

"AND JEHOVAH WAS WITH JOSEPH" (IV)

(Gen. 39:2,3,21,23; Acts 7:9,10)

INTRODUCTION: In *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, this assessment of Joseph's character is found: "He presents a noble ideal of character, remarkable for his gentleness, faithfulness to duty, magnanimity, and forgiving spirit, so that he is often regarded as an OT type of Christ." (pg. 449) (Review the preceding three sermons.)

The Lord was with Joseph:

I. WHEN HE FULLY FORGAVE HIS BROTHERS

- A. Pharaoh told Joseph to invite all his family to come live in Egypt (Gen. 45:16-20)
 1. The Hebrews were warmly welcomed when they first moved to Egypt
 2. "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph." (Ex. 1:8)
 3. Because the children of Israel were "more and mightier" than the Egyptians, the Egyptians were fearful of them so they "made their lives bitter with hard service" and killed their baby boys (Ex. 1:9-16)
- B. When Jacob first heard that Joseph was alive "his heart fainted, for he believed them not", but when he saw the wagons he said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die." (Gen. 45:25-28)
- C. As Jacob was traveling to Egypt, God appeared unto him "in the visions of the night and said...I will make of thee a great nation...". (Gen. 46:1-4)
- D. Jacob and Joseph now wept tears of joy! (Gen. 46:28-30)
- E. Jacob told Pharaoh that he was 130 years old (Gen. 47:9)
 1. He felt that his life had not been a happy one. No doubt, his grieving for his beloved Joseph had hurt him deeply
 2. I believe the last 17 years of his life were happy ones for he was surrounded by his loved ones (Gen. 47:27,28)
- F. He made Joseph promise not to bury him in Egypt, but bury him with his fathers "in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah" (Gen. 47:29-31; 48:29-33)
 1. Jacob was embalmed and the Egyptians wept for him 70 days (Gen. 50:1-3)
 2. Joseph and his brothers kept their promise to their father (Gen. 50:4-14)
- G. Joseph's brothers were afraid that after their father's death, Joseph would treat them cruelly because of the evil which they had done unto him (Gen. 50:15-18)
- H. Listen to Joseph's kind reply to their request that he forgive them (Gen. 50:19-21)
 1. Joseph would not put himself "in the place of God" by avenging himself (Gen. 50:19; Rom. 12:19)
 2. Do you put yourself "in the place of God" by avenging the wrongs done to you?
 3. Do you, like Joseph, return good for evil? (Rom. 12:17,21)
- I. Do we completely forgive those that sin against us who ask our forgiveness, or do we continue to hold a little resentment in our hearts against them? (Mt. 6:14,15; Lk. 17:3,4)
- J. When we forgive one another from our hearts:
 1. We are acting like our Heavenly Father (Eph. 4:32)
 2. It will bring both the forgiven and the forgiving great peace of mind
 - a. The forgiven person will rejoice knowing that what he has done will no longer be held against him (Heb. 8:12)

- b. The forgiving person will find peace of mind for the feelings of anger, revenge, and resentment are replaced with feelings of trust, friendship, and love
- c. Truly, forgiveness has healing power!

II. WHEN HE DIED "BEING A HUNDRED AND TEN YEARS OLD" (Gen. 50:26)

- A. Joseph made the children of Israel promise that they would carry his bones back to Canaan when they left Egypt (Gen. 50:24,25; Heb. 11:22)
 - 1. Under the leadership of Moses, the promise was kept (Ex. 13:19)
 - 2. The bones of Joseph were buried in Shechem (Josh. 24:32)
- B. Joseph believed that God would keep his promises (Gen. 50:24,25; 13:15; 26:3; 28:13)
- C. Do you believe that God will keep His promises? (Mk. 16:16; Acts 1:11; Mt. 25:31-46)
- D. Are you "standing on the promises of God"?

III. GUIDING HIM THROUGH ALL HIS LIFE

- A. It is easy to see God's providence at work in the life of Joseph
 - 1. Providence is "1 The care exercised by the Supreme Being over the universe...The exercise of foresight and care for the future..." (*Funk & Wagnall's Standard Dictionary, Vol. II*)
 - 2. "Divine providence has come to refer to that foresight and forethought preservation, care and government of God which enable Him to bring about a desired end." (*Florida College Lectures 1975, "Prayer and Providence", by Homer Hailey, pg. 53*)
- B. About 200 years before the birth of Joseph. God told Abraham that his seed would "...be sojourners in a land..." (Gen. 15:12-14)
- C. It was through Joseph that God made provision for His people to go and dwell in Egypt in fulfillment of this prophecy to Abraham (Gen. 45:5-8; 50:19,20; Ps. 105:16-24)
- D. When Joseph suffered at the first of his life, he didn't know why it was happening, but he trusted in God's goodness and the Lord was with him
 - 1. Do you trust in God when you don't know why you are going through great trials?
 - 2. You will if you "walk by faith and not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7)
- E. It was not just by luck, or coincidence, that:
 - 1. Reuben said. "Let us not take his life." (Gen. 37:18-24)
 - 2. The Ishmaelites just happened to be passing by and headed toward Egypt when Joseph was in the pit and that Judah just happened to think of selling him
 - 3. Joseph was in prison with Pharaoh's butler and had interpreted the butler's dream so the butler could call Pharaoh's attention to Joseph when Pharaoh had dreams
 - 4. Pharaoh had the dreams that he did
 - 5. Pharaoh set Joseph "over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 41:37-44)
 - 6. There was a famine "over all the face of the earth" and food was to be found in Egypt which brought Joseph's brothers to Egypt (Gen. 41:56-42:5)
 - 7. Pharaoh invited Jacob, and all his relatives, to come live in Egypt and they did
- F. God is working in your life to make you into the type of person He wants you to be, but you must **yield** yourself to Him so "His pow'r can make you what you ought to be..."! (Rom.6:12,13)
- G. We must be like clay in the Potter's hands!

CONCLUSION: God wants you to become one of His children and be faithful and useful to Him like His servant Joseph. Will you let God work with, and through, you to accomplish His "good

pleasure"? (Phil. 2:13) If you will, you will be baptized into Christ for that is God's will for you!
(I Tim. 2:3,4; Mk. 16:16; Gal. 3:26,27)

~ Don Hastings ~