

POPULAR STORIES SERIES

CHAPTER 13

JOSEPH AND HIS COAT OF COLORS

Genesis 37: 3

Our next popular story is one that almost everyone has heard of: Joseph and his Coat of Colors.

Genesis 37: 3: Now Israel...made him a coat of many colours.

Joseph and his coat of divers colors typifies Christ and all that distinguishes Christ above his brethren.

“A coat of many colors” was a garment of fine needlework, made of divers colors, inside and out, worn to distinguish a person above others.

Garments of divers colors were fit for soldiers who were champions in warfare. We read of garments of “divers colors on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?” (Ju 5: 30) Christ is the Captain of our Warfare. He is distinguished above us on both sides—inside and out—holy and righteous.

King’s daughters wore garments of divers colors to distinguish them as undefiled virgins “And she had a garment of divers colors upon her: for with such robes were the King’s daughters that were virgins appareled.” (2 Sam 13: 18) Christ is distinguished above us for his holy and undefiled character. “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” (He 7: 26)

Later, we find God distinguished the door of entrance on the east side of the tabernacle from all other doors by needlework of many colors. “Thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework.” (Ex 26: 36) Adam was cast out of the garden—out of God’s presence—east of Eden. That door on the east side of the tabernacle typifies entrance into God’s presence. Christ is distinguished by God as THE Door. Christ is the only Way through whom sinners may have access into God’s presence.

The different colors in Joseph’s coat are symbolic of the divers reasons why Joseph’s father loved Joseph. They typify the divers reasons why God the Father loves his only begotten Son, Christ Jesus.

Yet, those same reasons are why Joseph’s brethren hated Joseph at first. But, later, they become the reasons for which they rejoiced in Joseph and loved him. The same reasons for which we hate Christ in our unregenerate state become the reasons we love him when God saves us.

So Joseph is a type of Christ. His coat of many colors is symbolic of the many things which distinguishes Christ above sinners. Those are the reasons for which the lost sinner hates Christ. But they become the same reasons for which the saved sinner loves Christ.

THE COLOR OF CHRIST’S PERSON

First, there is the color of Christ’s person: his faithfulness, holiness, righteousness, lovingkindness, mercy and truth—**Genesis 37: 2:...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.**

Joseph was shepherding his father’s sheep, feeding the flock with his brethren. But his brethren were involved in something the scripture calls “evil.” So he “brought unto his father their evil report.”

It shows, from an early age, that Joseph was faithful to his father and to his brethren. He was of a holy and godly character: righteous, truthful, upright, full of integrity. Joseph showed a spirit of willing obedience to his father and an

unwillingness to be a partaker of his brethren's sins. He was faithful to the business his father sent him to do. This young man would not see his father deceived by his sons. He would not see his father's sheep harmed. Though he would suffer the anger of his brethren, it was for their own good, that he reported it to their father.

Now, let's put ourselves in the shoes of his brethren. By nature, do we like what Joseph did? No. Neither did his brethren. For the same reason, the carnal mind is enmity against the Son of God. (Rom 8: 7)

The Son of God came among his brethren—God with us. Joseph was 17. But Christ was born of a virgin—holy and righteous—from his mother's womb.

Isaiah 11: 2: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Christ walked this earth, faithful to his Father. He said, "I must be about my Father's business." (Lu 2: 49) The Son of God is the faithful Shepherd of God the Father's sheep—his elect. Christ came to feed his father's sheep. He came to lay down his life for the sheep.

Yet, what did Christ find? He found us guilty of evil! The religious leaders were not feeding God's sheep, they were making merchandise of men's souls. Most are doing the same to this day. Christ said, "I am the good Shepherd. All that came before me were thieves and robbers." (Jn 10: 8, 11) That is us, "thieves and robbers."

It is the Light of Christ's faithfulness and holiness and righteousness that reveals our unfaithful, ungodly, unrighteous hearts and deeds. Simeon said of the Son of God, "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against...that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (Lu 2: 34, 35) Christ is the Word of God and the Word of God is "is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb 4: 12) Christ said, "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil" (Jn 7:7). He said,

John 15:22: If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. 23: He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24: 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. 25: But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

If left in our sin-nature, this is why we will not come to Christ—because Christ is Light—Faithful, Holy, and Righteous In his Light, Christ reveals our darkness, that our so-called faithfulness and righteousness and holiness is sinful and evil. He said,

John 3: 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

But later, we will see, Joseph's brethren were saved by Joseph being a faithful man of integrity and upright dealing. These things that exposed them as being unfaithful and unrighteous for which they hated him now, will be the very things that they will love Joseph for later.

So it is, when Christ comes in grace to our hearts, the very same person and character for which we hated Christ, become the very person in whom we rejoice and love. The sinner saved by grace rejoices because Christ is sovereign God with us. We rejoice that Christ is holy and righteous—our holiness and our righteousness. We love him because Christ is Faithful to his Father on our behalf and faithful to us. Sinner's brought by God to Christ's feet rejoice and love Christ because Christ came to feed his father's sheep, to lay down his life for the sheep. And he did just that!

Now which are you and I? When Christ exposed the Pharisee's they hated him for it. They hid behind their self-righteousness. But when Christ revealed the sins of the woman at the well, she bowed and believed on him and was saved. Sinners either hide in their self-righteous darkness or come to Christ the Light confessing they need Christ to be their Person and their Works before God.

John 3: 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Sinner, which one are you?

THE COLOR OF GOD THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR HIS SON

Secondly, there is the distinguishing color of God the Father's love for Christ his Son—**Genesis 37: 3: 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 colours.**

Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his children. Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel, his lawful wife. Christ is the Son of God the Father's love, his Firstborn, his only begotten Son.

Joseph was the son of Jacob's old age. Christ is the Son of God's old age. His Son from eternity.

Proverbs 8: 22: The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way before His works of old; 23: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was...30: Then I was by Him, as One brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.

The phrase "the son of his old age" also means Joseph was the son of wisdom. The Son of God is God's Wisdom. (1 Cor 1: 24) Christ is God's Wisdom to eternally save his people from our sins in Christ our Surety. Christ is God's Wisdom how God can be just and Justifier of his people. Christ is God's Wisdom of how he can unite God and Man in One.

Like as Joseph distinguished Joseph above his brethren with a coat of many colors, God the Father distinguished Christ above all his brethren. God spoke from heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Matthew 17:5). There is only one Son of whom God the Father said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased." (Mt 3: 17) From Adam until the end of time, it is not you and not me and not any other man. Christ the Son of God alone. He is the Son of God's love; the Son in whom God is well-pleased. You and I will never be pleasing to God except in Christ.

Yet, because God loves his Son and will give his Son all the glory and preeminence in our salvation—natural man hates Christ—**Genesis 37: 4: 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.**

We see this of Christ in the treatment Christ received while he walked this earth. We see it in the treatment Christ receives now by false religionists and irreligious men, too. But when God makes Christ Preeminent in our hearts then "we love him, because he first loved us." (1 Jn 4: 19)

God loved his Son. So it pleased God to give Christ all Preeminence. The way it pleased God to do so was by sending his Son to be the propitiation for the sins of his people. So God's love for his Son is God's love for his people. Christ said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." (Jn 15: 9)

It was great love for his children for Jacob not to entrust his house and sheep to any of his sons except Joseph. Imagine if Jacob had left it in the hands of Reuben—unstable as water. Imagine if God had left salvation in the hands

of us Reuben's—unstable as water. It was for God to first trust his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Doing so, God saved all his children from our sins.

Therefore, the reason believers now rejoice that God loves his Son preeminently is because he loved us in his Son when he sent his Son to lay down his life for us. Notice the connection between God's love for Christ and God's love for and salvation for his elect. Christ said, "I lay down my life for the sheep...Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." (Jn 10: 15, 17)

When Christ laid down his life, Christ highly exalted God as just and the Justifier of those that God brings to believe on Christ. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name" (Philippians 2:9). And when Christ was exalted, in Christ we read, "Wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (Col 2: 12) Now, we have this great assurance as believers resting in Christ, "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8: 39) God's love is for Christ and for his people in Christ—no where else!

THE COLOR OF DOMINION AS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

One more color we see that distinguishes Christ is his sovereign dominion over all his brethren as the Head of his church. It is this dominion by which Christ gives us life through the preaching of the gospel—**Genesis 37: 5: And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. 6: And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: 7: 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. 8: 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. 9: 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. 10: 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? 11: And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.**

We see here a type of the gospel Christ preached and preaches even now. Christ is raised with all power over heaven and earth. He is Head of his church with all power to save through this gospel. Christ declares the same to us in his parable and declares our natural reaction is the same as Joseph's brethren.

Luke 19: 12: He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13: And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. 14: But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

So what did Joseph's brothers eventually do? They stripped their brother of his coat of colors, through him in a pit and then sold him into slavery. This is a type of what we did to Christ—**Genesis 37: 12: And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13: And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here *am I*.**

God the Father sent Christ unto his brethren in this earth. The Son of God said to the Father, "Here am I."

Genesis 37: 18: And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. 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....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:...25: And they sat down to eat bread:...

Then they sold him into slavery to band of Ishmaelite's like as we sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver.

Genesis 37: 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.

When Christ came unto his own, we said, "Come now let us slay him." The cross was the enmity of the natural heart against God. The crucifixion of Christ was natural man's attempt to strip Christ of everything that distinguishes him as being above us like as they stripped Joseph of his coat of colors. We said as they, "We'll see what becomes of his dreams!" When finished with the cruel show of our depravity, we got him down off the cross so we would not break the Sabbath and we went back to the moldy, earthly bread of our legal, earthy, vain religion.

Sinner, you do the same every day when you reject the gospel of Jesus Christ! Preachers do the same every time they turn Christ over to the will of the people. "They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb 6: 6) Then the self-righteous sinner goes on in their legal, earthy, vain beliefs.

But their evil act was God's will to give Joseph power over all Egypt, over his brethren, to save his brethren from starvation. Here is the good news. The cross was God's will to give Christ power over heaven and earth and save his people from our sins. So God brought it to pass.

Years, later Joseph was given power over the storehouses in Egypt. You had to go to Joseph to get corn from Pharaoh. Christ is the keeper of God's spiritual storehouse. If you will approach God for acceptance you must come to Christ.

Not only this, then God sent a famine and his brothers found themselves starving. God brought Joseph's brethren to the feet of Joseph and they bowed like Joseph said they would. So it is that God must send a famine into your heart. God must bring you to the feet of Christ.

Genesis 42: 5: And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. 6: And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land:

Christ is governor over the land. The government of God's house and kingdom—the government of heaven and earth—is on Christ's shoulder. (Is 9: 6) Everything about the cross was to put Christ on the throne in glory!

Genesis 42: 6:...and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.

There is where God declares all his people shall be brought in time. We have to be brought by God before Christ to bow at his feet for mercy.

Genesis 42: 8: And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them;

Christ will make us see our sin and confess ourselves to be guilty before God.

Genesis 42: 8: And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. 9: And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them,...

Everything Joseph declared to his brethren all those years early came to pass. Likewise, everything Christ declares in this gospel today has, is and shall come to pass. He declares "the end from the beginning." He brings his preacher and

his people together from a far country even as Christ came from a far country. He brings near Christ's righteousness. He places salvation in Zion for Israel his glory. (Is 46: 10-13)

Genesis 42: 21: And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. 22: And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

Sinner, are you guilty concerning Christ? Have you been made by the Holy Spirit to look upon Christ whom you pierced and mourned for him in repentance and faith? His blood is required.

Genesis 42: 23: And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. 24: And he turned himself about from them, and wept;

The interpreter reminds us of the earthen vessel through whom Christ preaches the gospel unto his redeemed. Christ hears us when he brings us to confess our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. (1 Jn 1: 9)

Genesis 45: 1: Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. 2: And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. 3: And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. 4: And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. 5: Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

Oh, sinner, just like their sins put Joseph in Egypt our sins put Christ on the cross. But God sent Christ before his people—the forerunner—on the cross—to preserve life. When Christ brings us to confess our guilt, Christ speaks effectually in our heart in his gospel through the Holy Spirit saying, “Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me highter: for God did send me before you to preserve life.”

Genesis 50: 18: And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. 19: And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

Christ says to his child, “Fear not.” But Christ is God. Christ is in the place of God as the GodMan Mediator—the only Mediator between God and men.

Genesis 50: 20: But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. 21: Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Remember, that word which Joseph spake all those years before which they hated? They hated Joseph for his coat of many colors: for his faithful person, that he was loved of their father above all, and they hated the message that they would indeed bow before Joseph. Do you reckon they hated it now? No sir! Now they had a need. Now they understood. Now they rejoiced to bow and have Joseph reign over them in faithfulness and righteousness.

Sinner, I don't know if Christ died for you. But if God ever sends a famine into your heart: a famine so you see your sin and uncleanness, a famine so you see your need of Christ, a famine so that God makes you see you are guilty before God, that you crucified Christ, I am certain of this.

God will make his child know that our sin and our rebellion was God's way of putting Christ on the throne of glory, to bring all his people to Christ feet, that Christ might save all God's elect alive.

I guarantee if God does this for you then everything that distinguishes Christ above you, everything you once hated about Christ, you will then love. His gospel will be the best news you ever heard. And every time you hear it, you will

hear Christ say, “Fear not, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good to save much people alive.” And Christ will comfort you and speak kindly to you from then on. **Amen!**