

# Favor that shields and surrounds you!

**Genesis 47:6'** The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.



**In the BEST OF THE LAND.**

**7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.'**

The media that hailed Sachin Tendulkar and called him 'god of cricket', now tells that his magic is not working any more and they want him to quit at the age of 39, but today I want to talk of a man of God, whose life started at the age of 30 and he rocked the affluent land of Egypt in his late thirties. Listen friend, when God starts His work in your life, age ceases to matter! Are you there? Sit up for a powerful and prophetic message!

If today, you there is angst, apprehension and fear regarding what holds for you in the coming year, or you fear to tread into the unknown zone, may be a foreign assignment, new venture, transfer to new department of area, fear not, if God be with you, none can be against you and He would empower you to fulfill the assignment. Amen.

Chapter 37 of the book of Genesis opens with the life history of a man, whose name evokes gasps of awe, wonder, delight, admiration and what not! It is here the enthralling story of Joseph begins! In my own personal life, my Bible reading portion comes to this chapter every time I go through severe crisis in my life, and I get comforted, charged and energized through the awesome life of Joseph and his perseverance. Dear friends, I know each one of you are going through different phases in your life, some of us may be in the period of draught, some may be going through long periods of uncertainty, some stuck in the dark, some may be in the middle of a miracle, some may be in the brink of miracle and some may be celebrating victory; whatever, let us understand God's perspective during the sufferings in our life; let me warn you, we can never, ever understand God's ways with our unconsecrated eyes! We need spiritual eyes to view spiritual things! Apostle Paul prayed: '...the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.'(Ephesians 1:18)

Right from the beginning of his life, we see Joseph standing apart from the corrupt lives of his brothers. At this juncture, I want to point out that his father Jacob gave him an extra ounce of love because Joseph had lost his mother during the birth of his brother Benjamin. Joseph naturally turned to God and grew up to be the 'apple of God's eyes' because his step brothers hated him and he had nowhere else to go. At times, abandonment turns to be a blessing in disguise which propels us to fall into the lap of God! From the age of seventeen, the calamities and misfortunes that Joseph encountered in his life is astounding; but still we see the tangible presence of God leading him. From the time he is thrown into the prison on false accusation, through the period of languishing in the prison for several years, we read about a young man who withstood storm and tumbledos pretty bravely without buckling to pressure. Surely,

youngsters need to read chapters 37 to 50 of the book of Genesis, to equip themselves with rich learning from the life of Joseph. What hundred seminars on 'stress management' cannot do, a meticulous reading of the life of Joseph from the Bible, would pull you from slumber and lethargy. Aptly king David said: "The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) This is a sure challenge? Come on friends, do not feel weary and depleted, you have the big God with you! Amen.

Now, this is a prophetic message coming to each one of you today! Just read it prayerfully! If you are going through financial instability, problems relating to health, marriage or children and also uncertainty and blurred future, this is message is for you to search your hearts for disobedience, lethargy, spiritual barrenness and set right your life in the light of His Word and open your life for the 'fountain of God's blessings.' If you have prayed, fasted and read His Word immensely but still you find yourself facing a fuzzy future, then I recommend you to be still in front of God and wait for His deliverance.

These words of Jesus baffled me: Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." I repeat the underlined words again... yes, and hate his own life also! These are too profound and weighty to understand with an unconsecrated heart! I had read these scriptures umpteen times in my life, but when I read it recently, while going through some rough terrains in my life and ministry, I paused and wept and surrendered my life once again to Him. I said, 'Lord, I do hate my own life and will follow you wholeheartedly!' Someone very dear, close to me called me one night and asked tearfully, 'Did you resign your job to work among the street kids? Why are you spending the cream of your life, slogging it out with those kids?' She asked me much more.....with lots of love, though; however, I could not sleep that night; finally, I had to crucify my passions, my dreams and go to sleep with the thought to live for Him – not easy though.



*Yes, hate  
your own  
life  
also.....*

Shortly after that night, revival started happening among the kids in my school; I share an outstanding one, eleven year old Muslim boy whose father had left him and now living with his grandmother, joined our school as an emotional wreck, having already failed in standard three. Adding to these miseries, he was physically very weak, with puss oozing from his ears and almost falling sick every day. He would cry at the drop of a hat and had no inclination towards studies, I felt miserable and helpless. I had just one thing to do for him and that is to pray which I did very earnestly. The Christian songs and prayer in the school moved his heart and he started attending our church and joined Sunday School. Changes started showing in his life, slowly his attendance in church and school improved marvelously. I quote his recent testimony as said by him, 'Praise the Lord! Jesus has blessed me and now I am healthy and fine. Jesus has also given me lot of brothers and sisters in Abide School. I thank Jesus.' Heaps of children from the local slums, streets and garbage dumps are getting free education, food, shelter and most important the Word of God in our 'Abide Public School' for the poor. What started as a small orphanage turned to a full fledged, English medium Public School for the poor to help scores of people without education and it has now turned to 'HALF HOME' for them. Do you know what is a HALF HOME? The children come to

our school as early as 6.30 am in the morning and leave at 4 pm in the evening, just to take a nap and come back again to school. Our school is their REAL HOME!

Coming back to the scripture, Jacob the father of Joseph talks lot of death and gloom in life, read:

Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, "Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son." So his father wept for him (Genesis 37:35).

But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow" (Genesis 42:38).

Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die" (Genesis 45:28).

He speaks of death even after the blissful reunion with his son Joseph, "Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive" (Genesis 46:30).

But finally at the age of 130, God shows up to Jacob! Wow! Jacob hears the news of Joseph ruling Egypt! Further Joseph sends the 'best' of eatables for his father Jacob along with the 'best transport' to bring his father to Egypt. Read the scriptures to understand the impact of favor, when God shows up in your life:

Genesis 45:23" Joseph sent to his father these *things*: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey."

Genesis 45:27"...when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived."

May your spirit be revived as you read this message today!

However, when Jacob had to leave his home town at the age of 130 and travel to a strange country, where the culture, religion and language were different, he might have had apprehensions! God watched the fear! When Jacob reached Beersheba, the southern extremity of the land of Canaan, he offered sacrifices to God because once he leaves Beersheba, he would be leaving Canaan and entering a new territory. It is here God again shows up to Jacob and tells him: "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up *again*; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes." (Genesis 46:4)

God brought Jacob into a new and strange country Egypt, to rejoin with his lost and beloved son Joseph and give him the BEST at the twilight years of his life. Read: So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning" (Genesis 47:9).

Blessings in the life of Jacob starts when he is 130! **There is no time limit nor age limit for God!** The Bible wonderfully explains the blessings and favor of God over his people, when Jacob blesses Pharaoh! Man, this is awesome! **Jacob blessed Pharaoh!** (Genesis 47:7)

I want to quote the words of Makarand Waingankar, sports column writer regarding Sachin Tendulkar, 'when two tools – bat and ball become your slave, the world becomes your slave too. But everything comes to an end and when the legend knows, he quietly quits'

Listen to me friends, the above is about the fame and the glory that would come to an end, but when you become a slave to God (and not to the tools of the world), He would lift you up for the world to see!

Did you ever pause to think that from the age of 30 to the age of 110, Joseph lived a life of abundance? Joseph invested the best part of his life; that is from age 17 to 30 to God and thereby reaped tons and tons of blessings for the rest of his life; and still touching people!

✚ Genesis 50:22" So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third *generation*. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.

✚ Psalm 5:11' But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You.

✚ For You, O LORD, will bless the righteous; With favor You will surround him as *with* a shield.

God bless you!

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