

Genesis

Chapter 47:1-31

Last week we read of how Joseph sent for his father to come to Egypt and live in Goshen. Joseph gave his brothers instruction, to tell Pharaoh that they were shepherds or herdsmen, because Joseph knew they were despised by the Egyptians and that would help keep the children of Israel from falling into the false religions of Egypt.

✚ **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."*

Here Joseph's brothers and father had come to Egypt to live. I bet Joseph was really excited, because he went and told Pharaoh that they were there. Despite the way Joseph's brothers had treated him, Joseph was not ashamed of them. I say this because it says that Joseph took five of his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.

I wonder which five. Which ones would you choose?

I believe (and this is my own thought) that at least three of the brothers were Rueben, the oldest and protector of the brothers. Also Benjamin, because it was obvious that he was Joseph's favorite and only true whole brother (remember the others were only half brothers). Finally Judah, why Judah? I think to show that even though Judah was the one who did wrong by selling Joseph, or at least it was his idea. That Joseph had compassion and had forgiven Judah, just as our Lord does with us!

Remember when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers that he told them.

† **Gen 45:7-8a** *"And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. "So now it was not you who sent me here, but God.*

I believe that Joseph wanted Judah to see first hand that God was in control of the whole situation.

So Joseph brings his five brothers before Pharaoh, who asks them their occupation, and they tell him that they are shepherds, which they were. They also ask Pharaoh's

permission to stay there in Goshen. This is important because they are not flaunting the fact that their brother is a big wig in Egypt, no they are humbling themselves before Pharaoh. You have heard the term, "It's not what you know, but who you know", which is a true and false statement. Notice that Joseph knew no one in Egypt, but still he prospered in all that he did. Because of Who he knew, and that was God.

- † **Gen 39:2** *The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*
- † **Gen 39:21** *But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*
- † **1 Cor 3:6-7** *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.*

This last verse is in reference to witnessing and sharing Jesus with others. But notice that there are others who do the work also, not just you or me, and that it's God who blesses the labor of our work. The same is true also of our physical jobs that we do everyday. You are in that position at work, not because of who you know, or even what you know, it's because God who gives knowledge and has blessed you with your job.

- † **Dan 1:17** *As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.* (underlined for emphasis)

So don't boast in your accomplishments, because the God who gave you all that you have can take it away just as easily.

- † **Job 1:20-22** *Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD. 'In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.*
- † **Phil 4:11-13 (NLT)** *Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to get along happily whether I have much or little. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.*

Pharaoh's response to all of this was:

- ✧ **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."*

Pharaoh was saying in a sense, I like your family; they are like you, seeking to be humble and not haughty. This is something to think about for your own life and your family. Are you ashamed of them or proud of them? Would you be happy to introduce them to your boss or not? Do they know about your relationship with Jesus?

Joseph gave glory to God in all that he did and made sure his family knew this. By doing so, Joseph's brothers had a different outlook on life, not just because he told them about God, but he showed it by the way that he lived, and that's by forgiving the wrong that was done to him by his brothers.

Have you forgiven your family or friends for something wrong that they did to you? Have you told them and not just say it to them, and treat them like you have? Joseph did, by not telling his father what his brothers did to him and by presenting them before Pharaoh as his family, never bringing up the wrong they have done to him to others. He also told them one time that they had done wrong to him but God used it for good and never brings it up again!

When we fall into sin, we seek the Lord's forgiveness and as the bible says:

† **1 John 1:9 (NLT)** *But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.*

But not only that, but also:

† **Psalms 103:12 (Living)** *He has removed our sins as far away from us as the east is from the west.*

God has forgiven and forgotten our sins. We are instructed to do the same.

† **Matt 18:21-22** *Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*

To truly forgive someone is not only to forgive, but forget also. Sure, Satan will bring them back to your remembrance just as he does with our sins from the past. But we must not believe the lies of Satan or hold a grudge against someone.

Pharaoh liked Joseph's family so much and trusted them that he offered them a job to watch over his flocks.

✚ *And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.*

He trusted Joseph and he knew that Joseph would choose the right person(s) to tend his livestock.

✠ **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.*

I like these verses, because they show on both parts, Jacob and Pharaoh, that neither one was full of pride or thought of himself better than the other. Even though Jacob was a believer in God and Pharaoh wasn't, he didn't think himself better than Pharaoh. We as Christians should not look down on others just because they are not Christians. God didn't look down on us when we were not believers.

✠ **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

✠ **Gen 47:11-12** 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.*

Notice that Joseph didn't just give them a bunch of food and say, "You guys go ahead and figure out who gets what." No, just as our loving Father provides for each one of us individually, so did Joseph provide for each person in his family. With no one getting more or less than the other.

You may be wondering, "*But why do some people have more than others. I know Christians who have all kinds of things and plenty of money, but I just make it each week from paycheck to paycheck? Does God love me less than them?*"

First off, the answer is NO, God does not love you less than someone else.

✠ **Acts 10:34-35 (NLT)** *Then Peter replied, "I see very clearly that God doesn't show partiality. In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right."*

God sent His Son Jesus to die for all, not just a chosen few who God liked best. God wants you, as well as Bill Graham or Chuck Smith or your neighbor who gets drunk all the time to be in heaven with Him!

✠ **2 Peter 3:9** *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Maybe you are that neighbor who gets drunk all the time, or maybe you just try to be a good person and think that God will let you into heaven because you are good. After all, you don't drink (to much), you don't smoke, and you give to charities, you even go to church on Easter Sunday and Christmas. In fact you may stroll in every once in a while, even if it's not a religious holiday. God sees that, right?

‡ **Romans 3:23** *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

In the original Greek and Hebrew, the word "all" means "all" and that's all, all means.

‡ **Eph 2:8-9** *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

So if your works, or the good things you do don't save you, then how are you saved?

‡ **John 3:16-17** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*

Simply by believing in Jesus Christ, that He died for all your sins and paid for each one of them on the cross. That is where faith comes in, you didn't see Jesus dying on the cross, nor did you see Him rise from the dead. But God's word, the bible says He did and by faith you believe it.

So know that you know you are not saved by your good deeds and you are saved by what Jesus did on the cross and believing that. So what do you do now? Tell Him, ask God to forgive you for your sins and that you do believe in His Son Jesus. A prayer just like this is all you need to pray and believe that it's true.

Just pray:

Jesus, I know now that I am a sinner and that you died for all my sins on the cross. I believe as Your word say that You rose from the dead and right now You are at the right hand of God. Please forgive me for my sins and for trying to get into heaven on my own works. Thank You for forgiving me and for dying for me on the cross. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit and may I tell others of what You did for me and them too. I ask this in Your name Jesus. Amen!

If you just prayed this prayer and believed it, then you are now a Christian. Welcome to the family of God. Now go tell someone what you did. I would encourage you to start reading your bible everyday. I would suggest starting in the book of John. Also find a good Christian church to start going to, to help you grow in your walk with the Lord. Please feel free to e-mail me with any questions or if you need to find a church in your area.

✧ **Gen 47:13-19** 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.* 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."*

People will do some strange things for food. Remember Isaac and Esau and how Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup. Sometimes the Lord allows us to give up things just so we can eat to realize that all our possessions mean nothing if we starve to death.

Sometimes its not physical food that the Lord is trying to teach us about, but rather the way we are starving ourselves spiritually. We will do all we can to feed our flesh with food and the pleasures this world has to offer, but when it comes to spiritual things, we tend to stare ourselves. We put our favorite TV show before God's word. We put our activities and play time before the Lord and His word. We put our jobs before the Lord. Everything seems to be more important then God's word. But when we need something, we are quick to run to God and His word, for a short time, at least until the storm is over.

Remember 9-11? The first response of everyone, including our leaders was to run to God. Now this was a good thing to do, and I know a lot of people went to church and even became Christians because of it. But now that the dust has settled, it seems the world is returning to its former state. It is returning to the ways of the world and has forgotten about God all over again.

Maybe you don't want to hear this, and don't think it's true. Just turn on your TV and see if the programs have gotten any better.

Go to a movie and see if they still use the name of Jesus and God as a curse word.

Look in your neighborhood and see if the drug pushers and prostitutes are still there.

What about the place where they perform abortions and striptease places?

Yes we ran to God for help and He did comfort and save those in need. But we have continued to turn our backs on God, at least until the next tragedy! I'm so thankful for the sake of the lost that God is patient!

So the people of Egypt sold their livestock for food. By the next year they were once again out of food, and their reply to this was.

✧ ***Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh.***

They had nothing left but their own homes and themselves to offer. Will Joseph buy them? Let's see.

✧ ***Gen 47:20-26*** 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.* 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.*

Two things, First thing is that the priest did not have to sell anything and Pharaoh provided them for. This is important to note, because just because they were called priest doesn't mean that they served God. Remember that there were all sorts of, so-called gods in Egypt, and the priests were the servants of these false gods. But note that Pharaoh gave them their allotment of food, not Joseph. Joseph served the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob his father. He was not giving in to these so-called gods and did not serve them. He was not condoning what they represented either.

He was just being obedient to the government of the land. We need to take this an example of our laws. They may not seem right to you but we are required to follow them, as long as they don't go against what God says.

The second thing was the fact that the people sold their land and themselves to Pharaoh. The result of this was a taxing at 20% of what they made. And you thought taxes were high here in the USA. But they were willing to do this to save their lives and the lives of their families.

Notice that Joseph didn't make them slaves, because he knew what it was like to be a slave. He only made them workers for the Pharaoh, paying Pharaoh with the work that they had done.

✧ **Gen 47:27-31** ²⁷ *So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly. ²⁸ And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years. ²⁹ When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰ "but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I will do as you have said." ³¹ Then he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. So Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.*

Jacob lived in Egypt for seventeen years. This is interesting because the if you will remember, the famine was only to last seven years

✧ **Gen 41:30** *but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land.*

And Israel came two years into this seven-year famine.

✧ **Gen 45:6** *For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.*

So for twelve years Israel lived in Egypt even though the famine was over. But we really can't blame Israel for this, because this was all part of God's plan to reveal Himself to his children and deliver them out of Egypt into the promised land.

In the bible, Egypt represents the world and the promised land being heaven. So we wonder why as Christians we are not taken immediately to heaven when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. The children of Israel were to be a witness to the Egyptians of the one and only true God. If you read in the book of Exodus that some did come to believe and left with the Egyptians for the promised land.

✧ **Ex 12:37-38 (NLT)** *That night the people of Israel left Rameses and started for Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, plus all the women and children. And they were all traveling on foot. Many people who were not Israelites went with them, along with the many flocks and herds. (underlined for emphasis)*

We to are to be a witness to the world. We are not responsible for making them believe, we are only to tell them and God will give the increase.

✧ **1 Cor 3:6-7** *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.*

Jacob also made his son swear to him that he would not bury him in Egypt, but would take his body to the land of Canaan where his father and grandfather were buried. He said this because it was God's promise to him that He would bring Israel back to the land.

† **Gen 28:15** *"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 spoken to you."*

We will read of this in a few weeks in the last chapter of Genesis, of how Joseph kept his promise to his father.

May God richly bless you in His love, grace and Mercy!