

So, today we'll be continuing with *Part 6* of the current series, *The Fulfilling of Passover*.

Now, going through this we are talking about Passover and the fulfilling of Passover. We already touched upon some of those scriptures toward the beginning in Hebrews that speaks of a process that continues on in our lives.

Obviously, Christ came to fulfill the role of Passover, but it's something that hasn't been fulfilled completely yet because it's a matter of all those who are called who rely on the blessing of having a Passover so we can be forgiven of sins.

It's a complete process from beginning to end, to the end of the last hundred years, and that's awesome to understand what God has given to us and the different times in which people are drawn and called by Him.

And then, of course, this series has been touching upon the inheritance, and that has to do with the reason that God has called us in the first place, because He has a plan that we be in His Family and wants to give us far more than just a physical possession that He was promising to Israel. Those things have a spiritual intent anyway in the sense of the purpose that was going to be fulfilled later on, the prophetic part of it.

We're going to continue in this at this point here with *Part 6*. We're going to pick up in the story flow that follows where Jacob was wrestling with God and then God changing Jacob's name to Israel at that point right afterward, because he prevailed, because he wouldn't give up.

You think of the lessons in some of the simple examples of physical things that God gave us of the Old Testament so that we could think about those things and the meaning for ourselves. What amazes me is the process. Over several thousand years God has done this.

We can go all the way back to Adam and Eve, Enoch, and then go on through the flood, especially some of those lessons that we receive in through there. But as you begin to zero in on the things having to do with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, again, He's setting up a plan, a foundation for us to learn from. Very physical things, but He orchestrated all of them.

Oftentimes in the past within the Church in Worldwide, before the Apostasy, a lot of these things were not grasped in the sense that God is the one who designed, determined, planned everything that had to do with His Family before anything was ever created.

That's been kind of a hard concept for some to come to grasp and understand, how great, how awesome God is, because we still tend to or try to think along physical lines. We don't grasp, as we've been going through this series pointing out that the events that happened here, they didn't just happen by coincidence and then God used the example for something greater.

God made certain that even as some of the ones we've read about here, when they were to meet a certain wife or was given a wife, God worked those things out, the wives as well, and who they were to have. The timing of those things when they came together (and I don't remember if part of this was in *Part 5*), but when they met each other, the excitement that was there, and the way that circumstances sometimes worked out, those weren't just a coincidence.

God was involved in making sure that people were in the right place at the right time. That's hard sometimes for us to grasp. It isn't that God's controlling people's lives in the sense of the choices we make; He works with us, molds, and fashions us, and helps us so that we can (especially once we're called) make right choices and He strives to lead us in that way. But we've also learned within the Church that a lot more have been called than those who have remained.

So, many have been called in the past 2,000 years, but few have been chosen out of that because we are given choice. But especially in the beginning God was more directly involved in people's lives in setting up the foundation of things that would follow, and He worked with individuals in ways that we can't grasp at this point in time because there is not a lot written about it. But we're learning about it.

God was very involved in their lives to mold and fashion circumstances and situations and their minds and their thinking, and on and on it goes, and it goes far, far deeper than that.

We're going to continue on from this point here where, again, after he wrestled, Jacob wrestled with God, and changed His name to Israel. Again, an introduction to something that was going to have far greater meaning in time. We didn't even understand that during Philadelphia, what all this meant in the sense of Israel. Because there was the time when it talks about 144,000 in the book of Revelation, and it talks about 12 tribes with 12,000 each, it was believed that they had to be out of those twelve tribes (everyone that was 144,000).

In time, because it was thought, because of what it says later, that there was a great multitude that came along, it used to be believed that that was a matter of Laodicea and all the people whom God would call during Laodicea, and they would be added to the 144,000.

Well, we've learned since that time, God has revealed that's not the case. The 144,000 is about God's spiritual plan. It's about the first who are going to be resurrected when Christ comes, and it's not about physical tribes, it's about what they picture as far as God's temple is concerned and the structure of it, which God is going to continue revealing more to us about those things.

So again, awesome, the things that God reveals to us.

So, in the story then about Israel, in the account that follows, the next couple of chapters after this, (after it talks about Jacob wrestling with God and his name changed to Israel), it tells about how Jacob moved his family, servants, and possessions, toward the front of the line as they were (again, this is in *Part 5*), but now they're on their way back to the land of his fathers, if you will, Abraham and Isaac. He's coming with his family and all those who were born along the way. Again, *Part 5*. I'm sorry about that but bringing you up to date to this point in time here of those who had been born who were coming with Jacob now.

They were travelling back. His wives, and the two concubines, the two maids of the two wives, if you will—I guess that’s a better way of saying it—and the children who were born. So, when it was all said and done by this point in time there are eleven who have been born into the family. One more to go to Jacob.

And so, he’s at a point in time here where he’s sending his flocks and his family ahead of him as they get down farther below the area of the Sea of Galilee, just north of the Dead Sea. He’s worried about his brother, Esau, because the reason he fled in the first place was because he was fearful of Esau wanting to kill him, which he was. That was in his mind, in his heart. That’s why his mother said, “Get out of here,” and went and talked to Isaac, and then Isaac told him to go ahead and leave.

That’s why he went back up to the area that Abraham had first come down from. He went back up there to be with family that he could receive a wife from. So anyway, long story here in some of this.

But here we’re at a point in time here where he’s sending all this, the flocks and the herds and stuff ahead of him, and actually offering some to him, to Esau, to soften the blow, to try to befriend him, to give him large quantities of sheep and so forth, and other animals, livestock. Because not only is Esau coming, because he already sent people out and they’ve come back with a report, “Yes, Esau is coming, and there are four hundred men with him.” (*Part 5* again.)

He’s concerned that Esau still wants to kill him because of what happened with the Inheritance and the conniving that took place before Jacob left.

So, we’re coming into the story here in Genesis 34. So, they were in this particular area of Succoth, which again is in an area north of the Dead Sea on the east side of the river.

First of all, they were travelling south and instead of Esau being upset he found out that Esau was fine. They actually turned and went south, way south of the Dead Sea. Because they came up around the Dead Sea to meet his brother then, Jacob, and then he went on around and went back down the other side. That’s in the story.

Genesis 34:20—It says, **Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and spoke to the men of their city saying...** Now, the reason this is coming up at this point is because they’d come this far, and rather than travelling on right then they decided to stay for a time. So, they weren’t going to travel all the way back yet; and so they wanted to get land, buy land there, live there, dwell there for a time. It wasn’t pointed out how long. But rather than continuing on for a while they were going to stay there.

So, this is speaking of some individuals who already lived in that particular area where they had stopped when they met Esau.

It says here, **Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of the city, and spoke with the men of the city saying, These men are at peace with us, therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it.** Because Jacob had made it known here that this was their desire to live there, to buy land, and to settle there for a time. They were in favor of this, Hamor was, and his son Shechem.

It says, **let us take daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. Only on this condition will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people.** So, he's laying it out, what Jacob said that would be their condition if they were to dwell together like this. **Is that every male is to be circumcised, as they are circumcised.**

So, he went on to say, **Will not their livestock, their property and every animal of theirs be ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us.** So, they saw these vast herds they were bringing with them and so forth and felt that this was going to benefit them in the long run as well because they'd be able to trade and have these as well. So, it's like looking on theirs and saying, "Now we have that which we didn't have before."

And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, of all who went out of the city.

Now, a part of what happened here and a part of what led up to this that's discussed is that when they decided to dwell in that area Shechem became obsessed with one of the daughters, or the only daughter of Jacob, who was Dinah, and that was of Leah. Shechem took Dinah and committed fornication with her, and this had upset the brothers mightily, of what had taken place, and so, part of this was part of a scheme on their part, and this comes out in the story now. So, we're looking at the aftermath. I'm not going to go into all, what took place there. So, this is what's taking place, they're going to get circumcised now so they can dwell in the land together and be at peace.

Then **verse 25** it says, **Now, it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, all the men, that two sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword, and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out. Then the sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city.** So, others became involved then in the things that they did.

It says, **They plundered the city because their sister had been defiled. They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, of what was in the city, and what was in the field, and all of their wealth, all their little ones, and their wives they took captive. They even plundered all that was in the houses.**

Then **verse 30** it says, **Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, You have brought trouble upon me by making me,** or it's really "us" as it should be translated, **a stench among the inhabitants of the land.** So, in other words, when this begins to spread this is not a good thing for us, that you have done this, because now everyone is going to be on the watch for us, and basically our lives are in danger because of it.

So, he said, **Our lives, in essence, are going to be a stench among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites as it says here, and the Perizzites. And since we are few in number, they'll gather together to attack and destroy us. And all my/all our household,** all that we have.

Yet they responded, then... So, they responded back to their father in a matter of a justification: **Should he, context, have been allowed to,** speaking of Shechem, what he did, **Should he have been allowed to**

treat our sister like a harlot? So, that was their comeback with their father. What was done was done and obviously stirring up the family in a lot of different ways.

Then it goes on in **Genesis 35:1** and it says, **Now God said to Jacob, Arise...** So after all this had taken place it's time for him to get out of there and God tells him, with all of his family, He says, **Arise, go up to Beth-el**, which, again, the name of it is "the dwelling of God."

So, if you remember the time when he was travelling north to go to Padan-Aram, to go back to the region where Abraham had left the rest of his family to move south, and now Jacob was travelling back up there. This is the location where he had his dream and had the pillow, the rock, if you will, laid his head down at it and had the dream of the ladder coming down out of heaven.

So, all this is what transpired and so God is telling him, "Go back to that area." Now, if you look at map, again, they went pretty much straight west and crossed the Jordan river. So, they were on the east side of the river, and it's good to note, too, all this land that they were in is what God actually gave to Israel later. So, when He told them "all the land that you've seen, all the land," when He told different ones this, they had been through this land. And so, here Jacob lived there for a time, and I believe that was in the area where half was for Manasseh for that point in time.

But anyway, they crossed over, and almost straight across then to this area of Bethel on the other side, and about the same distance inland. About ten miles or so.

He said, Go there, go up to Beth-el and dwell there. And make an altar there to God. Awesome! He's telling him, "Make this altar." He knew what an altar was. He knew what it was for. Again, this matter of sacrifice and offering things to God. Abraham, Isaac, and now Jacob, he knew what these things were about. They'd been taught.

Make an altar to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother. In other words, "The first time when you were going north and getting away, remember the place where you had your dream?"

Then Jacob said to his household, and to all who were with him, Put away the foreign gods, in other words, the teraphim. Again here, this word, it's hard to know exactly what it was at that time because there is a lot of controversy of what it was for some. But some of these seem to be things that had to do with their ancestry, and it may involve a type of, not worship but close to it, esteeming them, looking back. Anyway, it wasn't correct, it wasn't right. So anyway, Jacob is dealing with it here.

So he said to his household, and to all who were with him, Put away the teraphim that are among you, purify yourselves and change your garments. So, he's introducing his family now a little more so to God and what they're getting ready to do. They're going up to Beth-el. He's already told them these stories, of what happened there, and so they're acquainted with it though it isn't something that necessarily they believe. But it's still there and he's telling his family "We're going to present ourselves. We're going to be there before God."

So he says, let them arise and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and has been with me in the way which I have gone. So, in the day of his distress was when he was fleeing from Esau, and so he's reminding them again of that occasion.

So they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was in Shechem. Now, to my knowledge it doesn't say anything more about this later on, whether at any time anyone got them back or anything, but it sounds like this is where they were, and this is where they stayed. Got rid of them.

Then they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them. So, what does that mean "The terror of God was up upon them?" Well, whatever God did in their minds He made it so that they were fearful of them. That's why it's stating it in this way. So, God has the power to do that.

You know, we think of things that are broadcast to us in a spirit world and we look forward to the time when this world during the thousand years doesn't have to have that broadcasting anymore from Satan and the demonic world.

Well, God has far more power than that to broadcast, to work with people and to put something like this in the minds in a more powerful way, to cause individuals to be fearful of those with whom He's working. He can put it in the minds of people to desire to want them, to be around them, to like them. There are examples in this throughout the Old Testament. And so, this is what God did. He put it in their minds, basically, that they should fear this family that was coming down though they may have been larger in number.

So, it says here **The terror of God was upon them in the cities round about them.** So, I guess it was enough that they heard that they were fierce, and you think about these fellas. They weren't very old. Jacob was only up there for twenty years and didn't start having children immediately. But when he did and they were growing, these, some of these were in their upper teens. They might have been a little older because it doesn't tell us exactly how long they actually lived in Shechem. These things aren't covered in scripture. A year? Two years? Five years? But they built dwellings there, it says. They lived there for a time. We just don't know. Five, ten years maybe, we don't know, it doesn't say. So, in their twenties perhaps, early twenties up to their thirties, early thirties max maybe?

So again here, the stories of what happened there with Shechem and his father, again, it spread. So, it says here, **The terror of God was upon the cities round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.**

So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, to Beth-el. So they came to this area of Beth-el, **he and all the people who were with him. He built an altar there, and called the place El-beth-el.** Now it already had the name of God in it because Beth-el meant "the dwelling of God" because of the ladder going up and down and he felt God was surely in this place, and now God's told him to go back there so now it's like, this is God's Beth-el, whatever. It's the God of Beth-el, the dwelling of God, **because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.**

God appeared to Jacob when he came from Padan-Aram and blessed him. Then God said to him, Your name is Jacob. So, it's backing up in thought here, so showing what happened. He came down from Padan-Aram, He appeared to him and told him to leave and told him to come down here, and now He appears to him and changes his name from Jacob, as it says here, **But you shall now, your name will not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.** So, it's just going back and covering what was discussed in Genesis 32:28 when he wrestled with God. **So He called his name Israel.**

Verse 11—God also said to him, I am God Almighty. I am El-Shaddai. Be fruitful and multiply. God is showing him very directly now that He's working with him in a powerful way. Because it wasn't enough that Isaac, in essence, passed along the blessing to him of inheritance. God's going to do it, and this is where God's doing it and letting him know, "This is from Me, and I'm working with you."

A nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.

Awesome! He didn't understand what that meant. God was telling him this; he had respect to God, he had honor that he showed toward God, he had a mindset here that God could work with because it had been passed down from Abraham to Isaac and God was working with him in different ways, even while he was up there working for his father-in-law for twenty years.

Now He tells him, **A nation and a company of nations...** He's actually telling him more than Isaac said. ... **shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I give to you.** It's from God. Making it clear "I'm in this. I'm doing this. I'm giving this to you. This is Mine to give to you." ...**and your descendants after you I give this land.** Awesome!

And yet go back and think about Esau, what he did. To me, this is dumbfounding. He didn't have the same mind as Jacob. He didn't have the same respect toward his father, nor belief in God in the same manner that Jacob did that was obvious from the very beginning. He didn't think that much about an inheritance and what God had told to Isaac. Because he told his children about this. You think about that mindset, that so frivolously in that sense he had thoughts toward it, that a bowl of soup, you know, he'd rather have that than hold on to something like that.

I marvel at that. Again, I'm bringing it out again because there are lessons to be learned from this. I think of all the people, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people that we have personally known, hundreds in the ministry we have known who did the same thing but far worse. Because they have been told, we're all told when we come to a point of making a choice of baptism, our desire is to be in God's Family, our desire is to be God's, to be in His hands, that He mold and fashion us.

I think of the thousands and tens of thousands who have left over 2,000 years, who did far, far worse than Esau because we were given the ability from the moment of baptism and hands laid upon us, the ability to grow and to conquer and to overcome, to be filled with the life of God, the spirit of God, to have it continually living within us. The very reason that Christ gave his life is so that him and his Father could dwell in us.

I marvel at that sometimes, of how blind the mind can become when it begins to want something different. You think, how could someone do that for a bowl of soup? And people have done far, far worse because they knew far, far more. They had God's holy spirit.

We shouldn't forget that. Because I've said every year, there will be people who leave. Another person this past week suspended because they won't obey God. It just keeps happening and keeps happening. That's why I've made comments, it's going to happen till the time Christ comes.

You think, "Well, how could that be" because after everyone sees the war, everything that's taking place? Human nature is human nature and there are going to be individuals who still make wrong decisions. And so, it's good for us, as we've just gone through this season of Passover and coming out of sin, to look at ourselves, to pray to God and to ask God to help us to continue to fight, to prevail, to wrestle with ourselves, our own human nature, to fight for this way of life. To do anything less is mind-boggling. And yet it happens.

That's the hardest part of my job. The hardest part. Having to come to a point where someone is told that they can no longer be in fellowship within the Church. So it's something to be sobered by and to learn from as we go through this, because, again here, God working in a very powerful way with Jacob and all the things He's done over several thousand years to give us everything that we have now.

We have far, far more than what Jacob was ever given. He didn't understand all of God's plan by any measure, but what he was given was enough to be judged by – his present truth. His present truth, there wasn't a whole lot there. But he was judged by what God gave to him, by his attitude toward God, by his thinking toward God and so forth, by how he lived.

So again, **The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land. Then God went up from him into the place where He talked with him. So Jacob set up a pillar, it's to stand up a pillar in the place where He talked with him.** Now, it doesn't say if it wasn't the same rock. I personally feel like it probably was. He knew the area where he was. He knew what he had done. It was a unique thing that he had there, he saw it, and whether it was that one there that he'd put upright then at that point in time, we don't know. But it fits the story and the things that happened in the first trip and then this trip.

He set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone. And he poured a drink offering on it and he poured oil on it. Now, Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Beth-el. It's the exact same spot.

Then they journeyed from Beth-el; but when there was a little distance to go to come to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem, basically it became Bethlehem later on. So they're moving farther south here now. So, they're going in order here, just telling what took place.

It says, **Rachel was in labor, and she had hard labor. Now, it came to pass that the midwife said to her, Do not fear, you will have this son also. So it was, as her life was departing (for she died), that she called**

his name Ben-oni, which literally means “Son of my sorrow,” **but his father called him Benjamin**. So, his name became known as Benjamin (she died), which means here “son of the right hand.”

So Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath. So, she had two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. I’m just stating that. She had two sons then and the two were Joseph and Benjamin. Benjamin was the last.

Verse 27—Then Jacob came to Isaac his father at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron. So again, this is going a little farther south. So, they’re in this area here, Hebron, as it goes on to say, **where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt**. So basically, that’s where they had lived.

I think of that particular area there because it’s kind of north of the Negev or on the side of it, but in thinking about some of that and how barren it is down through the Negev desert especially, some of that area must have been better at one time. It’s kind of like the northern part of Africa, the Sahara. At one time it was known to be extremely lush, and then people came in and it was stripped and a desert. And so, because of what mankind does sometimes to certain areas I can’t help but think that this area must have been better than what it is today.

Jeremy and I were talking the other day here about Ephesus when we visited that particular area. It’s about 8 miles inland from the sea there. At one time Ephesus was a—which I’ve mentioned in the past—was a harbor. When you visit there you actually see where the harbor was, where the ships came up and docked. It’s very easy to see where it was. Except now, there’s nothing but dirt out there because the Romans came in and stripped all the land there of all the lumber that was there, and in time it just silted in and there’s no river, there’s no nothing there anymore, except you can tell it’s low. But it used to come in all the way from the sea.

Mankind has really done a number on things over the centuries and over a few thousand years and plundered the world and basically raped it. We are reaping the results of it to this day.

This particular region here I can’t help but feel that probably is a little more lush or they wouldn’t have stayed there in the way that they did for so long because to them it was a better region. It does talk about some of them, I think Ishmael was the first, that went into the area farther toward Jordan and the area known today as Petra. They went kind of in that region there, and that region has always been far more desolate.

They came to this particular area. It says, **Now, the days of Isaac**, it says, **were a hundred and eighty years**. Incredible, 180 years old. **So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him**. Now, at this point they were 120 years old, both of them (because they were twins). So anyway, they were both 120 years old so they themselves are getting up there in age, obviously, Jacob and Esau.

Genesis 37:1, jumping on down a little bit here. **Now, Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan**. So, I feel like it’s good to go ahead and continue through the story and to understand that God’s hand is in all of this all the way through. And every once in a while we’ll point some of those things out. Because too often we (I don’t know what the expression might be here), short-change

God. We don't give credit enough to God, to His power and His ability to mold and fashion things in His plan and purpose, but He did over and over again.

Anyway, so it goes on to say here, **verse 2—This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah**, in other words, with Dan and Naphtali. So, it's talking here now about Joseph was with Dan and Naphtali, **and the sons of Zilpah**, which were Gad and Asher. So, he was with the four of them. **...his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.**

So, whatever they did, it doesn't go into it and discuss here, but whatever it was they brought back a bad report about Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher, and it doesn't say what they were doing and why he came back and reported to Jacob in the manner that he did, but Joseph did. Family dynamics, the family wasn't too happy with him, the boys, obviously, because here he goes and tattles and tells dad. There was something that they did, it just doesn't say what.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, and when that happens in a family the family is going to know it in the things that Jacob did, Israel. **For he is a son of his old age. Also, he made him a long coat of many colors. But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all the brethren, they hated him and couldn't speak peaceably to him.** In other words, when they spoke to him it was in a nasty manner, a harsh manner, and they intended to be hard on him. They didn't like him at all, and it gets worse.

Now, Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers. This is amazing. You see what God did. Gave him this dream, it all has meaning in it, and it's going to come to pass, but it's very strong for Joseph. He's a young guy in his teens, youngest in the family... Well, he wasn't the youngest, I guess, there's Benjamin. Anyway, there was a couple years difference there I guess.

But it says, **they hated him all the more**, because of the dream. **So he said to them, Please here this dream which I have dreamed.** So, he just couldn't hold back. They didn't want to hear him tell them anything. They treated him poorly anyway. But he was bent on telling them what his dream was all about.

There we were, we were all there, **binding sheaves in the field.** I don't know if you know what sheaves are but it's usually some kind of a grain, whether it be wheat or a type of corn or cane, as it's called, and you put them together and you tie, wrap a string around them or whatever, and leave them there. The purpose is so they'll dry in the field rather than being on their side, so the grain on top can dry out, for one thing.

They're out here gathering all these things together and this is what the dream is showing. So, they were familiar with the custom here of what was taking place. **...binding sheaves in the field, then behold, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and indeed, your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.** I mean, you can put yourself in that situation. You can't help but laugh at it because they didn't care for him one iota, he was a pain to them, and he was very pushy, and he was going to make sure they heard this. Then when they heard this story it just made it worse.

Then his brothers said to him, Will you indeed reign over us and have dominion over us? Because that's what that would mean. **So they hated him even more for his dreams, and for his words.**

Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, Look, I have dreamed another dream. You can't help but put yourself there and think, "Oh, this is not going to go well." **This time the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me. So, he told it to his father and his brother's and his father rebuked him and said to him, What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?**

So again, they had no idea what this was all about and what the meaning of it was, but it was something to be fulfilled later on here in part, in large part as far as what was prophetic.

Verse 11—So his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind or kept the matter in his thinking. It's what it's about. So, even though the primary reason he rebuked him is because of the brother's response and because of how it looked and how it sounded to them and he's very pushy. He's a bit obnoxious in his approach, very outspoken, and God was going to use that. He was going to teach him lessons as well. Just like Jacob had to learn certain lessons, Joseph is going to have to learn some lessons. It's going to take some time but he's going to learn lessons too about himself, about his own nature.

God can work with those kinds of things in our lives if we respond. He can cause situations around us to give us the opportunity to see things in our self that we wouldn't otherwise see. We can easily see here what Joseph needed to work on. It's not that hard.

So, "his brothers envied him, but his father kept it in mind," wondering what does this possibly mean? Because his father has already had some experience with dreams.

Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. So again, quite a way a way, actually, because this is north of Beth-el in this particular area. **And Israel said to Joseph, Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them. So, he said to him, I am ready. Then he said to him, Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks.**

So, most likely having to do with the season of the year and the land having more abundance in that area to be able to take the flocks that far away, the herds that far away, all that they took, and be able to watch over them while they graze there.

...and bring back word to me. So he sent him out of the valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.

Now, a certain man found him, and there he was wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, What are you seeking? "What are you looking for?" So he said, I am seeking my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing? In other words, where the livestock is, and being that large people would have known it in the area here, but this is something that God is still taking care of.

Then the man said, They have departed from here, and I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. So, Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan. Now, when they saw him some distance away, even before he came near, they conspired against him to kill him. Lot of love there in that family. They hated

him so much that this was actually what they were going to do. They had decided they've had enough of him, he's far away enough from home now, let's kill him out here.

Then they said to one another, Look, the Lord... It's not the word "dreamer" here. That's not the right translation at all. It's the word for "Lord" or "Master." **Look, the master is coming.** In other words, they're mocking what he said in his dreams. **So let's kill him and cast him into some pit and we will say some wild beast has devoured him.** So they were going to leave him in a place that he couldn't get out of, in essence, to die. Not necessarily do the killing themselves, but in essence still killing him.

...then we will see what will become of his dreams. In other words, He's going to die, and this is going to be the end of the dreams.

Then Reuben, hearing this, delivered him out of their hands by saying, We shouldn't kill him. Reuben said to them, Don't shed any blood, but cast him into the pit, which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him, so that he might deliver him out of their hands and bring him back to his father.

In other words, what his plan was, he was going to have them go ahead and have him be put in a pit here and then come back later on and take him out. So, "Yes, go ahead and put him in a pit, but don't lay any hands on him for sure before you put him there," because he was afraid that that's what they were going to do, so that indeed it'd be like a burial, in that respect. He was afraid they would go all the way and take his life rather than just throwing him in the pit.

So, it came to pass when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. Then they took him and cast him in the pit. And the pit was empty, there was no water in it. In other words, so he wouldn't drown it was a dry pit.

Then as they sat down to eat a meal they lifted their eyes and look, there was a company of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead with their camels bringing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt. So now again, if we're not careful we read this like a story, and they just happened to be coming along and they're going down to Egypt. None of it just happened. God was behind this.

God was in charge of this, in that respect, of making certain. He knew exactly what was going to take place and how the brothers felt. Anyway, regardless of what was happening here in this point in time, God made certain that he was going to be taken down to Egypt. It was God's intent to make certain that in time there is going to be a family in Egypt, that it was going to become great in the land of Egypt. It's all a part of God's plan and it's going to start out here with this family. Awesome.

So, nothing is happening here by coincidence. They just happened to be going by on their journey and just happened to be coming by while he's been thrown into the pit?

So Judah said to his brothers, What good will it do if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. So, his brothers listened. So again here, Reuben, first here, had no desire to see his brother die there, and so he tried to make a way out for him. And now we come to Judah who didn't want to see him die there in

a pit and so his idea was to sell him and let him at least be taken down into Egypt and he could be traded off down there so at least the blood wouldn't be upon their hands.

Again, part of God's plan that indeed he be sold down there. God's going to see to it that the rest of the family is going to end up there. Incredible!

Verse 28—Then as the Midianite traders passed by they pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And so they took Joseph to Egypt. I mean, you look at something like this, one person being taken down there, and all the while God's plan is, is an incredible nation of people, large numbers of people are going to be in Egypt. This family is going to be in Egypt, and then one day God's going to call them out of Egypt.

Because what is Egypt all about? Being called out of sin. It's all about Passover and the things that are going to happen in Egypt. Passover night and the Days of Unleavened Bread and their journey out of Egypt and the things that God begins to work with a nation of people. Here He's just working with individuals, but eventually here He's going to work with a nation of people, He's going to call them out of the land of Egypt. Awesome! Everything happening by God's design, nothing by chance.

That's why I hate sometimes we can read through a story and don't think about God's in it. What is God doing? God's planning all this. And what's the purpose? It all has meaning. Not just for something physical here that was to take place, but things that are spiritual as well.

So, when Reuben returned to the pit, indeed, Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. Now, he didn't know what had taken place here because they had already conspired here, Judah had, the rest of them, "Take him off. Let's sell him and take the money and let them take him down to Egypt." **He then returned to his brothers and said, The boy is not there. What can we do? So, they took Joseph's tunic...** Now, they knew full well what had taken place.

So, they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they took the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, We have found this. This is what's remaining. Do you know whether it's your son's tunic or not? You think, just downright ugly, sick, you know, to let your father think that in order to get by with this. "We got rid of him, he's down, he's been sold to Egypt, that he's on his way down there, the Ishmaelites are taking him down there. But poor old dad, we're going to let him come to the conclusion with the tunic and the blood that an animal has torn him up, killed him." I think of attitudes in thinking like that and that is really downright sick.

Verse 33—So he recognized it and said, It is my son's tunic; a wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt, Joseph has been torn to pieces. All I can say is, sick.

Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. So, all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted. And he said, For I shall go down into the grave to my son, concerning his son, in mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

Now, the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, the officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard. So again, we know what the story is but it's good to go through it.

So again, God not only had him taken down there but saw to it that he was put in the right places in order for God to work with him, to mold and fashion certain things in his life that are going to become important later on. All this has to do with the molding and fashioning that God is doing through different individuals in his life. Incredible!

Genesis 39:1—Now, Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. The Eternal was with Joseph. He was with the whole family all through this in the things that were taking place and what He was molding and fashioning in their minds, in their thinking. Because these individuals are going to be used in powerful ways in God's plan. Awesome!

...and he was a successful man as he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. His master saw that the Eternal was with him, and that the Eternal made all that he had to prosper in his hand. In other words, here is this individual. He's working with Joseph; he sees everything that Joseph does. It doesn't mean that he recognizes God Almighty, the Eternal, but that's the result, in essence, the true result of what's taking place because of what God is doing in his life and He's giving him the favor. He's seeing this on a physical plane.

He doesn't recognize the Eternal God. He doesn't have any thought toward God Almighty. He doesn't know God. He hasn't been teaching him about God. They have different gods. So, this has no part in any of this, in that respect, in the sense of their response or Pharaoh's response later on. There are things that Joseph didn't hold back, there are things that he spoke of later in time here, but in these things here that were taking place it was a matter that here is an individual who owns a lot, and Joseph has been given favor in the sense of everything that he does, everything that he touches turns out great and produces more.

And so, this is what's impressive upon Potiphar's mind, in that respect. Here he sees Joseph and everything that Joseph is doing, that he puts into his hands, he doesn't have to worry about it. Incredible! And so much so that he can go off and do other things and leave him there taking care of all the things that are in his household, and he has total confidence it's going to work out great. That's the kind of favor that God was giving to Joseph.

We need to understand over and over again God gives favor in our lives of various things. We go through different kinds of trials, we go through different things in life, but nevertheless, God's molding and fashioning us and there are things we're given favor of in life for whatever it is that's being molded and fashioned within us. The greatest thing are those things that are spiritual.

So Joseph found grace in his sight and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. So it was from the time he made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the Eternal blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake. That's the whole point. It

was because of Joseph's sake that everything, that all was being blessed. ...**and the blessing of the Eternal was on all that he had in the house, and in the field. Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate.**

In other words, he had no worry or concern. Joseph is taking care of it. Amazing.

Now, Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said to his master's wife, Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has unto my hand. There is no one greater in this house than I; nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

So, that's how he felt, "his God." So, he spoke of God. He's just being very clear to her "This may not be your thinking and in your belief, but this is my belief, and this is the way I feel."

So it was as she spoke to Joseph day after day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her, and to be with her. She didn't stop there, I should say, she kept hounding him.

Now, it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work; and none of the men of the house were inside. Now, he was lacking a little bit of wisdom here. If he knew she was like this there are things he should have done. Sometimes people can learn a little too slowly.

I think of something that's told within the ministry a long, long, long time ago, that never was a minister ever to be alone with any woman in the Church ever. It was just a set rule. Why? Well, for the sake of appearance, for one thing. It doesn't look right. Especially if they're married it doesn't look right. And yet I have known of ministers who did so, and some for wrong reasons, and women for the wrong reasons.

So, it was a good thing to go by and too bad that people couldn't remember a story like this, that things can happen, even when both are supposed to be in God's Church. So, there are things we should live by and be careful how we are in life because human nature is human nature. Wisdom, like we heard about in the sermon on Sabbath, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. It comes from God.

So, even in the environs of God's Church we should be wise, we should abstain of all appearance of evil and things we do in our life so that no one can look at something and find fault with it and be accusative about a matter and be suspicious about a matter, and maybe chirp about it then, "Well, I've seen that so-and-so..." No, we should be careful. Again, human nature is human nature.

To be candid about it again, to be real blunt about it, these things have happened over and over and over and over again. I think it's the number one reason why people have screwed up in God's Church and left the Church. Because of someone else. Sometimes in the world, but oftentimes it's been within the Church. Sometimes people wonder, "Well, how could that be?" Well, it's called foolishness, just like we heard in the sermon, not being too wise, not being too sound, and not being on guard against our own human nature and the human nature of others.

It says, **Now, it happened about this time when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside.** So again, stories like this just there for a story or whatever, and just applied to him, or is it something people can learn from and understand things can happen? And there are situations in life that people should be careful and not stupid. Sometimes people are just, have been just plain—what other word can I use—stupid, and it's led them out of God's Church. The bowl of soup. Anyway, I don't want to go there.

So anyway, again here, reading this again. **When Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside**—big mistake! Seriously, if he knew that she was approaching him like this he should have been a little smarter. Seriously! He should have been a little bit smarter to not be in a situation where she might come around and they'd be alone. Doesn't that say that would be the smart thing to do, the right thing to do? Okay.

That she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me. I mean, he'd gone that far that she was willing to do that, he should have been smarter. **But he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and ran outside.** Another mistake. But how do you know what's going to happen? But he was fleeing, he was getting out of there. Scriptures even say, "flee fornication," you know.

So anyway, **so it was when she saw that he had left behind his garment in her hand, and fled outside, that she called to the men of her house, and spoke to them, saying, See, he has brought into us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, so I cried out with a loud voice.** She's all innocent. **So when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and went outside.** She's all innocent. The worst kind of things that can happen.

So she kept his garment with her, until his master came home. Then she spoke to him with words like these saying, The Hebrew servant, whom you brought to us, came in to me to mock me. And so it happened as I lifted up my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside. So now she's being, she wants to get him. She wants to be vindictive toward him. She wants to get him any way she can because of pride, because of haughtiness, the reasons human beings do some of the stupid things they do, and he got himself into a stupid position.

We can learn from that, that we should not put ourselves into stupid positions, in an environment whether it be a weakness we may have, maybe it's one of alcohol, maybe it's whatever it might be in life, and because different situations exist in people's lives and if people put themselves in those circumstances and situations they're just asking for trouble. For us in God's Church I hope we understand that trouble seeks us out. Because there are beings out there who desire for us to fall, to stumble. As a minister I can tell you these things have happened over and over and over and over again in God's Church.

So, we're to be smart, we're to be wise. We're to strive to stay close to God in everything we do in life, whatever it might be, whatever situation in life where we know we may have a weakness. Sometimes not even that, just to understand human nature has weaknesses and people can find themselves in bad situations, and it shouldn't be that way.

Anyway, always lessons to learn, things to be wise about. It's like an alcoholic, and if a person has a problem with alcohol, and there's a lot of alcohol in your home, it's not a good situation. Why put yourself in that situation? I know a little bit of humor in some of that, but you know what? This happens. Things like that have happened in God's Church over and over and over again, situations like that.

Whatever the sin might be we should strive not to put ourselves in an environment, in a situation where sin is easy. Because we have human nature and if we let down and don't have our guard up in life things can happen. They've happened over and over and over again in God's Church through time. I have dealt with situations over and over and over again in God's Church because individuals haven't been wise about their conduct, about what they're doing.

We all should know what our greatest weaknesses are in life, whatever they might be. Those are the things in which we should be on guard the most. To be on guard is something spiritual if you do it right. It's a matter of looking to God and crying out to God to be on guard, that we not put ourselves in environments or situations that are foolish, where we may have a weakness in our past.

Because things can pop back up. Just because you've conquered or overcome something for a certain length of time doesn't mean you can't slip and fall. There's a being and beings out there who want to see us fall, who want to see us hurt.

So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, Your servant did to me after this manner, that his anger was aroused. You bet! He believed what she had to say. **So Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. So he was there in the prison.**

But the Eternal was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. That's an incredible thing to understand, that no matter what kind of situation in life we might be in, that God can give us favor, whatever it might be in. Whether it might be in a job in a bad situation, bad employer, and there are things if you keep praying about and keep looking to God, there are things we may have to learn through the process, but when it's all said and done there are things that God works out in our lives, intervenes in our life. It's an awesome thing.

Sometimes you have to keep at the battle, whether it be on a job, if it be in a job situation and you have an employer that just has it out for you.

And He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. What an awesome thing to be in environments where things can be bad, but God can give us favor in the sight of others. So, things can change around but sometimes there are things that are good for us to learn and experience. It's not good that everything always go well with us in life, that everything is good and hunky dory, peachy keen.

Trials are good. Trials are necessary. Without trials we can't grow. Without trials we can't change, conquer, and overcome. We can't be tried and tested and refined spiritually. That would defeat the very things by which God works with the mind. We have to make choices and we have to be willing to enter into various

battles. But it's God who then after a time in a battle gives us a victory, whatever that victory might be, gives us of an ability to conquer and overcome.

Verse 22—So the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; and whatever they did there, it was his doing. What an incredible thing here, the kind of favor that God gave in this particular case, in that kind of an environment and that kind of a situation.

So, sometimes we can be in very, very bad environments, but God gives us favor in the sight of someone. What an awesome thing. I could say "Been there; done a little bit of that." God can give favor with different ones so that different ones are known, and if anyone gives you a hard time or bothers you you're going to answer to them. I was given that kind of favor several times. It means a lot and you recognize it. So, God has the power to give favor whatever situation we may be in in life. What an awesome thing to understand. God did here as well, gave him favor.

So, the keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under his authority; because the Eternal was with him. So whatever it might be in life, we might go through some hard things in our lives, whatever it might be, on a job, in family perhaps, extended, whatever families we have and things that might come our way, trials that might come our way, but as we learn various things through them there are things that God does as well to intervene, to give us favor, but we still have to make certain choices along the way. Because of making the right choices then and learning how to do that, so often then we see how God intervenes in our life to rescue us, to give us favor. So it was in this particular case here because it was needed from the very beginning.

...because the Eternal was with him; and whatever he did, the Eternal made it prosper. What an incredible thing, God made it prosper, whatever he touched, whatever he did.