

EXPLORING GOD'S WORD LESSON 3B

(Read Acts 7:2-10)

God called Abraham into a covenant relationship with Him. He promised that He would build out of Abraham and his descendants a great nation and that through this nation, He would bring a blessing to all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3).

I. GOD'S CHOSEN NATION WAS ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE _____:

The Old Testament, from this point on, focuses on God's working with a select group of people – the descendants of Abraham. His purpose was to use this nation to bring about His plan of redemption for mankind.

1. Abraham begat _____, the son of the promise.
2. Isaac begat _____ & _____.
 - a. Jacob was a deceiver, yet God saw something in him.
 - b. Jacob convinced his brother to sell his _____. (Read Gen 25:29-34)
 - c. Jacob tricked his father into giving him the _____. (Read Gen 27:18-23)

After securing the birthright and the blessing, Jacob fled the wrath of his brother. While running he encountered God at a place called _____. God offered to Jacob the same covenant that He had made with his father and grandfather.

(Read Genesis 28:10-22)

Jacob, however, is still self-willed and fled instead to Haran (the place God had called Abraham out of). He struggled for 21 years and is cheated by his father-in-law Laban (Genesis 29-31). Jacob reaped what he had sown.

But then, God called him back to Bethel:

Genesis 31:13 (NKJV)

13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.'"

3. After an encounter with God, Jacob's name was changed to _____. (Read Genesis 32:24-28)
4. Jacob had twelve sons. They would become the _____ of Israel:

Reuben	Zebulun	Asher
Simeon	Issachar	Naphtali
Levi	Dan	Joseph
Judah	Gad	Benjamin

II. JOSEPH WAS THE _____ SON: (Read Genesis 37:1-5)

Joseph is the oldest son of Rachel. He was his father's favorite. Joseph dreamed dreams that he did not understand, but they pointed to his future. His brothers hated him because of his father's favor and for his dreams.

1. Joseph's Struggle:
 - a. _____ and attacked by his brothers (Genesis 37:17-20 & 26-28)
 - b. _____ in Egypt (Genesis 39:1-5)
 - c. _____ by Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:7-14)
 - d. _____ in the dungeon (Genesis 39:20-23)
 - e. _____ by the king's butler (Genesis 40:21-22)

2. Joseph's Advantage:
 - a. Yet, the Lord _____ Joseph. (Read Genesis 39:2, 21)
 - b. God's presence is not always indicated by our ease of life.
 - c. Joseph lived his life *Coram Deo* – before the face of God.
 - d. He was a man of _____.

III. JOSEPH IS A POWERFUL EXAMPLE OF _____:

Joseph could have thwarted the purpose of God in his life by:

1. Allowing himself to become _____.
2. Seeking to _____ himself when he had the power.

Instead, he became a beautiful Old Testament picture of _____.

IV. KEY PRINCIPLES OF FORGIVENESS FROM THE LIFE OF JOSEPH: (Read Genesis 45:1-8)

1. Forgiveness is a _____ made in faith.
2. Forgiveness is a recognition that God alone has _____ to avenge our enemies (Read Genesis 50:19).
3. Forgiveness does not mean the _____ goes away. (V.2 "he wept aloud")
4. Forgiveness is not _____. (V.4 "I am your brother, whom you sold...")
5. Forgiveness is not always immediate _____. Joseph did not immediately reconcile with his brothers.
 - a. Sometimes reconciliation takes time.
 - b. Sometimes reconciliation is not possible.
 - c. Forgiveness takes _____, reconciliation takes _____.

V. JOSEPH SAVED HIS FAMILY & PRESERVED GOD'S PLAN:

God used Joseph to save his family from the famine and to bring them into Egypt, so they could grow into the nation God planned for them to be: (Read Genesis 47:11-12 & 27).