

Genesis 46:1–7 (ESV) ¹So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ²And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.” ³Then he said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. ⁴I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes.” ⁵Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, ⁷his sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

Life Principle: Positive Spiritual Growth Is Demonstrated By A Person Truly Seeking God’s Guidance Before Making Major Life Decisions.

Luke 6:12–13 (ESV) ¹²In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. ¹³And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles:

Genesis 47:27–30 (ESV) ²⁷Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. ²⁸And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years. ²⁹And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place.” He answered, “I will do as you have said.”

Life Principle: Stay Focused On God's Future Promises Even When You Are Prospering In The Present.

Hebrews 11:16 (ESV) ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Matthew 6:19–21 (ESV) ¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Genesis 48:20 (ESV) ²⁰So he blessed them that day, saying, “By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying, ‘God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.’” Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

Life Principle: God Does Not Bless According To Human Merit Or The World’s Expectations But Behavior And Life Choices Do Matter.

Luke 17:10 (ESV) ¹⁰So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV) ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Romans 11:33–36 (ESV) ³³Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ³⁴“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” ³⁵“Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” ³⁶For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Life Principle: God Does Not Bless According To Human Merit Or The World's Expectations But Behavior And Life Choices Do Matter.

Genesis 49:3–10 (ESV) ³“Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. ⁴Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch! ⁵“Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. ⁶Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen. ⁷Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel. ⁸“Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. ⁹Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? ¹⁰The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Genesis 50:15–21 (ESV) ¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” ¹⁶So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷“Say to Joseph, “Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.” ’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?” ²⁰As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Luke 6:27–28 (ESV) ²⁷“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

Luke 6:32–33 (ESV) ³²“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

Life Principle: Christians Should Remember That Any Type Of Revenge Or Payback Is Intruding On God's Prerogative

Romans 12:19-21 (ESV) ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1 Peter 2:21-23 (ESV) To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. ²² “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” ²³ When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

Life Principle: It Is Essential That Christians Understand And Believe That Even The Worst Circumstances Are Used By God For The Best Purposes.

Daniel 2:21–22 (NLT) ²¹He controls the course of world events; he removes kings and sets up other kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars. ²²He reveals deep and mysterious things and knows what lies hidden in darkness, though he is surrounded by light.

Romans 8:28 (ESV) ²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.