

Do Not Be Afraid

Genesis 46:1-34

“Although Egypt was, if anything, even more polytheistic in its religion than Canaan, there was not the danger of assimilation that perpetually confronted them in Canaan. The Egyptians felt themselves racially superior and were reluctant to mix and intermarry with foreigners, especially shepherds (Gen. 43:32; 46:34), a fact which has been clearly confirmed by students of Egyptian antiquities. Also, these people were culturally and intellectually the most advanced nation of the world at the time, so there was much of future value the children of Israel could learn.

Thus, although they could profit much, both financially and culturally, by associating with the Egyptians, they would be forced to dwell apart by themselves, developing their own peculiar culture, and in particular, learning to center their lives around the God of heaven and earth rather than the gods of the nations. All of this would forge them into a distinct and unique people ready to receive and promulgate the laws of God and the great plan of God.” Henry Morris

- I. There were several battles going on as the nation of Israel was being formed, one was moral, the other spiritual. Both battles exist today and will continue until the end of Christ’s millennial reign here on earth. If a nation fails morally, it will lose its desire to look to God for guidance and direction. If it fails spiritually, it will not care to be moral. Behind our nation’s moral decline is its spiritual decline. For a believer to either not see it, or apathetically ignore it, puts into question their understanding of what it means to stand firm in the faith. To see it, means we put into practice our faith as a people of God who will fight for what is morally and spiritually good for the family, the church, and our nation. I believe the church has been called to its greatest challenge since the inception of this nation. It’s a moral and spiritual challenge that cuts to the very core of what it means to call ourselves followers of Jesus Christ. Who we elect as leaders, will determine in many ways whether this nation continues its slide into immorality and godlessness. It’s a fierce battle for the very survival of the freedom and responsibilities given to us by God of free speech, religious liberty, the sanctity of life, the moral protection of children, and support for Israel. God has given us the power we need to keep a nation God-centered through believers willing to take a stand and through the ballot box. Satan is doing whatever he can to take it away, we must not let him, for he who is in us is greater than he who is in the world.

1 Jn. 4:4 *But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.*

Job 12:23-25 *He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away. 24 He takes away understanding from the chiefs of the people of the earth and makes them wander in a trackless waste. 25 They grope in the dark without light, and he makes them stagger like a drunken man.*

II. *When we are fearful or in great perplexity we often wonder if God will hear us when we pray to him. God is always more eager to answer than we are to ask, more eager to guide than we are to follow. This was the case here. Jacob worshiped, and it was immediately after this, perhaps that very night, that God told him he was on the right tract, that God would bless him even in the distant and dangerous land of Egypt. God's words fall into several parts. First, God called him by his name—'Jacob! Jacob!'... If God has never called you by your name, thereby leading you out of the previous allegiances into his own flock of believing people, I warn you not to take another step until this personal relationship is settled. God must be your shepherd. Jesus must be your Savior before anything else can be settled. Second, God reaffirmed his covenant with Jacob... What a God he is, this God of the covenant! He is Abraham's God; he was faithful to Abraham throughout his long life. He is Isaac's God, Jacob's God, Moses' God, David's God. He is your God and mine. This very continuity should strengthen us for whatever lies ahead. Third, God had a promise for Jacob. He told him not to fear going down to Egypt, ... Often we have a small view of what God is doing. But it will calm our fears if we can see our work as a part of his large plan and know that one day we will be part of that great company. God's final word for Jacob was the most important of all. He promised to go with him as he went to Egypt... and to bring him back again. If God were not with me, I should fear to take even a single step. But because God is with me, I can walk through anything, even hell, and come forth unscathed." Boice*

Gen. 46:1-27

Gen. 12:2-3

Jn. 10:2-4

Deut. 31:8 *It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."*

III. The reception Jacob received from his son Joseph, and then from Pharaoh, was made possible because Joseph did not derive his identity from his prominent position in Egypt, but from God. When he looked at his father and his brothers and their families, he saw his family, and his natural heartfelt response was to treat them with honor and respect. God put him in a position to be their advocate among the Egyptians who considered them detestable in their sight. There are many analogies we can draw from this, but the most powerful is knowing that Jesus is our advocate (1Jn. 2:1) in a world, i.e., the world system and its minions, that looks upon us as detestable in its sight because of our unwillingness to conform to its ways. *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing (1 Thess. 5:9-11).*

Gen. 46:28-34

Phil. 2:3

Eph. 2:19-22