

Grace tells a better story.

Gen 47:7-10

Then Joseph brought his father Jacob in and presented him before Pharaoh. After Jacob blessed^[a] Pharaoh, ⁸ Pharaoh asked him, “How old are you?” ⁹ And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers.” ¹⁰ Then Jacob blessed^[b] Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

Jacob –

- a. Favored by his mother but not his father.
- b. At his mother’s suggestion -he tricks his brother into selling his birthright.
- c. He flees home under threat of death -never to see his parents alive again.
- d. Ends up with his uncle Laban who tricks and exploits him for 20 yrs.
- e. Finally leaves his uncle with 2 wives -one who was unloved -and 2 concubines.
- f. Upon leaving, his wife Rachel steals her father’s idols.
- g. He then encounters Esau who Jacob thinks will kill him, but he is reconciled.
- h. He arrives in Canaan where his daughter Dinah is raped by a Canaanite man and Simeon and Levi exact revenge on the Canaanite village by tricking the men into getting circumcised and then slaughtering them all.
- i. Jacob leaves this area in fear, and moves to Bethel, but first he asks all his household and those who were with him to put away their foreign gods.
- j. He then moves from Bethel towards Ephrath where along the way he loses his favorite wife Rachel in childbirth.
- k. Then his oldest son Reuben ends up sleeping with his concubine Bilhah.
- l. Judah, his 4th son, fails in his responsibility to provide for the succession of his deceased sons and ends up being tricked by his daughter-in-law into sleeping with her to provide for his line’s succession.
- m. He has 12 sons with 4 different women –and makes the same mistake as Isaac his father in favoring some over the others.
- n. His ten sons by Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah conspire to kill their brother Joseph who was Rachel’s son—then change their minds and sell him into slavery.
- o. They then deceive their father and for 20 yrs Jacob thinks his son Joseph has died.
- p. He then sustains a famine and the threat of the loss of Benjamin, his last remaining child of Rachel.

Gen 48:1-16

Sometime later Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So, he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. ² When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed. ³ Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty^[a] appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me ⁴ and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to

your descendants after you.’⁵ “Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. ⁶Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers. ⁷As I was returning from Paddan,^[b] to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So, I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem). ⁸When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, “Who are these?” ⁹“They are the sons God has given me here,” Joseph said to his father. Then Israel said, “Bring them to me so I may bless them.” ¹⁰Now Israel’s eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. So, Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹Israel said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too.” ¹²Then Joseph removed them from Israel’s knees and bowed down with his face to the ground. ¹³And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel’s left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel’s right hand and brought them close to him. ¹⁴But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. ¹⁵Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my father’s Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, ¹⁶the Angel who has delivered me from all harm—may he bless these boys. May they be called by my name and the names of my father’s Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on the earth.”

- a. God was faithful and extended the promise He had made to his grandfather Abraham, and to his father Isaac, to him.
- b. God had sustained him despite all his failings and troubles.
- c. God had reunited him with his son Joseph.
- d. God had reconciled Joseph to his brothers.

Heb 11:21

By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

So let us now see what the story of Grace is for Daniel

Chapter 1:

- a. God preserves Daniel’s life with the initial siege of Jerusalem.
- b. God sustains him on the 500-mile march to Babylon.
- c. God moves Ashpenaz to choose Daniel in service to Neb’s court.
- d. God causes the official in charge of the King’s food to show favor to Daniel when Daniel refuses the King’s diet for him.
- e. God gave Daniel and his friends special wisdom and understanding and so they gained favor with Neb.

Chapter 2:

- a. God softens Arioch's heart, who was the commander of Neb's guard and assigned to execute the wise men of Babylon. He gave Daniel an audience and allowed him to visit the King regarding the King's dream.
- b. God gave Neb patience for one night to allow Daniel to work on the dream.
- c. God gave Daniel the interpretation of the dream.

Chapter 3:

- a. Though Daniel is not mentioned, God gives his three friends courage to refuse the Kings command to worship the golden image.
- b. God preserves their lives amid the fiery furnace.
- c. God exacts revenge on those who tried to have them killed.
- d. God uses their refusal to be a witness to Neb who testifies to God's greatness throughout his kingdom.
- e. God then uses Neb to promote the three to high positions within the province –no doubt preparing for the events of chapter 4.

Chapter 4:

- a. God again gave Daniel the interpretation of Neb's dream.
- b. God gave Daniel the courage to tell him of it.
- c. God restrained the ambitions of Neb's rivals during this time.
- d. (speculative) God made Daniel regent and used his three friends to administrate the Kingdom while Neb went crazy.

Chapter 5:

- a. God revived Daniel's career by bringing him to the attention of Bel's mother.
- b. God gave Daniel the interpretation of the writing and its meaning.
- c. God gave Daniel the courage to deliver it.
- d. God sustained and preserved Daniel while the Kingdom fell into the hands of the Medes.

Chapter 6:

- a. God moves Darius to favor Daniel and appoints him as one of three administrators over Babylon.
- b. God then gives Daniel such ability he rises over the other two.
- c. God endears Daniel to Darius who tries his best to save him from the lion's den.
- d. God preserves Daniel from the lions.
- e. God exacts revenge on Daniel's enemies.
- f. God moves Darius to issue a decree to worship Daniel's God
- g. God prospers Daniel and extends Daniel's favor to Cyrus.

Chapter 7:

- a. God gives Daniel a vision of things to come.
- b. God interprets the vision to him through an angel.

Chapter 8:

- a. God gives Daniel another vision of the future that expands and details the vision he had in chapter 7.
- b. God again gives Daniel the interpretation by an angel.

Chapter 9:

- a. God sends Gabriel to correct Daniel's interpretation of the prophet Jeremiah and to give him further insight as to the future for his nation, Israel.

What is my point? God always tells a better story in your life than you can.

- a. God saved me.
- b. He has provided for me –I have physical provision.
- c. I am still alive today!!!
- d. He has given many of you a thriving marriage and family.
- e. He has given you a career or job.
- f. He has given you relative health.
- g. He Has given you gifts to use and time to use them.

Four things to take away:

- a. Let God's grace be the story of your life!!!
- b. Tell others of the grace of God in your life.
- c. Listen to others of the grace of God in their lives.
- d. Embrace God who continues to write your grace story.