

January 16 Su Reading 16 — Genesis 22:1-18 — God, the Provider

¹ After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ² He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. ⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy^[fn] will go over there and worship and come again to you." ⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. ⁷ And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸ Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

⁹ When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." ¹² He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." ¹³ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide";^[fn] as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."^[fn]

¹⁵ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶ and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his^[fn] enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

ESV Footnotes

(22:5) Or *young man*; also verse 12

(22:14) Or *will see*

(22:14) Or *he will be seen*

(22:17) Or *their*

Jehovah Jireh — After God provided the ram to substitute for Isaac as a burnt offering, Abraham named the place, "*The LORD will provide*" (v. 14), which the KJV translated as "*Jehovahjireh*." When Isaac asked his father about a lamb for the sacrifice, Abraham replied that "*God will provide for himself the lamb...*" (v. 8). He didn't know how but he had faith. This story opens with, "*God tested Abraham...*" (v. 1). It was a faith-proving test and it was an extremely severe test for Abraham to be willing to sacrifice the son God had promised him as the beginning of a vast people-group. God often does the unexpected. God does provide for His own. As the hymn says, "All I have needed Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!" (Thomas Chisholm—1923). You will probably never be faced with as serious a problem as Abraham, but the same dependence on God as the provider must be held on to. You have a problem? God is the provider! He is enough!

Here is part of a very fitting song about Jehovah Jireh. Sing along with the whole song here:
[Jireh Elevation Worship and Maverick City lyric video - YouTube](#)

I'm already loved; I'm already chosen.
I know who I am; I know what You've spoken.
I'm already loved, more than I could imagine.
And that is enough.

Jireh, You are enough.
Jireh, You are enough.
I will be content in every circumstance.
Jireh, You are enough.
Forever enough, always enough, You're more than enough.
Forever enough, always enough, so much more than enough.

— Chandler Moore, Christopher Joel Brown,
Naomi Raine, Steven Furtick

Meditation: God told Abraham to take his son and “go to the land of Moriah ... on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you” (v. 2). What mountain was it? Where did Solomon build the temple? “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David his father, at the place that David had appointed, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite” (2 Chron. 3:1). It looks like the temple was built at the same spot that Abraham had built the altar to offer his son. Much later, just outside that city, the Messiah was offered as a sacrifice by God on Mount Calvary. God also provided a substitution there; the innocent Jesus took the place of sinful mankind so that we might have eternal life.

January 17 M Reading 17 — Genesis 24:12-28, 48-51 — The God Who Leads

Sarah died at the age of 127 (Gen. 23:1) and 137-year-old Abraham bought a cave from the Hittites and buried her there. Isaac was 37 years old and not yet married, so Abraham sent his servant to the land from which he had come, telling him that “The LORD ... will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there” (Gen. 24:7). When the servant arrived, he came to a well and prayed.

¹² And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. ¹³ Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴ Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master."

¹⁵ Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder. ¹⁶ The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. ¹⁷ Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water to drink from your jar." ¹⁸ She said, "Drink, my lord." And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." ²⁰ So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. ²¹ The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the LORD had prospered his journey or not.

²² *When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels,* ²³ *and said, "Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?"* ²⁴ *She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor."* ²⁵ *She added, "We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night."* ²⁶ *The man bowed his head and worshiped the LORD* ²⁷ *and said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the LORD has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsmen."* ²⁸ *Then the young woman ran and told her mother's household about these things.*

In telling this story later to Rebekah's brother, Laban, the servant added:

⁴⁸ *Then I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son.*

⁴⁹ *Now then, if you are going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."*

⁵⁰ *Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing has come from the LORD; we cannot speak to you bad or good."* ⁵¹ *Behold, Rebekah is before you; take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has spoken."*

The unseen angel had seamlessly guided the servant to the right well just as Rebekah was coming to draw water. He prayed to ask God to show His "steadfast love to ... Abraham" (v. 12). Then, "before he had finished speaking" (v. 15), Rebekah showed up at the well—an immediate answer to prayer. As soon as she was identified as being one of Abraham's kinsmen, the servant bowed to thank God for His love and leadership. We serve the God who leads. We don't see Him but we benefit by the way He arranges circumstances in our lives to bring about His perfect will for us.

<p>He leadeth me! He leadeth me! By His own hand He leadeth me; His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me. —Joseph Henry Gilmore (1862)</p>

Chesed Love — This passage is also very significant in that, for the first time in our readings, we encounter the "steadfast love" of God (v. 14). It is the important Hebrew word, *chesed*, which is difficult to translate, also being rendered in this verse by other versions with, "kindness ... lovingkindness ... faithful." It is primarily used in the context of a covenant, as it is here. It is God's tenacity in maintaining His side of the bargain, in this case, with Abraham. This consistent, persistent love was upheld, not only with faithful Abraham, but later with unfaithful Israel. It is being stubbornly loyal. God does not give up on His own children. He is the ever-loving Father.

January 18 Tu Reading 18 — Genesis 28:1-5; 10-22 — The Omnipresence of God

¹ *Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women."* ² *Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.* ³ *God Almighty^[fn] bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples.* ⁴ *May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take*

possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!"⁵ Thus Isaac sent Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. ¹² And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder^[fn] set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! ¹³ And behold, the LORD stood above it^[fn] and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. ¹⁴ Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

¹⁸ So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹ He called the name of that place Bethel,^[fn] but the name of the city was Luz at the first. ²⁰ Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, ²¹ so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, ²² and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you."

ESV Footnotes

(28:3) Hebrew *El Shaddai*

(28:12) Or *a flight of steps*

(28:13) Or *beside him*

(28:19) *Bethel* means *the house of God*

Unseen Presence — As Isaac had obtained his wife from her brother, Laban, so Isaac sent Jacob to get his wife from one of Laban's daughters. Traveling from Beersheba, at the southern end of the Promised Land, God appeared to Jacob in a dream when he stopped for the night at Luz, near the center of the land. God repeated the promise He had made to Abraham regarding the land, his descendants, and their worldwide influence (vv. 13-14). That promise would now apply only to the descendants of Jacob, not Esau. Upon waking from his dream, Jacob made this significant statement: "*Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it*" (v. 17). He seemed to be surprised as if he had discovered the place where God "lived," naming it Bethel ("the house of God"). What he did not seem to know was that God is in every place; He is omnipresent, everywhere present. Even today, people tend to think of God as dwelling in a specific place, like heaven or in a church building ("the house of God"). Although God was present at Bethel, Jacob said, "*I did not know it.*" Part of God's promise to Jacob was this: "*Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go...*" (v. 15). God is also present today wherever we go and we should know it. We should practice His presence when we go about the activities of our day. Talk to Him! Thank Him! Praise Him! He is everywhere present.

January 19 W Reading 19 — Genesis 29:15-35 — God's Compassion

We read earlier about the compassion of God in saving Noah's family from the worldwide flood. In that context, God was acting in compassion toward some while executing judgment on others.

Today, we read about a different side of God's compassion—lifting up the underdog. When Jacob arrived at Haran, he found the love of his life, Rachel, the younger daughter of Laban, but he was in for a surprise after spending a month there.

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah's eyes were weak,^[fn] but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. ¹⁸ Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." ¹⁹ Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." ²² So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. ²³ But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. ²⁴ (Laban gave^[fn] his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.) ²⁵ And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" ²⁶ Laban said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." ²⁸ Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. ²⁹ (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) ³⁰ So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.

³¹ When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. ³² And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben,^[fn] for she said, "Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me." ³³ She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.^[fn] ³⁴ Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.^[fn] ³⁵ And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah.^[fn] Then she ceased bearing.

ESV Footnotes

(29:17) Or *soft*

(29:24) Or *had given*; also verse 29

(29:32) *Reuben* means *See, a son*

(29:33) *Simeon* sounds like the Hebrew for *heard*

(29:34) *Levi* sounds like the Hebrew for *attached*

(29:35) *Judah* sounds like the Hebrew for *praise*

Relative Love — This passage is filled with struggles related to love. It even calls the lack of love "hate" ("Jacob ... loved Rachel more than Leah ... the LORD saw that Leah was hated..."—vv. 30-31). It was this lack of Jacob's love that God, the giver of all life, responded to by blessing Leah with four sons. God shows compassion to the underdog, the one who is not esteemed by people around them. In fact, He delights in it. David wrote, "The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed" (Ps. 103:6). Leah was always second place in Jacob's heart, but God loved her and showed it. Do you sometimes feel like Leah? You may not be appreciated or loved as you would like to be. God is for you! He is your champion. He loves you. We shouldn't live for the love of man as much as for the love of God. God also loved Jacob, in spite of his devious ways, and Jacob not only gained Rachel on this wife-finding trip, but all four of his wives, since Zilpah and Bilhah would later become substitute wives because of the barrenness of Rachel and Leah. God would later bless

Rachel with two significant sons, Joseph and Benjamin, completing the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel (Jacob).

I was sinking deep in sin,
far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within,
sinking to rise no more,
But the Master of the sea
heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me,
now safe am I.

All my heart to Him I give,
ever to Him I'll cling,
In His blessed presence live,
ever His praises sing,
Love so mighty and so true,
merits my soul's best songs,
Faithful, loving service, too,
to Him belongs.

Love lifted me!
Love lifted me!
When nothing else could help,
Love lifted me!
— James Rowe (1912)

January 20 Th Reading 20 — Genesis 32:1-2, 9-12, 22-32 — Striving with God

¹ *Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. ² And when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.*^[fn]

Messengers sent by Jacob returned with the threatening news that Esau was coming to meet them with 400 men. This prompted Jacob to fear and to make a plea to God.

⁹ *And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,' ¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. ¹¹ Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. ¹² But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"*

As a precaution, Jacob sent ahead a huge present for Esau of 580 animals to appease him before they would meet. Then, Jacob had a very real encounter with God in the form of a man.

²² *The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children,^[fn] and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. ²⁴ And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. ²⁵ When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶ Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." ²⁷ And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸ Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,^[fn] for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." ²⁹ Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. ³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel,^[fn] saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." ³¹ The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. ³² Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew*

of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

ESV Footnotes

- (32:2) *Mahanaim* means *two camps*
- (32:22) Or *sons*
- (32:28) *Israel* means *He strives with God, or God strives*
- (32:30) *Peniel* means *the face of God*

Striving for a Blessing — This passage seems to reveal more about Jacob than it does about God. Jacob had just left Laban, a man he had struggled with for about 20 years. Then, when he was threatened by a potential struggle with his estranged brother, Esau, he struggled with God in prayer and reminded Him of His earlier promises. Finally, he struggled with God “*face to face*” (v. 30) in the form of a physical man. God congratulated Jacob for his tenacity, renaming him Israel (“*he strives with God*”) and concluded that “*you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed*” (v. 28). Finally, Jacob/Israel got what he wanted “*And there he blessed him*” (v. 29). What does this show us about God? For one thing, God may intentionally test us by putting us in a situation that makes us struggle. Are we going to persevere? If we do, God will bless us in some special way. He may also leave a mark on us as a reminder of the struggle, like Jacob was left with a dislocated hip and a new name.

Meditation: This mysterious “man” that wrestled with Jacob was asked for his name and his response was significant: “*Why is it that you ask my name?*” (v. 29). He remained a mystery. This reminded me of “*the angel of the LORD*” that would later appear in the form of a man to Samson’s mother and father before he was born. At the end of several encounters, Samson’s father, Manoah, asked, “*What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?*” *And the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?”* (Judges 13:17-18). In both cases, the “man” would not provide his name. Was it the wonderful name of Jesus?

January 21 F Reading 21 — Genesis 33:18-20 — The God of Israel

Tensions rose as Esau and Jacob approached each other, but surprisingly, Esau greeted him warmly. After some polite debate, Esau agreed to keep the large gift of animals that Jacob had offered. They decided that Esau would go back to his homeland of Seir and that Jacob’s large group would follow (33:14). Instead, Jacob ended up building a house at Succoth (33:17) on the east side of the Jordan River, not too far from where he had met Esau. After some unspecified time, he relocated about 20 miles (32 km) to the west in Shechem, the same place that Abraham had first come into the land of Canaan where he had “*built there an altar to the LORD*” (12:7).

¹⁸ *And Jacob came safely^[fn] to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city.* ¹⁹ *And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money^[fn] the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent.* ²⁰ *There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.^[fn]*

ESV Footnotes

- (33:18) Or *peacefully*
- (33:19) Hebrew *a hundred qesitah*; a unit of money of unknown value
- (33:20) *El-Elohe-Israel* means *God, the God of Israel*

God, the God of Israel — Many Bible versions, like the ESV, do not translate the name of the altar but give its Hebrew equivalent, “*El-Elohe-Israel*.” Its literal translation is, “*God, the God of Israel*.” It is significant because the term, “*the God of Israel*” becomes almost a name for God and is used 175

times later in the Scriptures. It connects God even more precisely to one specific man (Israel) and his descendants. God earlier described Himself as “*the God of Abraham*” (26:24) but after Abraham had two very different sons, Ishmael and Isaac, God then identified Himself only as, “*the God of Isaac*” (28:13). Ishmael was left out. Isaac also had two different sons, Esau and Jacob (Israel), and God became “*the God of Israel,*” not “*the God of Esau.*” Esau was left out. Although Israel had 12 sons, from this point on, God always referred to Himself in this family connection as “*the God of Israel.*” Israel’s descendants were the People of God. We belong to this spiritually extended family, the family of faith, because of our acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus for salvation.

Sing along: [Blessed Be the God of Israel UMH#209 - Aldersgate Chorale - YouTube](#)

Blest be the God of Israel,
who comes to set us free;
who visits and redeems us,
who grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy,
of freedom and release;
God shall fulfill that promise
and bring the people peace.
— Michael Perry (1973)

January 22 Sa Reading 22 — Genesis 39:1-6, 19-23 — God, the Provider

God eventually opened the womb of Rachel and she bore Joseph. When he was a teenager, he was given two prophetic dreams, suggesting that he would one day rule over his whole family. After revealing these dreams, however, his jealous brothers sold him into slavery.

¹ Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. ² The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. ³ His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. ⁵ From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. ⁶ So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

Potiphar’s wife was attracted to Joseph and pestered him to have sex with her, which he faithfully refused to do. When she could not get her way, she framed him by telling Potiphar that Joseph had tried to rape her.

¹⁹ As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. ²⁰ And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. ²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. ²² And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. ²³ The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.

The Blessing of the Lord — We read earlier about God being the provider for Abraham when he was stopped from sacrificing his son, Isaac, on the altar; God caused a ram to be caught by its horns in a thicket for him. We more recently read about God being the unusual provider for Jacob (Israel) by giving him four wives and many servants and a multitude of animals. Today, we read about a different way God provides, i.e., giving ability to succeed. In Potiphar's house, Joseph "*became a successful man*" (v. 2), "*the LORD caused all that he did to succeed*" (v. 3), and because of Joseph, "*the blessing of the LORD was on all that [Potiphar] had*" (v. 5). The same thing happened after Joseph was thrown into prison when "*the LORD ... gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison*" (v. 21) and he was given management over all the prisoners because "*whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed*" (v. 23). God was working toward His plan of providing for the family of Israel during a severe famine. The God who provided Joseph's prophetic dream was working toward its fulfillment. Do we get jealous when we see God's unusual blessing on others? Would we like for them to be pulled down to the state of a servant? No, it may be part of God's wider plan to provide for something yet unseen. In the meantime, we should "*rejoice with those who rejoice*" (Rom. 12:15) under "*the blessing of the LORD.*"