

# Famine! What Shall We Do?

*'Pharaoh asked the brothers, 'What is your occupation?' 'Your servants are shepherds,' they replied to Pharaoh, 'just as our fathers were.' They also said to him. 'We have to live here a while, because the famine is severe in our land and your servants' flocks have no pasture. So now, please let your servants settle in Goshen.'* (Genesis 47:3-4)

*You are going to a far destination. You have been standing by the road for sometime but there is no chance to get transportation. The only possible means is to wave your hand to the passing cars, and ask for a lift. What will you do? Then, you have reached a place that you do not find a house to rest or sleep. You see people walking around. Are you going to ask for help? A place to sleep and food to eat?*

*In the above and other situations like sickness, joblessness, imprisonment, or calamities is it good to ask people's help? Many say, 'yes, it is good to ask help, it gives relief and victory.' But others object and say, 'No, you can handle it by yourself because God is with you.' Some people and even Christians are hesitant to accept their weakness and reluctant to ask help from others. Why?*

**1) Because of the proud spirit:** *The inner constituent of man and what is present in his heart is the cause of difficulty. Man's problem is not what he lacks, but what he possesses. It is his high self esteem, elegance in life, and cultural prestige that ultimately cripple him in times of distress and calamity.*

**2) Because of the ill-feeling of humiliation:** *It is not a weak point or a shameful matter to be in the position of lack and need. But the downgrading feeling that occupies a man's mind spoils any rescue effect.*

**3) Because of the fatal conceited thought:** *Egotism, self admiration, and the idea of being better than others are the high mountains that man quickly climbs. The moment that he is up there, it is so hard and seems so fatal for him to come down. And, he does not dare to ask favour from people lower than him.*

**4) Because of the lack of wisdom:** *Man does not deal with problems or situations only when he is strong but also when he is weak. Wisdom is little effort that gives a big achievement. The situation of being poor or defective is overcome by another power, it is called the wisdom from above.*

*The passage that is put up today is part of the real and beautiful story about the chosen people of God.(Please read Genesis chapter 37 to chapter 50) Jacob and his sons with their families, livestock and possessions were in the land God had promised to their forefather, Abraham. But circumstances suddenly brought changes. "There was famine in all the other lands. But in the whole land of Egypt there were foods. And all the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was so severe in all the world." (Genesis 41:54) Joseph, whom his own brothers sold as slave, was the one in-charge of all the storehouses of Pharaoh in Egypt. In response to the problem of no food, Jacob and sons went to Egypt:*

*a) When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, 'why do you just keep looking at each other?' he continued, 'I have heard that there is no grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.' (Genesis 42:1-2) Jacob's decision was a decision of a true shepherd. He was not only thinking about himself but as well about the flock and his family. He received the promise of God that his descendants would be a great nation, but he did not look upon their prestige or dignity. He considered others better than themselves. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ when He was on the cross, He was not ashamed to say, 'I am thirsty.' (John 19:28)*

*b) Then Judah said to Jacob his father, 'Send the boy along with me and we will go at once, so that we and you and our children may live and not die. I myself will guarantee his safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life.' (Genesis 43:8-9) When they had eaten all the grain that they first bought from Egypt, Judah though he was uncertain for their fate. took the responsibility for the second journey bringing Benjamin with them. For the sake of everyone he was willing to risk his own life and future, took the courage to speak to his father and then to Joseph, without thinking to be put to shame or humiliated. 'Each of you should look not only to your own interest, but also to the interest of others.' (Philippians 2:4)*

*c) They said to one another, 'Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distresses he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that's why this distress has come upon us.' (Genesis 42:21) These brothers who sold Joseph to the merchants were the same brothers who now came to him with humility and honesty. They accepted their guilt and they were humbled down. So when Joseph took them to Pharaoh, God gave them the right words to gain favour, not to own the land but to live for a while; not to be guest but to be servants. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.' (1John 1:9)*

*d) But Joseph said to them, 'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God! You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.' (Genesis 50:19-20) Joseph's brothers were afraid of the consequence of their wrong doing. But God is faithful to his promises to His people. God sent Joseph to Pharaoh to preserve food for his brothers in time of famine. His steps were inspired by God and the famine brought them all together as a family.*

**My dear and beloved:** *Are you in famine or in calamity? Would it be a part of God's discipline in order to bring you back to Him and away from arrogant status of life? 'What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Pray that Jesus will save you.*

**My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord guide me with your love, mercy and grace. Teach me to obey you and walk in your ways. Give me humility and meekness, and give me a forgiving heart to forgive my brothers who hurt me knowing that is your plan that they will come to you and got saved, this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*