

Genesis 46-48

April 17, 2011

Introduction:

Jacob has seen Pharaoh's wagons that were sent by Joseph to bring him to Egypt. He now believes that Joseph is alive and wants to see Joseph before he dies.

46:1-7: What takes place in chapter 46 verses 1 to 7?

- As Jacob is worshiping, God speaks to him and tells him to go to Egypt. God promises to bring Jacob back to Canaan and He promises that Joseph will be with him when he dies. So Jacob takes all of his family and possessions and begins the journey to Egypt.

46:8-27: In verses 8 to 27 Jacob's family tree is listed by name. These genealogies are boring to us but they are very important historical recordings. We learn in verse 27 that there were 70 who came to Egypt with (and including) Jacob.

46:28-34: What takes place in verses 28 to 34?

- Judah is sent to Joseph. Joseph tells him where to take the family (the land of Goshen {*GO-shun*}). Judah returns to Jacob and leads them to Goshen. Joseph travels to Goshen and reunites with his father. Joseph instructs his brothers to tell the Pharaoh that they are shepherds so that they can remain in Goshen and avoid the Egyptians who do not like shepherds.

46:29: Who would like to describe what it must have been like when Jacob and Joseph were reunited?

- What did Jacob feel? What did Joseph feel?

46:30: What is your reaction to Jacob's statement in verse 30?

- Jacob says that he can die now because he has seen Joseph's face. See Genesis 45:28. *28 Then Jacob exclaimed, "It must be true! My son Joseph is alive! I must go and see him before I die." NLT*
In one sense you might understand Jacob's desire just to see his son before he dies, but you'd think that he would want to live and enjoy Joseph's life. This is especially true since his favorite son was now the second most powerful man in the world.

47:1-6: What takes place in chapter 47 verses 1 to 6?

- Joseph brings five of his brothers to meet the Pharaoh. They tell him that they are shepherds and ask if they can remain where they have settled in Goshen. Pharaoh agrees and calls Goshen "the best of the land" of Egypt. He also requests that they oversee his livestock.

What do you find to be interesting about Pharaoh allowing Joseph's family to live in Goshen?

- Goshen was the best land in Egypt; it is at least unusual to give the best of the land to foreigners. Pharaoh planned to give Goshen to Joseph's family from the beginning (45:18). It is called "the best of the land" here in verse 6 and in verse 11.

What does this decision by Pharaoh to give Joseph's family the best of the land say about Pharaoh?

- It reaffirms his enormous trust in Joseph and his gratitude for all that Joseph had done.

See Genesis 39:4-6,21-23 and 41:38-41,44.

4 This pleased Potiphar, so he soon made Joseph his personal attendant. He put him in charge of his entire household and everything he owned. 5 From the day Joseph was put in charge of his master's household and property, the Lord began to bless Potiphar's household for Joseph's sake. All his household affairs ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock flourished. 6 So Potiphar gave Joseph complete administrative responsibility over everything he owned. With Joseph there, he didn't worry about a thing—except what kind of food to eat! Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, 21 but the Lord was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the Lord made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden. 22 Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of all the other prisoners and over everything that happened in the prison. 23 The warden had no more worries, because Joseph took care of everything. The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed. **NLT**

What do we learn about Joseph from these passages?

- Joseph was a gifted leader and manager. Other leaders recognized his giftedness quickly. All that he did “prospered” (39:3,23). In our day we might say, “Everything he touched turned to gold.” Joseph also had impeccable character. See 39:6,23 and 41:44. Those over him had complete trust in him doing the right thing.

How do giftedness, skill, and character differ?

- Giftedness is something that God gives to us; we don't earn it, deserve it, or get any credit with God for it. Skill is something we work at; skill is improving and mastering what we are gifted to do. We develop the talent that God gives us. Some maximize their giftedness and become as skilled as they possibly could be. Others never fully develop what they are gifted by God to do; they live beneath their God-given potential throughout their lives. Character is *our* gift to God. It is what we do to love him (John 14:21); it is completely within our control.

47:7-12: What takes place in verses 7 to 12?

- Jacob meets and blesses Pharaoh. His family settles in Goshen and Joseph provides them with what they need.

47:13-26: What takes place in verses 13 to 26?

- The people of Egypt spend all of their money purchasing food and supplies from Joseph. They then sell their livestock, land, and themselves to Pharaoh in order to survive the famine. Joseph establishes a one fifth (20%) income tax (on their produce).

Is Joseph taking advantage of the people's misfortune?

- Joseph may have been doing what the Pharaoh told him to do. Joseph in fact *takes care of* the Egyptian people. They are taxed one fifth of their income. Who ever heard of “slaves” getting to keep four fifths of what they make? He is providing housing for them in the cities. He is supplying them with what they need to eat and make a living (what they sow). They are apparently cultivating the land with livestock that Joseph supplies. A casual reading of these verses can make you think that Joseph is taking advantage of a famine to oppress and enslave people. He in fact is providing for them and taking care of them.

Who were the property owners in Egypt after the famine?

- The Pharaoh (government) owned most of the land. The priests retained ownership of their land (47:22). Jacob's family acquired and owned land in Goshen (47:27).

47:27-29: What takes place in verses 27 to 29?

- Jacob lives seventeen years in Egypt before he dies. He makes Joseph promise to return his body to Canaan, the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and himself. He wants to be buried in Machpelah (*mack-PEE-luh* - 23:17-20) with Abraham and Isaac.

48:1-22: What takes place in chapter 48 verses 1 to 22?

- Jacob is about to die and asks Joseph to bring his sons so that he might bless them. Joseph brings Ephraim (*EFF-ray-um*) and Manasseh (*muh-NASS-uh*) for Jacob to bless. Joseph puts his father's right hand on his firstborn and then left hand on the other. Jacob crosses his hand, putting his right hand on the second-born. Joseph tries to correct his father, but Jacob says that this is the way it is to be. Jacob prays a blessing on the boys. Jacob promises to include these two boys in his inheritance (48:5-6). Jacob also promises a greater inheritance to Joseph than his brothers will receive (48:22). In verse 21 Jacob tells Joseph that God will someday also return him to Canaan.

48:7: What do we learn about Rachel in verse 7?

- Rachel died on the way to Bethlehem and was buried there. She was *not* buried at Machpelah with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah.

What do we learn about death in verse 7?

- People that we love die.
- It is heart breaking to lose people that we love.
- When people die, we have to let them go (*I buried her*).
- God still has a plan for our lives; we must go on (*on the journey when there was still some distance to go...on the way*).

Why is it so important that we “go on” with our lives?

- If a parent loses a mate and the parent does not “go on”, then the children lose both parents. If we don't “go on” with our lives, then friends “lose” not one, but two people. If we are still breathing, then God still has a plan for our lives. Not to “go on” is to become useless to God when He still wants to use us.

If we “go on” with our lives, is it an insult to the deceased?

- If that person loved us, then that person would want us to go on with our lives and be happy. To remain depressed and to quit living might appear to some to be “romantic”, but it really displeases God and causes even more loss to ourselves and those who love us.

Can a person who deeply loved a mate and lost him or her ever really love somebody else?

- Love is not a limited entity; we don't have to divide it to love others. Love multiplies. You love your first child and you do not love him less when you love your other children. To love and marry again *does not* mean that you ever stopped loving your first mate.