

*The Articles of*  
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# A Souls Reflection

You are trying to go to sleep,  
And you find that your mind  
Is stirring in all directions.

Finally, you drift off  
Your spirit unsettled  
Your dreams vivid...

It's been a long work day.  
You drive wearily home  
Clothes soiled, face dirty.

At home, you go to the mirror  
Wanting to wash away  
Some of the blemishes.

But, as you look, there is more  
Than just a soiled body.  
You see unsettled pain within.

You begin to wash,  
But the dirt  
Won't go away.

"Scrub harder," you think  
As your hands begin to feel  
sore.

"Why won't the stains leave?"

Suddenly, your beloved  
grandmother  
Long gone from this life  
Appears in the room.

"Dear," she says,  
"What you see is not  
Your normal body."

"This mirror reflects  
Your soul that is  
Stained with sin."

"There is only One  
Who can make your soul  
White again."

"You know who He is  
For you obeyed His word  
Many years ago."

"God knows your troubles,  
And He wants to help  
To make your soul clean  
again."

Quickly, you wake  
Realizing that this  
Was only a dream.

You rush to the mirror.  
Your face and clothes  
Are clean.

Immediately, you pray to God  
Asking Him to forgive  
The sins you've committed.

You want to be whole again  
To be clean again  
His servant, once more.

With a believing heart,  
You know He has heard  
And forgiven.

Your life rededicated and clean,  
You leave your home on this  
morning  
Happy to be one of His  
children.

You remember that day  
When you obeyed His gospel  
And are thankful because...

Jesus paid the price  
So your sins can be forgiven  
So your soul can be  
unblemished.

Next time you look into a  
mirror  
You will remember that  
It's more than the outside that  
counts.

*-March 2008*

# Forgotten

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The world around me is crashing.

I feel that I am all alone.

There's a murder here,  
Words of hatred there.

The golden rule is all but forgotten,  
As someone is hurt again and again.

The words "forgive them" are faded.  
All that is wanted is revenge...

But I am not alone.

Someone knows how I feel.

He was beaten and mocked,  
Yet not a word did He speak.

As they nailed Him and rejected Him  
"Father, forgive them" were His words.

We are not worthy of His grace.  
It is taken without thought or thanks.  
Have we forgotten?

*-March 2008*

# God Sent Me Here!

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I want you to be honest with yourself. How many times have you been wronged by someone you are close to - maybe a family member or friend? And then, you thought, "How could they have done that to me" or "I'm sure they wouldn't have done this if something bad had happened to them first." While these might be normal reactions for people in the world today, this is not how God would have His children react.

In the Bible, Joseph is a perfect example of a follower of God who stood his course no matter what. Think about it. When he lived with his father, Joseph seemed to have everything going for him. He was one of his father's favorite sons, and God had already begun to send him dreams about his future. Then, when he shared these dreams with his brothers, instead of being glad for him, they became extremely jealous. Not only did the brothers sell Joseph into slavery, but they faked Joseph's death and deceived their own father.

How sad and lonely Joseph must have felt being separated from his family and having no way to get back to them. One would think that if he ever saw his brothers again Joseph would want to get even with them. But no. When the brothers came to Egypt for help, they had no idea that Joseph would be the one holding their fate in his hands. After testing his brothers to see if their hearts had changed, Joseph revealed himself to them. Understandably, the brothers become dismayed at this news. After all, Joseph now had the power to do whatever he wanted to them. However, Joseph did not blame his brothers for sending him to Egypt.

In Genesis 45:8, Joseph's reply to them was *"So it was not you who sent me here, but God..."* Joseph realized that even though his road to power in Egypt began rough, ultimately, this had been God's plan for him. Obviously, he had forgiven his brothers for their wrongdoing toward him.

We should have this same attitude for those who sin against us. Colossians 3:13 *"...if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."* So, the next time you are a victim of wrongdoing, think of Joseph's example and be quick to forgive, realizing that this event may be a part of God's wonderful plan for you!

After all, God has told his children in 1 Peter 5:7 that they should *"cast all their anxieties on Him because He cares for them."* And, He promises to *"supply all their needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:19). How wonderful it is to have a heavenly Father who cares so much for His children!

*-April 2008*