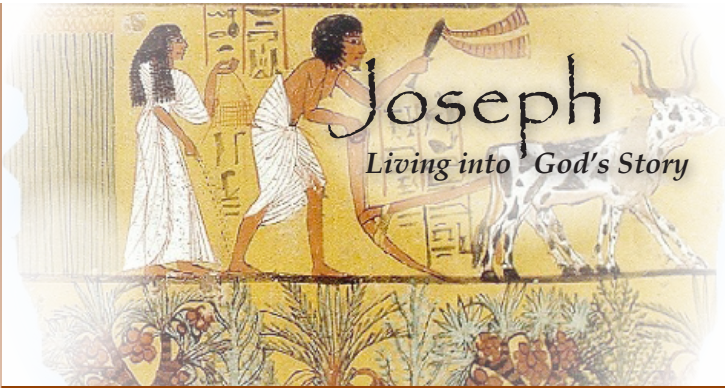


Weekly  
Discussion  
Guide

April 25  
2010

Genesis 46:6-  
47:12:  
And the  
Sons . . .



*Where we start . . .*

Have you ever given much attention to your “family tree”? If so, why? If not, why not?

When it comes to such things, who gets attention in the typical “family tree”? Why?

*What we read . . .*

When Jacob moves his family to Egypt to be under Joseph’s (and the Lord’s) care, we are given an accounting of who went; we get a genealogy. It is found in Genesis 46:1-27.

How is the genealogy laid out? Can you “diagram” the sons and grandsons born to Judah who made the journey?

In all this listing, the only grand-daughter mentioned is Serah (46:17). She is also mentioned in Numbers 26:46 and 1 Chronicles 7:30. What did she do that was notable enough to have her named in these genealogies?

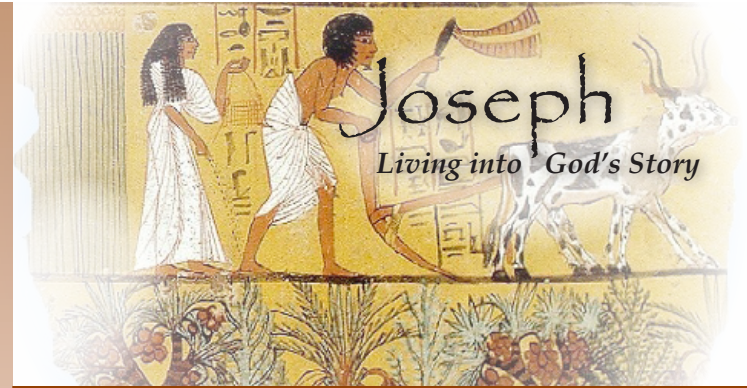
*Why this matters . . .*

What can we make of Serah’s name being mentioned? Minimally, we must recognize that *God notices and remembers names!* In the mass of humanity that went down to Egypt, the Lord was pleased to remember and note particular individuals—even if we don’t know why. Do you relate to the living God as if He is the one who *knows you by name*--no matter how small or insignificant you feel in “the big scheme of things”?

Weekly  
Discussion  
Guide

April 25  
2010

Genesis 46:6-  
47:12:  
And the  
Sons . . .



*Where we start . . .*

Have you ever given much attention to your “family tree”? If so, why? If not, why not?

When it comes to such things, who gets attention in the typical “family tree”? Why?

*What we read . . .*

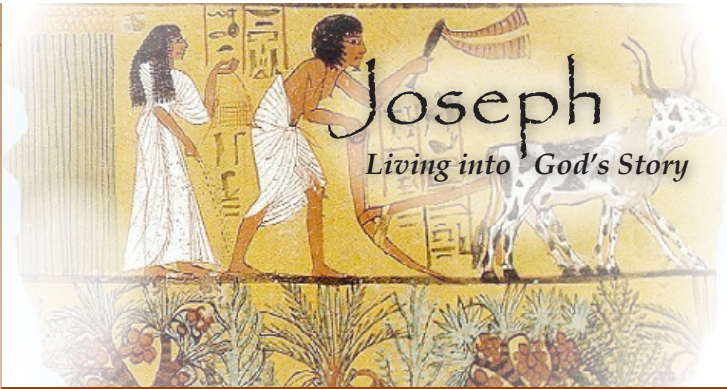
When Jacob moves his family to Egypt to be under Joseph’s (and the Lord’s) care, we are given an accounting of who went; we get a genealogy. It is found in Genesis 46:1-27.

How is the genealogy laid out? Can you “diagram” the sons and grandsons born to Judah who made the journey?

In all this listing, the only grand-daughter mentioned is Serah (46:17). She is also mentioned in Numbers 26:46 and 1 Chronicles 7:30. What did she do that was notable enough to have her named in these genealogies?

*Why this matters . . .*

What can we make of Serah’s name being mentioned? Minimally, we must recognize that *God notices and remembers names!* In the mass of humanity that went down to Egypt, the Lord was pleased to remember and note particular individuals—even if we don’t know why. Do you relate to the living God as if He is the one who *knows you by name*--no matter how small or insignificant you feel in “the big scheme of things”?



*What are we focusing on?*

It is easy to feel that God probably doesn't pay much attention to us, individually. After all, most of us don't really think we are "all that" when it comes to what God is doing in the world. Why would He take notice of us? That is a common feeling. But Jesus challenges that thinking when He told His friends and followers that the very hairs on our heads are numbered (Luke 12:7). Clearly, God *does* take notice of us.

This is pictured in a simple and unassuming way when we get to the genealogy recorded for us in Genesis 46. Lots of names are given; some known to us from other passages. But one, in particular, stands out: Serah, the only grand-daughter of Jacob mentioned by name. Why? That's hard to say; there is little in the Biblical text to warrant her being named. Thus, what seems clear is that she is mentioned *simply because God Himself knew her by name*.

*What will we be discussing?*

Some families are big into family trees; others are not so interested. But most people know what a "tree" is. And what typically gets mentioned or noticed in the tree are the "significant" people. Sure, an extensive tree has to include all of one's ancestors; but when it comes to highlighting what is there, those "of note" are noticed.

When we turn to the genealogy found in Genesis 46, it becomes clear that this is a listing of those who went with Jacob to Egypt. But, on closer inspection, it is a bit more than that. The list includes, for example, the two sons of Perez (46:12) who were not just grandsons of Jacob but who

would have been great-grandsons. The list is not a mere listing of sons or grandsons, but something a bit more. It is not a list of all those who were born to Jacob and his sons before their journey to Egypt, but a listing of the descendants of Jacob who were to later become heads of families among the twelve tribes "of Israel." (And this becomes even clearer when you compare the genealogy found here in Genesis 46 with the one found in Numbers 26--but don't feel you have to work through the one found in Numbers!) We are looking, in some sense, at a table of "family of origin" for the twelve tribes, something that we encounter later as well (as in Exodus 1:1-4).

For the most part, genealogies seem to be incredibly boring and of little real help. But this one must be here for some reason. It clearly sets the stage for the later departure out of the land, helping us see the great growth of the people and helping trace the various family lines. One of the things that makes looking through such a genealogy interesting is to take note of any surprising or out of place detail. And there is at least one in this list.

Serah is named; she is the only grand-daughter of Jacob named. She is found in this list (46:17), as well as the lists found in Numbers 26:46; and 1 Chronicles 7:30. Did she do something that made her famous and notable? Apparently not. There is no apparent biblical warrant for her being included in this genealogy; she just *is*.

What are we to make of this? Unlike many, she is mentioned three times, specifically, by name, in the Scriptures. That is quite remarkable. Apparently, God knows her by name; He has noticed her, even if there is not clear reason for Him to do so. And in that observation, there might come encouragement to us.

It is easy, even when we affirm God's love for us, to conclude that we really don't matter that much to Him. After all, we are just one little insignificant person somewhere in the big mix of things. But God noticed and knew Serah. And, He notices you and knows your name as well.

Jesus told His followers that the hairs on their heads were numbered (Luke 12:7). The living God was *that* attentive to Jesus' followers. He knew who they each were, and had intimate knowledge of each one. We know that the names of those who belong to Jesus are written in God's book (Luke 10:20; Malachi 3:16). God has taken note . . . of you, of me, of each of us, individually. As evidenced in His calling Serah by name and including her in this listing, He knows each of us by name and has a place and a "list" that is dear to Him where each of our names is recorded.

We should take courage, seeing this. God not only notices you, He knows you by name, calls you by name, remembers your name. You, individually, in all your seeming anonymity, are *known by God*.