

"BABY OF THE FAMILY"

**A SERMON BASED ON THE OLD TESTAMENT
BOOK OF GENESIS (37:1-4, 12-28) AND
PRESENTED FOR ORLEAN UMC ON
AUGUST 9, 2020----- (THE TENTH SUNDAY OF
AN ELEVEN WEEK SERMON SERIES THAT
WILL TAKE US THROUGH SOME OF THE
MAJOR THEMES AND STORIES IN THE BOOK
OF GENESIS)**

**I WAS NOT THAT STELLAR OF A SCIENCE
STUDENT, I'LL ADMIT, BUT READING THESE
STORIES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS REMINDS ME
OF SOMETHING I LEARNED IN SOME SCIENCE
CLASS OR ANOTHER.....**

**REMEMBER NEWTON'S THIRD LAW OF MOTION:
"FOR EVERY ACTION THERE IS AN EQUAL AND
OPPOSITE REACTION"?**

**IT'S A SCIENTIFIC LAW BUT IT'S ALSO A TRUTH
WHEN IT COMES TO HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS,
ISN'T IT?**

***OUR CHOICES HAVE CONSEQUENCES, AND
SOMETIMES THOSE CONSEQUENCES OUTLIVE
US.***

**AS WE TELL THE STORIES OF THE BOOK OF
GENESIS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT SUCH
IS CERTAINLY THE CASE IN THE LIVES OF OUR
FIRST FAMILIES OF FAITH.**

**WE'RE NOW ON GENERATION NUMBER THREE
OF ABRAHAM'S GRAND EXPERIMENT TO START
A NEW NATION, AND WE'RE STARTING TO SEE
THE EFFECTS OF SOME SERIOUSLY
MISINFORMED CHOICES, REACTIONS THAT
BUCKLE UNDER THE WEIGHT OF BAD DECISIONS
AND RIPPLE OUT OVER AND OVER AGAIN, EVEN
OVER GENERATIONS....**

**WE CRACK OPEN OUR STORY TODAY TO
GENESIS CHAPTER 37, WHICH, MOST SCHOLARS
WILL TELL YOU BEGINS A WHOLE NEW PART OF
THE SWEEPING EPIC WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING.**

**UP UNTIL THIS POINT OUR TEXT HAS BEEN
LITTLE PERICOPES, OR SELF-CONTAINED
NARRATIVES, LOOSELY STRUNG TOGETHER IN
ONE GRAND STORY..... BUT CHAPTER 37 ---OUR
TEXT FOR TODAY ----BEGINS A LONG, DRAWN-
OUT NARRATIVE THAT SPANS NEARLY TEN
CHAPTERS AND TELLS THE STORY OF HOW IT IS
THAT THIS RAGTAG LITTLE BAND OF
ABRAHAM'S DESCENDENTS EVER FINDS ITSELF
PLANTED IN THE LAND OF EGYPT, EVENTUALLY
FORCED INTO SLAVERY.**

**THE TIE BETWEEN THE STORIES OF WEEKS PAST
AND TODAY'S NEW NARRATIVE IS OUR
CHARACTER JACOB.**

**REMEMBER WHAT HE WAS UP TO LAST WEEK?
JACOB HAD SENT HIS FAMILY—WIVES AND
CHILDREN, THAT IS—ACROSS THE JABBOK
RIVER AHEAD OF HIM BECAUSE HE WAS SCARED
OF WHAT HIS ANGRY BROTHER ESAU MIGHT DO
TO HIM.**

***WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THIS TURN OF
EVENTS?***

**WELL, ASIDE FROM SHAKING OUR HEADS IN
DISBELIEF AT THE ANTICS OF OUR ANCESTORS
OF FAITH, WE CAN READ THIS STORY . . . AND
TAKE SOME COMFORT.**

FOR THOSE OF US WHO THINK OUR FAMILIES
ARE DYSFUNCTIONAL, WELL, THESE FAMILIES
MAKE YOURS AND MINE LOOK RATHER NORMAL,
IF NOT DOWNRIGHT BORING.

JUST THINK ABOUT THE WILD RIDE THEY'VE ALL
BEEN ON: ABRAM CLAIMED THAT HIS WIFE
SARAH WAS HIS SISTER BECAUSE HE COULD
TELL THE KING OF EGYPT WAS INTERESTED IN
HER, AND ABRAHAM WAS SCARED HE'D BE
KILLED.

NOW.....ISN'T THAT NICE!

SARAH HERSELF WASN'T MUCH BETTER. SHE CONVINCED ABRAHAM TO HAVE A CHILD WITH HER SLAVE, HAGAR, THEN TRIED TO KILL BOTH HAGAR AND THE CHILD WHEN SHE GOT JEALOUS..... ABRAHAM ALMOST SACRIFICED HIS SON ISAAC ON AN ALTAR..... ISAAC AND HIS WIFE REBEKAH RAISED TWO SONS -----ESAU AND JACOB---- WHO HAD A SIBLING RIVALRY THAT WENT FAR BEYOND FIGHTING OVER THEIR TOYS—IT WAS REALLY A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.... JACOB RAN AWAY TO HIS UNCLE LABAN, WHO LIED TO HIM AND TRICKED HIM OUT OF MARRYING HIS TRUE LOVE, RACHEL—ON HIS WEDDING DAY, NO LESS.

**AND WHEN WE ENCOUNTERED JACOB LAST
WEEK HE WAS JUST ENDING A 20-YEAR
ESTRANGEMENT FROM HIS BIRTH FAMILY,
HAVING PULLED UP THE ROOTS HE'D PLANTED
WITH LABAN AND SENDING HIS FAMILY OUT
AHEAD OF HIM.**

**WHEW!----LET'S PAUSE AND CATCH OUR
BREATH!!!!**

**FORGET AN EPISODE, IT'S MORE LIKE A
WHOLE *SEASON* OF JERRY SPRINGER IN THOSE
MIDDLE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS.**

**BUT EVEN WITH THE START TO A NEW CHAPTER
IN THE NARRATIVE, I'M AFRAID THE DRAMA IS
NOT OVER YET..... DYSFUNCTION BREEDS
DYSFUNCTION AND FOR EVERY ACTION THERE
IS A REACTION, SO ONCE JACOB GETS SETTLED
AND STARTS RAISING HIS OWN KIDS, WELL, IT'S
NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY HAVE SOME
ISSUES, TOO.**

**JACOB IS ALREADY WELL UP IN YEARS WHEN
CHAPTER 37 OPENS..... REMEMBER, JACOB HAD
TWO WIVES AND TWO SERVANT WOMEN, OR
CONCUBINES..... LEAH, THE FIRST WIFE WHOM
JACOB WAS TRICKED INTO MARRYING, WAS THE
MOTHER OF SIX BOYS.**

RACHEL, JACOB'S FAVORITE WIFE, WAS THE MOTHER OF TWO BOYS. THE TWO CONCUBINES WERE MOTHERS OF FOUR BOYS TOGETHER, INFORMATION FROM WHICH, IF YOU WERE SO INCLINED TO DO MATH, YOU COULD QUICKLY DEDUCE THAT THE TOTAL SONS OF JACOB AT THIS TIME WAS 12. TWELVE SONS (AND THERE WAS ONE DAUGHTER AS WELL). NOT BAD FOR SOMEBODY WHO STARTED OUT WITH NOTHING, JUST HOPING TO ESTABLISH A GREAT NATION THROUGH HIS DESCENDENTS.

WE ALREADY KNOW THAT JACOB LOVED RACHEL ABOVE ALL OF THE OTHER MOTHERS OF HIS CHILDREN, BUT RACHEL HAD DIED WHILE GIVING BIRTH TO HER YOUNGEST SON, BENJAMIN..... SO JACOB WAS LEFT GRIEVING AND CLUTCHING TIGHTLY TO HER MEMORY THROUGH THE AFFECTIONS OF THE TWO BOYS SHE'D BIRTHED: JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN. AND THIS DYSFUNCTIONAL FAVORITISM, UNRESOLVED GRIEF OR WHATEVER IT WAS JACOB WAS DEALING WITH, WELL, IT HAD A WAY OF RIPPLING DOWN INTO HIS RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIS CHILDREN AND, AS A RESULT, THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER.

AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT TODAY'S STORY IS ALL ABOUT.

TURNS OUT THAT, THOUGH JOSEPH WAS NUMBER 11 OUT OF 12 SONS OF JACOB, JACOB HAD SPECIFICALLY CHOSEN HIM AS HIS FAVORITE CHILD..... AS ONE OF BUT THREE CHILDREN ----THE MIDDLE CHILD SANDWHICHED BETWEEN TWO SISTERS... I CERTAINLY KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO BE ABSOLUTELY SURE YOUR PARENTS HAVE A FAVORITE . . . AND IT'S NOT YOU. (TURNS OUT ALL MY SISTERS WERE EQUALLY CONVINCED AND EVEN BITTER ABOUT OUR PARENTS HAVING FAVORITES,

**BUT WE ALL THOUGHT THE FAVORITE WAS
SOMEONE BESIDES OURSELVES!)**

**BUT IF WE STUDY THE HEBREW TEXT
CAREFULLY THERE IS NO DISPUTING THAT
JOSEPH WAS BY FAR THE FAVORED CHILD OF
JACOB..... WE'RE TOLD THAT JOSEPH ----DESPITE
HIS YOUNG AGE ----HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO A
SUPERVISORY POSITION IN THE FAMILY
BUSINESS, RESPONSIBLE FOR REPORTING BACK
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF HIS BROTHERS—WHO
WERE BUSY MANAGING JACOB'S HERDS AND
FLOCKS.**

THE TEXT TELLS US THAT JOSEPH WAS 17 YEARS OLD WHEN THE STORY BEGINS AND, REMEMBER, THE 11TH OUT OF 12, SO YOU MIGHT IMAGINE THE DYNAMIC OF 17 YEAR OLD JOSEPH RUNNING HOME TO HIS DADDY TO REPORT THAT HIS OLDER BROTHERS WERE TAKING EXTRA LONG LUNCH BREAKS!

TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, WE'RE TOLD THAT JACOB HAD GIFTED JOSEPH WITH A BEAUTIFUL COAT. THE HEBREW DESCRIPTIVE WORDS IN THAT SECTION OF THE TEXT ARE UNCLEAR, SO SCHOLARS HAVE TRANSLATED THEM TO SAY A "COAT OF MANY COLORS" OR A "LONG-SLEEVED COAT."

**IT WAS THE GOOD OLD KING JAMES
TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE FROM 1611 THAT
POPULARIZED THE PHRASE WE LEARNED IN
SUNDAY SCHOOL: “JOSEPH’S COAT OF MANY
COLORS.” -----CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL ----WE
HAVE TO KNOW THAT JOSEPH’S COAT WAS NOT
JUST ANY COAT, THAT’S FOR SURE.**

**WHENEVER HE WORE THIS COAT IT WAS CLEAR
TO ANYONE WATCHING WHO HAD THE FAVOR OF
THEIR FATHER . . . AND WHO DIDN’T. THINK OF
THE SITUATION LIKE THIS: WHEN JOSEPH
WOULD COME DOWN TO THE FIELDS WEARING
HIS COLORFUL COAT,**

**THE DRAB FABRICS HIS BROTHERS WORE
WOULD PALE IN COMPARISON..... AND, IN FACT,
WOULD MARK THEM AS LESS IMPORTANT. IT
WOULD BE LIKE WEARING A MCDONALD'S
UNIFORM VERSUS A FINELY TAILORED SUIT.
EVERYONE WHO SAW THESE TWO STANDING
NEXT TO EACH OTHER WOULD DEFINITELY
KNOW WHO WAS MORE HIGHLY ESTEEMED IN
THE EYES OF THEIR FATHER, JACOB.**

**DAY AFTER DAY, APPARENTLY, JOSEPH WOULD
COME DOWN TO THE FIELDS AND STRUT UP AND
DOWN, HIS BEAUTIFUL COAT SWINGING EASILY
AROUND HIS ANKLES.**

AND HE WOULD HURRY BACK TO HIS FATHER JACOB AND REPORT ANY INDISCRETIONS HE OBSERVED, ANY QUESTIONABLE BEHAVIOR HE SAW IN HIS BROTHERS.

OOOOH, IT WAS NOT NICE. THERE HE WAS EVERY DAY, GLOATING ON THE SIDELINES WHILE HIS BROTHERS MANAGED THE FLOCKS AND TRIED TO KEEP THEIR BURNING ANGER IN CHECK..... *REMEMBER, IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE LEARN FROM THIS STORY IT IS THAT EVERY ACTION HAS A REACTION, AND JOSEPH'S RIDICULOUSLY UNFAIR BEHAVIOR, TOTALLY ENCOURAGED BY HIS FATHER JACOB, WAS BOUND TO HAVE A RIPPLE EFFECT.*

AND, IT DID. BOY, DID IT EVER. THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK, AS IT WERE, WAS ONE DAY WHEN JOSEPH AMBLED DOWN TO THE FIELDS WHERE HIS BROTHERS WERE WORKING AND PROCEEDED TO TELL THEM ABOUT SOME DREAMS HE HAD HAD. OUR LECTIONARY FOR TODAY SKIPS THIS PART OF THE GENESIS STORY BUT MAYBES YOU REMEMBER WHAT THEY WERE? -----THEY WERE DREAMS ABOUT ALL THE BROTHERS OUT IN THE FIELDS, BINDING SHEAVES OF WHEAT, WHEN SUDDENLY ALL THE BROTHERS' SHEAVES BOWED DOWN TO JOSEPH'S..... AND ANOTHER DREAM, ABOUT THE SUN, THE MOON AND 11 STARS, ALL BOWING DOWN TO JOSEPH.

APPARENTLY, JOSEPH MANAGED TO REPORT HIS DREAMS TO HIS BROTHERS WITH A STRAIGHT FACE—TOTALLY SERIOUS, AND THE MEANING OF THE DREAMS WAS OBVIOUS TO JOSEPH—HE WAS MEANT TO BE IN CHARGE, TO LORD IT OVER ALL OF THEM.

THE MEANING OF THE DREAMS WAS OBVIOUS TO JOSEPH'S BROTHERS, TOO, AND THEY WERE SICK OF IT . . . SICK OF JACOB'S FAVORITISM, SICK OF FEELING SECOND BEST, SICK OF JOSEPH'S ARROGANCE . . . JUST SICK OF THE WHOLE SITUATION.

I DON'T THINK ANY OF US WOULD DISPUTE THE FACT THAT THIS WAS A SITUATION OF INJUSTICE..... JACOB PERPETUATED THE DYSFUNCTION OF HIS OWN CHILDHOOD BY REPEATING IT WITH HIS SONS, WHO COULD EASILY READ THE WRITING ON THE WALL.

THERE WAS NO FUTURE FOR THEM AS LEADERS

OF THE FAMILY; EVEN THOUGH HE DID NOT

DESERVE TO HAVE IT, JOSEPH WAS THE ONE

JACOB HAD CHOSEN TO SET HIS SIGHTS ON,

THE APPLE OF JACOB'S EYE, HIS

FAVORITE.....AND AS A RESULT, ALL THE OTHER

BROTHERS' STATUS WERE BUMPED DOWN A

NOTCH—THEY WERE LOSING OUT, UNFAIRLY,

BECAUSE OF THE WAY JACOB WAS BEHAVING.

AND JOSEPH'S GLOATING, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR NOT, WAS NOT HELPING MATTERS IN THE LEAST. IT'S ONE THING TO BE THE ADORED BABY OF THE FAMILY; BUT IT'S ANOTHER THING ALTOGETHER TO USE YOUR SPECIAL STATUS TO OPPRESS OTHER PEOPLE.

AND SO THE NARRATIVE BALL BEGINS TO ROLL; AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. THE BROTHERS PLOT TO KILL JOSEPH OUT THERE IN THE FIELD ONE DAY—JUST DO AWAY WITH HIM AND HIS SILLY DREAMS ONCE AND FOR ALL. THEIR PLAN WAS TO KILL HIM AND THROW HIS BODY INTO A PIT.

**BUT SOMEBODY'S CONSCIENCE WAS PRICKED—
AT LEAST ONE TRANSLATION SAYS THAT IT WAS
REUBEN—AND REUBEN CONVINCES HIS
BROTHERS TO SELL JOSEPH TO A PASSING
CARAVAN, TO GET HIM FAR, FAR AWAY AND OUT
OF THEIR HAIR FOREVER.**

**AND SO THEY STAGED THE WHOLE THING. THEY
KILLED AN ANIMAL AND SMEARED THAT
BEAUTIFUL COAT WITH BLOOD, THEN THEY
TOOK IT BACK TO THEIR FATHER, WHO MADE
THE ASSUMPTION THAT JOSEPH WAS DEAD....
AND JACOB'S GRIEF NEARLY CRIPPLES HIM, HE
IS SO DEVASTATED BY THE LOSS.**

***THEN, LIFE CONTINUES, AS IT ALWAYS DOES
EVEN IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY AND VIOLENCE
AND PAIN, WITH THE INJUSTICE PERPETRATED
AGAINST THE BROTHERS SEEMINGLY AVENGED.***

***BUT EVERY ACTION HAS AN EQUAL AND
OPPOSITE REACTION, AND YOU'D BETTER
BELIEVE THE BROTHERS' BEHAVIOR HAD
CONSEQUENCES.***

**WE'LL HEAR MORE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS AS
THE STORY CONTINUES NEXT WEEK, BUT WE
STOP HERE TO THINK ABOUT WHAT IT IS WE
MIGHT LEARN ABOUT OURSELVES AND ABOUT
GOD AS WE READ THIS STORY.**

***CURIOUSLY, GOD IS NOT A FIGURE IN THIS
STORY AT ALL. WE'VE COME FROM EPIC SAGAS
WHERE GOD IS APPEARING IN ALL MANNER OF
WAYS, TO THIS STORY, WHERE GOD NEVER
APPEARS..... ALL WE HAVE ARE THE ACTIONS
AND REACTIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS, TRYING
DESPERATELY TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY, IN
FAMILY, WITH EACH OTHER, AND NOT DOING
TOO WELL AT ALL.***

***SEE, EVERY ACTION HAS A REACTION, AND
WE'RE STUCK, ALWAYS, LIVING WITH THE
CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS AND THE
ACTIONS OF OTHERS.***

IT WAS UNJUST AND UNFAIR, IT'S TRUE, AND JOSEPH'S BROTHERS DID NOT DESERVE THE TREATMENT THEY WERE RECEIVING FROM JOSEPH AND JACOB, BUT THEY MADE A CHOICE TO ADDRESS INJUSTICE WITH ANOTHER ACT OF INJUSTICE, OF VIOLENCE, EVEN, AND NEWTON'S THIRD LAW OF MOTION SWUNG INTO EFFECT, AS WE KNOW BY NOW IT ALWAYS DOES.

WHEN WE ARE FACED WITH INJUSTICE, AS JOSEPH'S BROTHERS WERE, WE HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT HOW TO RESPOND. AND REMEMBER, EVERY ACTION HAS AN EQUAL AND OPPOSITE REACTION.

**SIMON WIESENTHAL WAS A JEW WHO LIVED
DURING WORLD WAR II IN AN AREA OF EUROPE
THAT WAS CONQUERED BY GERMANY.....
DURING THE WAR HE WAS FORCED TO LIVE IN A
GHETTO AND THEN SENT TO A WORK CAMP
WHERE HE FACED THE POSSIBILITY OF DEATH
EVERY DAY..... ONE DAY IN THE WORK CAMP,
WIESENTHAL WAS SUMMONED BY A NURSE TO
HEAR THE DYING CONFESSIONS OF AN SS NAZI
SOLDIER. THE SOLDIER ASKED FOR
FORGIVENESS FOR THE THINGS HE HAD DONE
TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE;**

**HE WANTED FORGIVENESS AS HE WAS DYING
BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID THAT HIS SOUL
WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO REST IN ETERNITY
UNLESS HE WAS FORGIVEN.**

**IN HIS BOOK THE SUNFLOWER WIESENTHAL
TELLS ABOUT TRYING OVER AND OVER TO
LEAVE THE ROOM BECAUSE HE WAS SO AFRAID
AND BECAUSE HE HATED NAZIS..... BUT HE
STAYED AND LISTENED TO THE DYING MAN OUT
OF PITY AND ALSO BECAUSE THE SOLDIER
BEGGED HIM NOT TO LEAVE.....**

WIESENTHAL RECOGNIZED THAT THE NAZI SOLDIER WAS SHOWING TRUE REPENTANCE BUT HE ALSO KNEW THAT THE SOLDIER WAS IGNORANT, SELFISH, AND A MEMBER OF THE GROUP THAT HAD TAKEN AWAY THE LIVES OF HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

OVERWHELMED WITH THE HEAVINESS OF THE DECISION, WIESENTHAL EVENTUALLY JUST LEFT THE ROOM.

THE NEXT DAY HE FOUND OUT THAT THE SOLDIER HAD DIED AND LEFT ALL HIS THINGS TO WIESENTHAL; WIESENTHAL SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE ASKING THE QUESTION: “WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?”

THE BOOK'S NEWEST EDITION INCLUDES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MANY NOTED JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN THINKERS WHO COMMENT ON THE DILEMMA WIESENTHAL FACED..... MOST AGREE THAT WIESENTHAL COULD NOT HAVE FORGIVEN THAT SOLDIER ON BEHALF OF AN ENTIRE RACE OF PEOPLE, BUT MANY ALSO NOTE: THERE'S SOMETHING POWERFUL IN STOPPING VIOLENCE AND HATRED WITH FORGIVENESS AND LOVE.

DESMOND TUTU, WHO PRESIDED OVER THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION IN SOUTH AFRICA AFTER APARTHEID WRITES OF WIESENTHAL'S DILEMMA:

“IT’S CLEAR THAT IF WE LOOK ONLY TOWARD A RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE, WE MIGHT AS WELL CLOSE UP SHOP. FORGIVENESS IS NOT SOME NEBULOUS THING. IT IS PRACTICAL POLITICS. *WITHOUT FORGIVENESS, THERE IS NO FUTURE.*”

SOMETIMES IN LIFE, THINGS HAPPEN TO US THAT WE CAN’T CONTROL. SOMETIMES WE SET OUT, FOR EXAMPLE, LIKE JACOB IN OUR STORY TWO WEEKS AGO, TO MARRY RACHEL AND END UP MARRIED TO LEAH. BUT EVEN WHEN THESE THINGS HAPPEN, WE ALWAYS—ALWAYS—HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT HOW WE WILL RESPOND TO THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES.

**WE CAN RESPOND TO THE INJUSTICE WE FACE
WITH ANGER AND HATRED AND VIOLENCE, AND
MAYBE SOME WOULD SAY A RESPONSE LIKE
THAT IS EVEN JUSTIFIED.**

**BUT REMEMBER: EVERY ACTION HAS AN EQUAL
AND OPPOSITE REACTION, AND VIOLENCE AND
PAIN AND INJUSTICE ALWAYS . . . ALWAYS . . .
BREED MORE VIOLENCE AND PAIN AND
INJUSTICE.**

**WHAT PAIN COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF
JOSEPH'S BROTHERS WERE ABLE TO FACE THE
UNJUST SITUATION IN WHICH THEY FOUND
THEMSELVES AND RESPOND, NOT WITH
VIOLENCE, BUT WITH FORGIVENESS?**

WHAT PAIN COULD WE AVOID IF WE TRAIN OUR HEARTS WITH THE DISCIPLINE OF ANSWERING INJUSTICE WITH FORGIVENESS AND LOVE?

EVERY ACTION, YOU KNOW, HAS AN EQUAL AND OPPOSITE REACTION . . . AND I SUSPECT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN VIOLENCE AND INJUSTICE IS COUNTERED WITH FORGIVENESS AND LOVE, MIGHT EVEN BE SOMETHING AKIN TO WHAT HAPPENED WHEN JESUS STEPPED TOWARD THE BOAT THROUGH THE CHURNING STORM, REACHED OUT HIS HAND THROUGH THE WHIPPING WIND AND UTTER CHAOS, AND SAID, “PEACE, BE STILL.”

AND IT WAS.

**PRAISE GOD AND MAY IT BE SO FOR YOU AND
FOR ME.....AMEN.**