

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob and Esau: A Family Feud  
TEXT: Genesis 25:12-27:40

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

Controversy and quarreling among brothers, euphemistically called sibling rivalry, is prevalent in most families and is a part of growing up. It can be contained, however, if it is dealt with consistently and fairly. But when the parents show partiality and take sides, this struggle often becomes malignant and fatal to family unity.

This study opens with the joy of long-awaited birth. After twenty years, Isaac and Rebecca have not just one son but twins. As the boys grow up, parental partiality develops with tragic consequences for family relationships. Yet throughout these events God works out his sovereign purpose and remains merciful to this family in spite of their failures. Not only can we profit from their mistakes, but we can also be encouraged by God's love for us even when we fail.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 25:12-34. According to verses 12-18, how were God's promises to Hagar fulfilled (see 16:7-16)?
2. What difficulties and tests of faith do Isaac and Rebecca encounter in connection with the birth of their sons (v. 19-22)?
3. What do we learn about Esau and Jacob from before their birth until they grow up (w. 23-28)?
4. What does the incident in verses 29-34 reveal about the character of the two brothers?
5. Verse 34 states that Esau despised his birthright (his double portion inheritance and future role as head of the family). In what areas was he tempted to give up something spiritually valuable for the sake of something of little or no value?
6. Read Genesis 26. How does Isaac follow his father's footsteps in his dealings with Abimelech (v. 1-11)?
7. In what ways have you experienced the strength of your parents or been influenced by their weaknesses? What can you do to improve the area of weakness?
8. What specific promises does the Lord make to Isaac in reaffirming his covenant with Abraham (v. 2-6, 23-25)?
9. Read Genesis 27:1-40. In 25:28 we learned that "Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebecca loved Jacob." How does this parental favoritism work itself out in the struggle recounted in verses 1-17?
10. How can you show equal love and care to family members with radically different personalities?
11. How does Jacob succeed in deceiving his father (v. 18-29)? What blessing does he receive?
12. Describe Esau's reaction and the blessing he obtains (v. 30-40).
13. As a result of this study, what one thing can you do within your own family or present living situation to reduce tension and encourage better relationships?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob in Exile: God's Mercy and Justice  
TEXT: Genesis 27:41—30:24

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

How do you cope with the consequences of sin in your life? What does your disobedience to God have on his purposes for you? Jacob's experience can provide helpful answers to these questions.

In the last study we saw how parental partiality increased the natural rivalry between Esau and Jacob. As Isaac and Rebecca took sides to work against each other, the family relationships became strained. In this study we see how they finally fractured with unforeseen consequences.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 27:41—28:9. When Rebecca hears of Esau's plan to Jacob, what strategy does she devise, and how does she persuade her son husband to carry it out (v. 41-46)?
2. In what specific ways would Isaac's command encourage Jacob as he leaves home and sets out on his long journey (28:1-5)?
3. Read Genesis 28:10-22. Describe what happens to Jacob on his first! away from home (v. 10-15).
4. From Jacob's response to the dream, what clue can we get about his relationship to God at this point (v. 16-22)?
5. A past sin or disobedience to God can leave us with a burden of guilt or failure. How can Jacob's experience renew our confidence in God's grace?
6. Read Genesis 29. In what ways is Jacob's initial experience in Haran similar to and different from that of Abraham's chief servant many years earlier (v. 1-18; see also 24:10-28)?
7. Jacob meets his match and means of discipline in Laban. In what way does the latter's trickery repay Jacob for the exploitation of his father's blindness (v. 19-24)? How is this situation resolved (v. 25-30)?
8. What do we learn about Leah from the names she gives her sons (v. 31-35)?
9. Read Genesis 30:1-24. What impresses you about the relationship between these two sisters?
10. Describe how this traumatic triangle works its hardship on each p involved.
11. Spiritual maturity often comes through suffering. In what difficult situation do you now believe God is working to strengthen your faith and character?

- Spend time thanking God for his care and discipline in your life.

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob versus Laban: Rivalry and Its Results  
TEXT: Genesis 30:25—31:55

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

Do you currently have a strained or fractured relationship with a family member, friend or colleague at work? Has the cancer of resentment or anger been eating away at you? In this study we find Jacob and Laban in just such a situation. In the previous chapter, after marrying both Leah and Rachael, Jacob was obligated to serve their father for another seven years. Now he wants to return to his homeland with his family. But Laban persuades Jacob to stay on with a new contract. We will see how the rivalry between these two men escalates to the point of open conflict.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Gen. 30:25-43. Why does Jacob want to leave, and why does Laban want him to stay (v.25-30)?
2. What arrangement does Jacob suggest for wages (v.31-33)?
3. What is Laban's strategy in verses 34-36?
4. Describe Jacob's way of getting back at Laban to increase the strength of his own flocks (v. 37-43).
5. How could these two men have responded in a better way to prevent this growing conflict?
6. Read Genesis 31:1-21. What new factors in Jacob's situation now prompt his decision to leave Laban's employ and return home (31:1-13)? How does Rachel and Leah's reply confirm his decision (v. 14-21)?
7. How has God protected and provided for Jacob in the midst of his unjust treatment by Laban (v. 1-21)? How can this give us hope when we are unjustly treated by a friend, spouse or employer?
8. Read verses 22-55. It takes two to make a fight, and usually each person has good reasons for thinking he or she is right. How do Laban and Jacob defend their actions (v. 22-42)?
9. Why is it often so difficult for us to see the other person's point of view in a controversy?
10. How do Laban and Jacob reconcile their differences (v. 43-55)? How would you evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of this reconciliation?
11. What have we learned in this passage that can help us in dealing with a strained or fractured relationship?
  - Decide now what steps you can take, and pray for courage to follow through.

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob Meets Esau: Planning, Prayer and Struggle  
TEXT: Genesis 32—33

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

The Christian life is a mysterious mixture of God's work and ours, His gracious provision and our effort. Sometimes we are perplexed over «I should make the next move. We see this pattern in the life of Jacob, who planning and praying, laboring and believing, are prominent in this narrative. The previous study ended with reconciliation and peaceful departure. Ni Jacob resolutely heads toward another confrontation with his adversary twenty years earlier—his brother Esau, whom he cheated. Jacob combines planning and prayer as he obeys God's command to return to his country at relatives. His struggle can teach us how to redress past wrongs and effects reconciliation with someone we have injured.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 32. What effects would meeting the angels of God have on Jacob as he nears his encounter with Esau (v. 1-2)?
2. Describe the tone of Jacob's message to Esau (v. 3-5).
3. After Jacob receives the ominous report brought back by the servants (v. 6), he alternately plans and prays. How does his prayer in verses 9-12 reflect his relationship with God at this point?
4. In what ways can Jacob's prayer be a model for our own praying?
5. To what extent do you think Jacob's plans are consistent or inconsistent with his prayer (v. 13-21)?
6. How does this struggle with the unknown man give insight into Jacob's personality (v. 22-32)?
7. In what ways does he emerge both stronger and weaker?
8. How does the change of Jacob's name from be deceives to he struggles with God indicate the development of his character?
9. In what areas do you struggle to trust and obey the Lord?
10. Read Genesis 33. In what ways does this meeting between Jacob and Esau contrast with the last time they saw each other (chapter 27)?
11. How would you account for the changes which have taken place in the two brothers?
12. In what areas can Jacob's actions toward Esau be a model for us of repentance and reconciliation?
13. When Jacob settles in Shechem (v. 18), he builds an altar to El Elohe Israel ("God, the God of Israel"). How had his encounter with Esau hi him to appreciate God's faithfulness?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob's Compromise and Commitment: The Cost of Discipleship  
TEXT: Genesis 34—36

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

In our Christian life both compromise and commitment are costly. When we falter and compromise, the consequences take their toll on us personally and often on our family and friends. Nevertheless, God graciously calls us to repentance and renewed commitment. In the last chapter Jacob bought a plot of land in Shechem among the Canaanites instead of going on to Bethel as God commanded. Now his compromise with a pagan community results in a multiple tragedy. We see how God again rescues his servant from a dangerous situation and reaffirms his covenant promise.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 34. What is Shechem's attitude toward Dinah (v. 1-4)? How does his father try to compensate for the wrong done to her (v. 5-12)?
2. How do you evaluate the reaction of Jacob's sons and the measures they take for revenge (w. 18-29)?
3. In what way does this tragedy illustrate the dangers of spiritual compromise or disobedience?
4. Read Genesis 35:1-15. In verse 1 God renews his call for Jacob to settle in Bethel. What is the cost of this commitment for Jacob and the meal of his household (v. 2-7)?
5. Have you become aware of any "foreign god" in your life, something which is taking the place of God? Explain. What specific step of obedience do you need to take to deepen your commitment to Jesus Christ?
6. In what sense does Jacob's return to Bethel mark a high point in his life?
7. What specific promises does God reaffirm to Jacob and to his descend (w. 9-13)? What new dimensions of meaning do they now have thirty years after they were initially made (28:13-15)?
8. Read verses 16-29. What new grief come into Jacob's life? What does changing his child's name from son of my trouble to son of my right hand tell us about Jacob's attitude toward his youngest son?
9. How can we, like Jacob, transform the pain of losing someone we love into confidence and courage for the future?
10. Read Genesis 36:1-8, then quickly scan verses 9-43. What do the comments in 35:29 and 36:6-8 show about the relationship between Jacob and Esau?
11. What is the most significant lesson you have learned from the lives of Jacob and Esau?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Joseph and His Brothers: Pride and Prejudice  
TEXT: Genesis 37— 38

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

we often see how children tend to duplicate the weaknesses as well as the strengths of their parents. This is evident in many families of the Old Testament. Jacob suffered from parental favoritism as a boy. Now we see how he perpetuates this practice in his relationship with Joseph—with disastrous results.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 37. Describe the family relationships at the outset of the story (v. 1-4). What kind of boy does Joseph appear to be in this chapter?
2. We have already seen in the examples of Abimelech, Jacob and Laban that dreams are a medium through which God reveals his will. This time, however, the communication is not through words. How are the symbols in Joseph's two dreams interpreted by his family (v. 5-11)?
3. What are the varied reactions of Joseph's brothers when they see him approaching (v. 12-22)?
4. What do you imagine the brothers talk about over lunch (v. 23-28)? How do you think Joseph feels as he sits in the pit and overhears the conversation?
5. Dothan was an important town on the ancient north-south caravan route west of the Jordan. Slave-trafficking was well established as both Syria and Palestine fed the market. Why does Judah's suggestion gain the assent of his brothers (v. 26-28)?
6. What motive do you see in the way the brothers report to their father the news of Joseph's disappearance (v. 29-35)?
7. Jacob's favoritism, Joseph's arrogance and the brothers' envy contribute to this tragedy of rivalry and hatred. To what extent are you involved in a bad situation, either your own or that of a friend, with some of these elements?
8. Read Genesis 38. In spite of having three sons, how does Judah find his lineage to be in jeopardy (v. 1-11)? What does he do about it?
9. What strategy does Tamar work out to establish her status as matriarch of Judah's line (v. 12-30)?
10. Perez (v. 29) is listed in the genealogies of David (Ruth 4:18) and Joseph, the husband of Mary (Matthew 1:3). How can this help us to appreciate God's grace?
11. Even tragedy and evil can be part of God's plan for good. How can these chapters encourage us to trust God in the midst of difficult circumstances?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Slave and Prisoner: Performance under Pressure  
TEXT: Genesis 39—40

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

How do you react when you are treated unjustly? How do you feel when you do everything you can to serve God well, only to have the bottom drop out of your life? Joseph faced these difficulties after he became a slave in Egypt. His example of perseverance under pressure and the way he coped with a shattering reverse can be instructive to us in similar situations.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 39. Trace the development of Joseph's ability and responsibility from the time he enters Potiphar's house (v 1-6).
2. Describe the temptation and increasing pressure Joseph now experiences (v. 6-12). What can we learn from the way Joseph resists this temptation?
3. What pressure does Potiphar's wife put on her husband to get her revenge on Joseph (v. 13-20)?
4. How do you think Joseph feels about God after this second injustice, which is completely undeserved?
5. In what situation have you been treated unjustly for taking a moral stand or refusing to do something wrong? How did you feel about God's letting this happen?
6. In what way is the picture of Joseph emerging in this narrative different from the character we first met in his father's home?
7. Notice the symmetry between verses 1-6 and 20-23. From the latter description of Joseph's activities, what can we surmise about his attitude toward his new, more humiliating situation?
8. Read Genesis 40. Describe the new situation in which Joseph finds himself (v. 1-8).
9. In verses 9-19 what similarities and differences do you find in the cupbearer's and baker's dreams and Joseph's interpretations?
10. What are the consequences for the three men (v. 20-23)?
11. This chapter ends with the words, "The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him." What thoughts and feelings might Joseph have had at this point?
12. What impresses you about Joseph's performance under these incredible pressures, reverses and disappointments? How can his example help or encourage you in a difficult situation this coming week?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Joseph Governs Egypt: Faithful Service Rewarded  
TEXT: Genesis 41—42

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

we often take a short-term view of the Christian life that concentrates on what God does for us now. Yet God has longer-range purposes that focus on what he wants to accomplish in us for the future. This principle has been at work in Joseph's life. Through adversity and disappointment God developed his character and gave him invaluable training. Now a sudden crisis and opportunity reveal what kind of person he has become—an example that can encourage us in our life and service for God.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 41. Why do you think Pharaoh was troubled by his dreams (v. 1-8)?
2. How does Joseph's sudden opportunity come about (v. 8-14)?
3. How do Joseph's interpretation and proposal demonstrate discernment and wisdom (v. 15-36)?
4. Describe Joseph's new position and the responsibilities Pharaoh gives him (v. 37-49)?  
In what ways had God prepared Joseph for these responsibilities during his twelve years in Egypt?
5. How have you seen God use a difficult assignment to prepare you for a later responsibility?  
How can the experience of Joseph help you to persevere in the face of hardship when there is little reward or sense of appreciation?
6. In what way do the names of Joseph's two sons reflect the contrast between his present situation and when he first came to Egypt (v. 50-52)?
7. Read Genesis 42. Twenty years have elapsed since Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. He is now about thirty-seven (see 37:2; 41:46). Trace the events which lead Joseph's brothers into his presence and fulfill his earlier dreams (v. 1-9).
8. Why do you think Joseph accuses his brothers of being spies and tests their honesty (v. 9-20)?
9. Do you think the brothers are genuinely repentant at this point (v. 21-22)? Explain.
10. As they return home, how does their situation become more difficult (v. 24-38)?
11. How does Reuben's response to his father's despair show his willingness to shoulder family responsibility (v. 35-37)?
12. How has adversity or pressure helped you become more mature in your responsibility for others?



# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Family Reconciliation: Repentance and Responsibility  
TEXT: Genesis 43:1 to 45:15

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

What makes reconciliation possible? What elements are necessary on each side of a hurt or wrong in order to heal a damaged relationship? This study provides answers to these crucial questions. Joseph's brothers have now returned home from Egypt with a report of their traumatic experience. As the grain purchased on the first visit to Egypt runs out, Jacob and his sons he increasingly difficult decisions. Although our experience may be less traumatic, we can learn principles of reconciliation from this complex family situation.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 43. As the famine intensifies, what pressures does it put on Jacob and his sons (v. 1-10)?
2. As Jacob instructs his sons and takes the risk of losing Benjamin, where does his confidence lie (v. 11-14)?
3. Think of a difficult situation you are currently facing. How can you entrust it to God Almighty, the one for whom nothing is impossible?
4. How do the brothers misinterpret Joseph's intentions (v. 15-25)?
5. What insights do verses 26-34 give us into Joseph's character?
6. Read Genesis 44. The stage is now set for the climax of this drama. What final strategy does Joseph devise in verses 1-17? How does this strategy test his brothers' character and loyalty?
7. Judah's appeal is one of the great intercessions in the Bible. How does his attitude differ from that shown by him and his brothers twenty-three years earlier (v. 18-34)?
8. Restoring a relationship fractured by injustice and injury requires repentance, confession and acceptance of responsibility for the consequences. In what way have you, like Joseph's brothers, been involved in such a process?
9. Read Genesis 45:1-15. How does Joseph explain to his brothers the reason for his being sold into Egypt and the purpose of his sufferings (v. 1-11)?
10. How can this perspective toward your own suffering make it possible for you to forgive someone who has grievously wronged or hurt you?
11. How can Joseph's experience give us greater confidence in God's sovereignty over the events of our lives?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob in Egypt: God Preserves His People  
TEXT: Genesis 45:16—47:31

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

Do you ever wonder how the bits and pieces of your life fit together? This study shows how the seemingly unrelated and perplexing events of the preceding chapters now serve God's purpose to preserve Jacob's family during the coming famine. This account can strengthen our faith and hope as we work through difficult situations we cannot understand.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 45:16—46:27. What is Pharaoh's reaction to the news that Joseph's brothers have arrived (v. 16-24)?  
What would this mean to them with their burden of fear and guilt?
2. Describe Jacob's reaction to the astounding news his sons bring back from Egypt (v. 25-28).
3. Beersheba had been Isaac's center of worship. As God confirms this move to Egypt, what encouragement does he give Jacob for both the immediate and distant future (46:1-4)?
4. Has God ever allowed you to see how seemingly unrelated events fit into the tapestry of his will? Explain.
5. How do verses 5-27 underscore God's faithfulness to the promises! made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?
6. Read Genesis 46:28—47:12, How does Joseph's skill as a planner's administrator continue to show itself as he arranges for his father's family to settle in Goshen (46:28-34)? Describe how Joseph's plan succeeds (47:1-12).
7. What impresses you about Jacob, so recently in despair and ready to die in his interview with Pharaoh (v. 7-10)?
8. Read Genesis 47:13-31. What do verses 13-27 reveal about God's purpose in bringing Joseph to Egypt?
9. How does Jacob's last request of Joseph show his faith in God's promise regarding his descendants and their own land (v. 28-30)?
10. What kind of important promise or prayer request can one be patiently waiting for God to fulfill?
11. How can the story of Jacob and Joseph help you to trust God with the seemingly disconnected and perplexing areas of your life?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Jacob's Blessing" The life of Faith  
TEXT: Genesis 48—49

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

our self-centered technological society seeks instant gratification and immediate results. The good life emblazoned on television is measured by what we have and use now. The elderly are usually considered obsolete rather than examples of how to live fully for the long run. But for those with eyes to see, Jacob can teach us valuable lessons about the satisfaction of persevering in the life of faith. This study views his final days as he evaluates the past and peers into the future.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 48. How will Jacob's adoption of Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh affect their share in the promises God made to Jacob (v. 1-7)?
2. In what ways is Jacob's faith evident as he blesses Ephraim and Manasseh (v. 8-20)?
3. How does God's sovereign choice of Ephraim over Manasseh follow the same pattern we have seen in the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?
4. In these blessings Jacob recalls the way God has dealt with him in the past. How would you describe God in terms of the way he has been working in your life?
5. Read Genesis 49. In verses 3-7 how are the blessings given to Reuben, Simeon and Levi related to their past actions (see Gen 34; 35:22)?
6. Although our past failures and sins affect our future, how can God's forgiveness and grace help us triumph over these consequences?
7. What future does Jacob see for Judah (v. 8-12)? What characteristics of the Messiah's reign does he foretell?
8. After blessing six of his other sons (w. 13-21), Jacob gives a rich and lengthy blessing to Joseph. How is Joseph's blessing related to his past actions (v. 22-26)?
9. Recall events in Joseph's life which illustrate the names given to God in verses 24-25.
10. How do Jacob's last words demonstrate the faith and hope with which he finishes the course of his life (48:21-22; 49:29-32)?
11. In what specific areas are you having to trust God for the future?

# ALL CHRISTIANS' FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

## INTERACTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL OUTLINE

TOPIC: Joseph's Final Years: Faith, Love and Hope  
TEXT: Genesis 50

Directions: - You should read and re-read the passage(s). You must know what the passages say before you can understand what it means and how it applies to you. Be ready to share constructively, what God is teaching us in the passages. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means participate! But allow others to have equal time. The teacher will not be lecturing, but will formulate diverse questions in order to dig deeper into each of the questions and would encourage people to discuss before he gives his biblical views of it.

Like a fine painting or sculpture, God's work takes time, but its beauty is a tribute to the artist. The previous studies have shown how God used the years of hardship and suffering to produce in Joseph a spiritual maturity unsurpassed in the Old Testament. In this final chapter of Genesis we see how Joseph's life reflects the character of God. He provides a model for the way we should relate to God and others.

### QUESTIONS

1. Read Genesis 50:1-14. How is Joseph's love and respect for his father evident?
  2. The mourning period of seventy days for Jacob is just short of the seventy-two days observed for a Pharaoh. What light does this lengthy ceremony throw on Joseph's authority and prestige in Egypt?
  3. Read verses 15-26. Describe the reaction of Joseph's brothers after their father's burial and the strategy they devise to save themselves (v. 15-18).
  4. Why do you think Joseph weeps when he receives their message?
  5. What does Joseph's answer to his brothers reveal about his attitude toward being treated unjustly (v. 19-20)?
  6. Think of someone who has injured you. What is your attitude toward that person? In what ways can you see how God has used this injustice for good?
  7. How does Joseph show his brothers that he not only forgives but genuinely loves them (v. 21)?
  8. If your relationship with someone is strained because of a wrong done to you, what action may God want you to take—beyond the usual "forgive and forget" attitude—to demonstrate loving concern for this person's welfare?
  9. One hundred and ten years was considered to be the ideal life span in ancient Egypt. How are Joseph's final years and words similar to his father's (v. 22-26)?
  10. As you look back over this chapter, describe some of the ways Joseph demonstrates the qualities of faith, love and hope.
  11. In the Genesis narrative we have seen that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph all died in faith, looking forward to promises they did not see fulfilled in their lifetime. How does their example provide a model for our hope as Christians?
  12. How has your vision of God been enlarged through your study of Genesis?
  13. What have you appreciated most about your study of Genesis?
- Take time to thank God for his goodness, grace and faithfulness in each generation, including our own.