

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #93

Genesis 46:31-47:12

At the time these events occurred, the world was in a severe famine, which of course was sovereignly controlled by God (41:28-32). The famine was so economically severe that the entire world was forced to go to Egypt to buy food (41:54-56). In fact, the famine reached a peak level that people ran out of both food and money (47:13-15).

WHEN GOD’S PEOPLE PURPOSE TO OBEY HIM AND STAY FAITHFUL TO HIM, GOD WILL PERSONALLY CARE FOR AND BLESS HIS PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF THE SURROUNDING THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES.

God’s promise to “supply all your needs” is not contingent upon our economy, but our faithfulness (Philippians 4:18-19). Jesus Christ did not say all things would be added to us if the economy were stable. What He said was if we would “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...all things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).

Moses wanted God’s people to see two very important themes:

THEME #1 - God will give His care, blessings and promotions to His faithful people regardless of potential problems and opposition. 46:31-47:6

After the tears had been shed (46:29), after Israel had spoken (46:30), it was Joseph’s turn. Joseph was a wise leader, who knew of potential problems and who was logical and political.

Let us recall that when Pharaoh told Joseph to have his family come to Egypt from Canaan, he told them to leave everything behind (45:20). However, as we saw last time, when Jacob finally decided to move, he left nothing and brought everything. (46:5-6).

Jacob’s family owned many different types of animals, including cows, mules, goats and camels (32:14-15). He also owned a large number of sheep. In fact, he owned flocks (plural) of them (32:5; 38:13). When Jacob brought all of these things to Egypt, Joseph became very concerned because shepherds were an abomination to them (46:34).

The word “loathsome,” literally abomination, speaks of something considered abominable, detestable, horrible and shameful (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 859, 871). This particular word is used in a religious sense and more than likely the reason for this is because Satan was well aware that ever since Cain and Abel, the only way to be right with God was through a “sheep sacrifice” (4:4). By moving the Egyptian religious leaders to hate shepherds, he was able to keep the entire Egyptian world from the one type of sacrifice that would bring one into a proper relationship with God.

Joseph was well aware of this and he specifically told his brother that when Pharaoh called them and would ask them about their occupation, they were to say they were “keepers of livestock” (46:34).

They were to stress they were cattlemen, not shepherds. Joseph, himself, would tell Pharaoh that his brothers were shepherds (**46:32**), but he would quickly qualify it by emphasizing the “livestock” element.

Joseph went to Pharaoh and informed him that his father and brothers had arrived from Canaan and were now in Goshen (**47:1**). Five of his brothers went with him and he presented them to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh asked them their occupation, they botched the answer (**47:3-4**).

We are not told what was going through Joseph’s mind, but Pharaoh turned to Joseph and told him to give them the best in Goshen and promoted the capable men to be rulers over his own cattle (47:5-6). **God turned Pharaoh’s mind not only to accept shepherds, but promote them.**

THEME #2 - God will give His blessings to those who are generous to His faithful family.
47:7-12

Three contextual points to see here:

- 1) Jacob pronounces two blessings on Pharaoh, one when arriving (**47:7**) and one when leaving (**47:10**).
- 2) Pharaoh commanded that Jacob and his family were to have the best land (**47:11**).
- 3) When the rest of the world was starving, Pharaoh was prospering (**47:13-14, 20**).

Clear back in Genesis 12:3, God made a promise to Abraham and his family, “I will bless those who bless you and the one who curses you I will curse.” What we are actually seeing here is a literal fulfillment of this very promise.

Pharaoh was concerned about Israel’s age (**47:8**) and was informed that he was 130 (**47:9**). Jacob classified his days as being “few” and “evil” when compared to his forefathers. Abraham, Jacob’s grandfather, had lived to be 175 years old (**25:7**), and Isaac, Jacob’s father, lived to be 180 (**35:28**).

Jacob was open and honest with Pharaoh and the remaining 17 years of his life would be greatly enjoyed and blessed by God.

The section ends with Joseph “providing” for his family (**47:12**). This particular Hebrew word means that Joseph held up, sustained, protected and provided for his family (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 586).

While the rest of the world was experiencing a severe famine, God’s family was enjoying a feast.

In these times of worldly and economic uncertainty, those faithful to God can always depend on Him. Seek Him first and He will add many things to your life.