

## **Lent Devotional March 18, 2020**

### **Scripture**

Genesis 45:16-28

*16 When the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, "Joseph's brothers have come," Pharaoh and his servants were pleased. 17 Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your animals and go back to the land of Canaan. 18 Take your father and your households and come to me, so that I may give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you may enjoy the fat of the land.' 19 You are further charged to say, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20 Give no thought to your possessions, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'" 21 The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them wagons according to the instruction of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. 22 To each one of them he gave a set of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of garments. 23 To his father he sent the following: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. 24 Then he sent his brothers on their way, and as they were leaving he said to them, "Do not quarrel along the way." 25 So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. 26 And they told him, "Joseph is still alive! He is even ruler over all the land of Egypt." He was stunned; he could not believe them. 27 But when they told him all the words of Joseph that he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 28 Israel said, "Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I must go and see him before I die."*

### **Devotional**

#### **The Rev. Dr. LindaJo H. McKim '77, Academia (1994)**

Earlier in Genesis, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers and openly wept as he asked whether Jacob, his father was still alive. He also offered words of forgiveness and reconciliation: "Do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5).

When the members of Pharaoh's household heard of Joseph's actions and reported the incident to Pharaoh, he told Joseph to send his brothers home with gifts and an invitation for Jacob and his household to move to Egypt. The hungry, poverty-stricken people of Israel are now to be blessed through the migration of Jacob's family. God has chosen to bless this family and through Pharaoh brings about the needed reconciliation.

Lent is a time of repentance and forgiveness. During this time, the messages of forgiveness and reconciliation are ones we need to hear and experience as well. The overwhelming forgiveness demonstrated by Joseph is a paradigm of true forgiveness. A forgiveness that remembers in a new way the hurts and pains of the past. A forgiveness that can lead to reconciliation and new life and to a blessed Easter morning.

### **Prayer**

Forgiving God, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, you offer us an opportunity to be reconciled to one another and to you. During this Lenten season, urge us to seek reconciliation in our personal lives and to work for forgiveness and reconciliation throughout the world. Amen.