

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

Isn't this exactly what the Scribes and Pharisees did with Jesus, after he began his public ministry on earth? As the followers of Jesus grew in number, and the focal point of attention was taken away from the Scribes and Pharisees; they showed themselves to be far off from the Lord. Jesus did come near to them and revealed their hypocrisy, which drove them to conspire to kill Jesus.

Let's look at a scripture reference for this verse: *Ps 31:11-24; 11 "I was a reproach among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me. 12 I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel. 13 For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life. 14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God. 15 My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. 16 Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me for thy mercies' sake. 17 Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave. 18 Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous. 19 Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! 20 Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. 21 Blessed be the LORD: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city. 22 For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou hearest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee. 23 O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. 24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD."* This was an actuality in the life of King David, Which tells the same story of the life of Joseph. This story prophetically demonstrates the life of Jesus incarnate. It also gives us a picture of what our lives as Christians will be like.

We see in this chapter, and the Psalms' text above, the depiction of our own lives in this world. How? When we are born again; we are seen afar off by the world around us, just as Joseph's brethren saw him afar off. The unsaved of the world, and the devil, see us and they despise us, because they despise our Saviour and Lord. They immediately begin to plot, how they may infiltrate our defenses, and bring us back into captivity and death.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. 20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Joseph's brethren were intent upon making the dreams of Joseph, God's voice, and word of truth, come to naught. We notice; their scheming includes having to make up lies to make them look innocent to their father. What Joseph's brethren do not understand is; their actions, which are evil and malicious, God will use to preserve the whole family of Israel alive in the future. This will be manifested

by, what to Joseph's brethren will be his resurrection from the dead, and revelation to them that he is alive and rules in Egypt.

Isn't this what the Scribes, the Pharisees, and the rulers of Israel, who were Jesus' brethren, did in the life of Jesus? They believed that killing the body would put an end to the ministry of Jesus Christ, which they despised because it took away their power, and glory of their flesh, to rule and reign in the lives of the Israelites. What they did not understand was their actions were only fulfilling the will and purpose of God. They did not understand that the pit, the grave, could not contain him. We have the testimony, of the word of God, that the Jesus' resurrection from the grave, the revealing of the resurrected body of Christ, which was revealed to a host large enough to make it indisputable, and the ascension of Jesus into heaven in clouds of power and glory, would only cause the gospel of Jesus Christ to flourish upon the earth. Every born-again sinner realizes that Jesus is alive and the ruler over all things whether in heaven or upon the earth.

Joseph had told of the dreams God gave him, which taught that he would ultimately be ruler over all his family, and his brethren hated him for them. Jesus foretold of his death, his burial, and his resurrection, and his eternal kingdom, and his brethren, the rulers of Israel, hated him.

21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. 22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

Reuben attempted to save Joseph, from death by his brethren, but failed in his attempt to restore Joseph to his father, that the purpose of God might be made manifest. There were those who attempted to deliver Jesus from death:

- Some were sent to take Jesus and bring him before the council, but they could not do it. As the Scribes and Pharisees railed upon them, Nicodemus spoke up on behalf of Christ, seen in: *Joh 7:50-53; 50 "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. 53 And every man went unto his own house."*
- Just as the efforts of Reuben to save Joseph from death were frustrated, so were the efforts of Pilate to release Jesus and spare him from death.

However, these attempts to save the lives of Joseph and Jesus failed, that the purpose of God might be made manifest.

23 And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him; 24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. 25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. 26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

"*they stript Joseph out of his coat*" A picture of what they did to Jesus at his crucifixion in: *Joh 19:23-24; 23 "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top*

throughout. 24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did."

"his coat of many colours that was on him" Jesus yielded up his many offices that he fulfilled, represented by the many colors of the coat, and reduced himself to mortal man, that he might die the death of the sacrificial Lamb death prescribed to him by God.

"And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it" They placed Joseph in a pit to die, which had no life sustenance in it. Joseph, by the will of God, was resurrected from this pit to life. They put the body of Jesus into a pit, the tomb, and we notice that it is stated that there was no water in the pit. This pit had no sustenance of life in it. Jesus was resurrected from the grave to life eternal. Had Jesus remained in the tomb, and not risen from the dead, there would be no sustenance of life, nor fountain of living waters, for God's people today.

"And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?" Judah tells his brethren; we don't gain anything by killing our brother, however, we might sell him as a slave to these travelers. This will accomplish the goal of ridding ourselves of our brother, and we will get paid for selling him.

John Wesley's Commentary points out: The idea of selling Joseph for twenty pieces of silver came from Judah. It was Judas that sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. The names Judah and Judas are sometimes interchanged in use.

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content. 28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Comparatively in scripture we find: **Mt 26:14-15; 14 "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver."** Joseph being sold for silver, wordly gain, is picturesque of Christ being sold for 30 pieces of silver. Some will object; this is not a good comparison, since Joseph was sold into slavery and Jesus was sold to his death. Let me ask you this: When his brethren sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites, was not Joseph dead to them? When Joseph's brethren come before Joseph in Egypt to buy corn; they confess that Joseph is dead: **Ge 42:13 "And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not."** When Joseph reveals himself to his brethren is a picture of the resurrection from the dead.

"and let not our hand be upon him;" and "sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites" We point out; The priesthood of the law service could not sentence Jesus to death, seen in: **Joh 18:31 "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:"** Why? They could not find a fault, or a sin in him, which would condemn him to death under the law. They only could accuse him with false accusations. Therefore, they sent him to the Romans to be sentenced to death under the act of treason, declaring

he was proclaimed a king over the Jews, and thereby in insurrection against the throne of natural government.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. 30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? 31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; 32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. 33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. 34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

We see; the plan of deceit is a continuously, self-reproduction of more lies and deceit. It requires of Joseph's brethren, a constant act of believing that Joseph is dead, all the while knowing that he was alive at their last sight of him. We understand from scripture that many of the Jews continued in the ceremonial and sacrificial law service after the death and resurrection of Jesus. With the death and resurrection of Jesus, which brought to fruition the age of salvation by grace, it requires a constant act of not believing that Jesus is the Christ, and that he has not resurrected and fulfilled the sacrificial law requirement forever.

"And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him" I point out here; though they may not be named in scripture, Jacob had not only sons, but he also had daughters, plural form.

"but he refused to be comforted" Jacob was not comforted by the efforts of his children for the loss of his beloved son Joseph. Neither can the lies of satan bring comfort and peace to the heart of one who is born again, who desires to see the beloved Son of God face to face.

"For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him." Jacob does not know that this is not a true statement, because in his distress in the belief that Joseph is dead, he has forgotten the dreams of Joseph, which tell him that he shall see his beloved son again, and that he and the whole family will bow in reverence to him. Likewise, we may go mourning in this life journey, but, if we be children of God, we will not go to the grave without being called to come, to Jesus by the power of the Holy Ghost, and to behold the Beloved Son of God.

Jesus will always reveal himself to God's elect and make known to them they have been saved before they go to the grave. After all, salvation does not come in the grave, but it happens in life, as demonstrated by scripture in: **1Co 15:19 "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."** You see, we are born again in life and being born again we go to the grave with the hope of the resurrection of the body unto eternal life.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

In summary of this chapter: Joseph's continual suffering and bondage is moving, as required by God, to attain the ultimate purpose of salvation for Israel and his whole family. We shall see; the

faithfulness of Joseph in God as we continue our study. This faithfulness is to be a source of strength and encouragement to us today. Joseph believed God would do what he had showed him in his dreams. We know this from his steadfastness of faith in God, which will be demonstrated by his life from henceforth.

Joseph's life, from henceforth, will be filled with trials and tribulations, which will ultimately end with Joseph rising to the position of 2nd in command of Egypt, seen in: **Ge 41:39-43; 39 "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42 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; 43 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."**

Jesus has acknowledged only one superior to him, and that is God the Father, seen in:

- **Joh 10:29 "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."**
- **Joh 14:28 "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."**

Jesus has risen from incarnation to heaven, and God the Father has given all things into his hands. Jesus, in a manner of speaking is 2nd in command over all things in heaven and earth, as seen in:

- **Mt 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."**
- **Joh 17:1-3; 1 "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."**

We trust, you have seen, in this chapter, that Joseph's life is a portrait of the incarnate life of Jesus. We trust, you have seen and understand that Joseph, in all the terrible circumstances he endured in his life, will be the saviour of his family. Likewise, Jesus suffered more terrible circumstances on earth than any person could even begin to imagine, that he might be the Saviour of all of God's people. Rejoice, I say rejoice, our eternal salvation is secure in Jesus Christ, Lord and Saviour. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!