

Jacob's Journey to Egypt

by Chuck Smith

Jacob's journey to Egypt is a story of forgiveness, redemption, and trust in God's sovereignty.

Duration: 25:14

Scripture: Genesis 32:28, Genesis 46:1, Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Jacob"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith takes us through the story of Jacob's journey to Egypt as recorded in Genesis chapter 46. He begins by recounting how Joseph's older brothers had sold him as a slave to Egypt, causing great distress to their father Jacob. However, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and reassures them that it was all part of God's plan to preserve their family during the famine. Pastor Chuck emphasizes the importance of forgiveness and letting go of the desire for revenge, as exemplified by Joseph's response to his brothers. He also highlights how God speaks to Jacob in a night vision, calling him by his old name, Jacob, instead of his new name, Israel.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
As we pick up in Genesis, chapter 46, verse 1, as Pastor Chuck Smith provides us with the details. Joseph's older brothers, ten of them, hated him, conspired together to kill him, instead sold him as a slave to the slave traders heading for Egypt, took his coat, killed a little goat and sprinkled the blood all over the coat, ripped it up and took it to their dad and said, we found this bloody coat, do you recognize it? He said, yes, that belongs to Joseph. The wild animals must have torn him in pieces.

And Jacob grieved because Joseph, though he was the eleventh born, was the favorite son. Loved Joseph above the others. That's what created the animosity and the jealousy that caused them to decide to kill him.

But Joseph, being sold as a slave in Egypt by the providence of God, in time, in Egypt, came to a position of great power after ten years or so. And while he was there, God made him second in command over all of Egypt. Now, there was a tremendous famine in that area of the world.

But God had warned Joseph of the famine to come. And so Joseph, while he was in this position of authority in Egypt, gathered together tremendous storehouses of grain during the seven good years. So

that when the seven years of famine began, they had grain more than could be numbered.

Just the overflowing. So the people, during the famine years, began to come to Joseph to buy grain. Back in Canaan, where Joseph had lived with his brothers, they also were experiencing the famine.

And so Jacob sent his sons down to Egypt to buy grain. They had to come through Joseph. He recognized them.

They didn't recognize him. And so he decided to give them a bad time for the bad time they had given him. He accused them of being spies.

He threw them in jail. He kept one of the brothers as a hostage, saying that they need not come again. They would not see his face unless they brought their youngest brother with them when they came again.

It was the full brother to Joseph, Benjamin. And so when they came home, they told their dad how mean this fellow was in Egypt and of his demands. And Jacob refused to allow Benjamin to go, saying, I couldn't stand it if anything would happen to my youngest son, Benjamin.

And so in time, as they ran out of grain and it was necessary to go back to Egypt, Jacob, the father, said to his sons, you better go down and buy some more grain. And they said, you don't understand. No way will that fellow sell us grain unless we bring our youngest brother.

He's mean. You can't really know how mean that guy is. And so finally, Judas said to his dad, look, I'll be surety for Benjamin.

Put him in my care and I'll be surety for him. So they came down to Egypt with Benjamin, Joseph seeing his youngest brother could hardly hold back the tears. In fact, he couldn't.

He went into another room and wept and then said, take them over to the house for lunch. And they ate together and had a wonderful time. And then Joseph ordered his steward to take his silver cup and put it in the bag of grain of his youngest brother, Benjamin, and also filling their bags with grain, put their money in the mouths of the sacks.

So as they left to go back to Jacob, no sooner did they get to the edge of town than Joseph sent his steward out and said, what's the big idea of ripping off my master's silver cup? That isn't the right way to treat a man who is so gracious and hosted you for lunch. Why would you do something like that? And they said, we wouldn't do anything like that. Whoever you find the silver cup, let him be put to death.

And if you confine it on us, we'll all become your slaves. The guy says, well, we don't need to do that. We'll just take the one who has the silver cup and we'll make him the slave.

The rest of you guys can go home. So they searched through the sacks. And when they came to Benjamin's sack, there was the silver cup.

And the guys all loaded up their donkeys. They said, let's go back. And they came back to Joseph and they said, you know, what can we say? We'd just all be your servants.

And Joseph said, no, no, I don't want you all in my service. It's just the young man who stole the cup, that's all. But, you know, why would you guys steal my cup and all? Judah came and said, look, my dad's an old man and his life is bound up in this son.

And if we come home without him, the old man will die. I'll tell you what, let me take his place. I'll become your servant and let him go back because I wouldn't want to be responsible for my father's death.

More than Joseph could handle, he began to weep. And they looked at him in amazement. He said, I'm Joseph.

They couldn't register. He said, I'm your brother, Joseph. But don't really be sorry or angry with yourselves for selling me because God sent me ahead to preserve the family during this period of famine.

It's only been two years. There are five more years to come. He said, is my father okay? Is dad still alive? Is he well and all? And they said, oh, yes.

And they said, well, bring him down to Egypt because it's going to be five more years of famine. And so they sent back carts from Egypt in order that Jacob and the family might make the journey with all of their children and grandchildren on down into Egypt. So the boys got home and they said, dad, Joseph is still alive.

In fact, he is over the land of Egypt. He's the Lord over the land except for Pharaoh. That's the only one higher than he.

And Jacob, his heart just sort of stopped. He just sort of fainted. He couldn't believe.

And then he saw all of the carts that had been sent by the Pharaoh and all of the goodies and all that had been brought to him. And he said, Joseph indeed is alive and I will go down to see him before I die. We come now to chapter 46.

So Israel took his journey with all that he had and he came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. They lived in tents, so they rolled up their tents, got together all of their goods, put them in the carts that had been sent from Egypt and they left the area of Hebron and they began their journey toward Egypt coming to Beersheba. Beersheba is the edge of the desert.

It's the edge of that land of Canaan. It's the edge of the land of promise. Once you leave Beersheba, you're into desert.

You're into the wilderness area. And coming to Beersheba, it had a lot of memories for Jacob. That's where he grew up as a little kid.

That's where he was with his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac. And they had built an altar there in Beersheba and so Jacob offered sacrifices on the altar there in Beersheba. It could very well be that at this point, he's 130 years old, traveling on the cart wasn't that comfortable and really his decision to go to Egypt was one of emotion.

Hearing that Joseph is alive, so anxious to see his son, he just says, I'll go down and see him. But he didn't inquire of the Lord. He didn't really seek the will of God.

And it could be coming to so many of the remembrances of how God had spoken to Abraham and to his father Isaac. And back in chapter 26 when Isaac, because of a famine was going to go to Egypt, the Lord said to him, do not go down to Egypt. So he probably began to wonder if God was in this whole move.

Maybe I should inquire of God of whether or not I should go. I don't want to go against God's will, even though my heart is drawing me there. And so there he offered sacrifices, plural, to the God of his father Isaac.

There were three basic sacrifices of the Old Testament. The sin offering, whereby a person would offer an animal unto God, placing first of all their hands upon the head of the animal, confessing their sins, transferring the sins over to the animal and then killing the animal, and offering it unto God as a sin offering. That was in order that I might come to God.

That was to open the door for me to have fellowship with God. You see, sin breaks fellowship with God. The Bible says the wages of sin is death.

The soul that sinneth it shall surely die. Spiritual death, alienation from God. So that's the first thing that must be dealt with if a man is going to come back to God.

The first thing that must be dealt with is the sin in your life. In the Old Testament they had a sin sacrifice that was placed upon the animal, the guilt, and thus you could then approach God. In the New Testament we have Jesus Christ who bore our sins for us and became our sacrifice and died in our place.

All we like sheep had gone astray. We turned everyone into our own ways, but God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God through Him.

And so Jesus is our sin sacrifice. He has borne our sins, making fellowship with God a reality for you and for me. For if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with the other as the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Fellowship with God through the sin offering of Jesus Christ. The second sacrifice was the burnt offering, which was the sacrifice of consecration. I want to just consecrate my life to God.

I want to submit myself to the will and the plan of God. And that burnt offering was an important sacrifice whereby I was submitting or yielding myself to the will of God. Jacob's will and desire, his heart said, go down and see your son Joseph.

But what does God want? And so that burnt offering, Lord, I want to just defer my will to yours. And the third sacrifice was the peace offering, where you would burn the fat of the lamb and then you would sit down and eat the rest of it. And the burned fat was sort of God's portion.

And then you would sit down and eat in fellowship. It was the communion offering where I just sit and commune with God. We sort of eat together and just share.

Open my heart to God and just that beautiful sharing and communion with him. And so he offered to God the sacrifices. And then that night God spoke to Israel in the visions and he said, Jacob, Jacob.

And he said, here am I. God, who at different times and in different ways spoke to our fathers, has in these last days spoken unto us by his own dear son. In those days, God dealt more directly with people. What would you think if in the middle of the night you'd hear your voice being called by God? Man, that would be awesome.

Jacob, Jacob. God now speaks to us through Jesus Christ, through the word of God. It doesn't preclude God speaking to us through visions and I believe that such a thing is a possibility.

It doesn't preclude God speaking to us through dreams. In fact, we are told in the Scriptures that in the last days as God pours out his Spirit upon all flesh, our young men will see visions and the old men will dream dreams. Now, to my knowledge, I have never had a dream with spiritual significance.

I've had some pretty weird dreams, but I put them off to onions on the hamburger before I went to bed. I've never had visions of great spiritual significance. I have had some visions where suddenly you visualize something.

It used to be when I was living in Corona, I was contracting, building a motel and offices up in Idyllwild and I was driving back and forth quite a bit because I was teaching Bible studies in Corona and I would come back for the Bible study in the evening and then get up early in the morning and head back up the hill to work on this project that I had going. And I used to have a radio broadcast in Corona on a station that was then KRL. And so I would listen to my broadcast on the way up in the morning to sort of critique it.

But in the process of time, my radio in my car was just getting worse, so much static that it was hard to listen to it. And as I was going up one morning, I was just passing March Field on my way to San Jacinto. It turned off at 395.

And the thing got so staticky I couldn't hear it. I said, Lord, I've got to make this stupid drive because I came down to teach a Bible study. And the only thing that's worthwhile is listening to the radio.

I mean, I hate to waste time. What's wrong with that dumb radio? And I got a vision. The vision was of an interesting little socket type of a connection that was sort of hanging loose and just barely holding on.

I pulled over to the side of the road, just where you go around the mountain, it makes a turn, there's sort of a wide pull-off. I pulled over to the side of the road there, popped the trunk lid, climbed in underneath to see the rear speaker, and there was this little connection that I saw in my mind, dangling loose just like I saw it in my mind. Pushed the thing together tight, got back in the car, radio was clear as crystal.

Man, I didn't drive up the mountain that day. I floated up the mountain. God can speak to us through visions or through dreams.

But surely that isn't the general method by which God speaks to us today. But in those days he did. They didn't have the full revelation of Scripture as we have.

And so in a night vision he heard his name being called Jacob, Jacob, but that was his old name. God had given him a new name. Notice it says, Israel took his journey and came to Beersheba, and God spoke to Israel.

Israel is his new name. It means governed by God. The Prince of God.

But God, when he calls him, doesn't call him by the new name. Why? Because he's acting after his old nature. The name Jacob means heel catcher, or one who passes you by tripping your heel.

The schemer. The conniver. The guy who lives by his own wits.

And God calls him by the old name. Jacob. And he repeats it.

Jacob, probably to put emphasis upon the fact that he was not acting in accordance with the new nature, but he was still acting in accordance with the old nature. Now, he had been given this new name 35 years ago. You know, unfortunately, many times with us, even though we've been born again, been walking after the Spirit, or living a new life in Christ, sometimes we revert back to the old nature.

Isn't that sad? That reversion back to the old nature, where suddenly I think, oh, this is what I'll do. My wife used to say, I would never want to be your enemy, because I have a very diabolical mind when it comes to getting even. It used to be when I was in college, the guys would all come over to my room at night and say, what are we going to do? Because I was sort of the idea man.

That old nature, it still has a tendency to creep up. When someone has done something, I'll say to my wife, here's what I would like to do. Because my old nature would love to get even.

But thank God, the new nature says, oh, forget it. Let it go. What difference does it make? But sometimes we still respond after the old nature.

The first response is oftentimes after the flesh, until the Spirit has a chance to say, okay, come on, cool, I'll take this. All right, Lord. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the book of Genesis as God speaks directly to Jacob in our next lesson.

And we do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message, or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives, and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details. Simply call 1-800-272-WORD, and phone orders can be taken Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time.

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And be sure to include the call letters of this station with your correspondence. And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse study through the book of Genesis.

That's right here, on the next edition of The Word for Today. Now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith. Again, let me encourage you to wait on the Lord, be of good cheer.

Though your path may have led you into the valley and you're going through deep water, and at the present time you may not yet see your way out, if you're a child of God, His hand will lead you. He will sustain you. He will bring you forward with shouts of joy and victory as you see the full cycle of God's plan worked out in your life.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and see the unfolding grace of God in your life and the goodness of God day after day until you say, oh, God is so good. As we look around the world, we see two things happening at the same time. The world is falling apart, and the Lord is building His church.

What an exciting adventure for a missionary. And so it is with great enthusiasm that the Word for Today would like to make available this year's Mission Conference based on the theme of Jesus Building His Church. Once again, the Lord has assembled a great group of men and women who will share the Word in their own life and ministry experiences, such as Jed and Renee Gourley, serving in Kyrgyzstan, Steve Jones, pastoring in New Zealand, Brian McDaniel, ministering in Haiti, and John Dawson, president of YWAM, Youth with a Mission, hosted by Pastor Brian Broderson of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa.

Join us and see how you can equip and encourage those called to labor with the Lord in building His church in these last days. To order a copy of this year's Mission Conference on DVD with a bonus MP3, call The Word for Today at 800-272-9673 or visit us online at thewordfortoday.org. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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