

Scripture Text

Genesis 46-47

Context

Joseph has been sold into slavery, risen in Potiphar's house, been falsely accused, sent to prison, risen in prison and now been exalted over all of Egypt. There is a great famine in the land and Joseph, who is in charge of Egypt's storehouses begins to sell grain to 'all the earth' (Gen 41.57) who came to buy food. His brothers come to buy grain, he forgives them and invites them to dwell in the land with him.

Observation and Meaning

- What does 46.3 indicate that Jacob is struggling with as he moves towards Egypt? Why do you think he would have felt this?
- What are the various things that God says to Jacob in 46.2-4? How would this have assured him? What else has God told his people earlier in Genesis that would have prepared them for this move (see Ch 15)?
- Pharaoh's response to their request exceeds what they have asked. How does this show God's favour upon them?
- What are the other evidences of God's presence being with them from Chapters 46-47?
- What does Jacob's request regarding his burial show about his ultimate hope in God's promises?

Big Idea

God's presence is forever with His people, which bring great assurance to us as we live waiting for His Kingdom to come here on earth.

Connecting to the Bible's storyline

God sends his people to Egypt in accordance with His promises to Abraham in Genesis 15. The events of Joseph's life enable this move to Egypt to take place, in accordance with God's Word.

Sermon Outline

1. In the face of uncertainty - great certainty

- God's Word calls Jacob by name, tells him that He has a plan, will be present with him, and will bring him back to the promised land.

2. In response to this certainty - great faith

- Present faith - wholeheartedly moving forward
- Future faith - settled conviction about God's promise

3. In the land of uncertainty - sustaining grace

Application

- What circumstances are likely to make you feel afraid?
- How does God's promise of being with you bring assurance to you?
- What are the promises of God that you hold on to in times of uncertainty.
- What are the evidences of God's gracious presence being with you?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?
What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.