

ii. The future justice of God.

iii. Joseph the innocent, suffers in order that Judah and His brothers can be redeemed and rescued.

IV. Joseph and Jacob (29-36)

- A. Grief stricken Reuben sticks with the deception.
- B. Jacob's grief over the loss of Joseph.
- C. The chapter closes with a hint that Joseph is not gone forever.

LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Read Genesis 37. How many references are there to God in the story? How can you see God at work in the story?
- What does this story tell us about the “chosen” family from which God built the people of Israel? Is it surprising in any way? What might we learn about what God intends to do with them?
- How does this story (and what follows in the rest of Genesis) show us that God can use even hatred to accomplish His purposes?
- Discuss: *Providence never minimizes one's responsibility for their sin, but it does keep sin from having the final word.*
- Can you see allusions to previous stories in Genesis in this story? What can we learn from these allusions (indirect references)?
- Can you see echoes of this story in the gospel? Discuss.
- What are some ways we can see the hidden Providence of God in this chapter. How might this comfort us?

Genesis: Truth for Understanding Our World (25) Prophet or Profit? *Welcome to a Dysfunctional Family History*

Jerry Cisar — February 4, 2018

Text: Genesis 37

Introduction

- A. God works in unseen ways, within a most dysfunctional family, in order to redeem and rescue them from themselves.
- B. Providence never minimizes one's responsibility for their sin, but it does keep sin from having the final word.

I. Jacob and Joseph (2-4)

- A. This brief scene is about Jacob's love for Joseph.
 - i. Joseph is chosen, however, purely by grace... he is not by right the favored one.
 - ii. The coat is described with an adjective used of a garment worn by someone of high-status.
 - iii. Abel's sacrifices were pleasing to God, but not Cain's. Cain thinks it's unfair. Cain hates Abel and kills him – because of the favor on his life.
- B. Jacob loves Joseph in such a way that it provokes the brothers to hate him.

- i. *What Jacob intended for good, turned out to produce evil, and yet God superintended even Jacob's weak leadership and the brothers' evil intentions to bring about the deliverance of the family.*
- ii. Jacob's love brings about hatred toward Joseph—a hatred from which Jacob's love cannot protect him.

II. A Prophet and Providence (5-17)

- A. Joseph is a prophet.
 - i. Neither Joseph nor his brothers need anyone to explain the dream.
 - ii. Joseph's prophetic role doesn't solve the family crisis; it makes it worse!
- B. Shechem ... a place of danger.
- C. Cain and Abel (4:8-9)
 - i. The field
 - ii. *"Where is your brother?"*
 - iii. Brother's keeper
- D. Abraham and Isaac (22:1-8)
 - i. *"Here am I."*
 - ii. A long journey
 - iii. *"Where is the ram?"*

- E. Providence: the stranger who overheard the brothers encounters Joseph.

III. Providence and Profits (18-28)

- A. The foreshadowing of danger for Joseph was justified. (18-20)
 - i. *"We'll say that a ferocious animal devoured him."* (cmp. 4:7)
 - ii. *"Then we will see what comes of his dreams."*
- B. Suddenly Reuben wants to save the day. (21-24)
 - i. Why this sudden change of heart?
 - ii. The purpose it serves in the story is to contrast Reuben's leadership with Judah's.
 - a) Judah, whose goals are evil, is a stronger leader and gets the brothers to follow him.
 - b) Reuben, who this time has a goal that is good, is a weak leader, and in the end is not followed.
 - **The point:** *The blessing of the firstborn is not upon Reuben!*
 - iii. They stripped Joseph of his robe—the long prestigious coat that marked him as their ruler.
 - a) Matthew 27:28-30
 - b) The traitors sit down to eat.
- C. Judah's Betrayal (25-28)
- D. Where is God at work in this scene?
 - i. Providence in the fact that these traders are going past at this moment.