



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: God Won't Leave You There – Part 2

Guest(s): Anne Graham Lotz and Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Well, welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh. Have you ever prayed the same prayer for so long that you've started to wonder if God is even listening to your request? Maybe you've been waiting on a prodigal child to come home, or for years you've been wrestling with a health battle that just won't resolve itself. Or maybe you're carrying a wound from someone else who should have protected you. Long suffering is its own kind of test. Well, on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we're continuing our conversation with Anne Graham Lotz and her daughter, Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright, about their new book called *God Won't Leave You There. Joseph's Story*. Last time here on Family Talk, we heard how Joseph's darkest years weren't wasted. They were preparation. Today, Anne and Rachel-Ruth are going to take us deeper into what it looks like to find God's peace in prolonged suffering, and how to build a legacy of faith that outlasts our most difficult seasons on today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. Anne and Rachel-Ruth, welcome back to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Anne Graham Lotz: Thank you.

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: Thank you.

Anne Graham Lotz: Looking forward to talking to you again.

Roger Marsh: It's interesting as we were talking about Joseph's story as they delineate in their brand new book called *God Won't Leave You There*. One of the aspects of Joseph's life that I didn't really take into consideration until reading this book is the fact that there are a lot of times when people are going through tough times and you see someone who says, "Okay, I can do this." I mean, God's got me and using the old analogy, there may be a pile of manure in this room, but there's a pony in here somewhere type of thing. I mean, not to be that naive or Pollyanna, but I mean, it really is kind of our attitude. And one of the things, and this is a question for both of you, when was that aha moment for you when you realized, "Hey, Joseph really is the kind of guy we should be patterning our lives after through hardship."

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: Right off the bat, I'm blown away that when he's thrown in the pit and sold into slavery, he's not like, "Get me out of here. I demand my rights. I am a prince of a wealthy man in Canaan. Let me go." And his immediate submission to what he must have thought this is God's plan. And when he's laying out there while they're traveling to Egypt and he looks up at the stars, was he asking God, "What?" I mean, we don't know. We'll find out in Heaven. But he gets to Egypt and he just jumps right in. I mean, he becomes a slave. Even when he is in the slave block, he wasn't screaming and saying, "Don't you dare poke me and I shouldn't be here. I was taken against my rights." And somehow God gave him the ability to understand there's a greater purpose for this. And he just thrived in Potiphar's house. And he followed the Lord wholeheartedly and it's possible. And I know a lot of people aren't like that.

You've made a mess of your life and you've been suffering and you've been bitter and angry. It's okay. God is a God of mercy and grace. You just turn to him now and you say, "Now is my aha moment. Now I'm going to follow the Lord and I'm going to watch Him help me through this and He will. He is the rescuer. He is your champion."

Roger Marsh: I love this. I love this enthusiasm for Joseph's story and the fact that when you look at this, and Rachel-Ruth, if you'd like to take this on as a question, now that you are a mom, you've been a daughter of famous parents and that type of thing, what have you learned about trusting God with your own family across multiple generations knowing that everybody's watching you and it hasn't always been perfect?

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: Yes, it's not. I mean, it can get very difficult. Even with my own kids in my mind while they're growing up, I have this whole thought of how their life is going to turn out. And then when it doesn't, I'm like ... And I just had to trust the Lord, especially even with my oldest daughter. I went through a very difficult time and I was on my knees just begging God, "Lord, please, please make it quick, bring her back to You." And He has. I mean, it's just been awesome. But family dynamics are difficult. So if you or somebody who has gone through tremendous difficulty in your family, awful dynamics, abuse from a father or whatever it might be, Jesus is the ultimate. He's the one that is the one that we look to for the example, for our father figure, for our husband figure, for our best friend.

He wants to swoop down and be your everything. So if you've come up in a situation that's hard in a family, maybe Jesus is just saying, "It's Me. I'm going to be Your everything." And it's better than anything we could have ever had in the perfect family.

Roger Marsh: I love that enthusiastic response to a question that could be very challenging for people when you think about the family dynamics. And yet as we talk about Joseph's story, a lot of people when they look at a season of heartbreak or uncertainty, there's a lot of stress that goes along with it. Because of that uncertainty, sometimes it even manifests itself in physical illness or that type of

thing. This book gives us the concept and more than just a concept, we see it play out that God does provide peace for us in the middle of heartbreak, in the middle of uncertainty. Because of that uncertainty, sometimes it even manifests itself in physical illness or that type of thing. This book gives us the concept and more than just the concept, we see it play out that God does provide peace for us in the middle of heartbreak, in the middle of uncertainty.

Talk about how important that piece was, especially to these Old Testament characters who don't have the Scriptures written for them yet. They don't know how the story turns out. They're walking through this in real time. How is that peace that God provides for us so evident in these seasons?

Anne Graham Lotz:

We have something they didn't really know anything about. And we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. So when you come to the cross by faith and you tell God that you're sorry, you're a sinner, you know you've done wrong things, you ask Him to forgive you. You believe Jesus died on the cross to take away your sin. You claim Jesus as your Savior. You believe He rose from the dead to give you eternal life, which is that right relationship with God now, but Heaven when you die. And then you open up your heart, you invite Jesus to come in. He comes in and the person of the Holy Spirit. And it's the Holy Spirit who gives us peace. And when you look at Joseph's story, we look at his father, Jacob, who was told by the other 10 brothers that Joseph had been slaughtered by an animal.

And so he went through 30 years or 20 some years of believing Joseph was slaughtered. He didn't know. And it said that his grief was so great, they couldn't comfort him and he couldn't stop wailing. So he didn't have a peace about it. And I'm sure the brothers didn't have a peace about it because Judah went down, married a Canaanite, he got into a mess. He was trying to run away from his guilt. And then that's why Joseph took them through that series. It's so sort of strange where they went to Egypt, they bought grain, they found a cup in the grain, they went back, they were accused of stealing, but he was bringing them to a point where they would absolutely see the sin that they had committed and be not only willing to recognize it, but to turn away from it and take change as men before God.

So Joseph, I think, had a peace. And I'll tell you where I think his peace came from when he was 17 or whatever age it was, God gave him dreams. And that was the way God gave him His Word. In Joseph's day, they didn't have a Bible. So Joseph had God's Word that he would one day be a leader and he would be a leader over his brothers and over his whole family, including his parents, which is what enraged them so bad. So he knew that God had a plan and purpose for him, that it wasn't just to be enslaved in Potiphar's house. It wasn't just to be imprisoned in Pharaoh's..., that God had a leadership position for him. And it's interesting. Every place he went, he embraced and became a leader in that position, but not the ultimate position of being second in command to Pharaoh.

And I will just tell you from my experience, after when I found my husband to whom I'd been married for 49 years and he was unresponsive in our pool, and there was great agony of spirit and weeping and whatever. But there was also an immediate deep sense of peace and there's no explanation for it except that God gave it. And it was a supernatural thing. God just gave me peace and He also gave me a strong sense of purpose. He spoke to me through His Word telling me that I still had service to do, which is why He took my husband. He had finished his course, but I still had a fruitful labor and that He had a purpose for my life apart from my husband at that stage. And so that gave me even the week after my husband went to Heaven, I had peace in my heart and a very strong sense of purpose that has stayed with me.

So for Joseph, I believe God gave him peace because he had that strong sense of purpose. The brothers on the other hand, because they were so guilty. And I will tell somebody that may be listening, if there is sin in your heart that hasn't been dealt with, if you've been the betrayer, if you've been the one who's been at fault, then that guilt will keep you up at night. It will rob you of your peace and guilt in that sense as a friend because the guilt is seeking to bring you to the cross where you would confess it and tell God you're sorry. So you don't have to worry about offending God. He saw it when you did it. He knows about it, but you need to set that right with Him and then to the best of your ability, set it right with others. And Joseph went through an amazing process of getting this all right with his brothers and reconciling his family. So it's an incredible story.

Roger Marsh:

Yeah, that part of the Joseph story always just boggles my mind in a good way when he finally is presented with the scenario that the dream showed him. And here come the brothers and they're all bowing before him and everything. And what's Joseph's response? If he were completely carnal, he would say, "Good, I'm putting you in bondage." And instead, he's weeping and providing all sorts. I mean, kind of having a little fun with them, but it's a great story of restoration. And Rachel-Ruth, I know a lot of people will read this story and say, "Well, that's good for Joseph and it's good for your mom and it's good for you, but you don't know how long I've been going through this." I have a situation where there's been a physical challenge and maybe my spouse has been suffering with an illness for a long time or perhaps there's a child right now.

We're hearing more and more people who they get to their adult, the gray season and their kids grow up and wind up saying, "Hey, I didn't like the way I was raised and there's an estrangement or something like that." And they're long-suffering, prayers that seemingly are unanswered. Help us understand why Joseph's story does speak to people who are in situations where, like you said, God has not forgotten you. He still cares. He still sees and He wants to restore.

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: He does. And I think you can look at all Scripture. I mean, you can look at Joseph's story, but anywhere in the Bible, God never takes His eyes off His people. He's watching and He sees and He's not a mean God. He's not an evil God. We live in a fallen sinful world where there is going to be suffering. God had a perfect Garden of Eden at the beginning, and then Adam and Eve ruined

it. But then God's made a plan. He's got a plan and there is going to be hard things. And I think because of the time in which we live and the last days, it's actually worse than ever. There's so much more suffering and pain and hardship and long-suffering because the enemy wants to keep us down. But even though these things happen, that's where we've got to just look up because God can lift us up even though our circumstances stay the same.

It's like when Peter was walking on the water, he's like, "Ah the water..." But if we look at Jesus, He was going to help Him all along and God knew what He was going to do with Joseph. And He knew he had to go through those years of training that Joseph submitted to then raise him up. And then he had everything he could ever want as second in command of all of Egypt. And I don't think Joseph even thought much about it because he just loved God so much. He was just going to serve him no different anywhere he went. And I think whatever you're going through, long, long suffering is suffering long. And it can be hard and it can be lonely; it can be heart wrenching. And I've got a dear friend in Russia that has no one and she loves Jesus with all of her heart. And I continually am trying to encourage her that God has not forgotten her.

God's going to see her through. And we may be raptured not long from now. And I mean, I feel like we're so close to that, that it's not long for any of us. And so if this is for all of us at the end of our life right now, because the rapture's about to take place, because Jesus is getting ready to come back, then we want to finish strong and say, "Lord, I don't understand this. I am struggling, but I'm going to choose to follow You. I'm going to choose to trust that You know what's best for my life. And please, Lord, help me walk through this remaining time of my suffering to bring You glory in it" and guaranteed God's going to swoop down and help you through it and stay in your Word because that's where I got all my get my encouragement from. And He's very tender through the Word in speaking to you and He will see you through.

And maybe for some of us, that's going to be when we get to Heaven and then we're going to be like, "It was worth it. Look at this place. Gold streets and there's no sin and no evil and no bad people or mean people or cancer." And this is going to be a teeny tiny blimp compared to all of eternity. And just keep your eyes on Jesus and there's a bigger picture here.

Anne Graham Lotz:

And Roger, if I can just interject that if you've suffered from abuse, injustice, betrayal, let it go and God will sort it out. So we can choose to forgive, which we're commanded to. So we forgive the person who did that, not because they deserve it, but because God forgave us.

And so it's like a worship experience where we just say, "God, we love you and therefore I choose to forgive this other person." Reconciliation takes two people. So you can't reconcile with someone that is not willing to forgive also. So that's what Joseph, all that, what you said were sort of ... I can't remember, he wasn't playing games with his brothers. He was leading them to a point where they would remember what they'd done. They would feel the guilt of it

and the conviction of sin so that then they would be willing to reconcile with Joseph. So I've not been able to apply Joseph's pattern in my life quite, but when people have betrayed me or turned on me or slandered me, I choose to forgive and then I just let it go and knowing that one day God's going to set it right. And so I've seen Him set things right now in my lifetime, but there's some things I know when I get to glory and we stand before Him, He's going to manage all of that.

And I just want to make sure my heart is right before Him, that I've treated others the way I would want them to treat me, but the Bible says that "vengeance is mine, I will repay," God says. So He will hold them accountable. We don't have to. We're just free to forgive them, love them, and get on with our lives.

Roger Marsh:

Yeah. I love the fact that He will and also, He can't not be that way. So I love the double negative. And sometimes we have to do our best Corrie ten Boom and remember to forget and just kind of move on from there. But as you think about Joseph's story, it's really incredible to think about Joseph and his brothers and his father and Pharaoh and everything that happened because you have the past sins Anne, that you just brought up that have to be reconciled or not. And they do get a chance to reconcile. You've got the present situation, but then you've got Joseph thinking about legacy in terms of what this means for future generations. And at the end of this new book that you've written, *God Won't Leave You There*, Joseph's story, you do dive into legacy a little bit. And it's not just Joseph's legacy, but it's our own legacy for future generations.

And I know here at the James Dobson Family Institute, Dr. Dobson thought about legacy so much, he wrote a book about it. I mean, that was something we did. How would you encourage our listeners, our constituents to develop that faithful legacy that you write about?

Anne Graham Lotz:

I think you have to be that person. You have to be genuine and authentic in your relationship with the Lord, and that's where you begin the legacy, and then intentional to passing it on to your children. I love the way Rachel-Ruth developed those last chapters when Joseph brought his two sons to Jacob, knowing that Jacob was dying and he brought his sons to Jacob to bless them. And it's a beautiful picture if you want to describe it.

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: Yeah. I absolutely love it because the second Joseph hears that his dad is not doing well. He brings Ephraim and Manasseh, his two sons to be with Jacob. And Jacob, when he comes in and he ends up calling the boys, he adopts them, first of all, to be his actual sons. I mean, it's so sweet. But anyhow, then he calls them over to himself and he hugs him, he kisses them, puts them on his lap. And he was so grandfatherly and loving. And he wasn't like, "Well, where have you been? And why are you wearing that? And you're always on your phone." And he was so loving to them and they felt it. And then he blessed them. And it's a blessing that still the Jewish people say to this day, the blessing of the

Ephraim and Manasseh, to forget the pains of the past and be prosperous and blessed in the future.

And that model for us is that we as parents or grandparents or even a neighbor or an aunt or whatever, you can bless your kids with just words of blessing. I think there's so much cursing going out, putting people down or sarcasm and we need to speak words of life to this next generation. I think they're hungry to be loved and they're hungry for somebody to be authentic and we need to step up to the plate and do that and to love on them, encourage them, woo them in a sense to the Lord through our actions and facial expressions and giving them time and listening to them and all that I know that they're hungry for. We would be hungry for that. And of course this younger generation is. And Jacob really did that well in those last years and showed them, pointing them that the most important thing is the things of God, not the things of Egypt.

And that's adopting them is just saying, "I can't give you all the mounds of gold that Egypt has, but what I can give you is eternal." And this blessing of being adopted into his family. I mean, it's just a beautiful picture of legacy and what we have in the Lord. And so give them, you can give your kids vacations and all that stuff. And what does it matter? They might remember it, but what's going to change their life is passing on your love for Jesus. And so live it out in front of them.

Roger Marsh:

What did you learn through this writing process? I mean, I'm always intrigued when people are writing together and sometimes one is driving and one's navigating and the other way around. But Anne, what revelation did you have not only about God, but maybe about Rachel-Ruth that you might not have known about her and the way she's experienced some of the hardship in her life as the two of you were putting this book together?

Anne Graham Lotz:

What has blown me away, I think, is her gifting, not only in speaking. She's developed into a very powerful Bible teacher, her online Bible study. She has 17,000 people registered for that Bible study. And it's just finished for the ... She'll pick it up again in May some, but powerful Bible teacher, that has blown me away. And then her writing ability has ... We've done two books before this one together, *Jesus Followers*. She took stories of when she was just our family stories and wrote them out and then *Preparing to Meet Jesus*, a 21-day challenge to be the bride that God wants us to be for His son. But to see this book, those were great books and they were best-sellers and the Lord was ... But this book is a major trade book. This is different than the other two. And she did the heavy lifting in it.

So she wrote, she just taught Joseph, and so she did the heavy lifting. And to see her ... So the way she talks and her enthusiasm and her passion, to see that come out in words on a page and to see the way she can take a passage and dissect it and see things, because I've taught Joseph, but then she sees things that I missed and she has such a great imagination that she puts you into the story. You feel like you have been there with Joseph. If you've been on that

slave journey, you've been on the slave block, you've been in Potiphar's house, but you can smell it, you can feel it, you can taste it, you live it out. And it's because the way she's fleshed it out just in her imagination. But to see that blossom until ... And I personally think I've written maybe 22, 23 books at this point, and I think this is going to be right up there at the top.

It's amazing. So I think that's what ... I didn't learn so much about her in this, but just to watch her come into her own as far as an author is concerned and continue to speak and preach and teach in an amazing way because she draws you to the Lord, which is what we want. She draws you into God's Word. After you read this book, you'll want to pick up Genesis and read the story for yourself because it's amazing.

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: God gets all the glory. I can't stress that enough because the insight that He gave me into every part of the story came straight from Him. I mean, it's supernatural. You talking about I'm an ADHD. I struggled in school, but it just came alive to me. And I guess I picture things in stories. If somebody else has ADD, it's just encouragement to you. I didn't do great in school, but God can use a brain like that to just have you picture. I picture the stories and I write what I see. And so I just wanted to say, mom's sweet to say that, but God gets all the glory. He really did that.

Roger Marsh: Amen. Amen. Well, it's a very encouraging book and anyone who is going through a struggle or a season of doubt or just concern, you're going to be blessed by what Anne Graham Lotz and Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright have written in the book called *God Won't Leave You There*. It's Joseph's story. We have a link for it up at drjamesdobson.org or jdfi.net. Anne, Rachel-Ruth, thank you so much for the work that you've done on this project. And thanks for being with us today here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Anne Graham Lotz: Thank you so much, Roger. God bless you.

Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright: Thank you.

Roger Marsh: God's silence is never the same thing as God's absence. And what feels like abandonment is often just the long work of preparation. On today's edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, we enjoyed the second part of a rich conversation featuring Anne Graham Lotz and her daughter, Rachel-Ruth Lotz Wright. Their brand-new book is called *God Won't Leave You There*. It's Joseph's story, and it's available now. And if today's discussion resonated with you, I encourage you to get a copy for yourself or for someone you love. You'll find a link for more information about the book when you visit jdfi.net. And while you're there, you can also listen to both parts one and two of this conversation and share it with a friend who needs to hear it as well. That's jdfi.net. And speaking of those long seasons and difficult relationships, if you're walking through a hard stretch in your marriage right now, I want to tell you about a free resource from your friends here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

It's simply called "Conflict in Marriage." It's a two-part email series that tackles some of the most common and pressing questions couples face, like why do arguments keep happening even when neither of us wants to be fighting? Or how do we know if our conflicts are "normal" or are they maybe a sign of something deeper? This series offers real biblical answers from Dr. Dobson's years of counseling experience. And if you'd like to sign up for your free copy of the "Conflict in Marriage" email series, go to jdfi.net and search for that title, "Conflict in Marriage." Again, you'll find it at jdfi.net. You know, maybe it's been a while since you have partnered with us financially. Please know that your support of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute helps us to continue to bring programs like the one you just heard to families who are desperate for hope and biblical truth, families who may be in the middle of their own wilderness season right now.

You can always make a secure donation online at jdfi.net. That's jdfi.net, or you can call a member of our constituent care team at 877-732-6825. That's 877-732-6825. Well, I'm Roger Marsh and on behalf of all of us here at Family Talk and the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thanks so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

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