

Sermon Notes 8/29/21

“Surviving the Famine”

How should we respond to Genesis chapter 47?

1. Come to God through _____.

Genesis 47:1

Hebrews 7:24-25

2. See life in this world as a _____.

Genesis 47:9

Hebrews 11:13-16

3. Be a _____ to people in our world.

Genesis 47:10

Matthew 5:13-16

4. Trust God’s plan for our _____.

Genesis 47:27

1 Peter 1:3-6



“Jacob meets Pharaoh” by James Tissot 1896

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 47: August 29 – September 5

Genesis 47

Genesis 47 takes us through the last five years of the famine in Egypt. Here again, Joseph is a type of Jesus as he intercedes for his family. He goes before the Pharaoh as a mediator and an advocate for his brothers just as Jesus intercedes for us (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1). We also see God's people not just surviving the famine but thriving with great blessings of prosperity and growth. When we are facing difficult days and times of uncertainty, we, like Jacob, need to trust God's plan for our lives.

Read Genesis 47:1-12

1. What did Joseph tell Pharaoh in verse 1?
2. Who did Joseph bring to Pharaoh in verse 2?
3. What did the brothers say to Pharaoh after he asked them about their occupation? (47:3-4)
4. Where did Pharaoh tell Joseph and his extended family to settle? (47:5-6)
5. Why did Pharaoh ask Joseph about any special abilities among the brothers in verse 6?

Kent Hughes notes,

Joseph's strategy could not have gone better because despite Pharaoh's phobic regard for shepherds, Pharaoh's response went far beyond expectations. Because of Joseph, virtually boundless favor was extended to Jacob's family as Pharaoh, in courtly decorum, spoke to Joseph... Unbelievably, in addition to keeping his initial promise of the best of the land (cf. 45:18), Pharaoh even offered the brothers employment as superintendents of the royal cattle.¹

¹ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 532.

6. What did Jacob do when he came to the Pharaoh in verse 7? (See also 47:10)

7. What did Jacob say when the Pharaoh asked him how old he was? (47:8-9)

Egyptians typically despised shepherds (46:34). However, Pharaoh knew that there was something special about Jacob. Paul Kissling writes,

While we are not told of Pharaoh's reaction to his encounter with Jacob, he must have been impressed by his longevity as well as by the fact that he had fathered a son as wise and capable as Joseph. Before Jacob left, he blessed Pharaoh a second time, bringing home the point to the readers that this was not just politeness but a hint of the fulfillment of Yahweh's promise that Abraham's descendants would be the channel of his blessing to all the nations of the world.²

8. How was the land of Goshen described to verse 11?

9. How did Joseph decide how much food to give to each of his brothers? (47:12)

Read Genesis 47:13-26

10. How does verse 13 describe the famine at that time?

11. What did the people say to Joseph when they ran out of money to buy food? (47:14-15)

12. How did the people pay for their food for the rest of that year? (47:16-17)

13. What did the people suggest after all their money and livestock were gone and they still needed more food? (47:18-19)

14. How many of the Egyptians sold their land and became servants of Pharaoh? (47:20-21)

15. Why were the priests able to keep their land? (47:22)

² Paul Kissling, *The College Press NIV Commentary: Genesis Volume 2* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2009), 559.

Paul Kissling observes,

Because Pharaoh had chosen to follow Joseph's divinely guided advice, Pharaoh came to own almost all of the land of Egypt. Ironically, however, by building up Pharaoh's power Joseph was laying the foundation for future Pharaohs to abuse that power by enslaving and brutally abusing the descendants of Jacob.³

16. Even though all the land now belonged to Pharaoh, how much of the produce was given to Pharaoh? (47:23-25)

17. What happened to this 20% produce tax after the famine was over and the land was productive again? (47:26)

Read Genesis 47:27-31

18. How did God bless the Israelites after they settled in Goshen? (47:27)

19. How long did Jacob live in Egypt with his son Joseph? (47:28)

Kent Hughes writes,

Significantly, Jacob would have seventeen years with his son Joseph, which is exactly the same number of years they had together in Canaan before the treachery. Genesis is silent about these years, but a fast-forward to his ultimate age of 147 suggests uneventful, unruffled tranquility for both father and son.⁴

20. What character traits did Jacob ask Joseph to show him in verse 29?

21. What promise did Joseph promise to do when Jacob died? (47:29-30)

22. What did Jacob (Israel) do in verse 31? Where is this verse quoted in the New Testament?

23. How has God provided for you in times of uncertainty?

24. How can we be generous to people in need while encouraging them to be productive members of society?

25. How will you show kindness and faithfulness to someone this week?

³ Kissling, 563.

⁴ Hughes, *Genesis*, 536.