

Genesis 47

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. We are going through the life of Joseph, and we're in Genesis chapter 47.

But before we go there, I'd like you to take your Bibles and turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. And in verse 10, Paul says this, But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Paul understood a truth. He understood that where he was, the position he was at, what he was going through, was all the grace of God in him. And wherever he stood at that moment, if you saw any good in him, it wasn't really him, it was God's grace that was on him and working through him.

But he also realized that that grace that he gave, that was given to him, he wasn't going to waste it. And that's why he said, I worked harder than everyone else. I worked harder than everyone else.

And then he says, well, it wasn't really me, it was God's grace working through me. And today in Genesis chapter 47, we are with Joseph, and we're seeing how Joseph makes the most of God's provision in his life.

[1 : 16] As you know up to this story, Joseph was one of 12 brothers. During this time, he was sold into slavery. He was put in jail.

He was a slave. He was in jail for over two years. He was forgotten, left behind. But the whole time, God was working in his life, just for that moment. And in Genesis chapter 47, we get to see what that moment was all about.

And there's three things in this chapter I'd like to outline. The first thing is I'd like you to see Joseph's arrangement, arranged meeting with Pharaoh. The second thing would be Joseph's management in Egypt.

And the third one would be Joseph's care for his father's funeral, his father's burial. But one thing, if you look through the life of Joseph, you see one thing. Every time God puts him in a situation, Joseph is always coming out on top.

Whether he's in jail, he ends up running the place. Whether he's in slavery, he's ruling everyone else. And now here he is. Now here he is.

[2 : 20] Reunited with his family. Reunited with his family, second ruler in Egypt. And what's Joseph going to do? He's going to make the most of what God did in his life. So if you would, turn your Bibles there and we'll say a quick prayer.

We'll ask the Lord to be with us. Heavenly Father, we thank you for an opportunity. I thank you for an opportunity, Lord, to preach your truth or preach your word. Lord, I ask that you would just bless us tonight. Be with our pastor, Pastor Gardner in Peru.

Be with Pastor Trent in Louisiana. Please keep him safe. Take care of him, Lord. Lord, I ask that you just let this truth speak truth to our life. Lord, God, help us to learn from Joseph and how he made the most of what you gave him.

And Lord, God, help us to do the same. We'll give you all the praise. And Lord, we ask you just do something mighty tonight. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. This whole time, God has been orchestrating the survival of his people.

And he did so by using one man. And that man was Joseph. It's often said when there's a problem, when God has a problem, he seeks for a man to use. And this man in this story, he uses Joseph.

[3 : 21] In chapter 46 and verse 30, if you have your Bible, it's just a couple of verses behind chapter 47. The Bible talks about the reunion that Joseph had with Jacob. You probably know at that time, nothing probably made Jacob more happy than to see the son that he lost for several decades.

Could you imagine? A father thought his son was dead. His brothers come back and said, hey, Joseph's alive. Come on, we're not lying. Come on, come back. And then finally this reunion, he comes to him.

And look what he says in verse 30. And Israel said unto Joseph, now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

The excitement, the joy, the contentment of finally getting to see his son. And what has Jacob said? Okay, it's finished. I'm done. But I want you to notice something.

What does Joseph do after he meets his father? What would you do after you met your father? Think of the years. Think of the times that you were in slavery. Think of the travel from Canaan to Egypt in a caravan as a slave.

[4 : 31] Think of the time that you were treated and how badly and poorly you were treated. All because your brothers lied to you. And then finally to be reunited with his father, who he was taken away from.

What would you do? I know what I would do. Say, hey, Dad, let's go to Disney World. We're just going to relax for the next couple of weeks, aren't we? We're going to have a good time. We're going to go down to the villa. We're going to go down to the resort.

We're just going to take off the next couple of days. But what does Joseph do? What does Joseph do? Look in verse 31. And Joseph said unto his brothers, after his dad just said, I can die now.

And to his father's house, he says, I will go up and I will show Pharaoh and say unto him, My brethren and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me.

And the men are shepherds, for their trade have been to feed cattle. And they have brought their livestock and their herds and all that they have. And it shall come to pass. And this is Joseph speaking to his brothers.

[5 : 29] It says, and it will come to pass when Pharaoh, he'll call you guys. He'll call you up. And what shall you say? And shall say. This is what Pharaoh is going to say. What is your occupation?

What job title do you guys have? What do you guys do for a living? That ye shall say. This is what you guys are going to say. This is Joseph coaching his brothers. You will say, thy servant's trade hath been about cattle from our youth even till now.

Both we and also our fathers, that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen. For every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.

I've always wondered about these verses. Have you ever read the Bible? And you get to this passage. And why is Joseph telling his brothers to be shepherds when the Egyptians abhor shepherds?

You ever thought about that? It questions me, but it kind of shows my ignorance. But Joseph realized something. He realized, first of all, he started to plan what he was going to do with his family.

[6 : 29] There was no time to rejoice. There was no time to decide, hey, let's reminisce about the old times. He says, we've got to get to work. There's a famine out there. I want to take care of you guys. And not only am I going to take care of you in the later chapter, he says, I'm going to take care of the entire world.

But Joseph begins to start coaching his brothers. Because Joseph realized that Pharaoh will be seeing these people. And he wants his family to be a benefit to Pharaoh. What better way to be beneficial than to specialize in something that a person hates or abhors?

Let me say it like this. Let's say you hate to do yard work. Okay? You hate to mow. You hate to clip. You hate to rake. You hate to pull weeds.

You hate doing yard work. Now, if someone were to come to you and say, do you mind if I stay at your house? Do you mind if I eat your food? Basically, will you just take care of me?

What are you going to ask? What are you going to do for me? What better response for that person to say, well, I'm a landscaper. I do what you hate. I can do that.

[7 : 36] What a great lesson for a person who has a boss. What a great lesson for a person who has somebody above them. To find out what that person hates and to do it. And do it for him.

What better way to get on their good side? See, Joseph was always four steps ahead. He was planning for the future. He realized why God sent him there. Why did God send him there? Why did God send him there?

Well, if you take your Bible, turn to Genesis chapter 50. At the end, Joseph tells us why he realizes why God put him there. And Genesis chapter 50, verse 20, the Bible says, But as for you, you guys thought it evil against me.

But God meant it for good to bring pass, as at this day, to save much people alive. This is a conversation that Joseph is having with his brothers. And this is what he says, I realize what you guys did, you meant it for evil.

But can I let you know that God meant it for good? Because God put me right here that I might save much people. And so as soon as Joseph sees his family, he realizes this, Famine in the land, I've got to take care of them.

[8 : 39] Famine in the land, I've got to take care of them. I've got to arrange a meeting. I've got to coach them and tell them what to do. Well, notice what happens. In Genesis chapter 47, the Bible says, Joseph made good on his word, and he went to Pharaoh, and he told him about the situation.

In Genesis chapter 47, verses 1, the Bible says this, Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh and said, My father and brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all they have are come out to the land of Canaan, and behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

And he took some of his brethren, verse 2, five of them. He took five brothers, and just like Joseph predicted, Pharaoh asked the question that Joseph said he would. Joseph, or Pharaoh asked the question, just like Joseph said he would.

What is Pharaoh saying to his brethren? What is your occupation? What is your occupation? Great leadership lesson. If you want to learn a good leadership lesson, let's look at the life of Joseph.

Now remember, before we get there, what position did Joseph have in the land? He was number two ruler over all of Egypt. And why didn't he just tell his brothers, Why don't you just stay here in the land of Goshen?

[9 : 45] It's okay. I'm number two. I'll take care of you. I'll take care of you. It's alright. Just stay right there. Why didn't he just tell them that? Well, if someone would come...

Joseph already had taken the steps. He still, he never assumed anything. He still sought out the blessing of his boss to place his family where they could have a job that no one else seems to like.

See, Joseph realized that if he stepped across Pharaoh, if he ever made it come out like he was attempting to take Pharaoh's spot without going through the right ranks, it could be bad for him.

So he went up to Pharaoh and he set up this meeting. The brothers' answers just like they were told to. And look what God does. Look at verse 4. And they said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land we are come.

For thy servants, your slaves, thy servants, have no pasture for their flocks. For the famine is sore in the land of Canaan. Now therefore we pray thee, let thy servants, Pharaoh, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

[10 : 52] And this is what Pharaoh spake unto Joseph. And he said, Thy father and thy brethren come unto thee. And the land of Egypt is before thee. And the best of the land make thy father and brother dwell in the land of Goshen.

Let them dwell. And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them ruler over my cattle. You see what happens in this story? Joseph arranges a meeting.

He coaches his brothers along. And at the end of it, God puts them in the best location inside the world at that time. Because there was a famine. There was no place for them to take care of their cattle in Canaan.

But God took care of them. He put them in the best place. And not only that, Pharaoh says, If there's anybody that knows what they're doing with cattle, why don't you have them oversee my cattle? Man, man, what a great and mighty God.

What a great and mighty God to provide for His people. That's what happens in this story. It's God providing for the people. Not only does He give them a spot, and not just to say any spot, but the best spot.

[11 : 50] And they now have the responsibility to take over Pharaoh's cattle. Here's a side note. When Joseph introduces his father, in verse 7, notice what Jacob does.

Before we move on, this is just like a little rabbit trail. This is something that we need to focus in on. Just notice this. What was Jacob? He was no more than just a sheep herder.

He was a shepherd. He was a farmer. He took care of cows. At the time he left Canaan, how many people did he oversee? How many souls were over him?

Seventy. But yet, when Jacob comes in, before Pharaoh. Now who's Pharaoh? He's the king over Egypt, right? He has all the goods that people are going to need for the next seven years, right?

He has all the grain. What does Jacob do? Look in verse 7. Joseph brought Jacob his father and sat him before Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

[12 : 52] Pharaoh. And this scene, this scene, the scene would have been unusual, illogical, and surreal. Here was Pharaoh.

At his place. At his palace. On his throne. And here was Pharaoh in all of his splendor. All of his guards. All these wise men that go there. All these jesters.

All these people that are taking, just to take care of Pharaoh. And then, here is Pharaoh, the mightiest man in the empire. And here comes this travel weary, old man, who can't provide for his family.

And what does that guy do? Pharaoh, he comes in and he blesses the mightiest man in the world. Hebrews 7 says this, And without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.

The greater blesses the lesser. Did you get that? The Bible says, the greater blesses the lesser. Jacob blessed Pharaoh, because although he could not hold a candle to Pharaoh's political, or financial, or military, he was unequivocally, he wasn't even close to being the half the man he was.

[14 : 08] But yet spiritually, spiritually he was greater than any Pharaoh there was. Because he knew the God of God. He knew the Creator God. He knew the God that saved him.

He knew the God that took care of his father and his grandfather. He knew the Jehovah God. It's a great lesson. For us as children of God, of children of God to learn.

We are a royal priesthood. We are a peculiar people. And why did God make us that way? So we could bless others?

So we could bless others? Why did God call Abraham out? Why did God bless Abraham? So he could be a blessing? What a contrast between Abraham and Jacob.

You guys remember when Abraham left to go to Egypt? What happened to Pharaoh when Abraham left? There was a curse on Pharaoh. But now, now, in God's timing, through God's provision, of God's people, what happens to Pharaoh?

[15 : 12] God uses his man to bless idolatry. Look, if you're a child of God, everyone that you meet, everywhere you should go, someone should be blessed from knowing you and seeing the testimony in your life.

You get that? The co-workers you work with, the friends that you have, they should be blessed just by knowing you. Because God has done a work in you. Don't ever let you, don't ever think because you don't have enough money that that person is greater.

Don't ever think because you don't have enough talent, or never, don't ever think because you have not enough wealth, that you're lesser. No, no, you have someone who's greater than that and dwells in you.

And so you ought to be a blessing to others. So after this meeting, Joseph's family has been taken care of, and blessed greatly. But that doesn't stop with Joseph.

You see, Joseph takes God's provision, and he makes the most of it. Joseph takes what God has given him, and he works his tail off.

[16 : 22] So he has a job to do. So he gets busy. He started out in this chapter with arranging a meeting to care for his family, but now he has to worry about managing an entire nation during a famine.

In verse 13 of Genesis chapter 47, the Bible says this, And there was no bread in all the land, for the famine was very sore.

This is a bad, bad, bad famine. So the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by the reason of the famine.

But Joseph, Joseph, number two in command, he had a solution. He was going to take the grain that he had stored up during the time of plenty and sell it.

And that is what he did until everyone, until he had everyone's money. Now, once you read that, and you study that in Genesis chapter 47, maybe you have the same question that I do.

[17 : 27] Man, these people are starving, and possibly some of these people have some different types of diseases that come with malnutrition, and heaven forbid, there might be even people dying out there. Possibly.

Joseph, why aren't you just giving this stuff away? Joseph, why are you giving, why are you taking these people's money? Why are you doing this? Listen to what this commentator has to say about that.

The prudence of selling the grain. Joseph was very wise to sell the grain instead of giving it to the people. If he had given it to the people, he would have destroyed the Egyptians.

Why? Because the Egyptians, like many of us here in America, are what? Are great wasters. Joseph had proved that by doing more with one-fifth of the food supply, which he had collected in Genesis chapter 41-34, in the seven years of plenty, than the Egyptians did with the other four-fifths.

The Egyptians ran out of food shortly after the famine started. Joseph fed all the Egyptians and many from other countries for seven years, with just one-fifth of the food supply in the seven good years.

[18 : 43] Making the Egyptians pay for their food forced them to conserve their food and finances. Thus, it greatly helped their character. Did you get that? What wisdom Joseph had.

During the seven years of plenteous, these people went out and they wasted four-fifths of what they had. And Joseph only said, I want 20%.

I just want one-fifth of what you guys got. And Joseph took that one-fifth and he was able to stretch it for those seven years. So what happens if he would give that food to those people?

They'd probably waste it just like they did before. But instead, he taught them a lesson. After all the money was taken up, Joseph then went and collected all the livestock from those that were willing to barter the food for cattle.

You know the story after the livestock was all gone. Then Joseph collected all the lands and their lives. They actually sold themselves into slavery. Genesis 46.18, it says this, When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year and said unto him, We will not hide from it, my Lord, how that our money is spent.

[19 : 56] My Lord also hath the herds and cattle. There is not left in thy sight of my Lord, but our bodies and our land. Wherefore, shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land?

Buy us our land for bread, and we our land will be thy servants unto Pharaoh. Give us seed, that we may live and not die, and that the land be not be desolate.

In Leviticus chapter 25, verses 14, the Bible shows that it was a great act of love and kindness to buy the land of those in need and to take them as your employees or as slaves.

Now this type of slavery under a good employer was regarded by some as preferable to the risk of freedom. Did you get that? It was almost preferred.

They would rather be a slave than rather to go out there and make it out on their own. They would rather be a slave because their master took so well care of them or took so good care of them. And when offered freedom, some slaves refused it.

[21 : 00] Slavery in the Old Testament times was very different from what you know from slavery that our country took part in. The Old Testament slavery at its best meant a job for a life with a benevolent employer.

And this was why the Egyptians viewed Jacob's actions and said this in verse 25, and they said, Thou hast saved our lives. Let us find grace in the sight of my Lord and we will be Pharaoh's servant.

What a great steward Joseph was. He had been placed over the grain and now Pharaoh was the richest person on earth. Joseph wisely handled the unrighteous mammon and there was no doubt that our Heavenly Father gave him true riches to oversee.

And Joseph didn't just take like a dictator and he didn't waste like a lot of other governments do today. But look what he did with his newly acquired wealth. In verse 23, And Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh.

Lo, here is seed for you and ye shall sow the land and it shall come to pass in the increase that ye shall give a fifth part unto Pharaoh and four parts shall be your own for the seed of the field and for your food and for them of your household and for the food for your little ones.

[22 : 27] What a gracious ruler. And think that he gave these people the ability to work back from where they fell from. Joseph was given the opportunity and he made the most of it.

He made the most of it. God set him in charge of Egypt and he made the most of it. Joseph had shown himself faithful time after time and that probably leads to one of the greatest compliments in my eyes.

Joseph gets to care for his father's burial. The year was past now and the nation of Israel possessions were growing and they were multiplying so life was good.

God had given Joseph and Jacob 17 more years to spend together and share with each other. But the time, like for all, was drawing close to being over for Israel.

Jacob. Jacob was close to dying and he knew it. So he called for Joseph to make his last request. And that last request was for him to be buried in Canaan, his home.

[23 : 35] He was a stranger. He was just a stranger, just a soldier. And he told that the Pharaoh that his time in Egypt was just only a short stay and he wanted to go back home where it all began.

So Jacob called on the one person he knew that would get the job done. The one that he could rely on.

Joseph. Most likely the job to bury the father was probably given to the firstborn son. But Reuben had shown himself unstable, unreliable, unfaithful, unfaithful and undisciplined to do so.

But Joseph, because all the provisions that he's given made the most of it. He showed himself faithful and reliable, not taking the opportunities and the obstacles that God put in his life for granted.

He was given the privilege to bury his father. So we're going to conclude with this. God has pushed you through different situations. And some are good and some are bad.

[24 : 45] But my question to you is what are you doing right now? Are you complaining about those bad situations? Are you just becoming dormant and enjoying those good situations?

What are you doing right now? What are you doing with God with what God has given you? Joseph had every right to be bitter. And I'm going to say even to get some revenge.

He was going to get revenge on his brothers. He was going to get revenge on the country that put him into slavery. But instead, Joseph took what God had given him and he made the most of it.

And he saved many lives. Joseph also had the right once he saw his father, he could have said, I've lost so much time with him. Let me just take this time.

Let me just take the rest of this time and just spend it with him. Let me just catch up. I don't want to miss out on anything else. But he didn't. He realized that God put him in a situation to save lives of people.

[25 : 51] And God had given him provision. And he made the most of it. And so he went to work devising plans and saving his family and saving the world. They were in a famine.

There was trouble out there. So the question I pose to you tonight is this. Don't you realize that there's a world in trouble? They need the gospel.

And unless we have a whole bunch of Josephs out there scheming and planning to save lives, it's not going to happen. God gave provision to the church. And whether you're in a bad circumstance or whether you're in a good circumstance, what are you doing?

Are you trying to make the most of it? Are you trying to work the hardest you can? Are you trying to take what God has taught you and teach it to others? God did a work in the life of Joseph.

And Joseph didn't take that for granted. If you're here today and you're born again, God has done a work in your life. Are you taking it for granted? Are you taking God's provisions and not making the most of it?

[27 : 00] I see from the life of Joseph, man, he wasn't like that. He was faithful. He was reliable. And at the end of it, his dad said, Joseph, I want you to make sure my bones get taken back to where they belong.

What are you doing right now to show yourself faithful? Heavenly Father, I thank you for an opportunity, Lord, once again, to preach your word. Lord, thank you for the life of Joseph. Thank you how he showed himself faithful.

And thank you, Lord, that though he is dead, yet he still speaks. And we can learn from his life and we can grow. Lord, help us not to take what you gave us for granted.

Lord God, help us to make the most of your provisions. And we'll give you all the praise. First, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia.

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