

A GODLY AMBITION
Genesis 37:1-11

INTRODUCTION

As a historical narrative, Genesis has introduced the reader to many fascinating characters. Genesis 37 begins our series of studies in the life of Joseph, the elder of Jacob's two sons by Rachel. Actually, the final 14 chapters of Genesis focus on this great man in Israel's history. Joseph is also an important Bible character because many types (pictures) of Jesus are seen in him. While reading through Genesis 37-51, be looking for these types of Jesus. You will be richly rewarded in becoming familiar with Joseph.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read through Genesis 37:1-11 several times. As you do, recognize the dynamics of this troubled family. Joseph, a 17 year old lad, has two dreams about his future. After examining Joseph and his family, we will focus on the subject of dreams. Many books about dreams are written by popular authors today, some very poorly. Let's see dreams from a Biblical perspective, when someone may be given **A Godly Ambition**.

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

I. Genesis 37:1-4. Joseph's place in the family. Now living in Canaan, Jacob has 12 sons. Joseph was the 11th, born in Jacob's old age to Rachel, who is now dead. Jacob had loved Rachel more than his other wives, and loved Joseph above his other sons. Jacob even made him a tunic of many colors, signifying a position of favor and the birthright. Joseph's older brothers had done many evil things, and were filled with hatred for Joseph. There was no peace in this home.

II. Genesis 37:5-8. Joseph's first dream. Binding sheaves of grain with his brothers, Joseph saw his sheaf rise above theirs, and their sheaves bowed down to his. Jacob told it to his brothers. But Jacob's brothers hated him even more. This dream was accurate, as Joseph will provide food for his family in the future years of famine. Joseph will have the prominent place.

III. Genesis 37:9-11. Joseph's second dream. Easily understood, this dream showed again that Joseph will be prominent among Israel's children, and even his father and mother would bow down to him. Joseph might have been wiser to keep silent, but he told his family. He could have had pride or at least a self-centered point of view in telling the dream, or perhaps it was just for him to know and not divulge to others. But in hearing this dream, Jacob's family cannot be happy for him. He was envied by his brothers and rebuked by his father, although Jacob will keep the matter in mind. But, this dream certainly did come true. In **Revelation 12:1** the stars, moon and sun represent the family of Israel, and speaks of Jesus coming from the nation of Israel.

Genesis 37:1-11 begins the record of Joseph with dreams of his future. Through these dreams, his course in life is set. God revealed these dreams, but gave no detail of how or when these things will come to pass. It will be many years before Joseph realizes God's ambitions for him fulfilled. For a believer, it is exciting to get **A Godly Ambition** from the Lord. Now, what should your response be? Firstly, develop a deepening relationship with the Lord. Allow Him to shape your character. Humble yourself before Him and He will make you ready for the work He has shown you. 1 Thessalonians 5:24. Maybe you have someone to receive council from, share and pray with, but keep looking to the Lord for His direction. It may be a long time before the dream is realized, but be patient – the Lord knows when you will be able to handle the plan of God for you. Think of David and Paul; how long and difficult it was for them before their dreams were realized. The Potter's perspective is right, as time and trials shape and mature to accomplish His work His way.

CONSIDER God may still speak through dreams today...

- If the Lord gives you **A Godly Ambition** in a dream, look to Him to guide you more than other counselors or society.
After all, it is His plan for you. *Psalm 37:3-5, Psalm 119:97-105, 2 Timothy 2:15, Isaiah 46:8-11*
- If someone you know has **A Godly Ambition**, prayerfully and carefully invest in his life to help set him on his course.
Be a godly example and wise counselor. *Philippians 3:17, 2 Timothy 2:2, Titus 2:7-8*
- If a loved one needs to receive **A Godly Ambition** for their life, have hope!
God is able to reach anybody. *Ezekiel 22:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:13, Matthew 5:13-16*

PRAY

- for the Veterans Day Assembly, that it would greatly minister to those who have served our country!
- for the upcoming Shepherd's School, that those who attend would receive a "Godly Ambition" from the Lord!
- that you would be a godly example to those around you as you daily serve the Lord where He has you.
- continually for the restoration of the hurricane-ravaged areas.
- for Beena (India) for her upcoming eye surgery.