

January 26

Scriptures: Read Genesis 45 & 46

Key Verse: “And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.” (Genesis 45:7)

Overview

The climax of this beautiful and touching story has arrived. After Joseph saw the changed hearts of his brothers, he revealed his identity. It was an emotional time, but Joseph’s brothers seemed to be uneasy, “dismayed in his presence” (45:3). They were afraid he would repay them for the evil they had done to him. In spite of his many reassurances, they continued to be uneasy for many years (cf. 50:15). Joseph, however, truly forgave them. Rather than being resentful and bitter (which, without the love of God in his heart, would be considered normal), Joseph recognized the sovereignty of God. He told them several times that it was the plan of God for him to be in Egypt “to preserve life” (45:5). Joseph’s wisdom did not only guide and help Egypt during the time of plenty and famine, but most importantly, his being there was to fulfill the purpose of God for his family to become a nation from which would come the promised Seed. The grace and mercy of God is incomprehensible! The Lord had planned for their salvation, just as He has also planned for yours through His son Jesus.

Joseph told his brothers to migrate to Egypt with their father and all their children and herds. There they would have plenty of food for there were still five years of famine yet to come. His high position and prestige gave him the authority to let them dwell in the land of Goshen, which was ideal for grazing herds and yet was near to him in the fertile eastern delta area. Here they could shepherd their herds far from the civilized city of the Egyptians, who considered them an abomination (46:34). They were free to live as they pleased and to worship God in their own way, remaining separated from the heathen Egyptian culture. Before his brothers left, Joseph gave them gifts for themselves and extra gifts to Benjamin, along with gifts for his father. Pharaoh welcomed them to come and generously said all the goods of Egypt were theirs. He supplied them with carts for the children to ride in and it seems there was even a special cart sent by Joseph for his father Israel.

Upon seeing these Egyptian carts, Israel believed Joseph was alive and we are told his spirit was revived and he was willing to go so he could see Joseph before he died (45:27, 28). It is interesting to note that when he was in doubt he is referred to as Jacob (45:26), but after believing, he is referred to as Israel. “prince with God” (45:28). On the way south, Jacob stopped at Beersheba to offer sacrifices to God where his father Isaac (26:25) and grandfather Abraham (21:33) had erected altars previously. Possibly Jacob hesitated about going, thinking of the bad experience Abraham had there and the fact that God had told his father Isaac not to go down to Egypt. He must have prayed for guidance and counsel from God. In a vision, he heard the voice of the Lord telling him not to be afraid, but to go to Egypt where God would make of him a great nation. The Lord comforted him by saying Joseph would be at his side upon his death, “Joseph will put his hand on your eyes”, meaning Joseph would close his eyes in death. God gave Jacob seventeen more years of life after he arrived in Egypt (47:9, 28). In the same vision, the Lord

assured Jacob He would bring his family back again to the land of Canaan. The Lord is faithful, and what He has promised we must be confident He will do.

Prayer

Thank You, Lord, for Your great provision for us. May we access daily Your storehouses of blessings for spirit, souls and body.