

## b. What can we do to prevent this in the future?

- 1) God gives us the answer in Hebrews 13:5. "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*"
  - a) In our way of life, we are **not to be covetous**. This word particularly means loving silver; however, in a broader sense it may apply to wanting more than God has given, (whatever that might be).
  - b) We are **always to be content** with what God has given to us.
  - c) We must **never forget** that the Lord is always with us, and he is **ALL** that we need.
- 2) Another helpful verse is 2Corinthians 12:9. "*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*" This is true for us as well.
  - a) We must rely on God's grace (i.e., His divine help) to stop coveting a better situation and to be content with what God gives.
  - b) His grace is sufficient when we are unwell, without work, short of money, hurting emotionally or in dire need, for when we are burdened and weak we are forced to rely on his unlimited strength.
- 3) With a contented heart, we must be ready so that we do not miss opportunities to speak out for the Lord.

**Conclusion:** The next time you start to grumble, complain and covet a better situation, remember Jacob and his missed opportunity.

Conquering this, if it has become a habit, will take deliberate effort and much prayer. Paul said, (Phil 4:11) "*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*" With God's help, we can do it!

**Song:** Jesus Loves Even Me – 492

# Missing Opportunities

13 February 2022 – Genesis 47 – Gen2022 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Joseph told Pharaoh all about his family arriving. He then took five of his brothers in to talk with Pharaoh. They politely told him that they were his servants and that they worked as shepherds (v.3). They then asked him to allow them to sojourn (live temporarily) in Goshen (v.4). Pharaoh granted their request (v.5-6). Joseph then took Jacob, his father, in to see Pharaoh (v.7-10). Verses 11-26 summarise how the people of Egypt bought food with their money (v.11-12), then with their cattle (v.13-17), and finally with their land and their bodies (v.18-26). They sold themselves into slavery to save their lives.

Israel (Jacob) dwelt in the land of Egypt 17 years, and God blessed him and his family (v.27-28). As he neared death, he made Joseph promise to bury him in Canaan with his family (v.29-31).

**Transition:** This evening, I want us to focus on four verses in this chapter that addresses common sins with which we struggle. These sins rob us of joy. They cause tension in our homes. They also cause us to miss opportunities to share Christ with others and to glorify the Lord. Our focus will be on verses 7-10.

Joseph brought his father Jacob into the palace and stood him before Pharaoh (v.7). Jacob **blessed** or kneeled before Pharaoh. Then, Pharaoh ask Jacob a question that gave him a **prime opportunity** to speak to this mighty king in person (v.8). **Instead of using that special opportunity to testify for the Lord his God, Jacob blew it.**

## 1. Jacob grumbled instead of praising (v.9)

### a. He grumbled that he was a pilgrim

- 1) He had lived 130 years, yet after all those years, he was still a pilgrim.
- 2) The word *pilgrim* means that he had never owned any property and that he lived among strangers. He was always a sojourner with no permanent dwelling place.
- 3) What he said was **true**, but he said it with a grumbling, negative twist.

### b. He could have praised God instead

- 1) Perhaps, he could have said, "The great God whom I serve

has allowed me to live 130 years." Or he could have said, "Jehovah God has graciously given me 130 years of life."

- 2) Adding the fact that he had always been a pilgrim with no land of his own was a negative comment, not needed to answer Pharaoh's question.

## 2. Jacob complained rather than counting blessings

### a. He complained that his days had been few and evil

- 1) Jacob focussed on the fact that the days of his life had been *few*. This may imply few in number or of little worth. As he looked back on his 130 years, he felt like they were wasted and of little value.
- 2) In addition to the fewness of his days, he added that they had been *evil* days. Life had been hard. He had to flee home after he deceived his father. Laban deceived him into marrying Leah before Rachel. Laban had mistreated and cheated him while his hired man. His sons had killed the men of Shechem, causing him great fear. Rachel, his wife, had died. Joseph had disappeared and presumably died 22 years earlier. Jacob had lived a difficult life; however, he had caused many of his own problems.

### b. He could have recounted God's many blessings

- 1) Despite all the evil he had endured, God had been very good to him. He could have said...
  - a) God appeared to me in Bethel and promised blessing.
  - b) God wrestled with me and again blessed me.
  - c) God gave me 12 sons and Joseph is still alive.
  - d) God spoke to me in Beersheba, promising to make him a great nation (Gen 46:1-3).
  - e) God had promoted Joseph to PM in Egypt so that he could preserve my life. *God has been good!*
- 2) Instead of listing his complaints, Jacob could have listed these and other blessings during his life.

## 3. Jacob coveted when he could have been content

### a. He coveted a long life like his forefathers

- 1) His grandfather Abraham died at age 175. His father Isaac died at age 180.
- 2) He desired a longer life than 130 years, and he was

already feeling the pangs of old age.

- 3) In essence, he was saying, "*God has not treated me fairly by allowing me to age prematurely.*"

### b. He could have been content with God's grace.

- 1) As Jacob communed with the king, he could have expressed contentment, knowing that God makes no mistakes.
- 2) Perhaps, he could have said, "*I have not yet reached the age of my forefathers, but I know my God will keep me healthy and alive as long as He deems best.*"
- 3) Pharaoh needed to hear that God Jehovah was all that Jacob needed. He needed to know that Jehovah was better than any of his many gods.

## 4. Application

Jacob missed a perfect opportunity to testify for the Lord and give God glory. He grumbled, complained and coveted when he should have contentedly praised the Lord.

I don't know about you, but I have responded just like Jacob on far too many occasions. Countless times, I have missed opportunities to glorify the Lord because I opted to grumble, complain and covet a better situation than God had given me. Perhaps you have done the same.

### a. When that happens, what are we to do?

- 1) As with any sin, we must first admit our problem. We must not blame our environment or those around us. We must squarely look in God's mirror and say, "*I have missed opportunities to glorify God by my grumbling, complaining and coveting.*" I have sinned!
- 2) We then must confess the sin to God. It is such a blessing that God is so longsuffering, patient and forgiving.
  - a) (Ps 86:5) "*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*"
  - b) (Ps 86:15) "*But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*"