

VAYIGASH (GENESIS 44:18-47:27)

The Stimulus Package

2009 · Rabbi Yerachmiel Sepowitz

The Egyptian economy was a shambles. Joseph rose to power by correctly interpreting the Pharaoh's dream. (See "I Have a Dream") G-d sent seven years of plenty, to be followed by seven years of unprecedented famine. Joseph advised to Pharaoh to put a wise man in charge of coordinating savings during the good years, so that Egypt would be able to survive during the bad years. Joseph got the job.

Joseph's elevation worked out well for his father and brothers. G-d had decreed that the Nation of Israel was to spend many years as slaves in Egypt, after which G-d would send Moses to lead us to freedom. In order to be taken out of Egypt, first we would have to get there.

Since there was no food in the land of Canaan, Jacob's sons did their food shopping in Egypt. As a result of the fact that their brother Joseph was already there, and in charge, they managed to survive the bad years under his royal patronage.

Joseph saved more than his brothers. He saved his country.

There was no bread... Joseph gathered all the money that was to be found in the Land of Egypt... through the provisions that they purchased. Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's palace...and when the money was gone... all the Egyptians came to Joseph, saying, "give us bread..."

So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in return...

They came to him in the next year and said... "Nothing is left...acquire us and our land for bread; and we -- with our land -- will become slaves to Pharaoh."

Thus Joseph acquired all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field...and the land became Pharaoh's...

Joseph said, "Today I have acquired you with your land for Pharaoh...at the ingathering of the harvests you will give a fifth to Pharaoh..."

...They said, "You have saved our lives. May we find favor in your eyes, my lord, and we will be slaves to Pharaoh." (Exodus, 47:13-25)

Pharaoh took over everything. He now owned a 20% interest in every farm in Egypt. And how did the Egyptians react to the news? They welcomed it! ---*"We will be slaves to Pharaoh."*

THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS ...

... the beginning of slavery is a government bailout! :-)

Have a great Shabbos.

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