

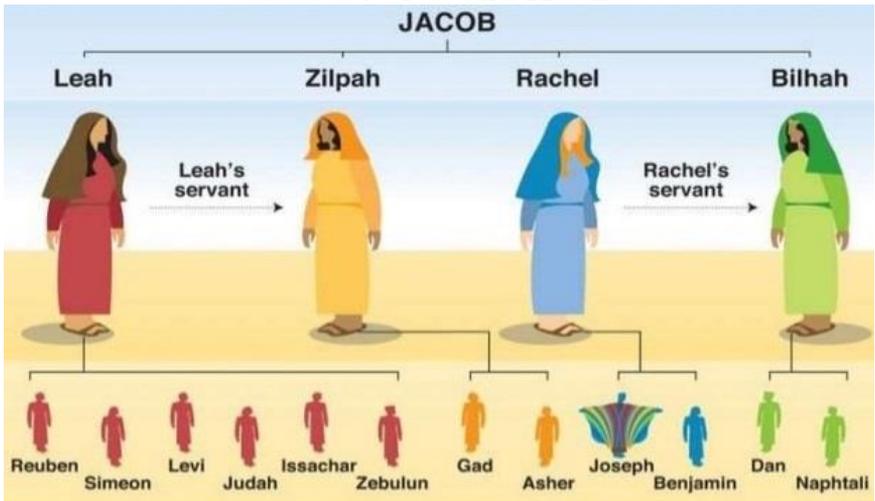
Sermon Notes 6/13/21

“The Coat of Many Colors”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 37?

1. Beware of showing _____.
Genesis 37:3
Matthew 5:43-45
2. Communicate the _____ of Jesus.
Genesis 37:4
Ephesians 4:32
3. Practice the _____ of Jesus.
Genesis 37:6-7
Philippians 2:3-8
4. Demonstrate the _____ of Jesus.
Genesis 37:18
1 John 3:15-16

Jacob's 4 wives and 12 sons:



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 37: June 13-20

Genesis 37

God told Abraham that his descendants would be enslaved for 400 years in a foreign land before they would inherit the Promise Land (Gen. 15:13-16). The final 14 chapters of Genesis tell the story of how Jacob's family went from living in the land of Canaan to living in Egypt. Here, in chapter 37, is where that story begins. Here, we see the providence of God working through a series of unfortunate events in the life of Joseph to accomplish the greater purpose of God's plan for redemption.

Read Genesis 37:1-11

1. Where did Jacob choose to live in verse 1?
2. How old was Joseph in verse 2?
3. Which brothers was Joseph working with in verse 2? What did Joseph say about his brothers?

It is important for us to look for the best in others and intentionally express appreciation and praise for their good qualities. It is a human tendency to be critical of others, focusing on what needs to be corrected while overlooking things that should be appreciated. Paul Kissling notes,

The NIV's "bad report" may be too tame a translation which tends to whitewash what Joseph actually did. The Hebrew word translated "report" (דִּבְרָה, *dibāh*) is used of false slander (Ps 31:14; Prov 10:18; 25:10). The word is used three times to describe the "bad report" about the Promised Land which the ten spies brought to Israel (Num 13:32; 14:36, 37). It may well be that Joseph's report was actually not true or only partially true.¹

4. What did Israel do for Joseph in verse 3? Why?
5. How did Joseph's brothers speak to him? (37:4)

The Hebrew word for "kind word" in verse 4 is *shalom* (שָׁלוֹם), "peace."

¹ Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 420-421.

The “report” Joseph brings to his father (v. 2), along with the special coat (v. 3), and the assignment in verse 14, all indicate that Jacob had promoted Joseph to a position over his brothers. John Walton writes,

Most scholars acknowledge that status, not just favor, is what the special coat represents. Nevertheless, the description of the coat of many colors is still the norm in Sunday school curricula as well as in popular perception (e.g., as in Andrew Lloyd Weber’s *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*), even though this interpretation has been nearly universally abandoned in scholarly circles. Most commentators favor something more along the line of a full-length coat or a long-sleeved coat, either of which would indicate that Joseph is management, not labor.²

6. How did the brothers feel about Joseph’s dreams? (37:5)

7. What was the meaning of the dreams Joseph had? (37:6-9)

The name “Joseph” means “add more” (Gen. 30:24). In verses 5 and 8, the author is making a play on words when he says, “they hated him all the more.” The text literally says, “They Josephed their hate for him.”

8. What did Israel think about the second dream Joseph had? (37:10-11)

Read Genesis 37:12-36

9. Where did the brothers go to pasture the flock in verse 12?

10. What assignment did Israel give to Joseph? (37:13-14)

Kissling observes,

Jacob tells Joseph to go and see about the peace of his brothers and the peace of the flock. The NIV and NRSV translate the Hebrew word *shalom* by “well,” but this obscures the connection between this verse (v. 14) and verse 4 where the brothers were not able to speak “peaceably” to Joseph. Jacob is sending Joseph to enquire about the peace of his brothers (and of his own flocks) when those brothers could not even speak in peace to Joseph.³

² John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2001), 662-663.

³ Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2*, 427.

11. What happened when Joseph got to Shechem? (37:15-16)
12. How did Joseph finally find his brothers in verse 17?
13. What did the brothers plan to do to Joseph? Why? (37:18-20)

Dennis Prager comments,

The brothers began conspiring to kill Joseph while he was still far off in the distance. It is easier to loathe people and plot against them when we are not actually confronted with them. When we interact with them, they often become sympathetic human beings. The surest way to preserve hatred—and negative stereotypes—is to avoid dealing face-to-face with those we hate.⁴

14. What did Reuben do, and what did he intend to do? (37:21-22)
15. What did the brothers do to Joseph before they sat down to eat? (37:23-25)
16. What did Judah convince the brothers to do? Why? (37:27-28)
17. What did Reuben do when he found out what his brothers had done to Joseph? (37:29-30)
18. What did Joseph's brothers do, and what did they tell their father? (37:31-32)
19. What did Jacob think happened to his favorite son? (37:33)
20. How did Jacob respond to the news about Joseph? (37:34-35)
21. What happened to Joseph? (37:36)
22. When is it important to avoid displays of favoritism?
23. How will you communicate kindness with your words this week?
24. How will you demonstrate the love of Jesus with your actions?

⁴ Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Genesis* (Washington, DC: Regnery Faith, 2019), 431.