

Genesis 46-48

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 43

Ten of Jacob's sons return to Egypt to buy food and with a present to give to "the man" [Joseph]

- They return this time with Benjamin

- They are brought to Joseph's house where he becomes emotional upon seeing Benjamin

- A feast is made for the brothers

Chapter 44

Joseph sets up his brothers to learn a lesson of their own cruelty

- He instructs his servant to fill their sacks with food, but also returns their money and his 'cup'

- The cup is found in Benjamin's sack....he will be a slave in Egypt

- Judah defends them while telling 'the man' that their father will die if Benjamin does not return

Chapter 45

Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers (who were dismayed)

- He tells his brothers it was God's plan for them to come to Egypt 'to save your lives'

- They are to return and bring their father and families back 'to the best of the land in Egypt'

Genesis 45:28

²⁸Then Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

¹So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to **Beersheba**, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

Beersheba, on the southern border of Canaan—Jacob stops to seek God's blessing before journeying on to Egypt

The last time in scripture God speaks to one of the patriarchs:

²Then **God spoke to Israel** in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am."

"Israel" used as a name refers to the spiritual

"Jacob" used as a name refers to the physical

➤ the repetition of the name indicates urgency

Jacob's response: "Here I am"—attitude to do what God wants him to

³So He said, “I *am* God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there.

⁴I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up *again*; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.”

v. 4 “I will bring you up again”—looking to the exodus and a promise of Jacob’s burial in Canaan

“Joseph will put his hands on your eyes”—
Joseph will attend his father’s needs at the moment of his death



“hand on your eyes”—refers to birthright

(JFB) “usually reserved to the **eldest** or dearest member of the family; and this implied that he should henceforth enjoy, without interruption, the society of that favorite son”

200 mile journey to Egypt

Beersheba



Jacob had gone to the familiar site that was important to both Abraham and Isaac: **Beersheba**, where he worshipped God before going on to Egypt

⁵Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

⁶So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him.

⁷His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he **brought with him to Egypt.**

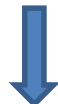
v. 7 “all his descendents he brought with him to Egypt”

Jacob's journey to Egypt began a four hundred year sojourn away from the promised land of Canaan

v. 8-27 A listing of the **descendents of Jacob—the heads of the families in Israel**

(NSB) “The listing of the family of Jacob is not only an important historical document, but also a source of pride. From this family would come the whole nation of Israel...”

The order of the sons of Jacob is given according to their birth mothers...”



⁸Now these *were* the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt:
Reuben *was* Jacob's firstborn.

⁹The sons of **Reuben** *were* Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

Reuben, the firstborn lost his right because of his sin with Bilhah [35:22]

¹⁰The sons of Simeon *were* [£]Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, [£]Jachin, [£]Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman.

v. 10 "the son of a Canaanite woman"

(NSB) "The phrase indicates that marrying a Canaanite was unusual in Jacob's family. Only Simeon and Judah married Canaanite women."

¹¹The sons of Levi *were* Gershon, **Kohath**, and Merari.

(NSB) "The sons of **Kohath** in particular became the founders of the priestly family, from which **Aaron and Moses** descended" [Ex. 6: 20-25]

Moses was born approximately 350 years after Kohath's time

¹²The sons of **Judah** were Er, Onan, Shelah, **Perez**, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan).

The sons of Perez were **Hezron** and Hamul.

Hezron (Judah's grandson)

(Aid to Bible Understanding)

“Son of Perez and family head of the Judean ‘Hezronites’; ancestor of King David and of Jesus Christ.....Hezron is listed among the seventy ‘souls of the house of Jacob who came into the land of Egypt’ and therefore must have died in that land”

Matthew 1: 3

“Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot **Hezron**, and Hezron begot **Ram**.”

Ram

(Aid to Bible Understanding)

“A descendent of Judah through Perez and Hezron who lived while Israel was in Egypt....Ram's genealogy, leading to the Davidic line....was an ancestor of Jesus”

¹³The sons of Issachar *were* Tola, [£]Puvah, [£]Job, and Shimron.

¹⁴The sons of Zebulun *were* Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

¹⁵These *were* the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, *were* thirty-three.

¹⁶The sons of Gad *were* [£]Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, [£]Ezbon, Eri, [£]Arodi, and Areli.

¹⁷The sons of Asher *were* Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah *were* Heber and Malchiel.

¹⁸These *were* the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons.

¹⁹The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife, *were* Joseph and Benjamin.

²⁰And to **Joseph** in the land of Egypt *were* **born Manasseh and Ephraim**, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.

²¹The sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, [£]Huppim, and Ard.

²²These *were* the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all.

²³The son of Dan *was* [£]Hushim.

²⁴The sons of Naphtali *were* [£]Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and [£]Shillem.

²⁵These *were* the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: seven persons in all.

²⁶All the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob's sons' wives, *were* sixty-six persons in all.

²⁷And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt *were* two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.

(NSB) "The total is sixty-six, and when Jacob, Joseph and Joseph's two sons are added, the grand total is seventy. The number did not include the wives of Jacob's sons.

Ancient Israelites regarded the number 70 as a token of God's special blessing on them"

²⁸Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him *the way* to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen.

v. 28 (NSB) "Jacob treated Judah as the leader among the brothers. Normally the firstborn, Reuben, would have been expected to lead"

²⁹So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

Jacob and Joseph had not seen each other for 22 years

³⁰And Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you *are* still alive.”

v. 30 (NSB) “Jacob’s reunion with his son Joseph was the crowning even of his long life.
Jacob lived for 17 more years “ [47: 28]

(BKC) “Jacob was satisfied to see his son alive, for he was the one designated as the heir...so this was more than a family reunion; it was a confirmation that God’s promised blessing was intact”

³¹Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

³²And the men *are* shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'

³³So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?'

³⁴that you shall say, 'Your servants' **occupation has been with livestock** from our youth even till now, both we *and* also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination to the Egyptians."

Joseph stresses they tell Pharaoh that they work with cattle (livestock)

(NSB) "These verses show Joseph's leadership ability. He accomplished his goals by maintaining a genuinely deferential attitude to those in authority, by skill in making suggestions, and by a knowledge of the customs of the people."

v. 34 "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians"

(New Bible Commentary) "Shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians probably reflects a common distrust of nomadic peoples by urban dwellers"

(JFB) "by ranking these [shepherds] in the lowest class of society"

¹Then Joseph went and told Pharaoh, and said, “My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they *are* in the land of Goshen.”

“land of Goshen”—eastern part of the Nile Delta region—it is well watered and ideal for shepherds

²And he took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.

³Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What *is* your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, “**Your servants *are* shepherds**, both we *and* also our fathers.”

v. 2 “**five** men from among his brothers”

(Barnes) “a favorite number in Egypt”

(JFB) “Jewish traditions say that Zebulon, Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher were presented”

v. 3 “your servants are shepherds”—they were blunt, not diplomatic like Joseph

(Zondervan Bible Backgrounds Commentary)

“By indentifying themselves as Shepherds Jacob’s clan offers assurance that they are not coming to take Egyptian farmland or get involved in politics”

⁴And they said to Pharaoh, “We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine *is* severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen.”

(Expositors) “the Egyptians hated shepherds and thus would allow the Israelites to dwell off by themselves in the land of Goshen

⁵Then **Pharaoh spoke** to Joseph, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you.

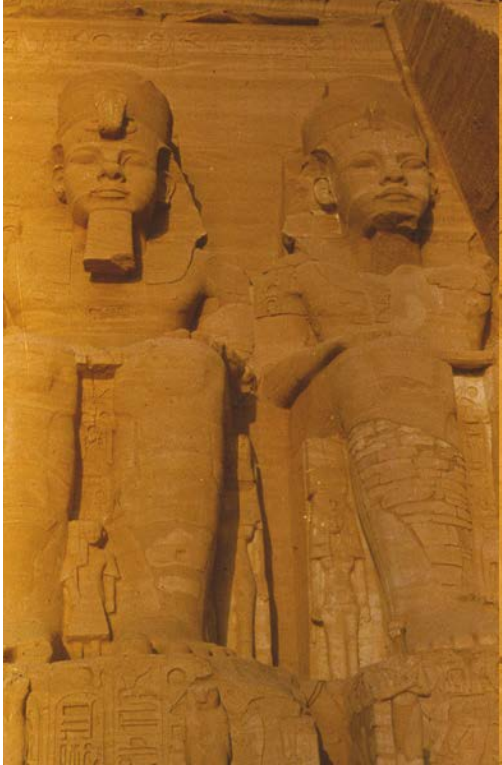
⁶The land of Egypt *is* before you. **Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land;** let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know *any* competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.”

(Archaeology and the Old Testament, Unger)

“The family of Jacob, settled in Egypt in the land of Goshen, indentified with the area around *Wadi Tumilat* in the eastern part of the delta of the Nile...

In both ancient and modern times the area around this *Wadi*, especially to the north of it, was one of the richest parts of Egypt.”

Contrast: the welcoming Pharaoh of Joseph’s time...with the Pharaohs of oppression in Exodus....something happens in history to change... this besides time



Pharaoh welcomes Jacob

(A History of the Old Testament, Eugene Merrill)

“**Sesotris III**, one of the major figures of the Middle Kingdom, would have been the ruler who **invited Jacob and his sons to settle in the eastern Delta**, the garden spot of Egypt”

(The Bible is History, Ian Wilson)

“That there was an Asiatic chieftain called **Jacob**, who established himself in Canaan during the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, and who went on to rule over the northern part of Egypt, is supported by independent and historical archaeological evidence.

Throughout Egypt and the Sudan numerous scarabs, or beetle-like seals, have been found, inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs: Y’kob-HR. This name is now accepted as an Egyptianisation of the West Semitic Yaqub-Haddu, or ‘Jacob’, while other hieroglyphs unmistakably indicate that this Jacob was some kind of ruler.”

⁷Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob **blessed Pharaoh.**

⁸Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How old *are you?*” (Egyptians lived shorter lives JFB)

⁹And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The days of the years of my **pilgrimage** *are* one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.”

¹⁰So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. (also a salutation JFB)

Jacob blessed Pharaoh twice [v.7, 10]

(Word) “Jacob, who in his youth cheated to obtain blessing, is now the source of blessing...”

(Word) “Because the Pharaoh has acknowledged Jacob’s special status by receiving him graciously and honoring his sons, he and his countrymen may expect to find blessing through Jacob and his descendents.

The most immediate fulfillment of this blessing is Joseph’s rescue of Egypt from the effects of famine”

¹¹And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them **a possession in the land of Egypt**, in the **best of the land**, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

¹²Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in *their* families.

v. 11 "land of Rameses"

(New Bible Commentary) "The district of Rameses, near the city of Rameses [Ex. 1:14;12:37] was apparently another title for Goshen"

¹³Now *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.

¹⁴And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

¹⁵So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."

The Egyptians exchange their money [silver] for grain, until there was no more money to buy food

¹⁶Then Joseph said, “Give your livestock, and I will give you *bread* for your livestock, if the money is gone.”

¹⁷So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread *in exchange* for all their livestock that year.

After the money was gone the Egyptians traded all of their livestock for grain/bread

¹⁸When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands.

¹⁹Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give *us* seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate.”

Now they sell their land and themselves to the state for grain

²⁰Then Joseph **bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh**; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the **land became Pharaoh's**.

(The Bible is History, Ian Wilson)

“It was precisely In Senwosret III's (Sesostris') time, uniquely in all Egyptian history, that the great estates **formerly owned by Egypt's nobles passed to the monarchy**”

²¹And as for the people, he [£]moved them into the cities, from *one* end of the borders of Egypt to the *other* end.

²²Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *allotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

²³Then Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is seed for you*, and you shall sow the land.

²⁴And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

(BKC) “Once the land belonged to Pharaoh, Joseph instructed the people to **plant seed**, which he gave them. His only stipulation was that Pharaoh must receive a fifth of all the produce.

In a word, the people survived but they (except the priests) were in bondage to Pharaoh”

²⁵So they said, “You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.”

²⁶And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the land of the priests only, *which* did not become Pharaoh’s.

Meanwhile the Israelites prospered in Goshen and were growing as a nation (God’s purpose)



²⁷So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and **grew and multiplied exceedingly**.

²⁸And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

²⁹When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt,

³⁰but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.” And he said, “I will do as you have said.”

³¹Then he said, “Swear to me.” And he swore to him. So Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.

v. 29 “put your hand under my thigh” (Abraham 24:2)

(Word) “Since the OT particularly associates God with life [circumcision being a mark of the covenant], placing ones hand under the thigh made an intimate association with some fundamental religious ideas”

v. 31 “bowed himself on the head of the bed”

(JFB) “Oriental beds being...simply mats spread on the floor, or divans raised a little from it. The meaning is that having been sitting upon it, he turned himself, and bowed in the attitude of devotional reverence, with his face towards the place where his head was usually laid”

Chapter 48

The blessing on Ephraim and Manasseh

¹Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father *is* sick”; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

²And Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph is coming to you”; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.

Joseph’s sons mentioned in order of their age

³Then Jacob said to Joseph: “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me,

⁴and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a **multitude** of people, and give this land to your descendants after you *as* an everlasting possession.’

The blessings that God promised to Jacob [35:11-12]—he is now prepared to pass them on

⁵And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, **are mine**; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

⁶Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.

Jacob adopted Joseph's sons as his own

(BKC) "Jacob gave the birthright to Joseph by elevating Ephraim and Manasseh to the rank of firstborn sons, thus giving them a double portion of the inheritance"

(BKC) "Jacob's elevation of the sons of Joseph was prompted by his recollection of Rachel, his favorite wife, who died in the land of Canaan"



⁷But as for me, when I came from Padan, **Rachel** died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when *there was* but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

⁸Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who *are* these?"

⁹Joseph said to his father, "They *are* my sons, whom God has given me in this *place*." And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them."

"I will bless them" (Ephraim and Manasseh)

"Blessing" is used 39 times in the life of Jacob [27-50]

¹⁰Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, *so that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.

¹¹And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"

Jacob had thought Joseph was dead...but now he knows the promises of God are being fulfilled because he sees Joseph's sons

¹²So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.

¹³And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and **Manasseh** with his left hand toward **Israel's right hand**, and brought *them* near him.

(Word) "Throughout scripture the right hand side is regarded as the place of honor and blessing"
[Deut. 11: 29; Psalm 110: 1; Mat. 25: 33; Heb. 1: 3]

Jacob deliberately puts his right hand on the younger brother Ephraim

¹⁴Then Israel stretched out his **right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger**, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was* the firstborn.

Joseph fully expects Jacob to put his right hand on the older, Manasseh, but it is not in God's plans and Jacob crossed his hand so that Ephraim the younger received the firstborn blessing

Younger blessed instead of the older
(BKC) "For four consecutive generations this reversed pattern was followed: Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Joseph over Reuben, Ephraim over Manasseh"

¹⁵And he **blessed Joseph**, and said: “God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,

The blessing of Joseph passes on to **his** sons
And **his** name [**Israel**] is passed to them as well

¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, **Bless** the lads; **Let my name be named upon them**, And the **name of my fathers** Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a **multitude** in the midst of the earth.”

“The Angel” (Heb. *Malak*) = Angel of the Lord
➤ Preincarnate Jesus Christ


“multitude”—repeated for a second time [v.4]

“**Let my name be named upon them**”—because of this many of the later references in the prophetic books to ‘Jacob’ or ‘Israel’ refer primarily to the descendents of Ephraim and Manasseh

¹⁷Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his **right hand on the head of Ephraim**, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

¹⁸And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this *one is* the firstborn; put your right hand on his head."

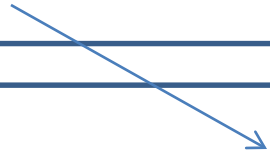

Key aspect of the birthright promise:



Genesis 35:11

¹¹Also God said to him: "I *am* God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; **a nation** and a **company of nations** shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.

¹⁹But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be **great**; but truly his **younger brother** shall be **greater** than he, and his descendants shall become **a multitude of nations**."



Great single nation: United States

Multitude of nations: British empire

v. 20 Sums up the entire act of the blessing:

²⁰So he blessed them that day, saying, “By you Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!’” And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers.

Jacob’s faith that God will bring his descendents back to the promised land [in Canaan]

²²Moreover I have given to you **one portion above your brothers**, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”

“One portion above your brothers”

➤ A double portion of the blessings to fall to the people of Joseph

“which I took from the land of the Amorite with my sword and bow”

(Keil and Delitzch) “As the perfect is used prophetically, transposing the future to the present as already being accomplished, so the words must be also be understood prophetically, as denoting that Jacob would wrest the land from the Amorites, not his own person, but in that of his posterity”

Lessons

God honors faithfulness

Joseph's faithfulness resulted in the family of Israel being saved and brought to the best of the land in Egypt

(LASB) "The faithfulness of Joseph affected his entire family. When he was put in the pit and in prison, Joseph must have wondered about his future. Instead of despairing, he faithfully obeyed God and did what was right. We may not always see the effects of our faith, but we can be sure that God will honor faithfulness"

"Let my name be named upon them"—the name "**Israel**" to Ephraim and Manasseh

- Birthright promises to Ephraim and Manasseh
- an important key to understanding later biblical prophecies