

## God's Heavy Hand

*Genesis 44*

*We need re-creation by Christ in order that the image of God, once distorted by sin, may be restored. We need deliverance from the dominion of sin in order that we may live freely for God. We need to be rescued from the power of Satan so that our lives may be given to Christ the Lord as his glad bondservants. We need to be saved from the wrath of God so that, released from this most terrifying of all prospects, we may live the life of forgiven sinners. It is the gospel of God that meets our need. It comes to us in our sin and begins to undo what had been wrongly done in our lives in order that God's image may be restored. Sinclair Ferguson*

- I. The process that God was putting the patriarchs through was a profoundly disturbing experience necessary for their spiritual awakening. *El Shaddai* used godly Joseph to make them aware of his condemning judgment of their sin.

Gen. 44:1-13; Rom. 7:7

- a. God's purpose was to empty his brothers of the pride (self-righteousness) that was preventing them from admitting to and facing the sin that had profoundly affected their whole family.

Gen. 44:1-12; Rom. 7:24

- b. God's purpose in bringing about a spiritual awakening in the hearts of the patriarchs was to take away any means of escape from accountability for their sin.

Gen. 44:13; 37:34-35; Psalm 32:3

- II. God brought the patriarchs to complete brokenness before Joseph to seek forgiveness and salvation from the heart-rending realization that they were guilty before *El Shaddai*.

Gen. 44:14-34; Rom. 3:10-11

- a. The full realization of their guilt emptied Joseph's brothers of any vestige of pride, self-righteousness, self-reliance or self-worth. They had nothing to stand on but the hope of mercy and forgiveness.

Gen. 44:14-17; Rom. 3:10-11; Gen. 37:26

- b. Judah's stance before Joseph speaks of a man completely humbled by the realization that there was nothing in him to save the patriarchs and Israel from the wrath of Joseph. It moved him to be completely honest and forthright.

Gen. 44:18-29

- c. Judah's brokenness brought him to a true heartfelt realization of what their sin had done to Joseph and their father. God instilled in his heart mercy and a strong determination to self-sacrificially right the wrongs that had been done.

Gen. 44:30-34; Ex. 20:12