

# HIS STORY...

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The lives of the ancient patriarchs tell a story penned by God. The events in their lives are full of meaning and within the multi-layers, reflections of a bigger story appear. Joseph's life is one of the richest stories preserved from ancient writings and oral tales for us—in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, who live in a time over-flowing with information and resources at our finger tips that we, unlike people in the past, can grow in the knowledge of our Creator and Savior beyond measure. “So the last will be first, and the first will be last” (Matthew 20:16). Jesus saved the best wine for last. In these last days, a dedicated remnant of God's people is growing spiritually strong. They are reading the stories, discovering the mysteries, and understanding the foreshadowing of God's great servants of long ago. Their knowledge is grounding their faith in truth and their love for their Creator and Savior is bringing them all closer together, intimately close.

Joseph, like many of God's servants who are part of the greater story, was young when God began His work through him. He was a boy loved by his father. “Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him” (Genesis 37:3). Joseph's story images the greater story of God's love for His Son, His beloved Son—the one of whom He is well pleased.

Joseph is the oldest from the wife that Jacob loved the most. He was the first-born from Rachel—eleventh of twelve boys. The number twelve is a reference to a **perfect government**. From four different wives, twelve boys were born. This family is emblematic of a perfect government engineered by God, still in the making, where Christ is the head—the first-born of God's **repentant** people who become Christ's body—a unified body ruling as one.

**SOMETHING NEW IS IN PROGRESS.** Things aren't quite right in the heavens or on earth. "On that day **the Lord will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth.** They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished" (Isaiah 24:21-22).

Ellicott's Commentary provides insight into that scripture, "He [Isaiah] sees more than the condemnation of the kings of earth. Jehovah visits also the "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10) or "on high" (Ephesians 6:12). Perhaps **identifying these spiritual evil powers with the gods whom the nations worshipped**, and these again with the stars in the firmament, Isaiah foresees a time when their **long-protracted rebellion shall come to an end**, and **all authority and power be put down under the might of Jehovah** (1 Corinthians 15:25). <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/isaiah/24-21.htm>

A new heavenly government is in the making, one that stems from one family of twelve on earth imaged as having twelve gates with twelve pearls, and twelve foundations and twelve times two—twenty-four elders in heaven. It will be an everlasting government with God our Creator as the head, Christ as His body and the Church—the Saints will form the body of Christ. From these three, a one royal body will rule heaven and earth.

"The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass" (Revelation 21:21).

"But I want you to understand that **Christ is the head of every man**, and the man is the head of a woman, and **God is the head of Christ**" (I Corinthians 11:3).

"For we are members of His body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the **two will become one flesh. This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about Christ and the church**" (Ephesians 5:30-32).

In heaven, God has thrones, a governing body that enforces His law, a parliament, judges, and a supreme court. "Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them **were twenty-four [twelve times two] elders.** They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads" (Revelation 4:4).

"Then I saw a Lamb who appeared to have been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the **four living creatures** and the **elders**" (Revelation 5:6).

On earth, the saints after their resurrection, will judge their own people—not just the Jews (the house of Judah). They will judge **ALL TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.** The lost sheep of Israel (the ten tribes) are alive and well in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "'Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it [that evil kingdom, likely Babylon] from the face of the earth; nevertheless, **I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob,**' declares the LORD. 'For I am commanding, **and I will shake the house of Israel among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground**'" (Amos 9:8-9). 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel will be healed

from their chronic amnesia; they will come to remember who they are and stand before Christ and the saints to be judged for every offense they have committed. "Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, in the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, **judging the twelve tribes of Israel**'" (Matthew 19:28). The righteous in the house of Israel will be shaken through the nations but will remain safe in God's sieve. He watches the wicked that will be blown away in the wind in bitter disappointment, as they continue to sin against Him. They will be dried up into brittle chaff and destroyed. From the kernels captured in God's sieve, 144,000 (twelve times twelve) from each tribe of Israel will be revealed. They do not defile themselves; they keep themselves pure. No lie will be found in them; they will be blameless (Revelation 14:4-5). They will be preserved and sealed during the Great Tribulation. What a wonder they will be coming out of a dark, defiled and dysfunctional system!

Like a breath of fresh air, they will be a humble God-serving people ready and trained to usher in God's Order of Love. The saints will judge the world and the angels in heaven. "Do you not know that **the saints will judge the world**? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that **we will judge angels**? How much more the things of this life!" (1 Corinthians 6:2-3).

The saints will be part of the foundation of this new government in the making, sitting on thrones and ruling under Christ both in heaven and on earth.

**LOVED BY THEIR FATHER.** Jacob loved Joseph more than his other sons. Christ is the beloved Son of his Father. "For this is how God loved the world: **He gave his beloved Son** so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life" (John 3:16). This unique Son is no rebel. "And a voice came from heaven: '**You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased**'" (Mark 1:11).

When Joseph was 17 years old, he brought a bad report to his father. Four of his brothers were doing wrong. "Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them" (Genesis 37:2).

Could it be that Jesus too, brought a bad report to his Father about his brothers who were doing wrong, the same foretold by Isaiah of their punishment "**the Lord will punish the host of heaven, in heaven...**"? (Isaiah 24:21). The multi-layers of Joseph's story reflect activities outside of his time and place on earth, which have slipped through the heavenly veil where God and His Sons reside.

**THE DREAM REVEALED WHO WOULD RULE.** Jacob loved Joseph and made a richly ornamented robe for him (Genesis 37:3); one fit for a king. One day, Joseph had a dream. Listen he said, "We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it" (Genesis 37:7). Joseph was not haughty, nor was he competitive. He was sharing a dream that was surreal. But his brothers

scoffed and said, “Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?” (Genesis 37:8).

Joseph’s story provides a window into Christ’s life. A mystery for many, but not for those in the last days. As Joseph suffered, Christ suffered. Joseph was exalted to rule second in charge in Egypt, Christ was exalted and anointed King of kings and Lord of lords. Ezekiel records the story of the battle of who will rule with God. Will it be the obvious choice, God’s holy council members in heaven—the tall and eternal, highly trained inner circle of sons of God who are looked up to and revered?

“Then all the trees of Eden, **the choicest and best of Lebanon, all the trees that were well-watered, were consoled in the earth below...** Which of the trees of Eden can be compared with you in splendor and majesty? **Yet you, too, will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth below, you will lie among the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword. ‘This is Pharaoh and all his hordes,’** declares the Sovereign LORD” (Ezekiel 31:16b-18).

The imagery of the trees of Eden in Lebanon is referring to the sons of God who hold offices of rulership in God’s government. The choicest and best of Lebanon are the sons of God in His headquarters—His holy council members, which included the son of God ruling over Egypt who took the title, ‘Pharaoh.’ These all, God said have been “consoled in the earth below.” They are in the Abyss which Ezekiel calls the ‘pit.’ They all failed in the rulership given to them. All of the sons of God who had the highest positions in God’s government failed and God overthrew them, sentencing them to the Abyss where they await judgment to this day.

So, who is Jesus, Son of God? He is God’s beloved Son, as Joseph was loved by Jacob. Jesus is the Son of God who in Ezekiel 17, God chooses to test through trials and suffering and award rulership—like Joseph. God said, “I myself will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it; I will... plant it on a high and lofty mountain. On the mountain heights of Israel, I will plant it; it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar... **All the trees of the field will know that I the LORD bring down the tall tree and the low tree grow tall. I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish.** ‘I have spoken, and I will do it’” (Ezekiel 17:22-24).

The offer to rule with God remained unfilled, until God himself selected a son and this son, succeeded where all the others failed. This is Yashuah HaMashiach; he is the splendid cedar planted in Israel. Imagery of a tall, eternal, ever-green tree adds depth and dimension in a picture that is difficult to see from earth.

Jesus’ perfect sacrifice was accepted and God awarded him co-rulership. “Jesus came to the disciples and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me’” (Mathew 28:18). In one simple sentence, a powerful statement is declared.

Christ has been given rulership in heaven and earth—over all creation, including all of the Sons of God in heaven and mankind on earth. Joseph’s sheaf stands upright images Christ’s loyalty to God and steadfastness in righteousness. He is the tested stone who has been given all power

and authority on earth and in heaven—his sheaf stands above them all. “So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘See, I lay a stone in Zion, **a tested stone**, a **precious cornerstone** for a sure foundation; the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic’” (Isaiah 28:16). His rebellious brothers were jealous and hated him both on earth and in heaven, but as prophecy reveals—all will bend their knee, the whole house of Israel and mankind and his rebellious brothers now consoled in the earth below along with the remaining righteous brothers in heaven.

Joseph had another dream. He said, “This time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me” (Genesis 37:9). The ancient house of Israel, the founding family of Israel clearly understood the meaning of who the sun, moon and eleven stars were for Jacob replied, “What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and our brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?” (Genesis 37:10). The family of Israel over the centuries has rebelled against their calling to be a holy kingdom of royal priests. “You will be for me **a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites” (Exodus 19:6) and “But you are a chosen people, a **royal priesthood, a holy nation**, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). The house of Israel said, “**‘We want to be like the nations, like the peoples of the world, who serve wood and stone.’ But what you have in mind will never happen**” (Ezekiel 20:32). God is in charge; His plan cannot be thwarted. “For the LORD Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back?” (Isaiah 14:27).

These rebels will repent and bend their knee. “You will remember your conduct and all the actions by which you have defiled yourselves, and **you will loathe yourselves for all the evil you have done...** I will deal with you for my name’s sake and not according to your evil ways and your corrupt practices, O house of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD” (Ezekiel 20:43-44). Still in the future on a close horizon, they, both houses of Israel who in this 21<sup>st</sup> century have become many nations, will repent and become a God-fearing re-united holy kingdom of royal priests.

**HOW DOES GOD CHOOSE HIS SERVANTS?** Are some people born more righteous than others? Is one race of people better than another? Is one gender superior to another? Paul addressed this issue and said that it is not for us to judge our creator God of whom he chooses to work with. “Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’ What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, ‘I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.’ **It does not, therefore, depend on man’s desire or effort, but on God’s mercy.** For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: ‘I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.’ Therefore, God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me: ‘Then why does God still blame us? **For who resists his will?** But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, **‘Why did you make me like this?’** Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?” (Romans 9:13-21).

Trust in our Creator. He so loved the world that He gave His one, truly tested stone to die so that this creation can live eternally. Trust in His love for you that He will do all He can to ensure that you live with Him forever because He loves you. “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matthew 6:26). Remember, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance** (II Peter 3:9), and “Therefore **the LORD longs to be gracious to you**, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For **the LORD is a God of justice**; How blessed are all those who long for Him” (Isaiah 30:18).

**HE WAS SENT TO FIND HIS BROTHERS.** “Now his brothers had gone to graze their father’s flocks near Shechem, and Israel said to Joseph, ‘As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them... Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me’” (Genesis 37:12-14). Like a mirror image, Christ was sent to find his lost brothers, the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 15:24). The house of Judah (the Jews) rejected Christ as their Savior, so the baton was passed to their brothers—the lost ten tribes whom Jesus was sent, for them to preach the gospel to the world.

At a distance, Joseph’s brothers saw him coming—a reflection of Christ’s coming foretold by the prophets. Before Joseph reached them, they plotted to kill him. The mysteries hidden in the multi-layers, shimmer through as we see the sons of God ruling over the nations from the heavens, also plotting their brother’s demise. “**None of the rulers of this age understood it**, for if they had, **THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CRUCIFIED THE LORD OF GLORY**” (I Corinthians 2:8). Joseph was thrown into a pit by his brothers on earth; Christ was put into the grave by his brothers in heaven and on earth. “**Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. Roaring lions [lion symbolic of royalty—royal family members] tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me.** I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint... you lay me in the dust of death... Dogs have surrounded me; a **band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet.** I can count all of my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing” (Psalm 22:12-18). Both Joseph and Jesus were sold for the price of a slave. Joseph’s royal coat was torn from his back and covered in blood. “It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces” (Genesis 37:33). During this evil age, those who follow Christ will suffer—that is the price of being a servant of God. “And he sent a man before them—Joseph, sold as a slave. They bruised his feet with shackles, his neck was put in irons” (Psalm 105: 17-18). God will choose enduring, humble servants who trust in Him and receive strength from Him to do His work—not self-reliant, self-determined, self-elevating, or self-glorifying rebels.

**SOLD AGAIN.** Joseph became the servant to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials in Egypt, a land far from the Promised Land. Everything that Joseph did, God blessed him and Potiphar noticed and promoted him; “he left in Joseph’s care everything he had... he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate” (Genesis 39:2-6). Joseph was well-built and handsome and it wasn’t long when Potiphar’s wife noticed him and asked him to go to bed with her

(Genesis 39:7). Relentlessly she threw herself on him, each time he declined. “One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. She caught him by his cloak and said, ‘Come to bed with me!’ But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house. She knew his conviction and remembered his words, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” So, she lied and accused him of an attempt of rape.

Far from his Father’s place in heaven, Christ was born on earth and became a servant. As the life of Joseph uncovers the greater story of Christ, it reveals the temptation by the evil one after Jesus had fasted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. “Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve’” (Matthew 4:8-10). Joseph and Jesus were tempted, but neither one of them weakened to commit adultery; they ran from adultery. They were unrelentingly loyal to serving and obeying the Almighty God.

During the dark days that lie ahead, a false church riding a beastly government will persecute the true church. Relentlessly, the true church will be attacked for a time that must be. “The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will say unheard-of things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been determined must take place” (Daniel 11:36). Christ’s Bride will not be tempted either, she will not join the false church and commit adultery. She will not deny Christ’s name or sin against God. She will overcome him [Satan] “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; **they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death**” (Revelation 12:11).

**THE ACCUSED—THAT HEBREW SLAVE WAS SILENT.** “This Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us!” (Genesis 39:14) “When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying ‘This is how your slave treated me,’ he burned with anger. Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined” (Genesis 39:19).

“Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest... The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for **false evidence against Jesus** so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward” (Matthew 27:57-59). “When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, **he gave no answer**. Then Pilate asked him, ‘Don’t you hear how many things they are accusing you of?’ But Jesus made no reply, not even to a single charge—to the great amazement of the governor” (Matthew 27 12-14). **Both Joseph and Jesus were innocent and falsely accused, yet accepted the penalty without a word.**

**BOTH JOSEPH AND JESUS WERE HEBREWS.** Together they represent all of the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph represents the 10-tribes of Israel—the northern house and Jesus born from the tribe of Judah represents the two-tribes, southern house of Israel. Today, they remain a divided kingdom, but their re-unification is prophesied; it is guaranteed. “This is what the Sovereign

LORD says: 'I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim's hand—and the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah's stick, making them a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand... they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms'" (Ezekiel 37:19, 22).

**GOD'S HUMBLE SERVANTS WERE NUMBERED AMONG THE TRANSGRESSORS.** "While Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there" (Genesis 39:21-22).

His fascinating story takes a twist when the cupbearer and the baker are thrown in prison and placed under his care. They each have a dream, which leads to Joseph's reply, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams" (Genesis 40:8). God gives Joseph the meaning of the dreams, but it wasn't until Pharaoh had a dream, two years later that the cupbearer remembered him and Joseph was brought before Pharaoh and again, Joseph gives credit to God. Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "It is not within my power, but God will speak concerning the welfare of Pharaoh" (Genesis 41:16).

No matter what place Joseph found himself in, he remembered God. Whether serving under the captain of the guard or in a prison, the place was of no significance; he revered and served God humbly not taking any glory for himself. He sought to reveal the power of God, which in his time, often came in the form of interpreting dreams.

So, Christ, who for a time, gave up his glorious eternal body to be born flesh and blood died with the shamed. "I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because **he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels**" (Isaiah 53:12). He did not speak in his own authority or take credit for himself. "I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me **what to say and how to say it**" (John 12:49). The work of God's hands is a meek and humble servant who is not self-seeking or selfish. And through God's grace, He shares His plan, knowledge and wisdom to those who seek and obey Him.

**LIFTED UP BY GOD, NOW THEY ARE CONSIDERED DISCERNING AND WISE.** "Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you" (Genesis 41:39-40). The rulership foreseen by Joseph is now his reality.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18), "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ], and through him [Christ] to **reconcile to himself ALL things**, whether **things on earth or things in heaven**, by **making peace through his blood, shed on the cross**" (Colossians 1:19-20).

Jesus and Joseph were given authority over everything, except with respect to the throne. God, our Creator remains supreme.



**HIS NAME IS CHANGED.** “Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. From Easton’s Bible Dictionary, the meaning of Joseph’s new name, Zaphenath-Paneah remains unclear. “This is a pure Egyptian word, and has been variously explained.” <http://biblehub.com/topical/z/zaphnathpaneah.htm>

Such drama and emotional turmoil bubble and boil in Joseph’s story, but now a time of peace and happiness ushers in a calm after the storm. Joseph is honored with a new name, reflective of his new title and authority, and a wife from a priestly family. 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians know this story well. Our Savior has received all authority in heaven and on earth, his new name, which remains unknown today will be written on the people who represent the Philadelphia church. “I will write on him [the Philadelphia church] the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem... and **my new name**” (Revelation 3:12). These people are the body of overcomers from the seven churches of Revelation—like Asenath, from a priestly family.

“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns, **He has a name written on him that no one but he himself knows**” (Revelation 19:11-12).

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. **I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it**, known only to the one who receives it” (Revelation 2:17).

Jacob overcame, Joseph overcame, Jesus overcame, and the true Believers—the faithful and loyal are overcoming. Like Jacob, Joseph and Jesus, they will receive a new name.

**STORAGE AND PROCESSES WERE ESTABLISHED DURING THE TIME OF ABUNDANCE IN PREPARATION FOR THE TIME OF FAMINE.** “Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh’s presence and traveled throughout Egypt. During the seven years of abundance, the land produced plentifully. Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities” (Genesis 41:46-49).

Christ began his ministry at the age of 30 years old. On the day of Pentecost, in the year of his resurrection, the church—a reborn group of people began. These people vowed to follow Christ wherever he goes. The baton was passed on that day to spread the good news of the gospel to the whole world. With the invention of the printing press and the development of the internet, information and knowledge of God’s word is everywhere. The Bible, resources, studies, research materials are easily accessible and available at a minimal cost for the most part. We are truly living in a time where the word of God can be easily accessed—so much, that its value is diminished and often thrown away. Initially, this Holy-Spirit-filled group of people, now known as the church, was a store house of truth. They were delighted to be given the job to preach the gospel to the whole world, but over the years, false teachers and false teachings

have polluted the pure truth and the seven churches of Revelation are now urged by Christ to overcome and return to the pure truth of God.

The famine is on the horizon. “The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph said” (Genesis 41:53-54). Christ too, has warned mankind of an upcoming trouble unsurpassed before nor ever will be. “For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, nobody would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened” (Matthew 24:21-22).

During the time of the famine of God’s word, an unusual event will take place. A Hebrew people will come to Christ and ask for God’s pure truth. “Then ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, that harm might come to him... Now Joseph was the governor of the land, the one who sold grain to all the people” (Genesis 42:3-6). Christ is the one we look to, for Christ makes intercession for us and through Christ we have access to our Father in heaven. “Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them” (Hebrews 7:25) and “Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us” (Romans 8:34).

“So Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground” (Genesis 42:6).

Joseph’s dream becomes a reality. “As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them... they did not recognize him” (Genesis 42:7-8). In this upcoming time of famine, 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel will turn to Christ for answers to their troubles, but he will speak harshly to them, having urged them for over 2,000 years in the book of Revelation to overcome.

Where do you come from? You are spies! I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance, but I hold this against you: some of you have forsaken your first love, some of you hold to the teaching of Balaam, likewise some hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitians, some tolerate the woman Jezebel and she misleads my servants into false religion, and many of you think that you are filled with truth, righteousness and wisdom, but these are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. Overcome the ways of this wicked world. Return to your Creator God and practice the pure Way of God (Revelation 3).

The churches don’t recognize Christ talking to them because he is not speaking to them face-to-face, just as Joseph initially spoke through an interpreter. Time and the movement away from the pure truth taught by the apostles has created a wall of confusion for the churches. They are unable to see how they have wandered off the narrow Way of Righteousness. Like Joseph’s brothers, they believe themselves to be honest and all of their teachings to be true.

“Your servants are honest men, not spies” (Genesis 42:11), Joseph’s brothers pleaded. They were offended by his harsh words and feared to return as the churches will fear, when they realize that they are far from honest, far from preaching the truth. Payment was not accepted by Joseph. There is no payment any human can pay for eternal life, nor can eternal life be earned through works. The greater story cannot be hidden. Salvation comes from the precious gift of grace from our Creator—the Almighty God. Joseph holds them in contempt for their waywardness and imprisons Simeon, the most brutal of the family of boys, as ransom. The remaining nine return home with their money, grain and having disclosed that they have a younger brother hidden in safety with their father. Christ will feed the 21<sup>st</sup> century Israelites, but he too, will hold them accountable for their waywardness. The churches have God’s Holy Spirit and today a wealth of access to His word. They are without excuse. They should have learned God’s truth, repented and lived the Way of God during the time of abundance.

“But they replied, ‘Your servants were twelve brothers, the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and **one is no more**” (Genesis 42:13).

After many years, they still perpetuated the lie that their brother, Joseph was dead—now they are believing their own lie. Many Christians reduce the monumental role and testimony of Christ into a passionate story, a nice idea, or a curious myth. Most of the Jews [the house of Judah] rejected Christ and refuse to accept him as their Savior. The admonition of Christ for his churches to overcome has faded from the pages written in Revelation 3, so they continue teaching misconceptions, disinformation and misinformation. They image Joseph’s brothers.

But hidden from view is a small, faithful and loyal group of people who follow Christ wherever he goes. Benjamin was the only brother—his blood brother who did not betray him. Joseph demands that his brothers bring Benjamin to him, if they want to live. Christ will do the same. He will demand to have his faithful church, his Bride brought near. Jacob, like God our father in heaven, is very protective of His ‘preserved ones’ under His direct care and like Jacob, He will be reluctant to let them go, for God will have to rely on Joseph’s wayward brothers who image the unreliable churches teaching a mixture of truth and falsehood to protect this younger and vulnerable brother—God’s tender faithful church on their journey to Joseph—Christ. This will take place just prior to the Great Tribulation when Satan, in his fury discovering that his time is short, pursues the woman [the faithful, loved church] who gave birth to Christ. This church will be thrust into the open. During her escape to a place of safety, she will get help from “the earth” (Revelation 12:16)—an image yet to be witnessed, yet to be identified.

**God’s ‘preserved ones’ will be spared.** “‘You have said, ‘It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape. Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. **A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name. ‘They will be mine,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘in the day when I make up treasured possession. I WILL SPARE THEM,** just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him” (Malachi 3:14-17).

**LOVE FOR HIS BROTHERS BROUGHT HIM TO TEARS, MORE THAN ONCE.** Finally, after Joseph continues to confront them, they begin to remember how they treated their brother who is “no more”. They accuse each other for their part in the wrong doing. “They said to one another, ‘Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when **he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come upon us...**’ They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter. **He turned away from them and began to weep**” (Genesis 42:21-24).

This ancient story images a time, when Christ is given authority over the lives of all mankind. His brothers—now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are a group of nations of seven churches, who won’t initially recognize him. He knows them. “The men had been **seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; and they looked at each other in astonishment**” (Genesis 43:33). And he wept.

Later when they returned a second time, Joseph is brought to tears when he sees his brother, Benjamin. “As he looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother’s son, he asked, ‘Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?’... Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, **Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there**” (Genesis 43:29-30).

Benjamin did not take part in the betrayal of Joseph. He is Joseph’s blood brother. This image is painting a picture of the unique relationship felt by Joseph for Benjamin—a close and tender relationship. It is a story God Almighty wants His people to understand and cherish. The Philadelphia church is characteristic of remaining faithful to Christ. He says, “you have kept my word and not denied my name” (Revelation 3:8). The female gender is always used when referring to the church. The image of brothers in this story is because the story is told at the national level which includes their churches. Benjamin represents the core group within God’s ultimate goal of producing a holy kingdom of royal priests. This holy kingdom of royal priests will comprise of all twelve tribes. All of Israel will be saved (Romans 11:26).

Judah brings Joseph to tears through his genuine humility, his leadership and unrelenting promise of Benjamin’s protection given to his father. Judah’s speech, while nine of his brothers remained silent, opened Joseph’s heart to bring his brothers close to him. “Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, ‘Have everyone leave my presence!’ So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. And **he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it**” (Genesis 45:1-2).

Still in the future, Christ will bring all of 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel, that is, all twelve nations, before him to see whether they are worthy of eternal life. One nation, the one prepared to lay down his life to protect God’s cherished son—their youngest brother will stand up as the leader among his brothers to prove their eternal change of heart. Christ will not send them away; this time, he will invite them to stay close to him.

Judah's plea to Joseph is heart wrenching. "So now, if the boy is not with us when I go back to your servant my father and if my father, whose life is closely bound up with the boy's life, sees that the boy isn't there, he will die. Your servant will bring the gray head of our father down to the grave in sorrow. Your servant guaranteed the boy's safety to my father. I said, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!' Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord's slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come upon my father" (Genesis 44:30-34).

An emotionally filled scene written in the book of Zechariah describes the pain filled remorse of the Jewish people on **that** day. "On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem. And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of **grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a first born son.** On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plains of Megiddo" (Zechariah 12:9-11).

The Jews will cry out and acknowledge Christ is their Messiah. "**You will not see Christ again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'**" (Matthew 23:39). Christ will hear them; they will receive God's grace.

"Then **he [Joseph] threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them**" (Genesis 45:14).

Joseph who imaged Christ in his life on earth, never stopped loving his brothers, but they certainly tested him. And again, after Jacob died, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" (Genesis 50:15) **They lie again,** distrusting Joseph's love for them and "when their message came to him, **Joseph wept**" (Genesis 50:17).

How many times have the houses of Israel caused Jesus to weep?

"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him." And **so He wept**" (John 1:11).

"And he said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' **Jesus wept.** So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?' (John 11:34-37)

Christ suffered much sadness and disappointment in the people who claim to be God's chosen. They witnessed many, many wonders and miracles, yet still, the religious leaders hated him causing their people to reject him.

**HIS CALLING BECOMES CLEAR.** At thirty years old, Joseph began to rule. His calling was clear to him. Joseph understood his two-fold God-given commission. "But God sent me ahead of you

1. **to preserve for you a remnant on earth and**
2. **to save your lives by a great deliverance”** (Genesis 45:7).

Christ understood his two-fold purpose:

1. Preserve his church
2. Pay the penalty for sin to save his brothers, all twelve tribes of Israel and to save all of mankind.

“And this is the will of him who sent me, that **I shall lose none of all those he has given me**, but raise them up at the last day” (John 6:39).

“For as in Adam all die, so also **in Christ all will be made alive**. But each in his own order: **Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming”** (I Corinthians 15:22-23).

“**For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life**, and I will raise them up at the last day” (John 6:40).

“For God so loved the world that **he gave his one unique Son**, that **whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life”** (John 3:16).

The lives of Joseph and Jesus meet at this very point where their calling is no longer a mirror image but one of the same—the preserving of the faithful and true people throughout the ages—the faithful remnant that God protects and holds dear to his heart and the rest of mankind. Joseph was not only saving his brothers, the Egyptians and all who came to buy food—his example, his leadership, his faith in God took them all into a higher place ruled by love.

**THE END TIMES FAITHFUL CHURCH JOURNEYS INTO CHRIST’S CARE.** The words preserved in Revelation peel open a long-hidden mystery. “A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head” (Revelation 12:1). This wondrous sign is the holy family of Israel—a royal church who gives birth to their Savior, then is pursued by a gigantic raging, wild dragon.

“She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth... to a son [Jesus]... the woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days” (Revelation 12:2-6). She is the faithful group of people who have been preserved since the birth of Israel all the way into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. She is a mere remnant of this Hebrew family; she is vulnerable, pure and loyal to God Almighty and follows Christ wherever he goes. The great dragon in his seething rage kicks up a dust storm in his pursuit for her. Foolish Satan, he is no match for the Supreme God. God Almighty won’t allow Satan to harm this body of people. She is “given the wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and a half” (Revelation 12:14). The imagery of a ‘great eagle’ is intriguing. The Israelites left Egypt on the wings of an eagle.

“You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how **I bore you on eagles’ wings** and brought you to myself” (Exodus 19:4).

A miracle of wonder will take God’s cherished people to safety before the release of horror that will consume this planet in darkness and pain.

**JOSEPH’S SILVER CUP.** Joseph’s cup has gone missing! “Let it be as you say. Whoever is found to have it will become my slave; the rest of you will be free from blame” (Genesis 44:16).

What meaning lies in this cryptic chapter in Joseph’s story of his silver cup secretly hidden in Benjamin’s sack that releases a gush of tension, anxiety and terror at the moment when everything appeared resolved?

Joseph’s plan was to keep only his younger brother with him—the brother who did not betray him; his blood brother. But, Judah stood in the way. He was bound to his promise with his father; he was unmoveable. His steadfast promise changed Joseph’s heart. We can expect Judah will again demonstrate an unrelenting promise made to God that will change Christ’s heart and the prophecy recorded in Romans 11 will be fulfilled, “**All of Israel will be saved.**” When Paul quoted that scripture, he was reminding the Jews that their brothers, the 10-tribed brothers, will be saved. The Jews thought that only they from the family of Israelites would be saved. Today, the meaning of the same scripture is reversed. The Christians who have accepted Christ as their Savior are saved; we are now waiting for the Jews to accept Christ as their Savior and be saved; hence, ALL OF ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED.

Five years remaining in the famine, Joseph reveals himself. They were terrified, but he asked them to come close and he comforted them by not reprimanding them for betraying him, rather, that he was sold as a slave to save lives. He explained, “It wasn’t you who sent me here, but God” (Genesis 45:8).

When Christ reveals himself and he stands face-to-face before 21<sup>st</sup> century Judo-Christians, they will be terrified. Their relationship is distant and superficial. Their belief in God and Christ is vague and blurry. They claim to do good works, but they break God’s commandments. They do not study and search out the truth from the scriptures as the Bereans did and they hold onto the traditions of men mixing paganism with truth. They can expect a time of trouble. During that terrifying time, they will sincerely repent and then, and only then, will Christ bring them close to him. They will feel intense guilt and shame, but he will comfort them and explain that his sufferings were planned from before creation to bring forgiveness of sin to them and all of mankind.

**BENJAMIN’S IS MORE THAN A BROTHER.** Rachel called him “Benoni” meaning “son of my sorrow” when he was born, but Jacob changed his name to “Benjamin” meaning “son of my right hand.” Joseph’s name means “he will add.” Joseph added Benjamin. Benjamin was Joseph’s only blood brother. He represents the added body of Christ—his Bride and nation of faithful people. Joseph cried aloud when he revealed himself. The pain of holding back his love

for Benjamin and his brothers was intense—Christ so loves his Bride and urges the seven churches of Revelation to overcome and remove the spots, wrinkles, and blemishes in their teachings, which keep them far and away.

When portions were served from Joseph's table to his brothers, **Benjamin's portion was five times more** than his brothers. They feasted and drank freely with him (Genesis 43:34) also, Joseph "To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and **five sets of clothes**" (Genesis 45:22).

The imagery of Benjamin receiving five times the meal portion and five sets of clothes foretells of the time when Christ gives his faithful and loyal people five times the knowledge, understanding and wisdom of God's word through the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit and they will shine five times brighter than their family members not only in their resurrected appearance but also in godliness and love.

Benjamin images Christ's Bride who the Bible often refers to as a remnant people; the remnant Joseph and Jesus were commissioned to preserve. They will have a significant role during the last five years of Jacob's Trouble. Joseph put his cup into Benjamin's bag to identify who he has chosen to be his servant. Joseph's cup is a cup of authority and a cup of suffering. Benjamin's brothers will watch in amazement the rise of their youngest brother who was previously insignificant—protected and hidden by their father. The boy mirrors a group of people who are obscure and not listed among the aged churches who have been around for hundreds of years; the same aged churches who hold onto the traditions of men, mixing pagan practices into the doctrines of God.

The tribe of Benjamin were known warriors. During the last days of this evil age, there will be no time to lure people to God, as fishers of men do. The urgency of the times will bring in the Benjamin hunters who will tear the lies, misconceptions, disinformation, misinformation away to expose the pure truth of God's word. They will feed the people God's truth and confront with the aggression of a warrior, falsehood and destroy it.

"Benjamin shall ravin (as) a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil" (Genesis 49:27).

**JOSEPH KNEW THEM, CHRIST KNEW THEM MORE THAN THEY KNEW THEMSELVES.** Joseph sat his brothers in order of their age and they were amazed. Christ is very much aware of the doings of the twelve nations of Israel, his seven churches of Revelation and their short-comings. He identifies every church by their characteristics spoken of in the Book of Revelation. The churches will be aghast. They have been preaching half truths, mixing truth, and at times, outright lying to their congregation. The twelve nations are filled with corruption at every level. They all will be scared as Joseph's brothers were foretold over three thousand years ago.



### **DURING JACOB'S TIME OF TROUBLE, PEOPLE SELL EVERYTHING TO GET THE WORD OF GOD.**

Joseph is the governor in charge of the selling of grain as Christ, today, is our access to eternal life. "When the money of the people of Egypt and Canaan was gone, all Egypt came to Joseph and said, 'Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? Our money is used up.' 'Then bring your livestock,' said Joseph... When that year was over... there is nothing left for our lord except our bodies and our land... Buy out land in exchange for food and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh... So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh's and Joseph reduced the people to servitude, from one end of Egypt to the other" (Genesis 47:15-21).

During Jacob's Trouble, a great tribulation during the final days on this evil world, all people will come into the servitude of God. They will exchange all of their wealth and everything that they own for survival. This will be done through Christ. He will charge them; willingly they will comply.

**CHRIST IS A HUMBLE SERVANT OF GOD, AND SON.** "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used TO HIS OWN ADVANTAGE; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:6-8)

**FATHER AND SON UNITE WHEN ALL THINGS ARE RESTORED.** Joseph has everything functioning in order when he talks to his brothers and he is ready for his father's arrival. "Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me—you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have'" (Genesis 45:9-10).

Christ is working now to bring all things in order, as they were at one time. When he is finished, our Father in heaven will dwell with us. "And he made known to us the **mystery of his will** according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to **bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ**" (Ephesians 1:9-10).

"Heaven must receive him until **the time comes for God to restore everything**, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21).

**CHRIST WILL REIGN UNTIL ALL ENEMIES ARE DESTROYED.** "For He [Christ] must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death" (I Corinthians 15:26).

“He [Christ] will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for the LORD has spoken” (Isaiah 25:8).

### **THE FINAL TASK FOR CHRIST WILL BE TO HAND BACK ALL AUTHORITY AND BECOME SUBJECT TO HIS FATHER IN HEAVEN WHO WILL RULE OVER ALL AND THROUGH ALL.**

**“When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all”** (I Corinthians 15:25).

This scripture goes back to Joseph’s dream that Jacob kept in mind. “‘I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.’ When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, ‘What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?’ His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind” (Genesis 37:10-11).

The imagery of sun, moon and stars was not a mystery to Jacob, but the bowing down to Joseph of his father and mother was truly a great mystery that he did not discard but kept in mind. That great mystery was understood by the Apostle Paul. He told the Corinthians that Christ will rule second in charge, as Joseph reigned second in charge, until all evil is destroyed and things are restored as they were before iniquity was found.

**“Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he ‘has put everything under his feet.’ Now when it says that ‘everything’ has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all”** (I Corinthians 15:24-28).

Note, Christ is now ruling over God’s kingdom in heaven. He is second in-charge and overthrowing the wicked heavenly rulers, powers and authorities referred to in Ephesians 6:12 who are our true enemies. Our enemies are not comprised of flesh and blood. Christ will continue ruling God’s kingdom until all sin and iniquity is destroyed, hence no more death. Christ is presently battling the wicked heavenly rulers: Satan, rogue eternal sons of God and fallen angels. God Almighty remains supreme, but Christ is ruling with full control as Joseph ruled in his day. When Christ has restored all things, he will bend his knee and hand back full control of God’s kingdom and then, God will rule as the head and Christ as his body.

**“When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all”** (I Corinthians 15:28).

God Almighty trusts Jesus Christ. About Christ God says, “Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of Your kingdom. **You have loved righteousness**

**and hated wickedness**; therefore, God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions” (Hebrews 1:8-9).

This rich scripture tells a story of its own. Christ, who God says “loved righteousness and hated wickedness was anointed beyond his companions” (Hebrews 1:9). These companions are heavenly angels. Christ became superior to them.

“He became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father?’

Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’?

And again, when God brings his first-born into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him.’

In speaking of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.’ But about the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore, **God, your God, has set you above your companions**” (Hebrews 1:4-9).

Christ was the angel of God who:

- **To ABRAHAM**

- **The angel of God is a spokesperson for God.** “And the **angel of the LORD** called unto him out of heaven, and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham’ and he said, ‘Here am I’. He said, ‘Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now, I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me” (Genesis 22:11-12).
- “And the **angel of the LORD** called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time and said ‘This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son [heir], indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies” (Genesis 22:15-17).

- **To JACOB**

- **The angel of God wrestled with Jacob and changed his name.** “But Jacob replied, ‘I will not let you go unless you bless me.’ Then **the man** asked him, ‘What is your name?’ ‘Jacob,’ he answered. Then **the man** said, ‘Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have **struggled with God** and with

men and have overcome.’ ... Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, **‘It is because I saw God face-to-face, and yet my life was spared’**” (Genesis 32:30).  
Hosea says, “In the womb he grasped his brother’s heel; as a man he struggled with God. Yes, **he wrestled with the angel and prevailed**; He wept and begged for his favor” (Hosea 12:3-4).

- **For JOSEPH**

- **The angel of the LORD was his protector.** Then he blessed Joseph and said, "May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, **the angel who has delivered me from all harm—may he bless these boys**” (Genesis 48:15-16).

- **MOSES**

- **Saw the angel of the LORD and heard God; BOTH were together in the burning bush.** “Now Moses was tending the flock... There **the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush.** Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up... When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, **God called to him from within the bush,** ‘Moses, Moses’ and Moses said, ‘Here I am.’ ‘Do not come any closer,’ God said. ‘Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground...’

The angel of the LORD is visible, he “appeared.” Both the Almighty God and the angel of the LORD were in the burning bush. One was visible and the other was not.

- **To the ISRAELITES**

- **The angel of the LORD was their guardian.** "See, I am sending an angel ahead of you **to guard you along the way** and to **bring you to the place I have prepared.** Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. **Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him**” (Exodus 23:20-21).

“He will not forgive your rebellion” indicates that this angel of the LORD has power to judge and sentence; he is no mere messenger. “My Name is in him” reveals his identity. His name is **YasHUaH.**

- **To GIDEON**

- **The angel of the LORD met with him and performed a burnt sacrifice.** “Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. **Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.** When Gideon saw that he was the angel of the LORD, he said, ‘**Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face.**’ **The LORD said to him, ‘Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die’**” (Judges 6:21-23).

In this story, Gideon is talking with **both** the angel of the LORD and the God.

- **To the WORLD**

- **The angel was sent to save them.** “I will send my angel, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; **the messenger of the covenant**, whom you desire, will come,’ says the LORD Almighty” (Malachi 3:1).

### **THE WORLD THAT BECAME A DESERT FROM WICKEDNESS WILL BLOSSOM WITH TRUTH.**

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a **new thing [restoring all things]!** Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland...” (Isaiah 43:18-19).

### **THE LOYAL AND FAITHFUL SAINTS WILL BE RICHLY REWARDED AND HONORED.**

“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, **‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God’**” (Revelation 21:2-3).

### **JOSEPH A SHEPHERD, CHRIST A SHEPHERD; JOSEPH SAVED, CHRIST OUR SAVIOR**

The story of Joseph is the story of Christ foretold over 3,000 years ago. It is the greatest story ever told. A story preserved and revealed in full to Christ’s Bride—His preserved.

The shepherds and shepherdesses of this world are quiet teachers who have searched out the truth and live by the word of God. They are the remnant who enter into a blood covenant with Christ, not loving their life unto death. They too are the betrayed, the accused, and the hated, but they are not discouraged. They willingly share in Christ’s cup of suffering. They put all their hope and faith in the promises to come.



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