

Forced Moves in our Lives!

July 2, 2017

Scripture Reading: Genesis 45:9-15

9“Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. 10“You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. 11“There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.” 12“Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin *see*, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. 13“Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.” 14Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. 15He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with.

Genesis 45:10, 11.

shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. 11“There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.”

Joseph not only reconciles, he gives everything for his family. He promised them the best fertile land, and promised that he would take care of all his needs! He not only invited them to live with him, he warned them also about the danger of famine. It was not going to go away soon. It will be there for five more years! He made them clearly see their choices: starvation and possible death if they choose to stay in their land. But if they stay in Egypt, they have nothing to worry! Sometimes God closes all the doors and keeps just one door open and thereby forcing us to move in His direction.

Genesis 45:14.15

14Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. 15He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

True reconciliation enables us to hug the people without any uneasy resentful feelings. Joseph gave a special hug for his special brother, Benjamin. Then he kissed all his brothers and wept on them.

True reconciliation makes us love one another and helps us forgive and wipe away the past trespasses.



Forced Moves in our Lives!

Husband and wife may fight over some issue and they would not even feel like touching each other. But when the anger dissipates and when they reconcile they are in each other's arms. Our fights do not have to be permanent. Let us sincerely reconcile and hug our enemies too! If we are uncomfortable about touching each other, it is highly likely that the reconciliation did not take place properly. If we are uneasy to touch a person, we have something against them!

Now Pharaoh's house got excited also about this brothers' reunion.

Genesis 45:16-20. 16Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. 17Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan, 18and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.' 19"Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. 20'Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

Pharaoh loved Joseph so much, he was willing to shower all the royal perks on Joseph's family! He promised Joseph the best land, and he told them to take his carts also. It is like USA president offering his limousine fleet to his dignitaries!

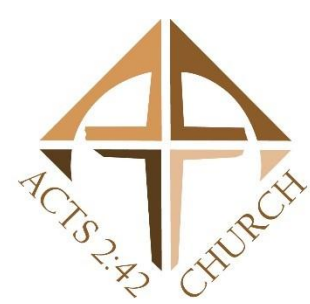
Suddenly everyone in Egypt was involved in this family union! God indeed brings people into our life to bless us!

Genesis. 45:21-24. 21Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. 22To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of silver* and five changes of garments. 23To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.

Joseph blessed the brothers with abundant wealth and sent them to bring his father. He again gave a special blessing to Benjamin.

The brothers returned to their father joyfully!

Genesis 45:26-28. 26They told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. 27When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 28Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."



Forced Moves in our Lives!

The brothers went and told their father about Joseph but the father would not believe them. But when he saw all the wagons and abundant gifts, then he believed. What a joy that must have been. Joseph was lost, but now was found by his father. Jacob lived with a broken heart. He was living all these years more like a dead man. There was no joy of living without Joseph. But now suddenly Jacob revived, it is like seeing a dead plant one whole year, but then one small shoot springs out the following year.

Jacob could not believe that Joseph was alive still. His heart almost stopped. After seeing so much material blessings, he believed! He perked up immediately! He was not a broken man anymore!

A very familiar Proverbs passage, **Proverbs 17:22 says,**
"A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones".

But now Jacob had to make a critical decision in his old age! Should he just go for a visit to Egypt or settle there for good! Abraham had to go move when he was 70 years old, but now Jacob had to do it when he was 130 years! Old people do not like to move around when they are old. Even if their children are not around, they would be usually surrounded with some good neighbors who would always help them in case of crisis.

But in this case, Jacob had to step out in faith! He had to uproot everything and move toward Egypt. There was another problem too! Jacob must have been confused about the will of God too! God had promised him again and again the land of Canaan. But now God seemed to force him out of that land and made him move toward Egypt! What should he do? What would you do in those circumstances? Let us see it in Genesis 46:1-4.

Genesis 46:1-4 1So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." 3He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. 4"I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes."

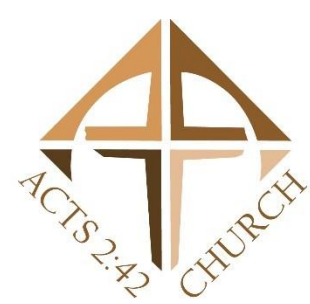
Jacob took all his belonging and came to Beersheba. He offered sacrifices for the Lord, probably Thanksgiving sacrifices! God strengthened him through a vision.

Jacob made the right move! He sacrificed for three reasons:

To purge the sins of his family

To thank God

To know God's will!



Forced Moves in our Lives!

He sought the will of God concerning his permanent move to Egypt. Now God appeared to him and spoke to him clearly!

1. I will make you a great nation!
2. I will go down with you to Egypt and will bring you up!
3. Joseph will put his hands on your eyes and close your eyes. In other words, he will be burying you!

Jacob was afraid first to go to Egypt.
Because

he was too old,
bad past memories narrated by his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham,

or because of future prophecy for Israel family that will become slaves.

There were about 66 to 75 people from Jacob's family travelled toward Egypt depending upon how you calculate. But Benjamin tribe poses problem. There is some discrepancy in the genealogy, compared to other parts of Scripture.

I want you to notice something else. Even after many years there were only 70 to 75. Abraham was promised a multitude of nations 215 years ago. But yet after 215 years, there were only 70 to 75 people!

But after 400 years they grew to be like 2 million people when they came out of Egypt. God always seems to start something very small. Jesus started His ministry with just 12 disciples! After Jacob and Joseph there were no great heroes. People could have forgotten totally about the promise for Abraham.

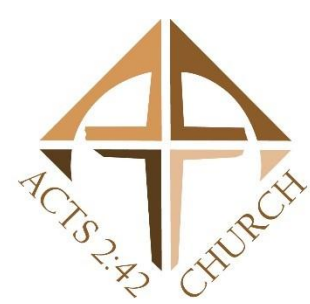
Anytime, we start a Christian ministry, it may take off very slowly. Don't give up. You run your race faithfully, as God has called you to do!

Anytime genealogy comes, it is good to focus on one particular tribe - Judah because our Lord Jesus Christ came through the tribe of Judah. The lineage here is Judah/Perez/Hebron.

Genesis 46: 8-27. Genealogy of Jacob.

Genealogy of Judah

Mathew 1: 3-5 Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron



Forced Moves in our Lives!

Jacob settled in Goshen!

Gen. 46:33, 34. 3“When Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ 34you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,’ that you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians.”

Interesting passage! Egyptians were mostly vegetarians. Looked down on shepherds!

In any case, finally Jacob could meet Joseph and it was an emotional one. This was one happy family union as a whole! We may have some great family unions, but what is the use having it if we have some resentful, angry people sitting in our midst? Jacob's family union was very special! All the family members had repented of their sins. Their souls were cleansed by so much tears and confession. They must have felt the power of God's love!

As we gather around communion table, we must feel that way too. A true repented sinner enjoys such ceremony with real thanksgiving! It is indeed honor to break bread with such repented sinners week after week. God will bring abundant joy to such believers!

Conclusion

There's indeed joy in the fellowship if there is true repentance, confession, and forgiveness.

God forced His will to bring the family of Jacob together! God may be forcing you in your situation too. You might have done everything to get out of your tough situation. Yet, you may be clamped so tight, you cannot move anywhere. Don't feel stifled. Don't suffocate. Don't feel claustrophobic, God has shut you in like that to bring out His will in you. Count it all joy and enjoy your life!

Pastor Daniel Israel