

JACOB IN EGYPT

BIBLE TEXT : Genesis 45:16-28; 46:1-7, 28-34; 47:1-12

LESSON 39 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:6).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Genesis 45:16-28

^{45:16} And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

¹⁷ And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

¹⁸ And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

¹⁹ Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

²⁰ Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt *is* yours.

²¹ And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

²² To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver, and five changes of raiment.

²³ And to his father he sent after this *manner*; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

²⁴ So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

²⁵ And they went up out of Egypt,

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Pharaoh's Respectful Consideration of Joseph's Family

- 1 Pharaoh hears about Joseph's brothers and the happy reconciliation and is greatly pleased, Genesis 45:16
- 2 Pharaoh commands Joseph to send for his father, Genesis 45:17-20
- 3 Joseph's brethren return to Canaan for their families, Genesis 45:21-25

II The Journey to Egypt and Joseph's Meeting with His Father

- 1 Jacob could not believe when told that Joseph was alive, Genesis 45:25, 26
- 2 The story of the reconciliation with Joseph, and Pharaoh's provision for Jacob's journey, convince Jacob of the fact of Joseph's present existence, Genesis 45:27, 28;

Psalms 126:1-6

^{126:1} When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

² Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

³ The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

⁴ Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

⁵ They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

⁶ He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

- 3 Jacob's going to Egypt is significantly preceded by a sacrifice to God, Genesis 46:1-7;

Genesis 28:16-22

^{28:16} And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not.

¹⁷ And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven.

¹⁸ And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

¹⁹ And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first.

²⁰ And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

²¹ So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

²² And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

Genesis 31:54

Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

Genesis 32:9-11

^{32:9} And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto

and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

²⁶ And told him, saying, Joseph *is* yet alive, and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

²⁷ And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

²⁸ And Israel said, *It is* enough; Joseph my son *is* yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

Genesis 46:1-7

^{46:1} And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

² And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I.

³ And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

⁴ I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

⁵ And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

⁶ And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

⁷ His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

Genesis 46:28-34

^{46:28} And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face

me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

¹¹ Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children.

Genesis 35:1-3

^{35:1} And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

² Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, Put away the strange gods that *are* among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

³ And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

Hebrews 13:15

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name.

Psalms 51:17-19

^{51:17} The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

¹⁸ Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

¹⁹ Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

4 Joseph meets his father after a 22-year separation, Genesis 46:28-30;

Proverbs 15:20

A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

Exodus 20:12

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

III The Presentation Before Pharaoh

1 Joseph instructs his brothers before they meet Pharaoh, Genesis 46:31-34

2 Five of the brothers are presented to Pharaoh, who engages them as supervisors, Genesis 47:1-6

3 Jacob is presented to Pharaoh and blesses him, Genesis 47:7-10;

Psalms 90:15

Make us glad according to the days *wherein* thou hast afflicted us, *and* the years *wherein* we have seen evil.

4 The family finds rest and plenty in the land of Egypt, Genesis 47:11, 12;

Psalms 105:8-23

^{105:8} He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to a thousand generations.

⁹ Which *covenant* he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

¹⁰ And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* an everlasting covenant:

¹¹ Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:

¹² When they were *but* a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it.

¹³ When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

¹⁴ He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he

unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

²⁹ And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

³⁰ And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive.

³¹ And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me;

³² And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

³³ And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation?

³⁴ That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians.

Genesis 47:1-12

^{47:1} Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they *are* in the land of Goshen.

² And he took some of his brethren, *even* five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

³ And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What *is* your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants *are* shepherds, both we, *and* also our fathers.

reproved kings for their sakes;

¹⁵ *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

¹⁶ Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.

¹⁷ He sent a man before them, *even* Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant:

¹⁸ Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:

¹⁹ Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him.

²⁰ The king sent and loosed him; *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

²¹ He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:

²² To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom.

²³ Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

NOTES:

When Joseph made himself known to his brothers it was an occasion of great joy for the entire 12 of Jacob's sons. We read that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard the noise of their rejoicing and that Pharaoh was greatly pleased that his faithful steward and ruler was reunited with his brothers.

Pharaoh and the Egyptians owed a great deal to Joseph. Through his foresight and wisdom, and because of the presence of God with him, he had instituted the plan whereby their lives were being saved in the trying years of famine they were now enduring. We might say they all felt that nothing was too good for the man who had done so much for them. This was Pharaoh's attitude, at least, when he called Joseph and told him to take the best of the land of Egypt for his father and brothers (**Genesis 12:3**) And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed).

But the glad news was too much for the aged Jacob, who had mourned the loss of Joseph for many years. He suffered some kind of shock when the brothers attempted to tell him. He would not believe it until he saw the caravan that Pharaoh had sent to carry him and his sons' wives and children to the land of Egypt for, as they supposed, the duration of the famine.

This movement of the chosen family to the land of Egypt was a part of God's great plan for the world. They were to become a great nation in the process of time, according to the promise that had been given them. During that time of growth they must be protected from the attacks of the larger enemy tribes and nations of Canaan, who naturally would have a very hostile feeling toward a group of people who said they were someday going to take the land and drive out all its inhabitants. The children of Israel would become the object of their hostility and assaults. To protect them, stabilize them as a nation, and educate them in industry, arts, and sciences, as well as to nourish them during the famine, God ordained that they should go down to Egypt. From there He planned to bring them back to Canaan when they were strong enough to take and hold the Promised Land.

The group that went into Egypt was a vastly different one from the great army of hundreds of thousands that came out, under the leadership of Moses. They went in, a little group of famine-stricken people whose sustenance had been given them from the rich stores of Egypt. They came out, a tremendous army enriched with all the wealth of that heathen land, conquering through the might of the God of their fathers — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (**Exodus 12:35-37** ^{2:35} And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: ³⁶ And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required*. And they spoiled the Egyptians. ³⁷ And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children).

The first leg of their journey terminated at Beer-sheba, not only because it was a convenient stopping place between Hebron and Egypt, but because it was also a consecrated place. Jacob, like Abraham and Isaac, felt the need and realized the value of receiving God's blessing on every move that he made. He stopped to offer sacrifices to God. He knew well the value of taking God with him on the journey. An old adage that applies strongly to a case of this kind informs us, "Prayers and provender never hinder any man's journey." We would be wise if we heeded the example of these godly men and never failed to consult a loving God on every occasion.

⁴ They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine *is* sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

⁵ And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

⁶ The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest *any* men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

⁷ And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

⁸ And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou?

⁹ And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

¹⁰ And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

¹¹ And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, 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 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to *their* families.

If Joseph found it difficult to contain his joy when he made himself known to *his* brothers, how much harder it must have been for him to await the arrival of his father and the rest of the family. He finally set out to meet the caravan as it approached the land of Goshen. It must have been a touching scene to see the long-separated father and son as they met and embraced each other. The Bible tells us that Joseph wept a good while. It was a happy climax to Jacob's long and troubled life and to Joseph's isolation from the people of God. Perhaps the old father felt that there could be no happier ending to all his sorrow and distress than the moment of meeting his son, Joseph, for he said: "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

The presentation at the court of Pharaoh was in two stages. The sons were strong, used to traveling, and were perhaps ready before the aged father was, who would naturally prefer to rest a while longer. Five of the sons were selected to represent the group, and they appeared before the ruler to receive his blessing and the bestowal of his hospitality and bounty. Pharaoh ruled that the best of the land of Egypt was to be given to them and that they might find occupation as rulers over his cattle and livestock, which promised to be an increasing responsibility, since the people of the land were trading their cattle to the government for food (**Genesis 47:17** And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year).

The final stage of the presentation took place when Jacob was introduced to Pharaoh. Extreme friendliness was manifested by that great ruler for the father of the man who meant so much to Egypt at this time. "How old art thou?" was the question that he asked to break down the existing barriers and promote a good feeling between them. Jacob's answer, in a few words, summed up a life history of trouble, grief, and sorrow. As Jacob looked back over the 130 years of his life he, no doubt, remembered when he deceived his father and stole the blessing from Esau. He perhaps, in retrospection, saw the time when he had to run from the wrath of that brother and seek refuge in a distant land among people whom he had never seen. No doubt, the years he spent in Haran came before him as a panorama — years of labor, disappointment, and suffering the results of his uncle's deception,

His memory might have shown him again the ten sons as they returned from Dothan with a familiar coat of many colors, bloodstained and bearing mute evidence, he thought, of a struggle between his beloved son and some wild beast. It is entirely possible that he re-lived, in this fleeting moment before Pharaoh, the grief and disappointments he endured these many years. But now all these passing visions left him and he realized that at last his family was united in filial love and devotion, enabling him to spend the last days of his life in security and peace.

It would have been a difficult thing at this time to persuade Jacob that the hasty, deceitful acts of his youth, which had brought all this suffering upon his own head were anything but wrong. He could fully realize now what an evil harvest he had reaped because he was not willing to let God work out His plan in His own time and way! We do not gain by running ahead of the Lord, or by attempting to open doors that He has not opened for us. It is far better to await God's time and will, even though it seems to impede our progress when we do so. We are ahead, in the long run, by waiting. We have the unimpeachable testimony of many men and women in Scripture to substantiate that fact, as for example, Abraham, Jacob's grandfather; and we perhaps have, in a small measure, experienced it ourselves, or have seen it demonstrated in the lives of our friends.

Let us be still and know that He is God! Let us be sure we are in God's will before we move! Let us allow the hand of the Almighty to **work** for us! This precaution will pay rich dividends of happiness and contentment in this life and in the end an eternal reward, that for magnitude and glory cannot now be imagined or conceived by us.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What attitude did Pharaoh take when he heard of the reunion of the 12 brothers?
- 2 What was the reason for this attitude?
- 3 Describe the home-coming of the 11 brothers.
- 4 What finally persuaded Jacob to go to Egypt?
- 5 What did Jacob do before he arrived in Egypt?
- 6 Who else had stopped for similar purpose at Beer-sheba?
- 7 Describe the meeting of Joseph and his father.

- 8 What occupation did the brothers of Joseph take up in Egypt?
- 9 What did Jacob say when he was presented to Pharaoh?
- 10 To what was Jacob referring when he said: "Few and evil have the days of the years"