

Connecting The Dots Between God's Control & Our Conduct

A Series Of Studies About Joseph's Life (Genesis 37–50)

A Brand–New Phase Of Life For Jacob:

When He Finally Stopped Trying To Bargain With God

Genesis 45:24–47:12; with other related biblical support

—**Introducing today's message:** Even though it spans 4000 years, almost half of what we read in **Genesis** describes the details of Jacob's family. Leading up to what we'll study today, we've seen how Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph resulted in his other sons selling him into slavery. Then, in spite of being a slave in Egypt, God was with Joseph & that enabled him to become Egypt's Prime Minister under Pharaoh. His main role was to manage food distribution during the famine that was ordained by God in order to fulfill His prophecy that Abraham's family would become a great nation while living in a foreign land. (*Genesis 12 & 15*) In our most recent studies, we saw that the relationship between Joseph & his brothers had been restored & today's lesson will focus attention on how Jacob's trust in the Lord was renewed and he began to listen to God in a fresh way. *We'll explore how Jacob's journey **toward** faith is relevant to us as we function in the midst of a culture that consistently clutters our minds with ideas that contradict the biblical truths designed to guide our lives.*

—**Some background details to increase our understanding:**

- 1} Jacob's grandfather Abraham had a bad experience in Egypt!
- 2} *God had prohibited Jacob's father Isaac from moving to Egypt!*
- 3} In Genesis 28:13–15 & 35:12, God specifically promised Jacob that the land of Canaan was given to him & his descendents.
- 4} *It's very likely that the Pharaoh during Joseph's time in Egypt wasn't a native Egyptian. He was from a political coalition originally from a region in Canaan who had overthrown the Egyptian government. Since native Egyptians had a great disdain for anyone from Canaan, this helps to explain how/why the Pharaoh would be some willing to place Joseph in a high government position & encourage his family to come to live in Goshen. (from Howard F. Vos, *Genesis & Archaeology*, Moody Press, 1963, pp 101–105)*
- 5} Until this time, Jacob's relationship with the Lord had been based on his ability to drive a bargain to get what he wanted. However, **God's gracious promises** had always been clearly expressed to him!
- 6} *Jacob's life had been marked & marred by treachery, not trust in God!*

—**Questions we might ask ourselves as we dig into this study:**

How attentively are we listening to God in the midst of all the confusing clutter coming from our culture?

How much or how often do we try to bargain with God in order to get what we want?

How often do we become bitter or anxious when God doesn't do what we want Him to do?

Do we genuinely believe that God is working to provide what's best for us, & what does that mean?

① After being _____ by what his sons told him about Joseph, Jacob was _____ when he saw the _____ & _____ from Egypt! {45:24–28}

② Jacob's attitude was _____ when he offered a sacrifice to God at Beersheba and God _____ him & gave him the _____ to take his entire family to Egypt. {46:1–27}

③ When Jacob arrived in Egypt, Judah guided him to Goshen & when Joseph saw Jacob, they _____ to one another & _____ for a long time. Jacob told Joseph, "Now let me die; my life is _____ since I have seen your face! {46:28–30}

4 Even though Pharaoh had _____ to give Joseph's family the _____ land in Egypt, Joseph _____ his brothers about how to _____ with Pharaoh. Then he took five of his brothers to Pharaoh to _____ that they would live in Goshen! {46:31-47:6}

5 Joseph brought Jacob to Pharaoh & Jacob blessed Pharaoh! When Pharaoh asked Jacob about his life, Jacob gave a _____ answer. Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh a second time! {47:7-12}

—PERSONAL REFLECTIONS & APPLICATIONS
THAT ENCOURAGE OUR FAITH

—1— Jacob's life was _____ & _____ by treachery. His _____ & _____ were a result of an _____ of God & His grace.

—2— Once Jacob saw how God had blessed Joseph, his perspective began to _____. He began to see God in an _____ way. He was able to _____ God's grace.

Some Relevant Quotes & Discussion Questions to Help us Dig Deeper

—“Grace stands in direct opposition to any supposed worthiness on our part. To say it another way: Grace and works are mutually exclusive. Our relationship with God is based on either works or grace. There is never a works-plus-grace relationship with Him.” —**Jerry Bridges**

—“When God's Word speaks **clearly** into our lives, and assures us of His presence, we should step forward in faith to **confidently** obey Him even if the majority of others aren't willing to go with us!” —**selected**

—“When our faith & trust in the Lord becomes authentically real, our desire to obey Him becomes one of our top priorities!” —**GAD**

— “The God of the Bible has clearly revealed to us that we have to connect with Him on His terms, not ours!” —**Erwin Lutzer**

Please carefully read Genesis 45-47 to prepare for our study questions. This week we'll be taking an attentive look at God's grace to help us block out the clutter that our culture is using to influence us toward sin.

—1— Jacob's life (as well as his family) was marked & marred by his own treachery. In many of his dealings with others, he used deception to get what he wanted & this became his routine. He was impacted by his own sin in such a way that he didn't recognize/realize that God's promises to him were based on his faith, not on his efforts to obtain them on his own. Eventually he became bitter & his faith became stagnant because his life was filled with sorrow & suffering, & he wasn't finding any sense of peace. How can we avoid falling into this type of experience? What does this teach us about God & what He might use to get our attention?

—2— Jacob had received God's promise that the land of Canaan was the “land of promise.” (Note Genesis 12:1-3 where Abraham received this promise; Genesis 26:1-5 for Isaac's promise from God; Genesis 28:10-15 & 35:9-15 for Jacob.) This probably made it difficult for him to move to Egypt when Joseph asked him to move. How did God make it clear to him that he should move to Egypt? What does this teach us about God? How does this affect that way we should read & believe the Bible?

—3— Typically, how attentively do we listen to God? How much does the culture around us influence our ability to hear God's Word? Or our desire to hear God's Word? Or our willingness to obey God's Word?

—4— Jacob became bitter & apparently this influenced his trust in the Lord. How do we tend to respond when it seems as if God isn't doing what we expect or desire? How can we guard against becoming bitter or anxious? What regular steps should we take to strengthen our faith?