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## **Favor: The Story of Joseph**

Favor in the Dark

September 17, 2023

**Genesis 50:18-21** *His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*

The dysfunction that plagued Joseph’s family for generations decidedly moves toward healing when Joseph forgives the family who wronged him.

Joseph had a front row seat to see forgiveness work in a family; it primed him to know the personal power of forgiveness.

**Genesis 32:1-12.** <sup>1</sup> *Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.* <sup>2</sup> *And when Jacob saw them he said, “This is God’s camp!” So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.* <sup>3</sup> *And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom,* <sup>4</sup> *instructing them, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, ‘I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. <sup>5</sup> I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.’”* <sup>6</sup> *And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.”* <sup>7</sup> *Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps,* <sup>8</sup> *thinking, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape.”* <sup>9</sup> *And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ <sup>10</sup> I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. <sup>11</sup> Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. <sup>12</sup> But you said, ‘I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’”*

## Jacob Has Grown Over 20 Years

Older Jacob carries real hope for the family.

**Genesis 32:13-21** <sup>13</sup> So he stayed there that night, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, <sup>14</sup> two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, <sup>15</sup> thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. <sup>16</sup> These he handed over to his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me and put a space between drove and drove." <sup>17</sup> He instructed the first, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?' <sup>18</sup> then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a present sent to my lord Esau. And moreover, he is behind us.'" <sup>19</sup> He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau when you find him, <sup>20</sup> and you shall say, 'Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us.'" For he thought, "I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterward I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me." <sup>21</sup> So the present passed on ahead of him, and he himself stayed that night in the camp.

Jacob tried to appease or atone ('kippur') for his sin.

- Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement
- Israel, The Temple, High Priest, Jesus

**Genesis 32:22-32** <sup>22</sup> The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. <sup>24</sup> And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup> Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." <sup>27</sup> And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." <sup>28</sup> Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." <sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." <sup>31</sup> The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. <sup>32</sup> Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

- Jacob encounters God and is forever changed.
- Jacob Wrestles With the Lord in the Dark
- Jesus, the atonement sacrifice for all sin, wrestles in the dark.
- People will hurt you.

- An encounter with the living God will change you.
- Right now, there is more riding on your forgiveness than you can know right now.

The Lord both forgives and helps you get free from unforgiveness.