

MAKING LEMONADE "KILLING WITH KINDNESS" GENESIS 46:28-47:12

This Week's Core Competency

Joy – I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances. John 15:11, *I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.*

According to the psalmist, "Tears may flow in the night, but joy comes in the morning" (30:5 [GNT]). Jacob's long night of weeping ended with the first sight of Joseph. More than two decades earlier, his sons had brought him the blood-stained, ornamented robe he had given his favorite son, the boy born to him in his old age, the child of his beloved wife, Rachel. The moment he saw it, he recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces" (Ge 37:33). He was inconsolable. The Bible says, "His family all tried to comfort him, but it was no use. 'I will die in mourning for my son,' he would say, and then break down and cry" (v. 35 [TLB]).

The supposed death of Joseph called into question the meaning of Joseph's dreams, and perhaps to a lesser extent, the meaning of God's promise given to Jacob at Bethel: "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you" (35:11-12).

After Joseph's disappearance, things went from bad to worse. There was a famine, and when his sons returned from Egypt with food, they returned without Simeon. On top of that, the lord of the land

***Tears may flow in the night, but
joy comes in the morning.***

– Psalm 30:5 (GNT)

demanding they come back with Benjamin, Rachel's other son, to prove their honesty and secure Simeon's release. And if that weren't enough, they returned with their money pouches full, making them look like thieves. No wonder Jacob exclaimed, "You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. *Everything is against me*" (42:36).

Little did Jacob know the reversal of fortune that lay in store for him. Two years later, his sons returned to Egypt to buy grain—this time with Benjamin in tow. To make a long story short, after they passed Joseph's test for jealousy and test for loyalty, the brother they presumed dead revealed himself to them. This time, when they returned home, they returned home donkeys laden with Egypt's best things and with the remarkable news that Joseph was alive. On Jacob's mixed response to the good news, one popular author writes: "Keep in mind that Jacob knew nothing of what had transpired. The last time he'd seen his sons, he wondered if he would ever see them again. Furthermore, he thought for over twenty-five years that his son Joseph had been dead. Was he in for a shocker! Not only did his sons return from Egypt loaded with supplies and new clothing, but filled with the news that 'Joseph is still alive!'"

"In his mind and heart, he had buried Joseph years ago. He had given up any hope of ever seeing him again. Now he was told that his long-dead son, his favorite son, was really alive and that he was an important official, ruling as prime minister over the entire land of Egypt. At first, Jacob did not believe them.

"When his sons reported what Joseph had said and when he saw the evidence of Egyptian generosity before his very eyes, Jacob recognized that his sons were telling him the truth. Joseph was alive! With this realization, Jacob's inner spirit came back to life" (Charles R. Swindoll, *Joseph*, 156-57).

cont. pg. 2

From that moment on, Jacob had only one thought in mind, the thought of seeing his son again. Nothing else mattered. On the long-awaited reunion, the same author writes: "Think of what it must have been like. After more than two decades, Jacob once more held the son that he had given up for dead. After all he had been through, Joseph embraced his aging father—the man he had missed so much, the one he feared he would never see again. He could feel the bones across his back as he held the old man in his arms. How long it had been! How much he had missed him! There the two men stood, staring into each other's eyes. Weeping one moment, laughing the next. *What a grand family reunion*" (163). Morning had dawned for Jacob.

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Read Genesis 46:28-47:12

46:28 Now Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. When they arrived in the region of Goshen, 29 Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time.

30 Israel said to Joseph, "Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive."

31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and speak to Pharaoh and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were living in the land of Canaan, have come to me. 32 The men are shepherds; they tend livestock, and they have brought along their flocks and herds and everything they own.' 33 When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, 'What is your occupation?' 34 you should answer, 'Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.' Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians."

47:1 Joseph went and told Pharaoh, "My father and brothers, with their flocks and herds and everything they own, have come from the land of Canaan and are now in Goshen." 2 He chose five of his brothers and presented them before Pharaoh.

3 Pharaoh asked the brothers, "What is your occupation?"

"Your servants are shepherds," they replied to Pharaoh, "just as our fathers were." 4 They also said to him, "We have come to live here for a while, because the famine is severe in Canaan and your servants' flocks have no pasture. So now, please let your servants settle in Goshen."

5 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you, 6 and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. And if you know of any among them with special ability, put them in charge of my own livestock."

7 Then Joseph brought his father Jacob in and presented him before Pharaoh. After Jacob blessed Pharaoh, 8 Pharaoh asked him, "How old are you?"

9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers." 10 Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

11 So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed. 12 Joseph also provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their children.

Read Genesis 46:1-7 also

1 So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, "Jacob! Jacob!"

"Here I am," he replied.

3 "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. 4 I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes."

5 Then Jacob left Beersheba, and Israel's sons took their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport him. 6 So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan. 7 Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters—all his offspring.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Circle "Judah" in 46:28.

* Underline "Goshen" in vv. 28, 29, 34; 47:1, 4, 6.

* Circle "shepherds" vv. 32, 34; 47:3.

* Circle "detestable" in v. 34.

* Bracket "years of my pilgrimage" in 47:9.

* Circle "blessed" in v. 10.

* Bracket "district of Rameses" in v. 11.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. God told Jacob he would make him into a great nation in 35:11. What more does he tell him in 46:3?
2. According to 46:7, Jacob took "all his offspring" to Egypt. So what?
3. Judah arranges the reunion of Israel and Joseph. Explain the *irony* in that.
4. Put what Israel means by what he says in verse 30 in your own words.
5. Why does Joseph want his brothers to tell Pharaoh they are shepherds?
6. Joseph's brothers tell Pharaoh, "We have come to live here awhile." Were they being truthful? Explain.
7. Why Goshen? (See 45:10; 46:28, 29, 34; 47:1, 4, 6; note on v. 28)
8. "Jacob blessed Pharaoh" (vv. 7, 10). How so?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about Jacob's reversal of fortune in light of God's promise and Jacob's pilgrimage.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

God repeatedly promises to bless Jacob. Before going to Paddan Aram where he served uncle Laban for twenty years, the LORD repeats the promise he first made to Abraham, adding, "I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you" (Ge 28:15). Then after returning to Canaan, like God had told him to do (31:3), the LORD reiterates his promise, saying to Jacob, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you" (35:11-13). Years later, following the climax to the story of Joseph on the cusp of his reunion with Rachel's son, the LORD reassures him of his blessing, saying, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes" (46:3-4). Commenting on the significance of "there," one commentator explains: "So the great promises made to Abraham and Isaac in the past are reaffirmed and reapplied: 'I shall make you into a great nation' . . . However, there is a new element here; 'there' announces that great nationhood will be achieved in Egypt and not in Canaan" (Gordon Wenham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 2, *Genesis 16-50*, 441).

As far as the telling of this episode in the story of Joseph is concerned, there isn't much to tell. After making it perfectly clear that "all" of Jacob's offspring migrate to Egypt with him (46:7, 26-27)—none would be left in Canaan to intermarry with the Canaanites, so none would be living in the land following the exodus when the Israelites enter Canaan 430 years later (Ex 12:40-41)—Judah is sent ahead to arrange his father's meeting with Joseph (vv. 28-30). Ironically, the one responsible for their separation is made responsible for their reunion. After more than two decades, Jacob sees the son he has given up for dead. Words cannot capture the emotion of the moment their eyes meet, a moment the text describes in only one verse: "As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time" (v. 29). It is moment enough for Jacob to say, "Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for

myself that you are still alive" (v. 30).

The rest of the narrative is given to the interview with Pharaoh and the preparations leading up to it (46:31-47:12), all of which is orchestrated to ensure that Jacob's family settles in Goshen—Joseph's preference (45:10). His choice makes sense for two reasons. First, Goshen offers the best pastureland, and second, it isolates the family from the influences of Egyptian religion and culture. Pharaoh has promised to give Jacob the "best of the land of Egypt" but without specifying the exact location. So before the family can settle in Goshen, Joseph needs Pharaoh's approval, and to secure that approval, he coaches his brothers to answer the any question regarding occupation by saying, "Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did" (46:34), which would practically guarantee their settlement in Goshen, since "all shepherds are detestable" in segregated Egyptian society (v. 34). This they do, more or less, with the desired result, when Pharaoh interviews them (47:3-6).

Then Joseph presents his father to Pharaoh (vv. 7-12). The interview begins and ends with Jacob blessing him. Although the Hebrew word translated "blessed" could be translated "greeted," according to one commentator, "Such a greeting entails pronouncements of blessing" (Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis*, 587). And on the notion of Jacob blessing Pharaoh, another explains: "That he was an old man, the patriarch of the clan, automatically gave more power to his blessing. Since he was the recipient of the promised blessings, his words here were more than a wish; he spoke for God in granting the blessing to Pharaoh, one that began shortly through the wise administration of Joseph" (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 686). Emphasis is thus placed on God's promise to bless the whole world through the descendants of Abraham (Ge 12:3). The episode ends on a happy note: "So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed" (v. 11).

The *upper story* of this episode is about God fulfilling Joseph's dreams and settling Jacob and his entire family in Egypt where they would become a great nation. The *lower story* is about Jacob and Joseph ordering their lives around God's word to them, i.e., the promises he made to them. Jacob

believes God when he says, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there" (46:3), and responds accordingly. Joseph acts wisely in presenting his family to

Pharaoh, so they receive the best of the land from Pharaoh, thereby preserving Israel's posterity in Goshen, which he perceives to be the will of God (45:5-7).

The Message of the Passage

God is faithful to his word, so you can confidently order your life around what he says, present circumstances notwithstanding.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

46:28 **Judah** "Judah continues to take a leading part in arranging the reunion of Joseph and Jacob (cf. 43:3-10; 44:14-34). It is fitting that as Judah's scheme led to the parting of father and son (37:26-27), so he should oversee their reunion" (Wenham, 444). "In 46:28 the emergence of Judah takes its next step forward as he is given a role of responsibility by being sent ahead to Joseph for the family. The role is going to be finalized in the blessings of Genesis 49 and, of course, is represented in the reality of the Exodus generation and eventually in the kingship of the Davidic dynasty" (John H. Walton, *The NIV Application Commentary: Genesis*, 686). "A special focus on Judah is part of the writer's overall strategy to emphasize the crucial role of Judah in God's plan of bringing about Israel's deliverance. The prominence of Judah is seen most clearly in Jacob's words of blessing to his twelve sons (Ge 49:8-12)" (John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 226).

v. 28 **Goshen** "In inviting them, Pharaoh had not specified where they should live (45:16-20), though Joseph himself had mentioned 'Goshen' (45:10)" (Wenham, 445). "Goshen is a Semitic term most likely referring to the delta region of Lower (= northern) Egypt in the area of the Wadi Tumilat (from the eastern arm of the Nile River to the Great Bitter Lake). Egyptian texts from the Hyksos period (ca. 1750-1550 B.C.) refer to Semites in this region, and it is an area that provides excellent pasturage for herds, which is what Jacob and his sons need. In 47:11 it is referred to anachronistically as the 'district of Rameses'" (Walton, 686).

v. 32 **shepherds** "His brothers have been herdsmen from their youth and intend to continue to look after their flocks in the future. Furthermore, the insistence that they have brought their livestock with them shows that they do not intend to be a burden on the state, but that they do need suitable pastureland. This should encourage Pharaoh to settle them 'in the land of Goshen' (v34)" (Wenham, 445).

v. 34 **detestable** "The Egyptians' abhorrence of shepherds has sometimes been ascribed to their bitter memories of the Hyksos rulers, after their expulsion, as 'shepherd kings'. But this interpretation of their name seems to have been the misunderstanding of a later age, and Joseph's period probably fell within their regime, not after it. A more likely explanation is that of J. Vergote, that this is only the perennial antipathy of the town-dweller for the nomad or the gipsy. Joseph saw the importance of emphasizing this, to ensure that Pharaoh's goodwill would be to the family's real benefit, not to their detriment by drawing them into a alien way of life at the capital" (Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, TOTC, 221). "By drawing attention to their lifestyle, Joseph hoped that Pharaoh would assign them land on the margin of Egypt, e.g., in an area like Goshen" (Wenham, 445).

47:10 **blessed** Or "greeted" (NIV margin). "Jacob is now the source of blessing, not just to his family but, as Westermann observes (3:171), to all the families of the earth. And because the Pharaoh has acknowledged Jacob's special status by receiving him graciously and honoring his sons, he and his countrymen may expect to find blessing through Jacob and his descendants (28:14). The most immediate fulfillment of this blessing is Joseph's rescue of Egypt from the effects of famine (47:11-27)" (Wenham, 446-47). "Joseph was able to save Egypt and its neighbors from a very severe famine, and to alleviate the desperate plight of the Egyptians. Joseph fulfilled God's promises to bless his family through himself (promised through his dreams), and to bless the whole world through Abraham's descendants. Pharaoh received money from Egypt and Canaan (vv. 13-14), livestock (vv. 15-17), land and slaves (vv. 18-21, 23, 25), and 20 percent of future harvests (vv. 23-26) . . . God blessed this Pharaoh, because he had 'blessed' the Israelites with the best of Egypt. Later, in Moses' time, God cursed a different Pharaoh, because he dealt harshly with the Israelites (cf. 12:3)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Genesis," 2016 ed., 298-99, www.soniclight.com)

v. 11 **district of Ramses** "'The land of Rameses' could have been another name for Goshen, or a larger area encompassing Goshen, or a district within Goshen. The use of the name 'Rameses' here and elsewhere (Exod. 1:11; 12:37; Num. 33:3, 5) has become a kind of 'red herring' for many interpreters. It has led them to conclude that these events occurred after one of the Pharaohs named Rameses lived. Rameses I reigned about 1347-1320 B.C. However, the biblical chronological references (1 Kings 6:1; Exod. 12:40; et al.) point to a date for Israel's move to Egypt near 1876 B.C. How can we account for the use of the name Rameses here then? It is possible that the name 'Rameses' (also spelled 'Raamses' and 'Raameses') was in use when Jacob entered Egypt, even though extrabiblical references have not confirmed this. 'Raamses' simply means 'Ra [the sun god] has created it.' Second, Rameses may have been the name of this district later, in Moses' day, when he wrote Genesis. Moses might have used the modern name when writing Genesis, rather than an older one that was in use in Jacob's day. A third possibility is that Rameses was the district name even later in history (e.g., after Pharaoh Rameses). A later scribe may have substituted 'Rameses' for an older name that was in use when Moses wrote or when Jacob entered Egypt" (297-98).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

From our text today it is obvious that during this initial encounter with Joseph's family and Pharaoh, everyone was on their best behavior. I promise I taught my kids manners. They also watched a lot of Barney episodes as preschoolers, so I am occasionally shocked when I see them acting like they just crawled out of a cave on a deserted island. Seriously, I don't care how tired you are because you stayed up too late playing video games. You are not allowed to walk past your grandmother first thing in the morning and grunt at her when she says "Good Morning!" and then proceed to drink out of the milk jug. When teaching manners to your kids remember the following principles: (1) Good manners are learned habits. It doesn't come naturally. (2) Polite kids usually become polite teenagers and then adults. Polite people tend to have better social development over their lifetime. (3) Learning and practicing manners is a lifelong skill. Expect your kids to get better at it as they age. (4) They are watching you to learn how to relate to others. Are you using your manners? (5) Consistency is the key. Keep talking about it and make being polite important in your home. Our kids will occasionally act like they came from another planet; however, turn those into teachable moments and press on!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Ge 46:28-47:12

1. What did Joseph do when he saw his dad?
2. Where did Pharaoh tell Joseph's family to live?
3. In what ways did Joseph take care of his family?

What Do You Think

The Egyptians and Israelites were very different from one another. Why do you think Pharaoh was eager to help them? When you meet people who are different from you, how do you feel? Are you curious about their lives?

What R U Going To Do

Get your parents help and research a country you know nothing about. What are the people like? What do they like to eat? What do they do for fun? Write down the most interesting thing you learned and share it with your group next Sunday.

Core Comp

Joy - Being happy on the inside no matter what's happening on the outside

Memory Verse

Ro 8:38-39 – *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed Scrolls _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade _____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-eight years and have one son, Zach.

Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



8001 Anderson Blvd.
Ft. Worth, TX 76120
1-866-PANTEGO
Fax 817-275-6403
www.pantego.org

The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.