



Don't straddle the fence:

- **For connection**
- **For affection**
- **For protection**

BE A FAITHFUL MAN OF GOD

- **A man with control**
- **A man with credit**
- **A man with courage**

Gen 37:1-4

Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.
2 This is the history of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and
Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.

3 **Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children,** because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

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You can not straddle the fence of FAVORITISM within your family.

Jacob loved Joseph more than the other children. Every one knows that favoritism can not exist within a family.

How did this partiality for Joseph occur?

Let us look back at Jacob's parent, Joseph's grandparents, and notice how they loved their boys.

Gen. Gen 25:27-28

27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

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You can't buy affection to get connection as a means of protection

THE BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY MAKES THIS STATEMENT CONCERNING THE BIRTH OF JACOB'S CHILDREN.

“The desire for affectionate approval often leads down dangerous paths. The contest of childbearing between Rachel and Leah shows just such a struggle within a family. The story is about the craving of human beings for love and recognition.”

Gen 29:31-35

When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. 32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called

Levi. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

- ✚ Leah had four children, but she was still the unwanted wife. Even though Jacob was cool to Leah, God and Leah knew his heart was with another woman.
- ✚ Jacob never saw Leah's affection, but God did. (compare "Beer Lahai Roi," literally it means, "the well of the living One who sees me," Gen 16:14; 26:62; 25:11).
- ✚ **Leah would remain FAITHFUL, yet unloved by man, but LOVED by God. The tribe of Judah would produce the KING OF KINGS. And from Levi would be the priestly tribe of Israel.**

Gen 30:1-24

1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

2 And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

3 So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her." 4 Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5 And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6 Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. 7 And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8 Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.

9 When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. 10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11 Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad. 12 And Leah's maid Zilpah

bore Jacob a second son. 13 Then Leah said, "**I am happy**, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.

14 Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."

15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?"

And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "**You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes.**" **And he lay with her that night.**

17 And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. 18 Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. 19 Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. 20 And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. 21 Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

22 Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.

23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son."

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Don't straddle the fence for connection, affection, nor protection.

Don't be afraid to share your dreams

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.**

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Gen 39:1-40:1

Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. 2 The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3 And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. 4 So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. 5 So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. 6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."

8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, **that he did not heed her**, to lie with her or to be with her.

11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." **But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.** 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, 14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. 15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."

16 So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; 18 so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused. 20 Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. **21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.** 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, **because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.**

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I like how Joshua puts it in his book, Josh 24:14-15:

14 "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! 15 **And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve,** whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

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What about Elijah, in 1 Kings 18:20-21.

20 So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. 21 Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing. NIV