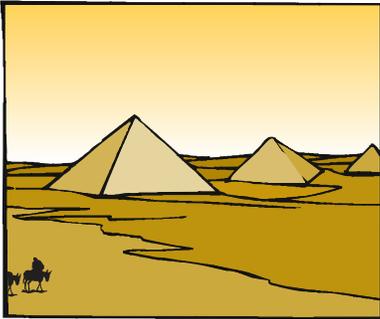




Jacob Moves to Egypt

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Genesis 46 - 47



Joseph finally revealed his true identity to his brothers. Though his brothers feared they would be punished for what they had done, Joseph poured out his forgiveness and grace on them. Now it was time to let their father know the truth. Jacob learned that he could trust God's promises.

Day #1: Disbelief to Belief

Are you good at waiting? No one likes to wait! What is something you have waited for? Jacob was waiting for his sons to return home from Egypt. He was very worried that something was going to happen to his youngest son, Benjamin. He didn't know if Simeon would be released from prison. Certainly, it was a long wait for Jacob. He probably paced back and forth from time to time.

Meanwhile, in Egypt, after Joseph convinced his brothers of who he really was, he explained that the famine would last five more years. He told his brothers to go home to Canaan, pack up their father and their families, and move to Egypt.

Pharaoh sent the brothers home with carts full of the best things from Egypt. They had food, clothes, and silver.

+ *So they went up out of Egypt. They came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. They told him, "Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of the whole land of Egypt."*

Jacob was shocked. He didn't believe them. - Genesis 45:25-26

Just imagine Jacob's disbelief! This story was too much to take in. His beloved Joseph was alive, and he was master over Egypt!

The fact was this: Joseph was waiting in Egypt to give them every blessing of the land. But unless Jacob believed, and acted upon his belief, he would not receive the blessings waiting for him in Egypt.

***** In much the same way, we are faced with this fact today: Jesus died to take away our sin. He offers forgiveness and new life. But you must believe this to be true, and place your trust in Him in order to receive forgiveness and new life.

Day #2: Faith in Action

Jacob finally believed that Joseph was waiting in Egypt, and he decided to go there. But before Jacob left Canaan, he stopped at a special place called Beersheba. 100 years before, when Jacob was a young man, God had spoken to him at that very spot. God promised to be with Him and increase the number of his family (Genesis 26:23-24). Now, at Beersheba, Jacob offered sacrifices to the Lord.

Jacob knew that God had also promised that Jacob's family would live in **Canaan**. Now Jacob was planning to take his family **out of Canaan**. Jacob wanted to hear from God. He wanted to be sure that he was doing what God wanted him to do. God spoke to him that night.

+ *"I am God. I am the God of your father," He said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt. There I will make you into a great nation. I will go down to Egypt with you. You can be sure that I will bring you back again. And when you die, Joseph will close your eyes with his own hand." - Genesis 46:1-4*

Jacob did the right thing by stopping in his tracks and seeking the Lord's wisdom. God was eagerly waiting for Jacob to come to Him. God spoke clearly, and Jacob could move to Egypt, confident that he was doing the Lord's will.

Now, get a box of cereal, or rice, or dry beans. Anything small will do. You'll need lots of pieces! On a plate, set out 11 pieces - one for each of Joseph's brothers. Add one piece to each of those pieces to represent each man's wife. Now, for every pair you have, add 4 or 5 pieces to represent each couple's children. Now add one piece for Joseph's sister, Dinah. Oh, and don't forget one for old Jacob! Now you have a plateful! This represents how many people packed up and headed for Egypt.

***** It's ALWAYS right to go to the Lord for help in making decisions. James 1:5 says that if you need wisdom, ask God, and He will give you **lots** of it! He will never be angry that you came to Him to ask His help.

Day #3: Worth the Wait

Here is a math problem for you to solve. Get your pencil and paper ready! Joseph was 30 years old when Pharaoh put him in charge of Egypt (Genesis 41:46). Then Egypt had 7 wonderful years with

Day #3 continued:

plenty to eat. Then there were 2 years of famine before Joseph told his brothers who he was. If Joseph was 17 years old when his brothers sold him into slavery (Genesis 37:2), how long had it been since Joseph had seen his father? *Answer: 30+7+2-17=22*

Joseph had not seen Jacob in 22 years! As Jacob's caravan traveled into Egypt, Judah went ahead to tell Joseph they had arrived. Joseph met his family in an area of Egypt called Goshen.

 *As soon as he came to his father, Joseph threw his arms around him. Then Joseph sobbed for a long time.*

(Jacob) said to Joseph, "I have seen for myself that you are still alive. Now I'm ready to die." - Genesis 46:29b-30

More than anything, Joseph longed to see his father. Twenty-two years is such a long time, but God used this difficult time to mold not only Joseph, but also Jacob. In God's perfect timing, God answered Joseph's prayers and brought his father to him.

 Ask your parents about a time when they prayed and it seemed to take a really long time to receive an answer from the Lord. Don't let this discourage you! Instead, let Joseph's story encourage you. 2 Peter 3:9 says that God is not slow in keeping His promises; He is simply working everything out for people to come to know Him.

Day #4: Abundant Provision

Joseph introduced his family to Pharaoh. Pharaoh welcomed them to Egypt and told them they were free to live in Goshen. This was the best land in Egypt, because it was the area where the great Nile River branched out into many smaller rivers.

Hold out one hand in front of you, and spread your fingers out. Imagine that your arm is the Nile River, and your fingers are the places where the river branches out. The water from these streams was crucial for drinking water. All the land around "your fingers" would be rich soil for growing plants for the people and livestock to eat. This was the land of Goshen, and Joseph's family thrived there.

On the other hand, the Egyptians had run out of money with which to buy food from Joseph. So they bought grain by giving Joseph their livestock. When all their livestock was gone, the people came begging once again. They pleaded with Joseph to make them servants in exchange for grain to eat. The Egyptians were desperate. Although being servants would be

Day #4 continued:

difficult, it was far better than dying! They were overjoyed when Joseph saved their lives by making them Pharaoh's servants.

There are two very different stories here. Joseph's family had plenty to eat, while the Egyptians begged for enough grain to survive. The Bible says:

 *Once I was young, and now I am old. Yet I have never seen the godly abandoned or their children begging for bread. - Psalm 37:25*

The Egyptians followed false gods all their lives. They did not put their hope in the one true God. But Joseph, and his family, lived in the promises of the Lord Almighty.

 You can trust that God will care for you, no matter what is happening around you. In Proverbs 1:33, God promises, "Whoever listens to Me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm." (NIV)

Day #5: Trust God's Promises

Before Jacob was even born, God promised to bless and grow his family (Genesis 12:1-3). And back when Jacob was a young man, God made the promise directly to Jacob. God promised He would be with Jacob, and that Jacob would have a very large family. 100 years later, God told Jacob the promise again. Did God keep this promise? The Bible says:

 *The people of Israel settled in Egypt in the area of Goshen. They received property there. They had children and **greatly increased their numbers.** - Genesis 47:27*

What does this tell you about God? God ALWAYS keeps His promises! At times, Jacob forgot this truth, and those years were miserable for him (Genesis 42:36, 38). During those times, he resisted what God wanted him to do. He did what seemed right to him, without asking God what to do. If Jacob had looked to God sooner, do you think God might have led him back to Joseph sooner? It took 130 years for Jacob to be **certain** that God ALWAYS keeps His promises.

 By God's loving grace, He gives us many wonderful promises that we do not deserve. If you trust His promises, you will live according to His word. If you don't trust His promises, you will live your life according to your own wisdom. We have seen God keep His promises time and time again in the Bible. Are you willing to trust His promises in your own life? Don't miss out on one day of God's blessings! Trust His promises every day!