

“WHY DO YE LOOK ONE UPON ANOTHER?”

Genesis 42:1
Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. Jacob asked his sons this question in a time of bitter famine – Gen. 41.
 - a. Before the great advancements in agriculture, and in the preservation of goods, famines were frequent.
 - i. One occurred in the time of Abraham – Gen. 12:10.
 - ii. In the time of Isaac – Gen. 26;1.
 - iii. Now one in the time of Jacob.
 - b. Man has always needed food, so the problem is given much attention in the Bible.
 - i. In Eden.
 - ii. When man was driven from Eden – Gen. 3: 19.
 - iii. In Esau’s selling his birthright – Gen. 25: 29 – 34.
 - iv. The temptation of Christ – Matt. 4: 1 – 4.
 - v. In Christ’s model prayer – Matt. 6:11.

I. THE QUESTION AND CONTEXT STRESS THE VALUE OF LEADERSHIP

- a. The sons of Jacob lacked LEADERSHIP and INITIATIVE.
 - i. There was a need for food, but the sons of Jacob only looked at one another.
 - ii. Doing nothing has never produced anything.
 - iii. Each was waiting for the other to lead the way.
 - iv. It provoked Jacob to say, “*Why do ye look one upon another? . . . I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither and buy for us*” – Gen. 42:1 – 2.
 - v. For the church to go forward we must have LEADERSHIP.
 - vi. The elders are commanded to shepherd the flock – I Pet. 5: 1 – 4.

II. THIS INCIDENT ALSO EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION

- a. Every accomplishment must begin with a vision.
- b. Man cannot do a thing he cannot visualize.
- c. Jacob was able to see what could and should be done – Gen. 42:1.
- d. Poor vision has slowly weakened and killed the Lord’s church in many communities.
- e. The world owes an enormous debt to its dreamers. . .

III. WE SEE IN THIS STORY THE VALUE OF ACTIVITY

- a. After a man visualizes what needs to be done, then he should get busy and do it.
- b. Jacob was a man of vision and action – Gen. 42: 1- 2.
- c. Joseph was also a man of vision and action – Gen. 41.
- d. It takes work to tread the road that leads to heaven – Phil. 2: 12.

IV. “WHY DO YE LOOK ONE UPON ANOTHER” WHEN THE FOLLOWING NEEDS ARE EVER PRESSING:

- a. Evangelizing the world – John 4:35; Matt. 9: 37 – 38; Mark 16: 15 – 16.
 - i. The command is to all Christians – I Pet. 3:15.
- b. Encouraging and teaching new converts – Matt. 28:20; I Pet. 2: 1 – 2.
- c. Preserving the FAITH – I Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:2.

- d. Standing firmly for the TRUTH – Jude 3; Psa. 119: 104.
- e. Visit strangers – Matt. 25: 35, 43.
- f. Contribute financially – I Cor. 16: 2; 2 Cor. 9:7.
- g. Restore the fallen – Gal. 6:1; James 5: 19 – 20.
- h. Care for the sick – Matt. 25: 36 – 43.

CONCLUSION

You should do what you can, whether the other person does or not.

Do not sit around looking at each other as duties stare you in the face.

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