway: **“BUT HE IS NOT GRIEVED FOR THE AFFLICTION OF JOSEPH.”** Which is as much as to say, If you are God’s Elect, many will be your afflictions (Remember, *“many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all”* - Psa. 34:19) And you will recognize and sympathize with all your co-Elect, by their afflictions. If you are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, it does not matter much what you believe, say, or do.

Let us, then, study what may be called, *“The Sad Saga of Joseph.”* The Holy Spirit considered this subject so important that He devoted approximately one-fourth of the valuable **50-Chapter Book of Genesis** to Joseph and his afflictions. Consider this important factual study reflecting Joseph’s own thought process; to wit: First, Joseph lived 110 years – (*“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.”* [Gen. 50:24-26]).

Second, the last 80 years of Joseph’s life was lived in the lap of luxury, so to speak; in opulence such as only ancient Egypt, at that time, could afford; as it is written, *“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward.”* Heb. 11:24-26. That passage from Hebrews, gives some further idea of ancient Egypt’s treasures in the days of Moses. (Gen. 41:46)

Thirdly, We are told that Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt, to receive unprecedented honor, and glory, and majesty as second only to Pharaoh – having spent the two years just prior to that, in jail, falsely convicted of raping Captain Potiphar’s wife! Beloved, who but our God can take a man out of prison and elevate him to deputy-Pharaoh in charge of all production, all preservation and all distribution of all food in the whole kingdom? “I like your ideas,” said the king to the jailbird; “Let’s plug ‘er in and see if she works.”

“And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is? A man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath

showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art; Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne shall 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 Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnaphpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. ... And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number." (Gen. 41:37-50)

Fourthly, *"And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseth; for God, said he, hath made me forget my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim; for God hath caused me to be fruitful in THE LAND OF MY AFFLICTION."* Gen. 41:51-52.

And so you see what appears to be another grand paradox – or mystery. Joseph here is calling the 80-year sojourn of time spent in Egypt (wherein he was the de facto ruler of Egypt) – yes, Joseph referred to that 80-year period (which was the last 80 years of his life) – as the land of his affliction.

Whereas, the first 30 years of Joseph's life was chock full of afflictions. The Holy Ghost takes up Joseph's biography to specifically mention his age at 17 years of age; to wit:

"These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, THEY HATED HIM, AND COULD NOT SPEAK PEACEABLY UNTO HIM. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren; and THEY HATED HIM YET THE MORE. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? AND THEY HATED HIM YET THE MORE FOR HIS DREAMS, AND FOR HIS WORDS. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying." (Gen. 37:2-11)

Fifthly. We have now traced Joseph to and including his seventeenth birthday; and, certainly, from what the Holy Ghost has specifically said, plus what may be reasonably inferred, we may conclude that Joseph is a fitting symbol of a suffering saint. Ergo. The Holy Ghost chose Joseph as the hero of the Faith for Amos 6:6; to wit:

“That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; BUT THEY ARE NOT GRIEVED FOR THE AFFLICTION OF JOSEPH.”(Amos 6:6)

There is a wonderful line of teaching in God’s Holy Word that is universally neglected among all men everywhere and in all ages; and which I am trying to expound in this sermon. It runs to this effect; to wit: *“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” 2 Tim. 3:12.* Period. God’s Elect are mightily grieved when they see their co-Elect (God’s little sheep) thus suffering. Period. Those who *“are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph (Amos 6:6).”* are on their way to Hell. Period.

Beloved. When we speak these blessed words as plain as we know how to this stupid swarm of humanity otherwise known as the earth’s population of some 8 billion souls, Satan comes along right behind us and *“catcheth”* these good words away; to wit: *“Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received by the way side.” Mat. 13:18,19.* Nevertheless, we love to preach these blessed words of the Kingdom; to wit:

“Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in Heaven; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets... But woe unto you that laugh now! For ye shall mourn and weep. ...Woe unto you ! when all men shall speak well of you ! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.”(Lk. 6:21-26)

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”(Mat. 5:10-12)

“And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. AND YE SHALL BE HATED OF ALL MEN FOR MY NAME’S SAKE; BUT HE THAT ENDURETH TO THE END SHALL BE SAVED.”(Mat. 10:21,22)

“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; AND YE SHALL BE HATED OF ALL NATIONS FOR MY NAME’S SAKE. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall HATE one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Mat. 24:9-13)

“These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin. HE THAT HATETH ME HATETH MY FATHER ALSO. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; BUT NOW HAVE THEY BOTH SEEN AND HATED BOTH ME AND MY FATHER. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”(Jn. 15:17-26)

Sixthly. Recall, *“And Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt”* and became ruler of all Egypt from then to his death at age 110 years. **Gen. 41:46**. That makes 80 full years, as ruler, when it is questionable whether Joseph suffered too many afflictions. At any rate, lay those last 80 years of his life to one side, and let us turn our attention again to the first 30 years of Joseph’s tormented life. We have seen how his eleven older brothers hated him and made his life miserable because his father loved Joseph most of all, because he was the child of Jacob’s old age – which the brothers viciously resented. And, because Joseph has become the standing figure of God’s Elect suffering great affliction, while the wicked all about them fiendishly rejoice – let us consider more of Joseph’s relevant biography, as recorded by the Holy Ghost; to wit:

“Moreover he called for a famine upon the land; he brake the whole staff of bread. He sent a man before them, EVEN JOSEPH, who was sold for a servant; Whose feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in iron; Until the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance; To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.” (Psa. 105:16-22)

The measure about hurting his feet and laying him in irons refers to the two years Joseph spent in the cruel Egyptian jail, falsely accused by Capt. Potiphar’s wife of raping her; which, if true, would be world-class ingratitude and lechery; for Capt. Potiphar had treated Joseph with great kindness and trust. Indeed, to one of Joseph’s righteous sensitivities, the Potiphar affair may have been the greatest affliction of all; involving as it did false accusations, libel, slander, and defamation of character; to wit:

“And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand...And he left all that he had in Joseph’s hands; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored.”
(Gen. 39:1-6)

Seventhly. ***“AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, THAT HIS MASTER’S WIFE CAST HER EYES UPON JOSEPH; AND SHE SAID, LIE WITH ME. But he refused, and said unto his master’s wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand (i.e., fiduciary to the extreme); there is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee; because thou art his wife; how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me; and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; and I cried with a loud voice; and it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out...And Joseph’s master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king’s prisoners were bound; and he was there in the prison.”*** (Gen. 39:7-20)

Just as *“Ye have heard of the patience of Job (Jas. 5:11);”* even so, Ye have heard of the afflictions of Joseph; and those who have not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph, and WBC, are not God’s Elect, and are bound for Hell. **Amos 6:6.**

I love you. Amen.