

## Practical Wisdom of a Man of God

Genesis 46.31-47.27

While God's plan cannot be thwarted by the sinful actions of men, it is magnified when combined with the wise leadership of godly men. Joseph is 'Exhibit A' of this truth, both with his family, and with the Egyptians. *Happy is the man who finds wisdom (Proverbs 3.13)!*

### Joseph's Family Meets Pharaoh (46.31-47.12)

- *Joseph prepares his family to meet Pharaoh (46.31-34)*
- *Pharaoh meets Joseph's brothers and blesses them (47.1-6)*
- *Jacob blesses Pharaoh, and is blessed by Pharaoh (47.7-12)*

### Joseph's Wise Leadership Blesses Pharaoh and Egypt (47.13-27)

- *People of Egypt live, and Pharaoh prospers (13-26)*
- *Israel thrives in Egypt and grows in number (27)*

The 'moral' of the story: *Wise leaders ensure God's blessings!*



## Digging Deeper

1. Joseph shows practical wisdom as he prepares his brothers for their meeting with Pharaoh. He says he will tell Pharaoh that they are shepherds, and that they are to say the same thing to him (46.32, 34), then explains why: "For every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians" (34b). Combined with the general loathing Egyptians had for Hebrews (Genesis 43.32), Joseph is making sure that his family and the Egyptians won't mix at all! How does this reflect God's wisdom for His people? (See Gen. 24.2-4; 26.34-35; 27.46; 28.1-9; Exod. 34.11-16; Deut. 7.1-6). How would you apply this 'godly wisdom' today?
2. In Gen. 47.7-12, Joseph presents his father Jacob to Pharaoh. Twice (vss. 7 and 10), Jacob 'blesses' Pharaoh – this may have been part of him greeting and saying 'farewell' – thus incurring God's favor on Pharaoh's rule. Did God bless Pharaoh? God promised Abram, *I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse* (Gen. 12.3a). Reflect on the truth of this promise in relation to Egypt (here, and later in Exodus). Is this promise still true today?
3. Joseph's wise leadership benefitted not only his family, but the Egyptians as well. How did it benefit his family (see 47.11-12, 27)? How did it benefit the Egyptians (47.13-26)? At the same time, how did it benefit Pharaoh (*incredibly*)?! The surpassing value of wisdom is shown in God's dealing with Solomon (see 2 Chron. 1.7-12). It is also emphasized in Proverbs; what does wisdom provide in these passages? Prov. 2.1-10; 3.1-26; 4.1-9; 8.12-21, 32-36.
4. God's 'economy' is linked with godliness. Under Joseph's wise leadership, Egyptians became slaves (47.19, 25), but they and Pharaoh flourished, and they praised Joseph for saving them (25)! In contrast, 430 years later, another Pharaoh made slaves of the Hebrews, leading to suffering, and ultimately the defeat of Egypt! What lessons for our priorities, pursuits, and submission to God (individually and as a nation) does this suggest?