

House On The Rock Life Group Study outline 2024

July: Purpose – Joseph’s Quest

Outlines for the month

Week 1: Textual context – The dream✓

Week 2: Content vs intent – The journey

Week 3: The Bigger picture – Of becoming

Instructions

During this study, we will be doing a ‘deep dive’ into a scriptural passage. It is strongly encouraged that you study the passage and entire chapter ahead of the study. Also be prepared with your research tools, for example Google or your study Bible, as you will need to reference it during the study. Spend time answering and discussing each question with the intention to gain sufficient understanding to help your own private Bible study as you further explore these topics.

Study chapters: Genesis 34, 35 and 37

Pilot text

Gen 37:5-11 **5** Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. **6** So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: **7** There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.” **8** And his brothers said to him, “Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. **9** Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.” **10** So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?”

11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

- 1. What was the dynamic among Jacob's children?** Consider the polygamous family structure, as against the more typical structure of today. How would that have affected how they related with each other, and with Joseph in particular? [Ch 30:35]
- 2. What kind of men were Joseph's older brothers?** What experience could have warned Joseph (and Jacob) about what they were capable of? [Ch 34]
- 3. Was Joseph right to tell his brothers about his dreams the first time?** How about the second time?
 - What was Joseph trying to achieve by sharing his dreams?

Closing thoughts: The journey towards finding purpose often starts with a dream, literal or figurative. Where the dream is instigated by God, it is a genuine pointer towards purpose. Even then, it is only a shadow, the start of a journey, and just a seed. How we choose to interpret it, and therefore what we choose to do with it; is what eventually impacts the trajectory of our lives. Joseph chose to use his dream as a weapon against his brothers, perhaps without fully appreciating how they might react. He was a child - only 17 years old - so his behaviour is not at all surprising to anyone who has ever been a teenager. Knowing that we all have (had) similar issues with maturity, it is deeply reassuring to know that God is able to make all things to work together for purpose

Application questions (use scriptures to support your position):

1. Imagine that Joseph told you first about his dream. Without the benefit of hindsight, how would you advise him to go about sharing it (if at all), and why?
2. A dear friend tells you about a dream he had, in which something bad happened to him. He is distressed and afraid. What would you advise him?
3. "Godliness with contentment is great gain"; therefore it is wrong for Christians to be ambitious. Agree/disagree with reasons.