

Genesis 46:28-47:12 Prosperity and Protection In Egypt

Context: Things have come full circle. Joseph has been revealed to his family. The brothers went back and told Jacob of their experience and brought all the gifts and provisions with them. We were given the list of family that came to Egypt earlier in chapter 46.

Why is coming to Egypt an important part of the story of Genesis?

- It is God's fulfillment of promise to preserve His people and prosper them.
- He told Abraham that He would send his descendants to a foreign nation for 400 years.

I. The Reunion of Jacob and Joseph (28-30)

A. Judah is sent ahead into Goshen (28)

1. Why Judah?

- a. Taken position as leader of the family
- b. Ironic he would take the lead to mediate the reunion when it was he who took the lead role in separating the father and son (37:26ff)

B. Jacob and Joseph Are reunited (29)

- 1. Joseph immediately went to see his family
- 2. He "presented himself" – though he is the higher official
 - a. This is to honor his father
- 3. Joseph falls on his neck and weeps
 - a. This is the 4th time in the narrative that Joseph has wept
 - b. Reminds us of Jesus' parable of the prodigal son

C. Jacob's heart overflows at their reunion (30)

- 1. Now let me die – he is not asking or hoping to die
- 2. His life is complete / satisfied – he is saying it will never be better
 - a. He is reunited with his most beloved son
 - b. His mourning is at an end – the grief of his heart is mended
 - c. Probably can't help but remember Joseph's dreams & God's promises

II. The Preparation To Meet Pharaoh (31-34)

A. Joseph prepares his brothers strategically to meet Pharaoh (31-32)

NOTE: Joseph will use very diplomatic and strategic means to make sure that Pharaoh gives his family the land of Goshen. He will give Pharaoh every clue and prompting to nudge him toward giving the land of Goshen to Israel.

- 1. Joseph will go before them (31a)
- 2. Joseph will mediate for them before Pharaoh (31b-32)
 - a. he will tell Pharaoh the family are shepherds
 - b. he will tell Pharaoh they have always been shepherds
 - c. he will tell Pharaoh they have brought all their flocks and herds with them
 - he wants Pharaoh to know that his family has not designs on being anything other than shepherds
- 3. Joseph is strategizing to benefit his family
 - a. he wants to place them in Goshen
 - b. he wants them to be in position to receive the promise

B. Joseph instructs the brothers what to say before Pharaoh (33-34)

1. They must tell Pharaoh they have always been shepherds
 - a. Notice that Joseph instructs them to say “your servants” have always been...
2. They must tell him that their fathers were shepherds
 - a. so they will not be perceived as a threat to Pharaoh or Egypt
 - b. so that they will be given the land of Goshen
 - Goshen was in Egypt but isolated from the populace in eastern Nile delta
 - there was much grassland there for the herds
 - Pharaoh would give Goshen to them because they were shepherds
 - Shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians
3. Joseph wanted to keep them separate from the Egyptians
 - a. So they would keep their identity and not assimilate in Egyptian culture
 - b. This was important for receiving the promises of God in the future.
 - they will come out of Egypt as a nation unto themselves
 - c. They are the family & people of God – they are not to be consumed into Egypt

III. The Presentation Of The Family Before Pharaoh (47:1-4)

A. Joseph informs Pharaoh his family is in Goshen (1)

1. hopefully since they are already there, Pharaoh would give them Goshen
2. Joseph makes sure to tell Pharaoh they brought all their herds
 - a. All their herds are there – and they are separated from Egypt proper

B. Joseph brings five brothers before Pharaoh (2)

1. Why only 5?
2. Which 5?

C. Joseph’s brothers answer Pharaoh as instructed (3-4)

1. Pharaoh asks their occupation – as Joseph predicted
2. The brothers answer as Joseph instructed (3)
 - a. they are shepherds / their fathers were shepherds
3. The brothers give more information than Joseph instructed (4)
 - a. we have come to sojourn in the land – present themselves as temporary residents
 - b. tell Pharaoh that pastureland is scarce in Canaan
 - c. They ask Pharaoh to give them Goshen
 - d. What was Joseph thinking when they spoke these things?

D. Pharaoh blesses the brothers of Joseph (5-6)

1. Pharaoh is speaking to Joseph here – he is delegating authority to Joseph to grant it.
 - a. the land is before you
 - b. settle your family in the best land – in Goshen
2. Pharaoh offers employment to able herdsmen
 - a. maybe others in this family were blessed as Joseph
 - b. Pharaoh wants to capitalize on their abilities
 - c. Pharaoh seems disposed to treat Joseph’s family with goodness.

IV. The Blessing Of Pharaoh By Jacob (7-9)

A. Joseph’s father is brought before Pharaoh (7)

B. Pharaoh asks Jacob his age

1. Jacob is clearly an old man

2. the elderly were revered as wise
- C. Before Jacob answers he blesses Pharaoh
2. Respectful greeting
 3. demonstration that Jacob is of a higher status before God than Pharaoh
 - a. Hebrew culture has underlying religious significance to blessings
 - b. Jacob is inferior to Pharaoh in rank and status
 - c. Jacob is superior to Pharaoh in age – and status before the true God.
 - d. This is not the norm
 - this is different from Abraham and Isaac's interactions with rulers
 - no record of direct blessing of foreign rulers by patriarchs
 4. This implies Jacob is the superior (Heb 7:7)
 - a. The implication is that the Lord is with Jacob
 - b. The God that saved Egypt through Joseph is with Jacob
- D. Jacob answers Pharaoh's question (9-10)
1. He is 130 years old
 2. He says that his days have been few
 - a. This would have surprised Pharaoh -
 - b. Most Egyptians had far shorter lifespans
 - c. His days are few compared to his fathers
 - Abraham – 175 years
 - Isaac – 180 years
 - Jacob will live 17 more years
 - d. His answer testifies to the favor of God on his life
 3. He says his days have been difficult
 - a. Strife and favoritism from his family
 - b. running from his brother
 - c. Cheated as a servant for years under Laban
 - d. the terrible activities of his sons
 - e. the loss of Joseph and years of mourning
 4. He blesses Pharaoh as he departs
 - a. fulfillment of God's promise – I will bless those who bless you
- V. The Provision For The Family Of God (11-12)
- A. Joseph – the mediator provides for his family
1. they are given possession of land in Egypt
 2. Land of Rameses is Goshen – later called Rameses
 3. Joseph provided all the food they would need
- B. Blessing of God has providentially preserved his people
1. Land and food to prosper and grow
 2. Separate from Egyptians to preserve their identity
 3. Blessed with the best Egypt has to offer
 4. Have a mediator with great power over Egypt.

All this confirms God's promise to Jacob that he would make him a great nation in Egypt (46:3)