

## Genesis 45:25-28 to 47:1-7

Their first trip to Egypt had been pretty devastating, but nothing to be compared to the second.

Right from the beginning, there had been a dark cloud hanging over their heads.

Certainly Benjamin was there to prove they weren't spies, but now there was a very good possibility that they would be taken as thieves.

Oh, they hadn't stolen the corn money. On that point, their conscience was clear, but *only* on that point.

Many years ago, they had sold their brother into slavery, and now their sin seemed to be catching up with them.

No, they just couldn't shake the feeling  
that their recent troubles were just  
the beginning of God's judgment.

So it was with heavy hearts that they  
dragged their feet back to Egypt, back  
to the place of impending doom.

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And, indeed, the events of this second trip  
would be even more bizarre than they  
could have imagined.

First of all, they had been treated royally,  
dining at the Governor's table, and  
then they were sent away with ample  
provisions.

But then, just when they thought they had  
finally escaped, they were stopped dead  
in their tracks.

And being unwilling to forsake their brother Benjamin, they all trudged back to the Governor's home in total confusion.

This was the last straw, or more correctly, this was the straw that broke the camel's back.

They could no longer avoid God's judgment.

Through their spokesman, Judah, they willingly confessed their sin, and gave themselves up to a life of slavery.

**"God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found."**

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But the Governor would have none of it!

Only Benjamin would become his slave while the rest of them could go free.

And it was at that moment, at the point of their greatest extremity, that Judah put his all on the line.

He would take his brother's place as a slave if only Benjamin could go free.

What could have induced him to make such a sacrifice?

Of course he loved his half-brother, but the real reason for this unusual offer was his father's love for the boy, and, of course, his own personal commitment to his safety.

**"For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever."**

And as we saw in last week's lesson, his willing sacrifice on the behalf of his

brother foreshadows a much greater sacrifice.

Yes, in Judah's petition to the Governor, we have all the elements of Christ's commitment to His Father.

In reality, Benjamin was innocent, but, as far as our type is concerned, he was a picture of the poor lost sinner.

And his only hope of salvation rested on his father's love, and, of course, Judah's oath.

Yes, "-- **God so loved the world,**" but it was Christ's commitment to His Father that led Him to the cross.

"--- **O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.**"

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Well, that's when the dam broke. **"Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him."**

With tears flooding down his cheeks, he cried, **"I am Joseph!"**--and suddenly everything changed.

Their burdens were lifted, **"the good of all the land of Egypt"** was theirs, and they were sent off to proclaim the good news.

Genesis 45:21-24 **"--- and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.**

**22: To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.**

**23: And to his father he sent after**

this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24: So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way."

And that's where we left them at the end of last week's lesson.

Loaded down with the good things of Egypt, they set off on their journey, as the Governor waved his fond farewell.

V 25-26 "And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

26: And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."

They were all talking at once, but the only thing Jacob was conscious of was the fact that Benjamin and Simeon were safe.

What a relief!

Now, I'm sure that would have been quite enough excitement for one day, but then someone almost shouted---"**Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.**"

Poor old Jacob nearly had a heart attack--- at least V 26 says "**Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.**"

And you couldn't blame him for that, could you?

His sons didn't have a real good reputation for telling the truth, and this was the most bizarre story he had ever heard. However, his lack of faith was short-lived.



V 27 "And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived."

Yes, there were the wagons, a loving gesture from a loving son, just waiting to carry him to Goshen.

And not only that, but there were those "ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way."

V 28 "And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."

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In the book of Genesis, the Holy Spirit often uses Jacob's two names as a barometer of his spiritual condition.

In V 25, He calls him by his old name, Jacob: supplanter, cheater, one who takes you by the heel.

Again in V 26 we read **"---Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."**

Then in V 27, Jacob begins to change--**"the spirit of Jacob their father revived."**

And by V 28, his faith comes shining through, and the Holy Spirit begins calling him Israel again, which means "prince with God."

V 28 **"And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."**

Israel didn't seem to question his sons, at least not at that point, about the

obvious fact that Joseph, who was supposed to be dead, was now very much alive.

Sooner or later, they must have confessed their sin, and told him of Joseph's gracious forgiveness, but at that particular moment, it didn't seem to matter.

No, the only thing that concerned him was the fact that **"Joseph my son is yet alive."**

It warmed an old heart that had been very cold for such a long time.

In desperation, he had cried, **"all these things are again me,"** but now he realized that in a very wonderful way, all these things had been *for* him.

Joseph had been sent away so that he could save his family.

Yes, all through those lonely years, God had been making the necessary preparations to preserve the Abrahamic Covenant.

At one point, Jacob thought the famine would destroy them all, but in reality, that had never been a possibility.

As God had promised his father and his grandfather, Israel would be **"as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore."**

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And sometimes we get discouraged, don't we? Like Jacob, we are tempted to say **"all these things are again me,"** but actually the child of God cannot lose.

In Romans 8:30-31, Paul got so excited about this fact that he exclaimed---

**"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he**

called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

**31: What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"**

Obviously the answer is *nobody*.

Certainly many of us have gone through sufferings and reverses, undeserved and unexplained.

At times our lives looked like so many knots and random colours, but someday God will show us the other side.

Then we will realize, as Jacob realized, that God was weaving a beautiful tapestry all the time.

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♪♪ *Not now, but in the coming years,  
It may be in the better land,*

*We'll read the meaning of our tears,  
And there, some time, we'll understand.  
We'll catch the broken thread again,  
And finish what we here began;  
Heav'n will the mysteries explain,  
And then, ah then, we'll understand.*

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As old Jacob traveled along in Joseph's  
    wagons, he really wasn't enjoying the  
    ride.

No, his mind was in turmoil.

Ever since he realized Joseph was alive, his  
    only desire had been to see his son  
    before he died.

And God seemed to be leading in that  
    direction.

Egypt had fulfilled Joseph's boyhood dreams,  
    and made him the protector of God's  
    Chosen People.

And certainly his beloved son had encouraged him to come.

So what was the problem?

For most of us that would have been quite enough, but Jacob was a special person, and this was a very special decision.

He had a great responsibility passed down to him from previous generations.

And all through his life, when an important decision had to be made, God had always spoken to him audibly.

When he needed to flee from his brother Esau's anger, and his father had specifically command him to leave the Promised Land, God had still spoken to him in a dream before he crossed the line.

From the top of a ladder that reached to heaven, God had confirmed the Abrahamic

Covenant, and had promised to bring him back to the Promised Land someday---

**"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."**

And when Laban and his sons turned against him, God had made it very clear that he should return to Canaan:

**"And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."**

Even when his two sons massacred all the males in Shechem and put the entire family in danger of annihilation, God had still given him specific instructions. **"And God said unto**



**Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."**

So over the years, Jacob had learned that it was never wise to make important decisions based solely on circumstantial evidence.

He must always seek God's specific directions before making important decisions.

So even with all these assurances and pressures pulling him towards Egypt, was it right to leave Canaan?

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In the past, God had made it very clear that his family should live in the Promised Land.

The Abrahamic Covenant was rooted in the soil of that land.

His grandfather, yielding to the pressure of another famine, had forsaken the Promised Land and lost his testimony in Egypt.

It was a bit of family history that they had all tried to forget.

Then his own father, again facing a famine, was in the process of leaving the Promised Land to flee into Egypt, when God stopped him dead in his tracks.

Genesis 26:2 **"And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of."**

And now history seemed to be repeating itself.

Every day that Jacob rode along in Joseph's wagons, he seemed to be getting closer and closer to making the same mistake.

Genesis 46:1 **"And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba---."**

Beersheba is located on the southern edge of the land of Canaan, just outside of Egypt.

It was Jacob's last chance to seek the Lord's counsel before making the big plunge.

I'm sure his sons were excited about the possibility of living in Goshen, and being under Joseph's protection.

So it must have been very tempting to just roll along and let events take their course.

However, at Beersheba, Israel called a halt.

He would go no further without the Lord's  
specific direction.

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What an important principle this is.

Just because something *looks* right, just  
because all the surrounding  
circumstances *point* that way, just  
because our natural desires are *pulling*  
us in that direction, and just because  
everyone else *assures* us it is the only  
sensible thing to do, doesn't  
necessarily mean it is God's will.

We must always ask ourselves the question,  
*What does God have to say about this  
decision?*

No, God doesn't usually speak to us audibly,  
at least He has never spoken to me that  
way, but we are never left without His

written Word, and we always have the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

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So Israel called a halt, and took the time and the effort necessary to inquire of the Lord.

Genesis 46:1-4 **"And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.**

**2: And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.**

**3: And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:**

**4: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up**

again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."

"---fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:"

No, Egypt would not cancel the Abrahamic Covenant.

Certainly that was good news!

And now he was assured that his greatest desire and God's will coincided.

His initial response had been, **"Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."**

Yes, that was in his heart's desire, but he was now willing to have God change it.

And you know what? We can trust God with our most cherished desires.

Not only did God assure him that he could go to Joseph with a free mind, but that

Joseph would be there at the time of his death to gently close his eyes:

**"And Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."**

What a tender word that was to His faithful servant.

So many times, in his younger days, he had made his own deals, his own decisions, and paid dearly for them.

But now, as an old man, he had given his most cherished desire to God, and God gave it back to him.

So now he could leave Canaan with a light heart, and with the Lord's blessing.

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V 5-7 **"And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which**

Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6: And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

7: His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt."

I won't be reading the individual names recorded here in V 8 to V 25.

However, to summarize, this list included Jacob's wives, 12 sons, 1 daughter, 52 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandsons.

The names of his son's wives were not mentioned here, but, of course, they were in that company.



Interestingly enough, Benjamin, with his 10 sons, represented the largest family. So even though he was the last, he certainly wasn't the least.

V 26-27    **"All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; 27: And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten."**

Some people have imagined a discrepancy between V 26 and V 27, but we must remember that they were talking about two different things.

V 26 refers to Jacob's blood relatives, that is, those **"which came out of his loins,**

**besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six;"** while V 27 counts "**all the souls of the house of Jacob,**" which, of course, would include Joseph and his two sons and Jacob himself.

And, as already mentioned, neither of these numbers included the sons' wives.

Nor did they include the numerous servants that would belong to such a large household.

So having done the math, let's get on with the more interesting events.

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The land of Goshen was just over the border, so, of course, they would arrive there first.

And even though Jacob knew that Joseph had planned to settle them somewhere in

Goshen, he didn't know exactly where, nor could they settle anywhere without Pharaoh's official consent.

V,28 **"And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen."**

Certainly Joseph must attend to these matters promptly, but that wasn't his first priority.

Oh, no. This time it would be pleasure before business.

V 29-30 **"And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.**

**30: And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."**

What a picture this is of Christ's reunion  
with His Father.

Yes, when His earthly pilgrimage was over,  
and He had risen victorious from the  
grave, His reception must have been  
indescribable!

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Joseph had two reasons for choosing Goshen,  
and since he is a type of Christ, we  
should take the time and effort to  
understand them.

The most obvious one was the fact that  
Goshen would provide ideal pasture for  
their livestock.

Located in north-eastern Egypt, Goshen, with  
a total area of about 900 square miles,  
would provide lots of room for their  
nomadic life.

However, even with its great potential, they would be very much dependant upon Joseph's supply of corn until the famine was over.

But there was a far more important spiritual reason for choosing Goshen.

V 34 tells us that "**every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians,**" and, of course, Joseph's family had been shepherds for generations.

At that particular time, the Egyptian population was divided into seven casts or guilds, and cattlemen were a despised group.

They weren't allowed to enter the temples or marry other Egyptians outside their cast.

This would seem to be a distinct disadvantage for Jacob's family, but, in reality, it wasn't.

God wanted the family of Israel to be separated from Egyptian society, as He would later want the nation of Israel to be separated from the Canaanites.

That's why He introduced special dietary laws to discourage socializing and intermarriage between His Chosen People and the people of Canaan.

So as it turned out, this natural Egyptian aversion for cattlemen accomplished God's desires automatically.

And Goshen would confirm them in their occupation.

Joseph knew his people would continue in their nomadic and separated lifestyle if they lived in Goshen.

However, if they lived in one fixed location among the Egyptians, they would be forced to seek other employment, and eventually would be absorbed into that heathen culture.

So the bottom line was--they needed the resources of Egypt--but they didn't need the moral pollution of that land. Or, to put it another way, they needed to be *in* the world but not *of* the world. And that's exactly how Jesus feels about His church.

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So Joseph arranged that all-important interview between his family and Pharaoh with one the purpose in mind. He wanted to establish Goshen as their home. V 31-32 **"And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go**

up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him,  
My brethren, and my father's house,  
which were in the land of Canaan, are  
come unto me;

32: And the men are shepherds, for  
their trade hath been to feed cattle;  
and they have brought their flocks, and  
their herds, and all that they have."

Now there's a tremendous social gap between  
a Pharaoh and a shepherd, indeed,  
between a Governor and a shepherd, but  
Joseph wasn't ashamed to call them  
brethren.

No, this great Governor of Egypt was not  
ashamed of his shepherd heritage, and  
our Good Shepherd, "**is not ashamed to  
call us brethren.**"

Yes, there *was* a tremendous gap between  
Pharaoh and Joseph's family.



But Joseph was uniquely fitted to bridge  
that gap.

Born and raised in Jacob's home, he was one  
of them, while at the same time he was  
very much at home amid the pomp and  
splendour of Pharaoh's court.

And politically speaking, he was seated at  
the right hand of the Pharaoh, and had  
the necessary leverage to be their  
mediator.

In fact, they would have never been in  
Pharaoh's throne room in the first  
place if it hadn't been for Joseph.

They would have been standing in that long  
line of refugees, waiting to buy a  
little corn, at least until their money  
ran out.

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I hardly need to draw the analogy here, for  
I'm sure you have already seen it.

As Joseph stood before Pharaoh, he pictures  
the Godman Who is seated at the right  
hand of His Father on our behalf.

Hebrews 4:14-16 **"Seeing then that we have a  
great high priest, that is passed into  
the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let  
us hold fast our profession.**

**15: For we have not an high priest  
which cannot be touched with the  
feeling of our infirmities; but was in  
all points tempted like as we are, yet  
without sin."**

Yes, without Joseph, they had nothing, but  
*with* him, they had every thing.

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First of all, Joseph prepared Pharaoh to  
receive his family: **"My brethren, and**

my father's house, which were in the  
land of Canaan, are come unto me;  
**32: And the men are shepherds."**

But he must *also* prepare his brethren to  
meet Pharaoh.

V 33-34 **"And it shall come to pass, when  
Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say,  
What is your occupation?**

**34: That ye shall say, Thy servants'  
trade hath been about cattle from our  
youth even until now, both we, and also  
our fathers: that ye may dwell in the  
land of Goshen; for every shepherd is  
an abomination unto the Egyptians."**

It wouldn't be easy for them to stand in  
Pharaoh's court and boldly declare that  
they were shepherds.

However, Joseph had cautioned them to be  
honest and forthright.

And you know, that is a good principle to follow in our own lives.

If you don't make a clear stand for Christ right from the beginning, you won't end up *living in Goshen*.

No, you will be absorbed into the culture around you.

So when you start a new job, or enter into any new circumstance, it is always a good idea to be upfront about your Christian testimony, and it will save a lot of complications later on.

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So Joseph cautioned them to make it very clear that they were shepherds, and his whole reason for doing this was to make sure they lived in Goshen.

Physically speaking, they could carry on their business in a profitable manner,

but more importantly, they wouldn't be absorbed into worldly Egypt.

Oh yes, he knew his brothers very well, and an ounce of prevention was certainly worth a pound of cure.

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But there was another reason why they should live in Goshen.

I'm sure Joseph didn't realize it at the time, but Goshen, being on the border of Canaan, was strategically located to accommodate future events.

Many years later, when Moses led the children of Israel out of slavery, this location would make it much easier to leave with their herds of cattle.

And you know what? If a Christian lives in Goshen, *if he lives the separated life,*

he will find it so much easier to leave when the time comes.

In fact, the Apostle Paul lived so close to the Promised Land that he could hardly wait to step over the line.

Philippians 1:23-24 **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:**

**24: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."**

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So as their great intermediary, Joseph made it his business to place them in Goshen.

Genesis 47:1-3 **"Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come**

out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

2: And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

3: And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers."

They were completely upfront about their occupation, and not only that, but they were very honest concerning their intentions.

V 4 "They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray

**thee, let thy servants dwell in the  
land of Goshen."**

So there it was, pure and simple.

They had come to Egypt as *sojourners* to  
escape the famine, and had no intention  
of making his land their permanent  
home.

V 5-6 **"And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph,  
saying, Thy father and thy brethren are  
come unto thee:**

**6: The land of Egypt is before thee; in  
the best of the land make thy father  
and brethren to dwell; in the land of  
Goshen let them dwell: and if thou  
knowest any men of activity among them,  
then make them rulers over my cattle."**

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So having settled the question of location,  
it was with a great deal of pride and



satisfaction that Joseph arranged the next interview.

V 7 **"And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh."**

It must have been a most unusual sight, as the old patriarch approached Pharaoh's magnificent throne, walking between the lines of palace guards, ministers of state, and court officials, all dressed in the splendour of Egypt.

Here was the old shepherd, halting upon his withered thigh, and leaning heavily on his staff, as he slowly made his way towards the throne.

At a respectful distance, he stopped.

When his sons first met Joseph, they had fallen down before the Governor, but Israel didn't even bow before Pharaoh.

Instead, he raised his sunburnt hand and  
blessed him in the name of the Lord.  
I can almost hear the collective gasp.

Hebrews 7:7 says **"And without all  
contradiction the less is blessed of  
the better."** And you know what? That  
was exactly the case!

Pharaoh was a prince among men and had power  
on earth, but Israel was a prince with  
God, **"for as a prince hast thou power  
with God and with men, and hast  
prevailed."**

Nevertheless, it was to Pharaoh's great  
credit that he didn't take offence.

Perhaps he sensed the unusual spiritual  
depths and perception in this old  
shepherd, and he graciously accepted  
his blessing.

And this wasn't the first time that Pharaoh had shown himself to be a man of discernment.

Some years ago, he had recognized the godly wisdom in a despised Hebrew slave, and had committed his entire country and his own throne into Joseph's hands.

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No, Israel didn't fall down before Pharaoh, for he had reserved that honour for Jehovah, but he did bless him in the kindest way, both when he arrived, and when he left.

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Oh yes, this promises to be a very unusual meeting, but I'm afraid it is one that will have to wait until next week's lesson.