



## 12- Heal a Family/Build a Nation

01/10/2010 - Jim Johnson – Gen. 43:1-15

God had a great nation to build, in order to do so he had to heal the family of Jacob. Joseph was learning humility; his brothers were developing a conscience, but father Jacob still needed some work. This is his story.

**A. Jacob was \_\_\_\_\_ – 1-7**

The famine persisted. Jacob and family had depleted the grain the boys had obtained in Egypt. Because the family was facing starvation, Jacob commanded his boys to go back and get more grain. Judah resisted and told him that they could not. The man (Joseph) had told them not return unless they brought the youngest (Benjamin) with them. Even though brother Simeon was being held hostage, Jacob said no. Benjamin had replaced Joseph as the favored son. (1-5) Jacob was frustrated. He tried to blame the situation on the boys, but he knew that Judah was right. (6-7)

**Jacob was confronted because he was protecting one son at the \_\_\_\_\_ of losing his entire family.** Simeon was languishing in a jail cell. Jacob's entire family was in peril of starving to death and yet Jacob was unwilling to do the one thing that could save them all.

**B. Jacob was \_\_\_\_\_ – 8-10**

Judah strongly challenges his dad but then made a noble offer. He volunteered to take responsibility for Benjamin. If he should fail in his mission he volunteered himself to be an outcast; to bear the blame forever. In Gen. 37, Judah and his brothers had one driving ambition to be loved and cherished by their father. That is what drove them to betray Joseph. But Judah had grown. His eyes had been opened to the selfishness of his father. He had wrestled with the guilt of having betrayed Joseph. He had learned that he could survive even if he never had the blessing of his dad. So he put the one thing that he most treasured at great risk – his relationship with his dad. His amazing and selfless offer left his father Jacob dumbfounded and speechless. Such a magnanimous gesture was so out of place in the family of Jacob.

**Jacob was confounded by Judah's noble and selfless \_\_\_\_\_.** The selfish person understands arrogance, but they are confused by humility; they understand taking, but are perplexed by giving; they understand ugliness but are confounded by grace. The wise person can begin the process of transformation in a family simply by meeting the selfishness with selflessness. (Luke 6:27-29)

**C. Jacob was \_\_\_\_\_ – 11-15**

Jacob was persuaded by the facts, and melted by his son's generous offer. So he told them to go and to bring with them expensive gifts. (11) They were to bring back double the money, so as to repay the money that should have been left in Egypt on the first trip. (12) He also released Benjamin to Judah and prayed for God's compassion upon them. (13) For the first time in his life Jacob the schemer said "I am going to trust God with my kids." His reason for doing so was to secure the release of Simeon (who was being held hostage.) Suddenly Simeon is given value. Simeon became a treasured son equal in value to Benjamin. The others boys and their starving families became equal in value to Benjamin.

**Jacob chose to \_\_\_\_\_ Benjamin in hopes of saving the rest of his family.** It took one son who chose to do the right thing, to set the pace, to break the mold - to sacrifice himself for the sake of others. That was what it took to conquer Jacob.

## ANALYSIS

It took the loss of Joseph, a ravaging famine, the loss of Simeon, and the threat of losing his entire family to starvation. It took well over 20 years but Jacob finally learned that

**In a \_\_\_\_\_ family, no one person is more important than any other.** Dad is no more important than mom, Mom is no more important than the kids, no one child is more important than the other

How do we build this kind of home?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ each child that they are important to you.
2. **Make sure that each child gets personal \_\_\_\_\_ with you.**
3. **Make sure that each kid receives equal \_\_\_\_\_**

We want to make sure that no one person feels less important than any other. But there are hindrances that get in the way.

1. **We often have our own \_\_\_\_\_ to overcome.**
2. **Some of our kids will meet our \_\_\_\_\_ better than others.**
3. **Some of our kids make us feel \_\_\_\_\_ than the others do.**
4. **Some kids demand more \_\_\_\_\_ than others.**
5. **Some kids are our kids while others are \_\_\_\_\_ kids.**

In a healthy family, no one person is more important than any other. May God give us such a family!

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## FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Use this section in your personal or family devotions to better apply the truth.

1. Jacob was shaped by Isaac's favoritism. What values have you brought from your home and how do they shape your parenting today?
2. Do a simple family survey. Ask each person to answer this question. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest) how important do you feel in this family?
  - a. Use the survey as a place to begin to address the needs you discover.