

“But, Jacob had some further duties, as head of the clan, to perform before he passed. He had to transfer the rights he possessed as leader and ruler of the family of Israel along with being the possessor of its wealth, over to the one who would carry on. That is, the first-born rights had to be transferred to the one who would be the next leader of Israel; and along with it, blessings and instructions not only to the next leader of Israel, but to all 12 of his sons. And, what Jacob does next, but hours and days before his death, is quite dramatic and has the most serious, far-reaching, even eternal, consequences for US.

“I cannot find the words to stress enough that for us to fill with meaning the remainder of the Torah as well as the whole of the Old Testament, we must grasp the significance of the events about to unfold in the last days of Jacob’s life.”

- Jacob sensed his own demise and asked to be buried in the land of promise. This shows his faith in God's promises. With the death of Jacob (**Israel**), the era of the Patriarchs comes to a close.

Conclusion:

1. God is keeping the Covenant made with Abraham.
2. The story has unfolded through Isaac and now Jacob.
3. Israel will grow as a nation in Egypt for several centuries and then will start toward the land promised to Abraham.
4. God's key men developed faith in His promises and finally Israel was able to take the land of Promise from those residents who had become exceedingly wicked.

GENESIS CHAPTERS 46-47

46-47 Gen NLT-C

By Charles Dailey © 2014 NLV CPS
Updated 12/30/2020 Printed 2/18/2021

Genesis Previously

Jacob acquired both the family birthright and family blessing.

Then Jacob left Canaan to marry. He saw a stairway to heaven.

Jacob married Leah, then Rachel. He acquired property.

Jacob returns to Canaan, Laban pursues, but makes agreement

Jacob reconciles with his brother Esau.

The Dinah incident, Jacob renamed Israel, Rachel dies.

Joseph sold into Egypt. Tamar outwits Judah.

Joseph imprisoned, interprets dreams for inmates.

**Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams
and is elevated to be second in charge of Egypt.**

Jacob's sons are sent to Egypt twice.

Joseph reveals his identity and wants Jacob to move to Egypt.

The promise to Abraham has been passed through single families until now. Here the promise expands to include Jacob’s sons as well. If the greater family remains in Canaan, they will intermarry with the locals and contaminate the family with idolatry. Instead, God moves them to Egypt and to an area apart from the main Egyptian population. But Jacob is not certain that God wants him to move the family to Egypt.

JACOB AND HIS FAMILY MOVE TO EGYPT

(46:1) So Jacob set out for Egypt with all his possessions. And when he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father, Isaac. (2) During the night God spoke to him in a vision. "Jacob! Jacob!" he called. "Here I am," Jacob replied. (3) "I am God, the God of your father," the voice said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make your family into a great nation. (4) I will go with you down to Egypt, and I will bring you back again. You will die in Egypt, but Joseph will be with you to close your eyes."

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- The altar where Jacob **sacrificed** may have been built by **Isaac**. Genesis 26:25. This is the Lord's final communication with **Jacob**. **Jacob** had a history of **fear**, so the Lord said it was okay to go to **Egypt**. The Lord would go with the family. His domain did not stop at the border. **God** promised a rapid growth in the families.
 - **Closing eyes** at death. His passing would be peaceful and with **Joseph** present. He would die among his loved ones. What, then, could be more reassuring to Jacob than to know his beloved son **Joseph** would be at his side when he dies? Every human being dies. What distinguishes one person's death from another's is *how* they die.

(5) So Jacob left Beersheba, and his sons took him to Egypt. They carried him and their little ones and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh had provided for them. (6) They also took all their livestock and all the personal belongings they had acquired in the land of Canaan. So Jacob and his entire family went to Egypt— (7) sons and grandsons, daughters and granddaughters—all his descendants.

- **Tom Bradford** makes the point that all went to **Egypt**. None were left behind. Note that the **daughters** and **granddaughters** were not counted.

THE CENSUS OF THE FAMILY - SONS OF LEAH-

(8) These are the names of the descendants of Israel—the sons of Jacob—who went to Egypt: Reuben was Jacob's oldest son. (9) The sons of Reuben were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. (10) The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul. (Shaul's mother was a Canaanite woman.) (11) The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. (12) The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (though Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. (13) The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron. (14) The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. (15) These were the sons of Leah and Jacob

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- Another hint of Moses' writing is seen in verse 26 where the writer speaks of a practice that is **still in effect**.

ISRAEL SETTLES IN GOSHEN AND PROSPERS

(27.) Meanwhile, the people of Israel settled in the region of Goshen in Egypt. There they acquired property, and they were fruitful, and their population grew rapidly. (28) Jacob lived for seventeen years after his arrival in Egypt, so he lived 147 years in all.

- Jacob lived long enough to hold his grandchildren and great-grandchildren -- lots of them.

JACOB WANTS TO BE BURIED IN THE PROMISED LAND

(29) As the time of his death drew near, Jacob called for his son Joseph and said to him, "Please do me this favor. Put your hand under my thigh and swear that you will treat me with unfailing love by honoring this last request: Do not bury me in Egypt. (30) When I die, please take my body out of Egypt and bury me with my ancestors." So Joseph promised, "I will do as you ask." (31) "Swear that you will do it," Jacob insisted. So Joseph gave his oath, and Jacob bowed humbly at the head of his bed.

- The people of **Israel** had lived as nomads, but now became dirt farmers. They had a high birthrate. **Tom Bradford** writes:

"Now we see that Jacob would live 17 years in Egypt before he died at the age of 147. Jacob, the last patriarch, would be the only one to die on foreign soil.

"But, before he died, when he knew his time was near, Jacob called Joseph to his side and made him promise not to leave Jacob buried in the sands of Egypt, but that his remains be returned to the Promised Land. Jacob had no need to worry if this promise would be carried out, because before he had arrived in Egypt, God had assured Jacob that this wish would be granted.

- The next request for **food** came to Joseph. Now the farmers had no money and no animals, so they offered their **land**. There must have been an association of farmers with a spokesman speaking for them. Joseph again had a solution:

(20) So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. All the Egyptians sold him their fields because the famine was so severe, and soon all the land belonged to Pharaoh. (21) As for the people, he made them all slaves, from one end of Egypt to the other. (22) The only land he did not buy was the land belonging to the priests. They received an allotment of food directly from Pharaoh, so they didn't need to sell their land.

- **Joseph**, as a government official, bought all of the **land** in exchange for grain for food, the exception being the land owned by the government-supported pagan **priests**.

THE EGYPTIANS FARMERS BECOME SHARECROPPERS

(23.) Then Joseph said to the people, "Look, today I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. I will provide you with seed so you can plant the fields. (24) Then when you harvest it, one-fifth of your crop will belong to Pharaoh. You may keep the remaining four-fifths as seed for your fields and as food for you, your households, and your little ones." (25) "You have saved our lives!" they exclaimed. "May it please you, my lord, to let us be Pharaoh's servants." (26) Joseph then issued a decree still in effect in the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh should receive one-fifth of all the crops grown on his land. Only the land belonging to the priests was not given to Pharaoh.

- **Joseph** expected a good year for crops and provided grain for **seed**. The Egyptians were reduced to sharecroppers. They farmed the government **land** and paid 20% of the produce from what had been their **land**. The people were genuinely appreciative of what Joseph had done to **save** their **lives**.

who were born in Paddan-aram, in addition to their daughter, Dinah. The number of Jacob's descendants (male and female) through Leah was thirty-three.

- Notice in verse 10 the marriage to a Canaanite. This risk was a reason to leave Canaan.
- **Leah** had tried to win **Jacob's** love by having babies.

THE SONS OF ZILPAH, LEAH'S SERVANT

(16) The sons of Gad were Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. (17) The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Their sister was Serah. Beriah's sons were Heber and Malkiel. (18) These were the sons of Zilpah, the servant given to Leah by her father, Laban. The number of Jacob's descendants through Zilpah was sixteen.

THE SONS OF RACHEL

(19) The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin. (20) Joseph's sons, born in the land of Egypt, were Manasseh and Ephraim. Their mother was Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, the priest of On. (21) Benjamin's sons were Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. (22) These were the sons of Rachel and Jacob. The number of Jacob's descendants through Rachel was fourteen.

- We must note that this genealogy was added after the time of writing of the main narrative because it includes children that may not have been born yet.
- Observe that only **Rachel** is named as a **wife**. She is the one whom Jacob loved intensely.

THE SONS OF BILHAH, RACHEL'S SERVANT

(23) The son of Dan was Hushim. (24) The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. (25) These were the sons of Bilhah, the servant given to Rachel by her father, Laban. The number of Jacob's descendants through Bilhah was seven.

CENSUS TOTALS

(26) The total number of Jacob's direct descendants who went with him to Egypt, not counting his sons' wives, was sixty-six. (27) In addition, Joseph had two sons who were born in Egypt. So altogether, there were seventy members of Jacob's family in the land of Egypt.

- The count of **seventy** is uncertain. The standard Hebrew text says 70, but the Greek translation says 75. Also Stephen said 75 when speaking before the Sanhedrin. These men would be experts on the details. Acts 7:14. It is curious how often the number 70 occurs with the work of God.
 - Seventy nations of the world are listed in Genesis 10.
 - Seventy elders are mentioned in Numbers 11:16.
 - Seventy years of captivity in Babylon was the punishment of Judah (2 Chronicles 36:21).
 - A life is 70 years. (Psalms 90:10).
 - Seventy weeks were determined for Israel in which to finish the transgression (Daniel 9:24).
 - Seventy translators produced the Septuagint.
 - The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy members.
 - Jesus sent out the "seventy" (Luke 10:1).
- **Tom Bradford** argues that more than 70 moved to Egypt. "It is very likely that there were WELL more than 70 individuals that went to Egypt because genealogies and censuses generally ONLY count the males of the population.

[Note by **Charles**: That males were counted in a census is seen in Luke 2:4: **Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.** (NASB) Because it was a Roman census, Mary was also counted.]

The 66 males mentioned in the genealogy of Genesis 46 are an example of this tradition. There would have

- The city of **Rameses** was not built until later. This shows the mark of Moses as the editor of the narration. **Rameses** was a city in his time. Exodus 1:11.

EGYPTIANS RUN OUT OF MONEY

(13) Meanwhile, the famine became so severe that all the food was used up, and people were starving throughout the lands of Egypt and Canaan. (14) By selling grain to the people, Joseph eventually collected all the money in Egypt and Canaan, and he put the money in Pharaoh's treasury. (15) When the people of Egypt and Canaan ran out of money, all the Egyptians came to Joseph. "Our money is gone!" they cried. "But please give us food, or we will die before your very eyes!"

- The government became immensely wealthy. The population asked **Joseph** for **food** stored in government warehouses, but they had no **money**. Joseph had a plan:

(16) Joseph replied, "Since your money is gone, bring me your livestock. I will give you food in exchange for your livestock." (17) So they brought their livestock to Joseph in exchange for food. In exchange for their horses, flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and donkeys, Joseph provided them with food for another year.

- The Egyptians gave up any **livestock** to the government. The title of the **livestock** passed to the Pharaoh. It is likely the farmers retained the actual animals.

(18) But that year ended, and the next year they came again and said, "We cannot hide the truth from you, my lord. Our money is gone, and all our livestock and cattle are yours. We have nothing left to give but our bodies and our land. (19) Why should we die before your very eyes? Buy us and our land in exchange for food; we offer our land and ourselves as slaves for Pharaoh. Just give us grain so we may live and not die, and so the land does not become empty and desolate."

“In a magnanimous gesture of friendship befitting of royalty, Pharaoh offers the Israelites the land of Goshen. And, further befitting of royalty, Pharaoh does NOT respond to these lowly Hebrew shepherds, he turns to Joseph and gives his reply.”

JACOB MEETS PHARAOH

(7) Then Joseph brought in his father, Jacob, and presented him to Pharaoh. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh. (8) "How old are you?" Pharaoh asked him. (9) Jacob replied, "I have traveled this earth for 130 hard years. But my life has been short compared to the lives of my ancestors." (10) Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh again before leaving his court.

- **Jacob** pronounced God's **blessing** on **Pharaoh** even though **Pharaoh** was a pagan. This is mentioned twice. **Jacob** was downhearted about his life story. Looking back, we see that he had brought most of his troubles on himself.

He achieved much that was worthwhile, but at a price. He cheated to get the family birthright and the family blessing and his brother wanted to kill him. He wanted to marry Rachel but was tricked into marrying Leah first, becoming a polygamist with all of the day-in and day-out conflict that entails.

He became a man of wealth but his father-in-law didn't want him to leave with it. He had pain on every side. As Jacob said, these were **hard years**. He lost Rachel early through childbirth.

(11) So Joseph assigned the best land of Egypt—the region of Rameses—to his father and his brothers, and he settled them there, just as Pharaoh had commanded. (12) And Joseph provided food for his father and his brothers in amounts appropriate to the number of their dependents, including the smallest children.

- **Joseph** gave his family property rights. He also provided food from the government warehouses. Israel had adequate **food** where others suffered.

been at least as many females born, and probably a few more females than males, which is the normal pattern of birth rate. So, it is likely that the full and complete number that went down into Egypt was closer to 150 family members. But, as would have any small nation of that size, they would also own foreign slaves.

In fact, we know from the Scriptures that describe the incident of the slaughter of the residents of Shechem some years earlier (recall, this was revenge by the Israelites for the rape of Jacob's daughter, Dinah, by the King of Shechem's son), that Israel took many woman and children as slaves and concubines. I would be surprised if their number was any less than 200, and probably a bit more.”

JOSEPH MEETS THE CARAVAN

(28) As they neared their destination, Jacob sent Judah ahead to meet Joseph and get directions to the region of Goshen. And when they finally arrived there, (29) Joseph prepared his chariot and traveled to Goshen to meet his father, Jacob. When Joseph arrived, he embraced his father and wept, holding him for a long time. (30) Finally, Jacob said to Joseph, "Now I am ready to die, since I have seen your face again and know you are still alive."

- **Judah**, now the family leader, went ahead to identify the route to **Goshen**. This avoided any mistakes at intersections. **Joseph** met the caravan and hugged his dad whom he had not seen in about 20 years. **Jacob** was content and willing to die. But he had seventeen more years of joy ahead living in Egypt (47:28).
- **Tom Bradford** gives the background for the next few verses:

“In any case, as is common for heads of state like Pharaoh, he has been prepared in advance for the greetings and blessings that he will give to his honored guests Israel the family of the Vizier of Egypt,

Joseph. But, in proper protocol, it is necessary for the Pharaoh himself to pronounce his rulings, face to face with representatives of Israel. So, Joseph also prepares some of his brothers as to what the procedure will be, and tells them exactly what they're to say, so as to accommodate Pharaoh's already decided plan for Israel kind of an Egyptian/ Hebrew Kabuki dance.

And, in the end, the idea is to make it 100% official, that the land of Goshen is the place that will be set aside for Israel."

JOSEPH COACHES HIS BROTHERS ON HOW TO MEET PHARAOH

(31) And Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's entire family, "I will go to Pharaoh and tell him, 'My brothers and my father's entire family have come to me from the land of Canaan. (32) These men are shepherds, and they raise livestock. They have brought with them their flocks and herds and everything they own.'" (33) Then he said, "When Pharaoh calls for you and asks you about your occupation, (34) you must tell him, 'We, your servants, have raised livestock all our lives, as our ancestors have always done.' When you tell him this, he will let you live here in the region of Goshen, for the Egyptians despise shepherds."

- **Joseph** planned for his **brothers** to meet **Pharaoh** and say they are **keepers of livestock**. Since **Egyptians** looked down on this way of earning a living, they would live in an incubator, separate from **Egyptian** society. This would keep God's people isolated from the **Egyptians**. Additionally, the Egyptians detested the Hebrews. Genesis 43:32.
- **James E. Smith** says of **Joseph**, "He wanted his family to be insulated as much as possible from the evil influences of Egyptian culture." This is a great lesson for us.

FIVE BROTHERS MEET PHARAOH

(47:1) Then Joseph went to see Pharaoh and told him, "My father and my brothers have arrived from the land of Canaan. They have come with all their flocks and herds and possessions, and they are now in the region of Goshen." (2) Joseph took five of his brothers with him and presented them to Pharaoh. (3) And Pharaoh asked the brothers, "What is your occupation?" They replied, "We, your servants, are shepherds, just like our ancestors. (4) We have come to live here in Egypt for a while, for there is no pasture for our flocks in Canaan. The famine is very severe there. So please, we request permission to live in the region of Goshen."

- The **brothers** formally asked for land in **Goshen** for grazing. The Egyptians did not like shepherding, so Joseph was able to settle his greater family in a portion of Egypt away from the population centers. This would greatly lessen the temptation for them to join in the national idolatry. **Burton Coffman** observes: "This matter of the Hebrews being unacceptable to Egyptians socially, due to their occupation, must be seen as precisely one of the reasons why God moved them into that situation. Simeon and Judah, perhaps others, of the Twelve Sons had already broken over the boundary in the marriage of Canaanite wives (pagans). And God's answer to that was simply the placement of them in a situation where intermarriage with the Egyptians would have been very difficult."

(5) Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Now that your father and brothers have joined you here, (6) choose any place in the entire land of Egypt for them to live. Give them the best land of Egypt. Let them live in the region of Goshen. And if any of them have special skills, put them in charge of my livestock, too."

- **Goshen** was offered by **Pharaoh** and he even offered work as keepers of his **livestock**. **Egypt** was primarily agricultural - farming. **Tom Bradford** notes Pharaoh's response: