

April 17/18, 2004

Study Questions
Fear or Faith (Part 2): A Study in the Life of Joseph
The Making of a Nation
Genesis 46:1-34
Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. How would you define reality? Which is the greater reality, what can be most easily seen today or that which ultimately lasts? Why?
2. What is necessary for us to live for the ultimate reality on a daily basis? Why is this so hard?

Bible Study

1. Take some time to review the life of Jacob. What adjectives would you use to describe his life?
2. Compare Genesis 46:1-4 with the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. The writer refers to Jacob as “Israel” in these verses. In what ways has God prevailed in Jacob’s life in spite of his fears and failures?

Compare Jacob’s life with God’s promise to us in Philippians 1:6. In what ways can we identify with Jacob?

Why do we have reason to be encouraged?

3. Genesis 46:8-27 records the nation of 70 moving with Jacob to Egypt. Many of the names in these verses we are familiar with and know the person’s story. Go through the list and discuss some of those stories.

God promised Abraham he would become a great nation. These people are the beginning of that great nation. Were these great people? Who would have thought that these misfits and failures would come together to be the foundation stones of this great nation promised to Abraham?

In what ways does this “nation” resemble the church today? Is the church a gathering of success stories or a gathering of grace stories?

4. Read Genesis 15:13. What did God tell Abraham would take place? While the next 400 years of life and slavery might have caused the Hebrew people to believe God had forgotten them, the truth is that God was working out His plan just as He described it to Abraham. How does this help us process the times of “slavery” in our lives?

5. Read Hebrews 11:8-22. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all died believing God's promise but never seeing it fulfilled in their lifetime. What are some of the promises we believe by faith but likely won't see fulfilled on this side of the grave?

Why is it necessary to live by faith to live for the ultimate reality?

Application

1. Did you spend more time this week with eyes fixed on the here and now or eyes fixed on that which we must see by faith? Consequently, was your week filled with joy and hope or stress and anxiety?
2. What specific things can you do to fix your eyes on that which you can only see by faith to give you peace and joy in the midst of the journey?
3. From this text list three specific reasons why you have reason to be encouraged today?
4. Pray for eyes to see that which can only be seen by faith.