

# RELIGION

## Learn to live on the divine time-table

### Genesis 45:1-12

It is important for us to remember that when God gives a revelation, he does not always give us a copy of the divine time-table. There are details in the divine plan that, sometimes, need to be developed on the personal level.

Training and experiences that make up life are often the crucible that can temper the life of the individual for the divinely designed task.

Joseph had two dreams. Genesis 37:6-9. As the result of his relating his dreams, his brothers "hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words." Genesis 37:8c. We are further told, "his brethren envied him..." Genesis 37:11.

These feelings of animosity led them to selling "Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver..." Genesis 37:28c. When the merchantmen arrived in Egypt they, "sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's and captain of the guard." Genesis 37:36.

While Joseph served in the house of Potiphar, he was the "overseer over his house." Genesis 39:4. The wife of Potiphar was the cause of this young man being cast into prison. Genesis 39:7-20. However, the time that Joseph spent as the overseer in the

household gave him experience in management that would have been difficult to have obtained in the house of his father. When he was cast into prison, "the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keep of the prison."

Genesis 39:21. This slave prisoner was placed in a position of great responsibility, even in this less-than-desirable place. Genesis 39:22,23. The fact that he was doing someone else's work did not change the situation that allowed him to learn, even under these difficult circumstances, as he continued to rely upon God.

Joseph had been 17 years old (Genesis 37:2) when he made that fateful trip to the grazing site that his brothers had found. When he was called before Pharaoh to interpret the two dreams, he was 30 years old. Genesis 41:46.

Thus, the 13 years of preparation were not wasted. God had a plan that was unfolding, and this young man was playing a major role, even though he was completely unaware of this fact.

After Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, he was elevated from prisoner to government official. Pharaoh "set him over all the land of Egypt. And...took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon

### Sunday School Lesson



Rev. James Temples

Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a chain of gold about his neck ... and ... made him to ride in the second chariot ... he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt." Genesis 41:41-43.

As ruler, the son of Jacob was in charge of gathering the grain of the seven years of plenty, and storing this food for the coming seven years of famine. Genesis 41:47-49.

Thus, the administrative skills that Joseph had developed became the tools that would save many people from starvation.

This famine was widespread — "and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread." Genesis 41:54b.

We are told that "all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands." Genesis 41:57.

Jacob, the father of Joseph, "saw that there was corn in Egypt." Genesis 42:1a. He sent "Joseph's 10 brethren ... to buy corn in Egypt." Genesis 42:3. We

are told that "Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him." Genesis 42:4.

These 10 brothers made the journey into Egypt. We are told that "Joseph was the governor over the land, and it was he that sold to all the people of the land; and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth." Genesis 42:6.

Joseph had changed in appearance in the 13 years that had lapsed since his original sale. "And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them..." Genesis 42:7a.

He questioned, "Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food." Genesis 42:7b. Then, Joseph accused them of being spies. Genesis 42:9. These men explained their situation (Genesis 42:10-13), and he put them in prison for three days (Genesis 42:17).

When they promised to bring the younger brother on their next trip, he sent them away with the needed provisions, while Simeon remained in prison. Genesis 42:21-25. Their money was returned to them, being placed in the sacks with the grain. Genesis 42:25-38.

The famine continued. Genesis 43:1. "And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food." Genesis 43:2. Judah reminded their father of the conditions that had been stated by "the man." Genesis 43:3-7. Judah, then told his father, "I will be surely for him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever." Genesis 43:9. He reminded his father, "For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned the second time." Genesis 43:10. Finally, Jacob consented for Benjamin to make the trip with his brothers.

Jacob insisted that they take a present to "the man," with double the amount of money that was needed. Genesis 43:11-12. This time they left with a prayer. "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin." Genesis 43:14.

When they arrived in Egypt, "Joseph saw Benjamin with them," and arranged for them to have a meal at his royal house. Genesis 43:16. Upon arrival at the house, they explained to the steward the situation that they had found on their first journey. Genesis

43:17-23. Joseph questioned these men concerning his father. Genesis 43:27,28. These men wondered at the seating arrangement. Genesis 43:33.

They were sold the grain that had been the object of the journey. However, the cup that Joseph used was placed in the sack of grain that belonged to Benjamin. Genesis 44:12. This act of theft was a very serious crime. The group returned to "the man." Judah made a plea on behalf of Benjamin. Genesis 44:18-34.

At hearing the plea of Judah, Joseph "could not refrain himself." Genesis 45:1a. After sending all of the attendants out of the room, "Joseph made himself known unto his brethren." Genesis 45:1b,c. "And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at this presence." Genesis 45:3b. Finally, they were convinced of his identity. Genesis 45:4a. He told them, "Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life." Genesis 45:5.

Can we see the hand of God in the difficulties of our lives? We need to understand the constancy of God. Malachi 3:6; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:8. God is working "his plan" in your life.

## Jesus said 'beware' — don't be a hypocrite

In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus issues a warning. The words penetrate every person in the crowd. They are instruction for true believers, attraction for those God is seeking to save, and repudiation of the very hypocrites Jesus is warning us not to follow.

The big idea is this: don't be a hypocrite.

**What is a hypocrite?**  
In almost every case, God takes things that are negative and turns them into something positive. But in the case of the word "hypocrite," God did the opposite.

He took a term that was positive at best and neutral at least and made it negative at last. To this day, "hypocrite" is a word which is exclusively negative.

At the turn of the first century, a hypocrite was an interpreter or an actor. I used an interpreter when preaching in a foreign country, and it was a good thing. I enjoy watching good, talented actors and actresses on stage and film. Good interpreters and

actors are, well, good. But when Jesus started referring to certain people as hypocrites, we know it was not a good thing.

A hypocrite at heart is a pretender. An interpreter pretends to preach, but he is actually speaking someone else's words. An actor pretends to live a life, but it is a life of imitation or fiction. While those types of pretense are relatively harmless and even helpful, Jesus used the term in a more sinister sense.

Jesus reinvented and reintroduced the word in the gospels. For the first time it appears three times in this text in Matthew. The word will come out of his mouth 21 times in the first three gospels. It is picked up four times by Paul, and once each by James and Peter.

The meaning for us is clear. A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be a Christian, but is not. Now the warning becomes ever clearer: don't be a hypocrite. "Beware," Jesus said, of "practicing your righteousness" the wrong

### The Gospel Truth



Dr. Charles F. DeVane Jr. First Baptist Church

way, for there is no eternal "reward" in it, only condemnation. Don't be a hypocrite.

**How can you spot a hypocrite?**

Jesus offered three ways in his three uses of the term. You can spot a hypocrite by the way they give, pray and fast. These were the three chief acts of piety for first century Jews. Since Jesus came not to abolish the law but fulfill it, he expects his followers to do these things. But he tempers his command with a warning: don't be a hypocrite.

Hypocrites give a certain way. In Jesus' day, there were literally tooting their own horn. Under the guise of "let's take an offering" they were really shouting "look at me give an offer-

ing." Not all offerings have to be secret, but no offering is supposed to be selfish. It is supposed to be about the giving, not the giver.

Hypocrites pray a certain way. In Jesus' day these prayers were long, wordy, and undoubtedly selfish. Such prayers typically have more "Is" than a potato. It is supposed to be about who God is and what he has done, not about who I am and what I have done.

Hypocrites fast a certain way. Fasting represents suffering and sacrifice for God. Hypocrites are glad to do it and glad for you to know it. They like to look the part. But it is supposed to be about what we gain, not what we give up.

The common thread in all these ways is that they are done to gain the approval of man instead of God. They pretend to please God, but they are truly done to please men and promote self.

An interpreter has to be seen and heard for the good of others. An actor has to be seen and heard for the good of others. The

hypocrite has to be seen and heard for the good of himself.

I don't hate hypocrites. I pity them. I'll tell you why. He has sold his soul for the praise of man, and in reality he has lost them both. No one in heaven or earth has room in their heart for a hypocrite. So pity them, but don't be one of them. Don't be a hypocrite.

**How can we avoid becoming a hypocrite?**

First of all, make sure you are taking the right actions in your life. Notice Jesus did not say if you give, pray and fast. He said when. In other words, there are certain activities that must take place in your life, not in order to become a Christian, but because you are a genuine Christian. Real Christians give, pray, fast and engage in other Christian and church activities.

If you don't do them because, well, that's what hypocrites do, then by your own confession you have become worse than a hypocrite. Take your choice. You can either go to church

with them or go to hell with them.

Secondly, since hypocrites do participate in religious activity, make sure your actions are accomplished with the right attitude.

In other words, do what you do for God and for others, not for your own advancement or admiration. Make sure you would do what you are doing even if no one knew but God, and try to do it that way.

Thirdly and finally, if your right actions are performed with the right attitude, you will gain the right rewards. That reward is a person.

For real righteousness is not a religious performance, but a relationship with a person, and that person is Jesus Christ. He loves me and he is my Lord. He saved me and he is my savior.

The main reason I do what I do is because he is who he is. And he is my reward, and the reward of all who follow him with a sincere, not hypocritical, faith. Don't be a hypocrite.

### CHURCH NEWS

#### Liberty Assembly

Liberty Assembly will have its Fall Festival Saturday, Nov. 17 from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m.

There will be games for children and adults, a cake walk and a country store with jellies, jams, homemade candy and cookies and all kinds of homemade items. The fun and festivities will end with a hayride for the young at heart. Everyone is invited to attend.

#### Rocky Ridge

The fourth quarter Gospel Sing will be at the Rocky Ridge Baptist Church Saturday Nov. 17 at 7 p.m.

The featured groups will be Johnny Avirett, The Parish Family, The Willing Servants and the Rocky Ridge Quartet. Everyone is invited to attend.

#### Flat Creek Baptist

Flat Creek Baptist Church will celebrate Harvest Day and Thanksgiving with a covered dish

lunch Sunday, Nov. 18 after the morning service. Everyone is invited to attend.

#### Wesley Chapel A.M.E.

Wesley Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church is sponsoring a Community Thanksgiving Program and breakfast Thanksgiving morning Nov. 22 at 9 a.m.

The speaker will be Rev. Millie A. Rambeau. Everyone is invited to attend.

### IN MEMORY

*Awaiting the Trumpet's Sound...*

*I Thessalonians 4:16-18*



Mary B. Davis

Nov. 8, 1924

April 29, 2006

**A tribute to her legacy from Lois and Family**  
Every Family Should Have a Mary...

"Mary had a little lamb. Its fleece was white as snow." This is not the Mary we reflect on and had the privilege to know.

Our Mary was a confidant, a psychiatrist and a referee. She was a nurse, a daycare provider, a friend, and just good company.

The name Mary means "the perfect one" and its origin is Hebrew. This name fits her perfectly, I would agree. Wouldn't you?

She was also known as Mul, Grandma and May B. Filled with such overflowing love, our Mary would never hurt not even a flea.

The wife of one, the mother of eight and the grandmother of many; Our family's Mary gracefully loved any.

Every family should have a Mary to help them endure life's trials. We were fortunate; she was with us, every step of every mile.

We witnessed our Mary endure her own hardships and many temptations, and because of her endurance, she was to us, such an inspiration!

Every family should have a Mary, to help guide them along the way. As we reflect on her legacy, we wish our Mary was still here with us today.

Our Mary loved to go to church, travel, shop and eat. We tell you, and this is no joke, she would often eat

Blakely Chicken, collard greens, a Little Debbie raisin pie, and wash it down with a caffeine free diet Coke.

Jesus' Mary was highly favored and blessed. And our Mary was her namesake and similar traits nonetheless.

Our Mary was a virtuous woman, as spoken of in Proverbs 31. She honored her husband, raised her children (some grands), but now her work is done.

Although our Mary is sleeping, there is one thing she would want us to do, prepare to meet our Savior and see her again, one day too.

A year has passed and some still wonder, "With her death, how are we dealing?" In God we trust, and we remember, "That earth has no sorrow that heaven is not healing."

In love with our Savior, reflecting on her legacy, we listen for...

...the Trumpet's Sound...

Composer:

Michelle Renee Davis  
Beaufort, Granddaughter

**Get your Boston Butt just in time for Thanksgiving!**

\$20 each

Place your order today!  
Pickup Monday, Nov. 19

Contact Southside Baptist Youth  
or Church Office at  
(229) 723-3152.

Proceeds benefit Youth X-treme Conference.

