

Putting Back Corn

“And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much . . .” (Gen. 41:49).

Since we live in a secluded neighborhood, every fall our family enjoys watching the squirrels gather up the acorns in our yard. They are preparing for the cold days, the bad weather, the ice and the snow in winter months. Although they will not be able to get out of their nests in those times, they will have food to eat because they planned for the days ahead.

The interpretation of Pharaoh’s dream declared there would be seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. Exalted as the agricultural leader in Egypt, Joseph began to prepare the soil and plant the seed. In the first seven years “the earth brought forth by handfuls” (41:47), and Joseph gathered “very much” corn and stored it up for the coming lean years (41:49).

In the seven years of famine, when the people cried for bread “Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians” (41:56). Not only did the Egyptians come to buy corn, but “all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn” (41:57). Because Joseph had put back corn he was a blessing to the needy people. Surely there are some special lessons for us in this story.

If we are to be a blessing to others in their hours of need, we must make preparations! The fields of our lives must be plowed, the fallow ground must be broken up. We must be very selective in the seed we choose and diligent in the planting of it. Another concern will be fertilizing the crop—not too much and not too little. Also we must not forget to clean out the storehouses of our hearts and minds so we can store what will be harvested.

If we are to be a blessing to others in their hours of need, we must work faithfully in the fields! The seed that is sown must be attended. If we expect it to come up we must keep the birds out of the fields. As the corn grows, we must be found hoeing and pulling up the weeds. There may be a great need for irrigation—the corn will not produce without water. While we work, of course, we must remember that our “labor is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58). Our work will be rewarded.

If we are to be a blessing to others in their hours of need, we must reap, store, and share what has been produced! The crops must not rot in the fields. That which the Lord has blessed us with must be shared with others. Through our Bible study, meditation, prayer, and self-denial, we will have corn to give to hungry souls around us. Through our stewardship the Lord may even let us give corn to those in other countries. Oh, let us put back corn now to help others in the days ahead.