

Sunday School Lesson (June 12 & 19, 2022)

Genesis 37-50: Joseph

Joseph was the son of a master con man. This must have influenced his perspective on life.

Jacob's Sons

As part of God's blessing on Jacob, after their midnight struggle, God renamed Jacob as Israel. That is the name used from here on out. His children were:

	Name	Mother
1	Reuben	Leah
2	Simeon	Leah
3	Levi	Leah
4	Judah	Leah
5	Dan	Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid
6	Naphtali	Bilhah
7	Gad	Zilpah, Leah's handmaid
8	Asher	Zilpah
9	Issachar	Leah
10	Zebulun	Leah
11	Dinah	Leah
12	Joseph	Rachel
13	Benjamin	Rachel (died during childbirth)

Joseph was the son of Rachel, Israel's favorite wife, and one other reason.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe of many colors for him. - Genesis 37:3

Joseph was about eleven when his sister, Dinah, was raped and his brothers massacred the perpetrators.

Joseph's Relations with His Brothers

Joseph did not help himself with his brothers. Read **Genesis 37:2 & 4**.

² *This is the history of the family of Jacob.*

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought an ill report of them to their father.

⁴ *But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.*

Joseph was involved with dreams from an early age. Two are detailed in Genesis 37 that he shared with his brothers and really should not have – they already envied and did not like him (Genesis 37:5-10).

5 Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they only hated him the more.⁶ He said to them, “Hear this dream which I have dreamed:⁷ behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose and stood upright; and behold, your sheaves gathered round it, and bowed down to my sheaf.”⁸ His brothers said to him, “Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to have dominion over us?” So they hated him yet more for his dreams and for his words.⁹ Then he dreamed another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, “Behold, I have dreamed another dream; and behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.”¹⁰ But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him, and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?”

Once, when his older sons were feeding the family flocks in Shechem (distant fields), Israel sent Joseph to check on his brothers. Upon Joseph’s approach, the brothers saw an opportunity to get even. Read **Genesis 37:18-20**.

¹⁸ They saw him afar off, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild beast has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.”

But God intervened and diverted their evil intentions. Read **Genesis 37:21-24**.

²¹ But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, “Let us not take his life.”²² And Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood; cast him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him”—that he might rescue him out of their hand, to restore him to his father.²³ So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore;²⁴ and they took him and cast him into a pit. The pit was empty, there was no water in it.

So, rather than kill Joseph, they sold him to a passing caravan of Ishmalites, who then took him to Egypt.

Now, who were the Ishmalites.

Descendants of Abraham’s other son, Ishmael; Muslims
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Joseph couldn’t know that God was setting up the circumstances where his dream of his subservient brothers would bow to him.

When Reuben found Joseph missing and that his brothers had sold him off, he was greatly distressed about how to explain this to Israel. Read **Genesis 37:29-35**.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he rent his clothes³⁰ and returned to his brothers, and said, “The lad is gone; and I, where

shall I go?"³¹ Then they took Joseph's robe, and killed a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood;³² and they sent the long robe with sleeves and brought it to their father, and said, "This we have found; see now whether it is your son's robe or not."³³ And he recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe; a wild beast has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces."³⁴ Then Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.³⁵ All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father wept for him.

- Jacob, the deceiver, is now deceived by his own sons!

Potiphar

- The Ishmalite traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.
- Potiphar made him overseer of his house and all his possession.
- The Lord was with Joseph (39:2, 21)
- Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him, but Joseph refused.
- Potiphar imprisoned Joseph with other prisoners of the king.

The Butler and the Baker

- The butler and the baker were imprisoned for offending the king.
- David was appointed to serve them: a humiliating reversal of fortune – from being overseer of Potiphar's house to being the servant of fellow prisoners.
- The butler and baker each had dreams that Joseph interpreted for them, giving God the credit. For the butler's dream read **Genesis 40:9-15**.

⁹ So the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "In my dream there was a vine before me,¹⁰ and on the vine there were three branches; as soon as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes.¹¹ Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."¹² Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days;¹³ within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his butler.¹⁴ But remember me, when it is well with you, and do me the kindness, I pray you, to make mention of me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house.¹⁵ For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."

- For the baker's dream read **Genesis 40:16-19**.

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head,¹⁷ and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head."¹⁸ And Joseph answered, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days;¹⁹ within three days Pharaoh will

lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat the flesh from you.”

- Fulfillment (Genesis 40:20-23)

²⁰ On the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday, he made a feast for all his servants, and lifted up the head of the chief butler and the head of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹ He restored the chief butler to his butlership, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand; ²² but he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

– Genesis 40:20-23

Pharaoh

- Two years later, Pharaoh has a dream that his wise men can’t interpret.
- The butler remembers Joseph, so he is brought up out of prison to Pharaoh. (Genesis 41:14-36)

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. ¹⁵ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it; and I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” ¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” ¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Behold, in my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile; ¹⁸ and seven cows, fat and sleek, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass; ¹⁹ and seven other cows came up after them, poor and very gaunt and thin, such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰ And the thin and gaunt cows ate up the first seven fat cows, ²¹ but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as gaunt as at the beginning. Then I awoke. ²² I also saw in my dream seven ears growing on one stalk, full and good; ²³ and seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them, ²⁴ and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. And I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me.” ²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dream of Pharaoh is one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dream is one. ²⁷ The seven lean and gaunt cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is as I told Pharaoh, God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁹ There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, ³⁰ but after them there will arise

seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; the famine will consume the land,³¹ and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of that famine which will follow, for it will be very grievous.³² And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.³³ Now therefore let Pharaoh select a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.³⁴ Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land, and take the fifth part of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plenteous years.³⁵ And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and lay up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it.³⁶ That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine which are to befall the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."

- Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph's wisdom and relationship with God that he put Joseph in charge of everything; second in power only to himself. Pharaoh gave him a signet ring, an Egyptian name, and a wife, Asenath.
- Joseph was 30 years old.
- Two sons: Manasseh (for God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house), and Ephraim (for God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction)
- 7 years of plenty – Joseph oversaw building warehouses and storing grain.
- When famine came, Joseph sold grain to the Egyptians. "Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth." (Genesis 41:57)

Jacob Sends for Food

- Jacob sent 10 sons to Egypt for food, but not Benjamin
- Brothers had to meet with Joseph because he was in charge of the food
- Brothers did not recognize Joseph (hadn't seen him in about 20 years) and he made the most of it (con man!), accusing them of being spies
- Joseph tested their honesty (Genesis 42:12-25)

¹² He said to them, "No, it is the weakness of the land that you have come to see."¹³ And they said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more."¹⁴ But Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies.¹⁵ By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your

youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶ Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain in prison, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.” ¹⁷ And he put them all together in prison for three days. ¹⁸ On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: ¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined in your prison, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, ²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they did so. ²¹ Then they said to one another, “In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us and we would not listen; therefore is this distress come upon us.” ²² And Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you not to sin against the lad? But you would not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.” ²³ They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. ²⁴ Then he turned away from them and wept; and he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. ²⁵ And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man’s money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

- First Joseph demands 9 hostages, but settles for one, Simeon. They reported back to Jacob. Read **Genesis 42:35-38**.

³⁵ As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man’s bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed. ³⁶ And Jacob their father said to them, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin; all this has come upon me.” ³⁷ Then Reuben said to his father, “Slay my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you.” ³⁸ But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he only is left. If harm should befall him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.”

- Food ran out, so the brothers came back with Benjamin, gifts, and the returned money.
- Joseph saw Benjamin and wept privately. Said he had been paid for the first grain. Feasted with brothers, giving Benjamin 5x as much food as brothers.
- Joseph hides a silver cup in Benjamin’s bag and then accuses him of stealing it. (con man, again!) Joseph demands Benjamin for a slave; Judah makes an impassioned plea to take his place.
- Unable to restrain himself further, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers (Genesis 45:1-15).

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him; and he cried, "Make every one go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

⁴ So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, I pray you." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Make haste and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry; ¹⁰ you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks, your herds, and all that you have; ¹¹ and there I will provide for you, for there are yet five years of famine to come; lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty.' ¹² And now your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Make haste and bring my father down here." ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

- Pharaoh was pleased with the news of the brothers and sent wagons of goods to Canaan to fetch Jacob.

God's Covenant with Jacob

On the way to Egypt, Jacob had a vision. Read **Genesis 46:1-7**.

So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ² And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here am I." ³ Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation. ⁴ I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again; and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes." ⁵ Then Jacob set out from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶ They also took their cattle and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, ⁷ his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters; all his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

- Note that even in his haste to see his lost son, Jacob took time to worship the Lord.

- Remainder of Chp. 46 lists the descendants of Jacob's children – also listed in 1Chronicles 1-7.
- When the family arrived (Chap. 47), Joseph (con man) told his brothers to claim to be herdsmen because Egyptians did not like shepherds. However, the brothers told Pharaoh the truth and asked for good grazing land in Goshen (eastern section of the Nile Delta). Pharaoh treated them warmly, despite being shepherds.
- Joseph introduced Jacob to Pharaoh; Jacob blessed Pharaoh; Pharaoh gave Jacob and his sons good land in Goshen.

Famine Continues

- Famine continued and Egyptians ran out of money to buy food from the Pharaoh's stores. Joseph negotiated livestock in payment.
- Next year Joseph took the people's lands for Pharaoh, in exchange for food. The people became slaves to Pharaoh (Genesis 47:20-26).

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe upon them. The land became Pharaoh's; ²¹ and as for the people, he made slaves of them[a] from one end of Egypt to the other. ²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh, and lived on the allowance which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land. ²³ Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. ²⁴ And at the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones." ²⁵ And they said, "You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be slaves to Pharaoh." ²⁶ So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; the land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

Jacob's Death

At age 147, as death approaches, Jacob makes Joseph promise not to bury him in Egypt. Read **Genesis 47:27-31**.

²⁷ Thus Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; and they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly. ²⁸ And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were a hundred and forty-seven years.

²⁹ And 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 loyally and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰ but 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." ³¹ And he said, "Swear to me"; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.

- In blessing Joseph’s sons, Israel crossed his arms and blessed Ephraim, the younger, over Manasseh, the older. By blessing Joseph’s sons as his own sons, Jacob was elevating Joseph to then get a double-share of the family blessings.
- Chapter 49 is Israel’s blessings on his sons.

Then Jacob called his sons, and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in days to come.

² *Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob, and hearken to Israel your father.*

³ *Reuben, you are my first-born, my might, and the first fruits of my strength, pre-eminent in pride and pre-eminent in power.*

⁴ *Unstable as water, you shall not have pre-eminence because you went up to your father’s bed; then you defiled it—you went up to my couch!*

Incestuous relations w/ Bilhah

⁵ *Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords.*

⁶ *O my soul, come not into their council; O my spirit, be not joined to their company; for in their anger they slay men, and in their wantonness they hamstring oxen.*

Slew Shechem, Dinah’s husband

⁷ *Cursed 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.*

Praised for living up to his potential; ancestor to the “Great Leader”

⁹ *Judah is a lion’s whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lioness; who dares rouse him up?*

¹⁰ *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

¹¹ *Binding his foal to the vine and his ass’s colt to the choice vine, he washes his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes;*

¹² *his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.*

¹³ *Zeb’ulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall be at Sidon.*

¹⁴ *Is’sachar is a strong ass, crouching between the sheepfolds;*

¹⁵ he saw that a resting place was good,
and that the land was pleasant;
so he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a slave at forced labor.

¹⁶ Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that his rider falls backward.

¹⁸ I wait for thy salvation, O LORD.

¹⁹ Raiders shall raid Gad,
but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰ Asher's food shall be rich,
and he shall yield royal dainties.

²¹ Naphtali is a hind let loose,
that bears comely fawns.

²² Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.

²³ The archers fiercely attacked him,
shot at him, and harassed him sorely;

²⁴ yet his bow remained unmoved,
his arms were made agile

by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel),

²⁵ by the God of your father who will help you,
by God Almighty who will bless you
with blessings of heaven above,

blessings of the deep that couches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶ The blessings of your father
are mighty beyond the blessings of the eternal mountains,
the bounties of the everlasting hills;

may they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the brow of him who was separate from his brothers.

²⁷ Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey,
and at even dividing the spoil."

Dan = "judge"; but was
treacherous; left out of
list of tribes in Revelation

Life will be hard for Gad, and
his tribe, but they will work
through and triumph

Asher's tribe plays major
role for King Solomon

Naphtali will settle in the
highlands

Blessings of Heaven are
rain & sunshine

Blessings of the deep
are rivers & springs

Benjamin will
have cruel
aspects

- (Scholars debate whether this was a contemporary prediction, or an accumulation of after-the-fact observations. Dr. Briscoe commented, "It is better to accept the fact that the old man was exercising some good old-fashioned wisdom and foresight mixed with a divine ability to see into the future and warn his children of what lay ahead.¹)

¹ Briscoe, Mastering the Old Testament: Genesis, p. 399.

- Israel then told his sons where to bury him (Genesis 49:29-33)
 - ²⁹ Then he charged them, and said to them, “I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field at Mach-pe’lah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah— ³² the field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the Hittites.” ³³ When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed, and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.*
- Joseph lived to 110, and saw his great grandchildren.

Summary

- God used Reuben multiple times: persuaded his brothers not to kill Joseph; berated his brothers in Egypt for selling Joseph; pledged the lives of his own two sons for the safety of Benjamin. And, he used Judah to plead for Benjamin.
- Joseph was a con man, indeed:
 - Fooled his brothers as a Egyptian governor
 - Returned their food purchase money
 - Hid silver cup in Benjamin’s saddle bag
 - Counseled his brothers to claim to be cattle herders, not shepherds
- Joseph was quick to give God the credit for his talent to interpret dreams.
- God reconciled Joseph to his brothers and restored him to Jacob.
- Despite trials and tribulations, God used Joseph to save his family, save the Egyptians, enrich Pharaoh, and begin the fruitful expansion of the Israelite nation. God made good use of the most unlikely assets – despised Hebrews and socially unacceptable shepherds. We should not be quick to judge and dismiss seeming ill-fitted people.
- There is no mention of Joseph being discouraged or self-pitying. Apparently he fended this off by immersing himself in caring for others. This would be good medicine for us to remember. (personal story of realizing that “others have it worse”).
- Even in unpleasant circumstances, God can be setting you up to fulfill His plan.
- God declared Himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The one God, the same God, the unchanging God.

From Dr. Briscoe: “We started with ‘In the beginning God...’ (Gen. 1:1) and even though our attention has focused from time to time on different events, people, and places, through it all we have seen the relentless commitment of God to His own eternal and blessed purposes and His unwavering commitment to make Himself

known to the race He created and which He loves to the point of ultimate sacrifice. No one knows for sure how many centuries are covered by the story of Genesis, but this is all to the good because it reminds us that we are not dealing primarily with centuries of human experience but with a tiny piece of eternity presented to us for our edification and blessing by the One Who inhabits eternity.

“After the Battle of Egypt in 1942 Winston Churchill said, ‘This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.’ Bearing in mind that Genesis speaks of beginnings we do well to remember that having come to the end of Genesis this is not the end, or even the beginning of the end, but it is certainly the end of the beginning!²

References:

1. Briscoe, Stuart, Mastering the Old Testament: Genesis, Lloyd Ogilvie, General Editor, Word Publishing, Dallas, TX, 1987, pp. 302-412.
2. Harper Study Bible, Revised Standard Version, Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, MI, 1985.
3. Internet:
 - <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/who-are-sons-of-god-genesis-6/>
4. RSV & NIV Bibles on-line: <http://www.biblegateway.com>

Bible Readings:

1. Genesis 37:2 & 4	2. Genesis 37:18-20
3. Genesis 37:21-24	4. Genesis 37:29-35
5. Genesis 40:9-15	6. Genesis 40:16-19
7. Genesis 42:35-38	8. Genesis 46:1-7
9. Genesis 47:27-31	10.

² Briscoe, Mastering the Old Testament: Genesis, p. 412.