

Joseph – part 9

Joseph made everyone the slave of the king
by Victor Torres

Last time we saw Joseph revealing himself to his brothers after he saw a change of heart in all of them.

Gen 45:1 (CEV) Since Joseph could no longer control his feelings in front of his servants, he sent them out of the room. When he was alone with his brothers, he told them, "I am Joseph."

Gen 45:2 Then he cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him and told about it in the king's palace.

Gen 45:3 Joseph asked his brothers if his father was still alive, but they were too frightened to answer.

Gen 45:4 Joseph told them to come closer to him, and when they did, he said: Yes, I am your brother Joseph, **the one you sold into Egypt.**

Gen 45:5 (KJV) And now do not be grieved, **nor angry with yourselves that you sold me here. For God sent me before you to preserve life.**

After telling his brothers: "YOU sold me into Egypt", and "YOU sold me here", he reassured them that it was really God who is setting everything into motion. And His purpose is good: "[He] sent me before you to preserve life".

Gen 45:6 (CEV) There has already been a famine for two years, and for five more years no one will plow fields or harvest grain.

Gen 45:7 But God sent me on ahead of you to keep your families alive and to save you in this wonderful way.

Gen 45:8 **After all, you weren't really the ones who sent me here--it was God.** He made me the highest official in the king's court and placed me over all Egypt.

When the king of Egypt heard about this reconciliation, he was really happy for Joseph. He told Joseph's brothers to get their families over to Egypt so that they can be taken care of during the remaining five years of famine.

Gen 45:25 (CEV) Joseph's brothers left Egypt, and when they arrived in Canaan,

Gen 45:26 they told their father that Joseph was still alive and was the ruler of Egypt. **But their father was so surprised that he could not believe them.**

Gen 45:27 (KJV) 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:**

Gen 45:28 And Israel said, *It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.*

Jacob suffered as much as Joseph suffered, if not more, so to hear that Joseph is alive and to see proof that he is even doing well must have caused Jacob tremendous joy. We will all experience pain in this life, but in the end, our loving Father will revive our spirits as He has done for Jacob.

Gen 46:1 (ESV) So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

Gen 46:2 And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am."

Gen 46:3 Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, **for there I will make you into a great nation.**

Jacob must have doubted this promise by God to make him a great nation after he thought Joseph died. But here he is reminded, as we are reminded, that God doesn't break His promises. God is more than capable of fulfilling every one of His promises.

Gen 46:4 (CEV) I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes."

Gen 46:5 Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

Gen 46:6 They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him,

Gen 46:7 his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

Gen 46:8 Now these are the names of the descendants of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn,

Gen 46:9 and the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

Gen 46:10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman.

Gen 46:11 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

Gen 46:12 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.

Gen 46:13 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Yob, and Shimron.

Gen 46:14 The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

Gen 46:15 These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; altogether his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three.

Gen 46:16 The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.

Gen 46:17 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, with Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel.

Gen 46:18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons.

Gen 46:19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin.

Gen 46:20 And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera the priest of On, bore to him.

Gen 46:21 And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.

Gen 46:22 These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all.

Gen 46:23 The son of Dan: Hushim.

Gen 46:24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.

Gen 46:25 These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all.

Gen 46:26 All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all.

Gen 46:27 And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

Gen 46:28 He had sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him in Goshen, and they came into the land of Goshen.

Gen 46:29 Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. **He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.**

Gen 46:30 Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive."

The joy that Jacob and Joseph experienced in this reunion gives us a picture of the joy we will experience when we are reunited with our Father in heaven. Why do we need to be reunited with Him? Because we all rebel against Him. But He makes a way to bring us all back.

2Sa 14:14 (KJV) For we must needs die, and *are* as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect *any* person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him.

Let's continue the story:

Gen 46:31 (ESV) Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

Gen 46:32 And the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock, and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.'

Gen 46:33 When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?'

Gen 46:34 you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' in order that you may dwell in the land of Goshen, **for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.**"

Why did Joseph tell his brothers that every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians? Why do the Egyptians find shepherds disgusting? This is because the Egyptians feel superior with their way of life. A shepherd rely on God's graces and lives by faith. What sort of spiritual lesson can we get from this? We are first like the Egyptians. We first rely on our flesh, our own ability to get what we need and what we want. Remember, we must see ourselves as the bad guys first, before we see ourselves as the good guys in any story in the Bible.

Gen 47:1 (KJV) 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.

Gen 47:2 And he took some of his brethren, *even* five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

Gen 47:3 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.

Gen 47:4 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.

To 'sojourn' is to have a temporary stay. The people of God know that this world is but a temporary place for them to live. It will be destroyed one day, including this temporary bodies of flesh in which we live in.

Gen 47:5 (KJV) And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

Gen 47:6 (CEV) I will let them live anywhere they choose in the land of Egypt, but I suggest that they settle in Goshen, the best part of our land. I would also like for your finest shepherds to watch after my own sheep and goats."

Gen 47:7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

Gen 47:8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou?

Gen 47:9 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.

Jacob is expressing the point of view which we should have about what this life is. It is a short experience of evil to humble us in preparation for the long life of good and joy that God has in store for us.

Ecc 1:13 (CLV) I applied my heart to inquiring and exploring by wisdom concerning all that is done under the heavens: **it is an experience of evil** Elohim has given to the sons of humanity **to humble them by it.**

Let's continue the story:

Gen 47:10 (CEV) Then Jacob gave the king his blessing once again and left.

Gen 47:11 Joseph obeyed the king's orders and gave his father and brothers some of the best land in Egypt near the city of Rameses.

Gen 47:12 Joseph also provided food for their families.

Gen 47:13 The famine was bad everywhere in Egypt and Canaan, and the people were suffering terribly.

Gen 47:14 So Joseph sold them the grain that had been stored up, and he put the money in the king's treasury.

Gen 47:15 But when everyone had run out of money, the Egyptians came to Joseph and demanded, "Give us more grain! If you don't, we'll soon be dead, **because our money's all gone.**"

Gen 47:16 "If you don't have any money," Joseph answered, "**give me your animals,** and I'll let you have some grain."

Gen 47:17 From then on, they brought him their horses and donkeys and their sheep and goats in exchange for grain. Within a year Joseph had collected every animal in Egypt.

Gen 47:18 Then the people came to him and said: Sir, there's no way we can hide the truth from you. We are broke, and we don't have any more animals. We have nothing left except ourselves and our land.

Gen 47:19 Don't let us starve and our land be ruined. If you'll give us grain to eat and seed to plant, **we'll sell ourselves and our land to the king. We'll become his slaves.**

You have to remember that it is the Lord making all these things happen. The Lord is the one who taught Joseph to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams correctly (seven years of good harvest followed by seven years of severe famine).

Gen 47:20 (CEV) The famine became so severe that **Joseph finally bought every piece of land in Egypt for the king**

Gen 47:21 **and made everyone the king's slaves,**

These Egyptians have to give up everything: their money, their animals, their land and even their own bodies. These Egyptians give us a picture of what judgment is. Judgment involves giving up everything we hold dear in this world, including our pride and self-righteousness.

Gen 47:22 (CEV) except the priests. The king gave the priests a regular food allowance, so they did not have to sell their land.

The priests points to the elect who have already been judged so they don't need to go through this process of humbling anymore.

Gen 47:23 (CEV) Then Joseph said to the people, "You and your land now belong to the king. I'm giving you seed to plant,

Gen 47:24 but one-fifth of your crops must go to the king. You can keep the rest as seed or as food for your families."

Gen 47:25 **"Sir, you have saved our lives!" they answered. "We are glad to be slaves of the king."**

It is like night and day if we compare being slaves of our flesh with being slaves of God. When we are slaves of the flesh, we are always afraid and troubled, angry and discontented with our life. But when we are slaves of God, there is peace of mind, contentment and joy. We will, like the Egyptians, glorify God for saving us from slavery to our flesh.

Gen 47:26 (CEV) Then Joseph made a law that one-fifth of the harvest would always belong to the king. Only the priests did not lose their land.

This law of giving one-fifth back to God is of course not telling us to give one-fifth of our income to our church. It points to being thankful for God's grace (the number five is a symbol of God's grace) by giving our life to serve Him.

1Co 6:19 (ESV) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? **You are not your own,**

1Co 6:20 (KJV) **For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body,**