

Desiring God's Will 2017-03-05

Gen 46:1-5

So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here am I."

3 Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. 4 I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes."

5 Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him

Here example of desiring God's will above our own will.

- Jacob is now 130 years old. Jacob put the brake on emotions and sought the Lord's will. Gen 45:28-46:1

He looks forward with joy to the reunion with Joseph but he is concerned about stepping outside of God's will.

- During other famines, Jacob's Grandfather (Abraham) did not inquire of the Lord and got into trouble in Egypt. God also forbid his father (Isaac) to go to Egypt. Gen 12:10, 26:2
- Jacob also knew God's promise involved Canaan, not Egypt.

He stopped and worshipped @ Beersheba, the southern-most boundary of Israel, "point of no return."

- He offered sacrifices of thanks and sought divine guidance. Gen 46:2

The Lord primarily reveals His will through His written Word....not audible voice.

- Does communicate through other means: Holy Spirit promptings (inner sense), godly counsel, circumstances, dreams.....If it contradicts Scripture....reject it.

The Lord revealed His will by reconfirming His corporate promises & giving new individual promises. Gen 46:3-4

- *Identifies Himself* using His covenantal name.
 - "I was faithful to your father and I am going to be faithful to you."
- *Not afraid*: Approval & encouragement to go to Egypt. My providential plan.
- *Great nation there*. Reaffirms covenant made with Abraham & descendants.
 - Multigenerational promise demonstrates unconditional faithfulness of God.
- *Go with you*: Promise of God's presence and favor. Not a territorial God.
- *Back to Canaan*. Reconfirms His faithfulness to national covenantal promise.
- *New personal promises*: make it to Egypt, reunited with Joseph and die there.
 - Loving God: Last thing Jacob will see is the person he thought he'd never see again.

Jacob goes to sleep afraid/unsure, awakes confident/ready to go. Gen 46:5, 15:13

- Here is the turning point in Israel's history: beginning of fulfillment of Gen 15:13

It was "good thing" Jacob wanted to do, but rather than guessing or leaning on his own understanding, he sought God's guidance/will.

- He put the brakes on his excitement long enough to yield fully to the Lord, seek Him.

US citizens are unsettled: we make major changes without much thought, prayer, godly counsel.

- Many times running from something rather than running to something.
- Easy to get excited about change: Life is boring, tired of problems in job/community, more money, greater challenge, more desirable location.
 - Usually "good" reasons, but does "God want me to make the change?"

George Muller, "Seek to have no will of your own so that you can honestly say, you are willing to do the will of God." Rom 12:1-2, Jam 1:5, Pro 3:5-6, 1 Thes 5:16-18

- That's easy when the Lord confirms what you want to do...like Jacob.
- But what if through prayer and godly counsel it seems God is saying "No" or directing you to do something you don't want to do or is personally costly?
 - Couples: major changes (job, relocation, etc) you must be in one accord.

Pursue God's will above your own desires by remembering God's promises to you, His past faithfulness & His incredible love for you.

- Find true joy, satisfaction, hope, contentment not "out there" in new circumstances/stuff but in the Gospel promises and our wonderful Savior.