

A Reunited Family Plans To Meet Pharaoh (Gen. 46:28-34)

28 Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen. 29 So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive.”

31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father’s household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, ‘My brothers and those of my father’s house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. 32 And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.’ 33 So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ 34 that you shall say, ‘Your servants’ occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,’ that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.”

- The land of Goshen was wetter than many other places within Egypt. All this is a great spiritual picture of the planning that our Lord does for us.
- Joseph preps them by asking them to emphasize that their occupation has always been livestock. In Egypt, shepherds were the lowest of the low!
- What Joseph has them say will give Pharaoh a sense of peace about the matter.

The Brothers Before Pharaoh (Gen. 47:1-6)

1 Then Joseph went and told Pharaoh, and said, “My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they are in the land of Goshen.” 2 And he took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh. 3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers.”

4 And they said to Pharaoh, “We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen.”

5 Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you. 6 The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.”

- We don't know which brothers were invited to meet Pharaoh. Five was a significant number to the Egyptians, and speak to us of God's grace.
- Pharaoh could not have been ignorant of Goshen.
- Pharaoh continues his kindness to Joseph by being kind to his family and speaking kindly to them. He does even more than what Joseph had asked.
- Notice that Joseph never sought any high offices for them.
- The Jewish people believed that this situation enabled them to worship God without excessive contact with the idolatrous people around them.

Jacob Before Pharaoh (Gen. 47:7-10)

7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8 Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How old are you?”

9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.” 10 So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

- Jacob gets his own audience, which is notable.
- Jacob blesses the Pharaoh, something unique in Genesis.
- Jacob is a good example of the principle that God's children should pray for and bless those who are in authority.
- Pharaoh asks how old Jacob is. Was he curious or shocked? Many people will point out, of course, that age carried a lot of weight in the ancient world.
- Jacob described his days as few and evil. His describes his life as depressing.
- Jacob also refers to their lives as a pilgrimage, both he and his fathers.
 - *These [meaning the patriarchs up to the time of Jacob] all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13-16)*

The Money Fails (Gen. 47:11-17)

11 And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12 Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in their families.

13 Now there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."

16 Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you bread for your livestock, if the money is gone." 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year.

- The land of Goshen was also known as the land of Rameses.
- Notice that the family does not fall into poverty or slavery as the Egyptians do. This is another way in which Joseph is a type of Christ: He will ensure that His people are supplied with the bread they need.
- Joseph delivers this massive amount of money into the hands of the king. This is another display of his great integrity.

- The money failed, which means the money economy was destroyed. All available gold and silver had been paid to the government in exchange for food.
- In the absence of money, there could only be barter. In Year 6 of the famine, the people had to barter their livestock in exchange for bread.

The Famine Reaches Its Low Point (Gen. 47:18-22)

18 When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19 Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate.”

20 Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh’s. 21 And as for the people, he moved them into the cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt to the other end. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations allotted to them by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

- This *next year* is probably the seventh and final year of the famine. Some Bibles may translate this as the second year, but it means the second year of the collapse of the monetary economy, not the second year of the famine.
- It may be that the common people had not listened to Joseph. They do not seem to have stored up for the difficult years. They asked for food, but they also asked for seed. If they do not sow, the land will become desolate.

- Joseph has been criticized for taking all the cattle and all the land, but we cannot suppose that he did this without the knowledge of the king. The moral of the story is to be prepared...
- To preserve life, Joseph had to reorganize the society by moving people into the cities, presumably because that is where the grain was stored.

Israel Prospers In Famine (Gen. 47:23-27)

23 Then Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24 And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

25 So they said, “You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.” 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, that Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the land of the priests only, which did not become Pharaoh’s.

27 So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.

- Joseph establishes a rule of 20% taxation. He could have taken them to all become complete slaves of Pharaoh, but he did not.
- We also see the power of religion, because the idolatrous priests were unaffected.
- Israel, however, continued to grow and to multiply. This is a great picture for us!
