

Transforming Daily
“... his blood is now required of us ...”
Genesis 42:22

Reuben understood the potential ramifications related to sin. To put it in New Testament terms, “The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23) Reuben suspected that how they were being treated then was in direct relationship to how they had earlier treated Joseph. One might call it a guilty conscience, but I call it conviction of sin. Keep in mind that it was Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn son, who tried to talk the other brothers out of mistreating Joseph, and here he is the one voicing his concern for their ultimate wellbeing.

Was Reuben right? Were they experiencing what they were experiencing here in the text because of their previous treatment of Joseph? The answer is yes and no. He was right that death is the wages of sin, but he was wrong concerning what they were experiencing being a direct result of mistreating Joseph. All that had transpired and was unfolding before them was according to God’s plan. God was the one bringing all of them together and it was Joseph who was laying out the strategy to see it through.

God also had, and has, a master plan to pay the price of the wages of sin. Joseph’s brothers were guilty as Reuben confessed. They should have been put to death for what they did to Joseph. They left him for dead whether in the pit or at the hands of their enemies as a slave, didn’t matter. It was in their hearts and minds to kill Joseph. That is what Reuben was confessing. Of course this text is referring directly to the events surrounding Joseph and his brothers, but what about sin in general?

The wages of sin is death whether in general terms or any specific act. God’s answer, what was, what is His master plan is found in the life and works of Jesus Christ to pay the price of sin’s debt. As the song says, “He paid a debt He did not owe, and I owed a debt I could not pay Christ Jesus paid the debt that I could never pay.”

The same book of the Bible, Romans, that tells the reader of this debt tells them that everyone, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, religion, and socio-economic background, is guilty of sin. However, this very same book that tells the reader of his or her spiritual depravity tells the reader that if they will confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead, they will be saved. John 3:16 says, “That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” This is the part that Reuben apparently didn’t understand. He understood the wrath of the judgment of God against sin, but he didn’t understand the wrath of God against sin to be an expression of His love so vividly demonstrated on Calvary’s cross.

Do you trust Christ as your Savior, the One who paid your sin debt personally? Have you confessed that you’re a sinner and in need of a Savior? Do you understand God’s wrath ultimately as an expression of His love? Believers may rejoice that they will not experience the second death, but not so for the unbeliever should they die without Christ or see His second coming before repenting of their sins. For unbelievers, in that state and on that day, will surely say, His blood is now required of us.