

STUDY FORTY ONE

YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Genesis 46:28—47:31

Introduction

In this story Jacob finally arrives in Egypt and is reunited with his long lost son. The famine is now very severe and Joseph has to manage the situation with the resources that he has prepared during the seven good years. We are *in* the world but not *of* the world: Jacob's family has to settle in an alien land and Joseph has to fulfil his responsibilities as a governor within Egyptian society.

Questions for Discussion

1.a) Why was it important that Jacob's family should settle in a district separate from the Egyptians (46:31-34)? (See also Gen. 15:4-16)

b) How are believers to be separate from the world? (See Ro. 12:2 & 1 Cor. 5:9-11)

2.a) When Jacob met Pharaoh who blessed whom (47:7-10)?

b) What does this tell us about the two men?

c) How can we bless the world?

3.a) How did Jacob describe his life (47:9)?

b) In what way is the life of the believer a pilgrimage? (See Heb. 11:13-16)

c) Was Jacob right to say his years had been few?

d) What does this tell us about Jacob's character?

e) Is self-pity a sin?

f) How can we overcome the temptation of self-pity?

4.a) What was Joseph praised for (47:25)?

b) What qualities can we see in Joseph in the way he managed Egypt's crisis?

c) How can followers of Christ show such qualities in today's society?

d) How can believers avoid corruption when they get into positions of power?

5.a) What promise was fulfilled in 47:27? (See also Gen. 12:2 & 15:5 & 28:13-14)

b) What does this tell us about God?

6.a) What was Jacob's request to his son Joseph (47:29-30)?

b) Why was this important to Jacob?

For Further Thought And Action

Is there any self-pity in your life? Think about all the good things that God has done for you and ask him to help you put self-pity to death.

Memory Verse

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

Matthew 5:13