

Jacob in Egypt

Scripture Reading — Genesis 47:7-12

“The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty. My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers.”

—Genesis 47:9-10 —

Sometimes the hardships of life accumulate on the soul, with resulting bitterness and resentment. When we cannot forgive and move on, we develop soul-destroying grudges. As one writer noted: “Holding a grudge is like drinking poison and then hoping that the other person dies.” The deep desire to see someone suffer ends up as a curse over our own heads.

Jacob had lots of reasons to hold a grudge: his days had been difficult, especially with a recent drought in the land. He might have despaired, letting the bitter bile of resentment gouge his heart. But we find his perspective was quite different.

He framed the “few and difficult” years of his life in the context of a pilgrimage. He knew that life was not just an accumulation of one problem after another but was a journey directed by God himself.

This pilgrim perspective was all the more useful for a man who left his homeland to live in a foreign land, where there was no guarantee of peace.

As Jacob found peace in the prism of life as a pilgrimage, so can we. Whether we move about or stay in one place, God is shaping us, sharpening us, calling us to live for him. Life has its challenges and trials, but we find comfort in the love and care of our heavenly Father.

Prayer

Great Comforter, my life is often difficult. I need your support and power. Please send your Spirit so that I don’t become resentful. Help me to be grateful for your blessings. Amen.

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