

The Book of Genesis

Verses 46:1-47:12

September 22, 2019

Genesis 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.*

When Jacob left the land that was promised to him by God, he had to wonder if he was making a huge mistake. If you'll remember back in Genesis 28, God made him a promise.

Genesis 28:13 – ¹³ *At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, "I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants.*

And then He repeated this promise again in Genesis 35:

Genesis 35:12 – ¹² *And I will give you the land I once gave to Abraham and Isaac. Yes, I will give it to you and your descendants after you."*

He could have also remembered the warnings given to Abram and then to Isaac:

Genesis 15:13 – ¹³ *Then the LORD said to Abram, "You can be sure that your descendants will be strangers in a foreign land, where they will be oppressed as slaves for 400 years.*

Genesis 26:2 – ² *The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. ³ Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father.*

We really can't know for sure what Jacob was thinking here but he surely must have been questioning whether he should be leaving the land that God had specifically told Jacob *and* his father *and* his grandfather was for him and his descendants. Was he thinking, "Is this a test to see if I'll remain faithful and wait on God to bring us through this drought rather than rush off to live with a bunch of pagans?" Of course, Jacob did what he always did and what we should always do. He looked to God for the answer. And of course, God answered him.

Genesis 46:2-4 – 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."*

God leaves no room for doubt here that Jacob is to move to Egypt. In and of itself, the action of uprooting the entire family would take a great amount of faith to perform but to Jacob's credit, he doesn't petition God to

let him stay where he was. Sometimes we're asked to leave what is known and comfortable to us and strike out into the unknown. For in doing that, we demonstrate true reliance on God to lead, guide and direct us and we're not just giving lip service.

Genesis 46:5-7 – 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.

Jacob packs up the whole family and their worldly goods and heads about 400 miles away from the Promised Land... Wait! What?

Sometimes, God leads us in a completely different direction than we think we should be headed. Does He make mistakes? Of course not, that's a ridiculous idea! But neither are we guaranteed a fast, straight path to our intended destination. If we want to truly enjoy the life that God gives to us then we need to relax and walk the path we're given to follow. It's often not the destination but the journey that's most important.

Next up, we find the crew manifest of the caravan cruise to Egypt.

Genesis 46:8-27 – 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.*

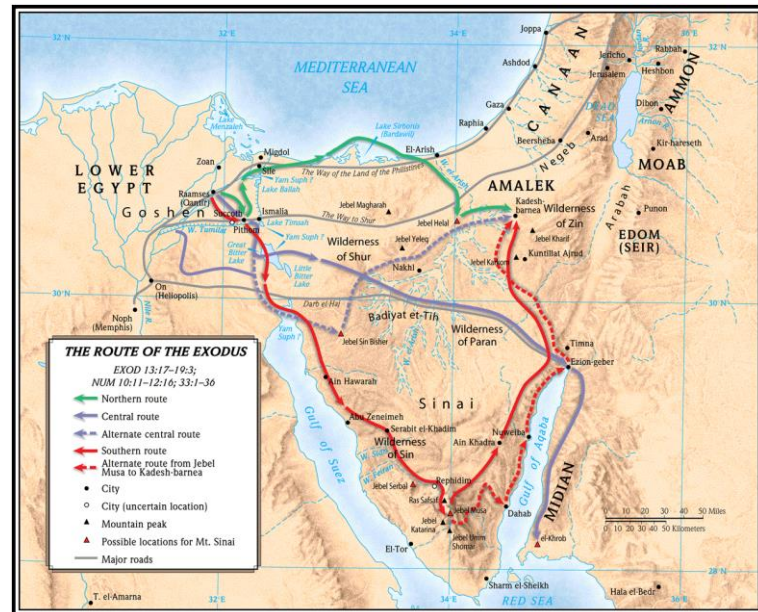
¹⁴ *The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.*

¹⁵ *These were the sons of Leah and Jacob 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.*

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.*



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.*

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.*

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.*

One commentator had this to say about Israel's family at this point:

Like many great works of God, Israel had a slow beginning.

- *From the time God called Abraham, it took at least 25 years to add one son – Isaac.*
- *It took Isaac 60 years to add another son of Israel – Jacob.*
- *It took 50 or 60 years for Jacob to add 12 sons and one daughter.*
- *But in 430 years, Israel would leave Egypt with 600,000 men.*
- *It took this family 215 years to grow from one to 70, but in another 430 years they grew to two million or more.*

Genesis 46:28-30 – 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."*

What a sweet reunion this must have been. But, we've got to wonder what went through the brothers' minds when they saw Jacob and Joseph embrace and weep. Will Joseph tell Jacob the sorted details of what they did? How will Jacob react if he does? Will Joseph seek his revenge against them now that he has them and their families entirely within his realm and under his control?

But, Joseph was above petty revenge or flaunting his success and superiority over his brethren. He just wanted to serve God and take care of his family. This is a good lesson for us in our lives. We should strive to not hold onto hurts and slights inflicted on us by others and then seek to "get even" or even let it affect our attitudes towards them. Rather, we should love them as God loves us all.

Proverbs 20:22 – ²² *Don't say, "I will get even for this wrong." Wait for the Lord to handle the matter.*

Another lesson to be learned here is that with God in our lives, there's really no reason to despair, ever, as God can bring us through any dark time. It's right there in the 23rd Psalm, "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me.*" It doesn't get much worse than that.

In this case, Jacob went from thinking he had lost his two favorite sons from his beloved, deceased wife to getting them both back.

Genesis 46:31-34 – 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 next demonstrated how cunning he could be by posturing to keep his family in a place out of the way and out of view of the Egyptians. He knew that over time, jealousy and strife would surface if they were given prime real estate within the kingdom of Egypt. So, he schemed to ensure that they were settled in a place that was segregated away from the rest of the Egyptians but at the same time was considered some of the best land in Egypt.

Genesis 47:1-4 – *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."

Again, Joseph displays great shrewdness here. He had already told his family that they'd live in Goshen so he had obviously already made up his mind where they would live. He just had to get things arranged.

Once his family had arrived, Joseph took some of his brothers with him to see Pharaoh. Joseph had coached his brothers on precisely what they needed to say. They asked that they be permitted to live in Goshen since they were shepherds.

If you recall, Joseph was second in command only to Pharaoh so it's probable that he could have secured the land in Goshen without having to go through Pharaoh first. But, by working things so that Pharaoh granted them the land, no one could later cause trouble by arguing that Joseph was playing favorites. No one could argue with Pharaoh!

Genesis 47:5-6 – 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."*

Pharaoh displays some shrewdness here, as well. Joseph was the one responsible for alerting Pharaoh to the pending disaster and for actually turning it around for Pharaoh's benefit. What better way to ensure that Joseph stays put by having his entire family there in Egypt with him.

Genesis 47:7-12 – 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.

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.

One can get the feeling that Jacob is looking like a shriveled up old prune here since the first thing we're told that Pharaoh asks Jacob is, "how old are you?" Jacob seems to confirm this thought by answering that he's traveled this earth for 130 **hard** years. However, he was quick to add that his life had been short compared to his ancestors.

So, the main takeaway from today's lesson could be boiled down to one thought. Serve God, go where He leads you, and don't sweat the small stuff (which is everything else).