



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 75



THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose.

JOSEPH CARES FOR JACOB AND HIS FAMILY

Gen 47:1 "Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. ² And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. ³ And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. ⁴ They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. ⁵ And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: ⁶ The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. ⁷ And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? ⁹ And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. ¹⁰ And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. ¹¹ And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, 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. ¹² And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families."

..... Gen 47:1-12

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Joseph goes to Pharaoh and announces that his father and brethren have arrived. They have brought their flocks, and herds, and all that they possessed, having come out of the land of Canaan. They are in Goshen at the time he reports their arrival to Pharaoh. Apparently being close by, he takes five of his brethren and presented them to Pharaoh for his examination and approval.

As Joseph had said he would, Pharaoh asked them about their occupation. As Joseph had instructed them, they said they were shepherds, even as their fathers had been. They also reported that they had come to sojourn in the land because they had no pasture for their flocks in Canaan. They then asked the king to allow them to dwell in Goshen, which was well suited for their manner of life. Pharaoh addressed Joseph, telling

him to give the family the best of the land, adding that he should make any competent man among them to watch over his own flocks. After presenting Jacob to the king, and after Jacob had blessed him, they then returned to occupy the land in Goshen. Joseph then nourished the families of Jacob proportionately with bread – that is, according to the need of each family, which is God's manner.

Joseph presents some of his family and his father to Pharaoh. Jacob blesses Pharaoh. Pharaoh formalizes their location, and Joseph cares for them— Given O. Blakely

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Jacob and all of his offspring went down into Egypt, seventy in total number. Years later, when they stood on the border of the promised land, the men who were twenty years and upward number, and able to go to war (Num 26:2), had increase remarkably. The total was 601,780 (Num 26:51). **This did not include the women, all of the female offspring, all of the males under twenty years of age, and all of the males twenty and upward who were not able to go to war.** A very conservative estimate would require from two-three million, possibly more, since the Israelites were growing at a phenomenal rate. This circumstance was a work of God, who was preparing them to enter and control the promised land.

Lest we forget, this was all the working of the Lord. God had sent Joseph to Egypt ahead of them, in order to prepare the way and the means for them to be sustained while they waited for the promised deliverance (Psa 105:16-19).

...ed from His revealed
If we fail to see this, our
of Genesis is nothing
ademic exercise and a
We are beholding a type

			#	GOIN G INTO EGYP T	GOING INTO CANAAN
		<i>Shelmites, Pharzites, Zarhites, Hezronites, Hamulites</i>	4		43730
		<i>Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, Shimronites</i>	5		22200
		<i>Sardites, Elonites, Jahleelites</i>	4		
4	JUDAH	<i>Shelmites, Pharzites, Zarhites, Hezronites, Hamulites</i>	5		76500
5	ISSACHAR	<i>Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, Shimronites</i>	4		64300
6	ZEBULUN	<i>Sardites, Elonites, Jahleelites</i>	3		60500
7	GAD	<i>Zephonites, Haggites, Shunites, Oznites, Erites, Arodites, Arelites</i>	7		40500
8	ASHER	<i>Jimnites, Jesuites, Beriites, Heberites, Malchielites</i>	5		53400
9	JOSEPH Thru:	<i>Machirites, Gileadites,</i>	2		
	EPHRAIM	<i>Shuthalhites, Bacharites, Tahanites, Eranites</i>	4		52700
	MANASSEH	<i>Jeezerites, Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Shemidaite, Hephherites,</i>	6		32500
10	BENJAMIN	<i>Belaite, Ashbelites, Ahihamites, Shuphamites, Huphamites, Ardites, Naamites</i>	5		45600
11	DAN	<i>Shuhamites</i>	1		64400
12	NAPHTHALI	<i>Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, Shillemites</i>	4		45400

That would not come for 430 years, 400 of which would be spent under the harsh oppression of Egyptian taskmasters.

This entire episode in the life of Israel must be seen from this higher perspective.

- Joseph was sold by his brothers, but God was with him (Acts 7:9).
- Upon arriving in Egypt he was in the house of Potiphar, as his slave. Potiphar saw that “the Lord was with

him” (Gen 39:2-3).

- Being with Joseph, the Lord blessed Potiphar's house for Joseph's sake, causing him to put Joseph in complete charge of his house (Gen 39:5-6).
- When Joseph was in prison, the Lord was with him, showed mercy to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison, and he put all of the prisoners into Joseph's hand (Gen 39:21-22).
- When he was put in prison unjustly,

"God was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper" (Gen 39:23).

- ➡ In prison, God enabled Joseph to interpret the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker of Pharaoh, who had been imprisoned for offenses, and were now put in Joseph's charge. This prepared the way for Joseph to eventually interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, which were key in the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham (Gen 40:4-19).
- ➡ God delivered Joseph out of all his afflictions (Acts 7:10).
- ➡ God enabled Joseph to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, which resulted in him being made ruler over Egypt (Gen 41:9-45).
- ➡ God *"called for a famine upon the land"* (Psa 105:16a).
- ➡ God *"broke the whole staff of bread"* (Isa 105:16b).
- ➡ God sent Joseph to Egypt before them, to have a posterity for Jacob, and to save much people alive (Gen 45:7).

➡ The *"word of the Lord tried"* Joseph by a period of time in prison, until his word came (Psa 105:19).

➡ God brought Joseph out of prison: *"The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom"* (Psa 105:20-22).

➡ Under Divine supervision, Jacob *"increased his people greatly"* in Egypt, *"the land of Ham"* (Psa 105:24).

It is a principle in Scripture that what the Lord purposes, He does – and none can hinder or stop him in the doing of it (Isa 43:13). It is not that God takes all of the intentions and works of men and makes them serve His purpose. **Rather, it is that His purpose drives, and is made known in, the activities of men.** Joseph said it well when he said to his brothers, *"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but **God meant it unto good**, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"* (Gen 50:20).

There you have the working of the Lord as declared by the apostle Paul: *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose"* (Rom 8:28).

THE POINT OF IT ALL

The point to be seen in all of this is that what God purposes and ordains, **He Himself** carries out. His activity is the **primary** activity, and men's involvement is supervised by Him – without them being mere robots. Although they are willingly involved, and are doing things related to God's purpose, they are apprised, **"it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"** (Phil 2:13).

This is not only true of the calling and involvement of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, it is even more true of God's *"so great salvation"* (Heb 2:3). In His crowning work of saving sinners (1 Tim 1:15), delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of His dear Son (Col 1:13), and making them a new creation (2 Cor 5:17),

God has not departed from His revealed manner of working.

If we fail to see this, our review of the book of Genesis is nothing more than an academic exercise and a theological novelty. **We are beholding a type of our salvation.**

JOSEPH CAME AND TOLD PHARAOH

Gen 47:1 **"Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen."**

JOSEPH CAME TO PHARAOH

"Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh . . ."

When Joseph was exalted to be ruler over all of Egypt, Pharaoh said to him, *"Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: **only in the throne will I be greater than thou**"* (Gen 41:40). Even though he was ruler over Egypt, Joseph was, in fact, in subjection to Pharaoh, and he carefully conducted himself in view of that reality.

This was the point at which Satan

suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam 15:4-6).

However, this kind of spirit was not in Joseph. In telling Pharaoh that his father and brothers had arrived, he was being in subjection to him. He would not make a decision of this magnitude independently of the higher ruler of the people.

A Type of Jesus

In this respect, Joseph is a type of Jesus who, after He had humbled Himself, was in subjection to the Father. On the eve of His betrayal Jesus prayed

as Thou hast loved Me" (John 17:20-23).

And, at the end, when all of the children of God are gathered together, Jesus will say to the Father, *"Behold I and the children which God hath given me"* (Heb 2:13).

The fact that the posture of subjection is also to be found in us is seen in the words of Hebrews 12:9: *"Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: **shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"***

MY FATHER AND BRETHREN ARE HERE

" . . . and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan . . ."

Pharaoh had sent word through Joseph's brothers to Jacob that he was to come to Egypt with his whole household: *"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; And **take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land"*** (Gen 45:17-18).

Now, in response to Pharaoh's lower directive, and God's higher directive, they had arrived.

THEY ARE IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN

" . . . and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen."

Joseph had told his brothers they would be dwelling in the land of Goshen (Gen 45:10). He had told them when Pharaoh asked of their occupation, they should answer *"Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen"* (Gen 46:34). Later Pharaoh would say, *"in the land of Goshen let them dwell"* (Gen

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himself failed. He too was in subjection to God, but was not satisfied to remain in that position. God said he reasoned, *"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High"* (Isa 14:13-14).

This same sort of reasoning was employed by Absalom, David's son, who was motivated by the devil. *"Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any*

to the Father about those He would bring to glory – like Joseph spoke to Pharaoh about his father and brothers beginning their trip to Egypt (Gen 45:17-20) – *"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them,*

47:6). It is evident that the land of Goshen was ideal for their manner of life.

Therefore, Joseph labors to ensure Jacob and his household are located in the right place – where they can live as they were accustomed, tending to their cattle.

A Point To Be Seen

Concerning spiritual life, for some people, this is a most difficult lesson to learn: **to locate in a place conducive to spiritual development and maturity** – a place where there is appropriate food for the soul.

Even though God places those who are saved, *"every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him"* (1 Cor 12:18), some insist on abiding in a place and manner that is convenient for the flesh. **The body of Christ is to the believer what Goshen was to Jacob and his**

household. That this is what God intends is made clear in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. There it is affirmed that certain Divinely appointed objectives are met within the context of the body of Christ: ". . . *the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love"* (Eph 4:12-16).

Under ordinary circumstances, these objectives cannot be met other than in the body of Christ. Christ works through His body, whether in the conversion of sinners or the edification of the saints. **The priority is the edification of the saints, for without that the ultimate objective of the church – to be presented as a chaste virgin to Christ bride, to be His wife – is not addressed.** Further, a weak and uninformed church is not suitable for the work of the making disciples, and having them added to the church (Acts 2:47). It is incumbent that the church be adequate for the work it is given to do.

Jesus operated with these priorities in His ministry on earth, when He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed of the devil. His most meaningful teaching was to His disciples. Whom He was preparing to be the chief members of His church (1 Cor 12:28).

JOSEPH PRESENTS SOME OF HIS BRETHREN TO PHARAOH

"² And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh."

Joseph now sets out to present his family to Pharaoh, and does so in a discreet way. I gather that this was in order to leave the most advantageous impression.

HE TOOK SOME OF HIS BRETHREN

"And he took some of his brethren, even five men . . ."

Joseph does not bring all of his brothers in at once. He first selects five of his brothers to present to Pharaoh. There are a variety of views put forth by various commentators as to why this was done. I have provided them to the right of this for your perusal. I am persuaded this was not done to avoid Pharaoh exploited them by using them for military or other service. Pharaoh had been told they were people that worked with cattle, and that Goshen was the best place for them to be. Pharaoh had promised them the best of Egypt, and

there was no reason to suspect he would act contrary to that statement. The surety of this was found in Pharaoh's respect for Joseph.

I see Joseph as presenting the most favorable of his brothers – the ones with the best appearance and minds – ones who best emulated the appearance of shepherds, and who, in some way, exhibited the care required to handle flocks. If the Egyptians viewed shepherds as an abomination, they must have had some means of recognizing them. Mind you, it is not that Joseph wanted his father and brothers to begin by being viewed as an abomination. **Rather, it was so there would be no objection to them living in Goshen, away from the rest of the people.**

AND PRESENTED THEM TO PHARAOH

" . . . and presented them unto Pharaoh." Other versions read, *"set them before Pharaoh,"*^{DARBY} *"introduced them to Pharaoh."*^{NET}

As used here, the word *"presented"* means *"TO SET, PLACE, EXHIBIT."*^{STRONG'S} The idea is that they were presented for review, or Pharaoh's examination. It is apparent from the text that follows that they did not appear in their shepherd's clothes while holding their staffs – otherwise, Pharaoh would not have asked them about their occupation.

VIEWS OF "HE TOOK FIVE OF HIS BRETHREN"

1. Joseph took five of his brethren that came first to hand — at random, without design or choice.

2. Joseph took five of the meanest-looking of his brethren to present before Pharaoh, fearing if he had taken the sightliest that Pharaoh would detain them for his service, whereby their religion and morals might be corrupted.

3. Joseph took five of the best made and finest-looking of his brethren, and

A Principle To Be Seen

There is a principle to be seen here.

When exhibiting someone representing the body of Christ, or someone who is being recommended for a place of service, the best examples should be presented.

- ➡ Therefore, when the early church was required to choose out some men for a particular work, they were told to *"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business"* (Acts 6:3).
- ➡ When recommending men to carry forth letters to the Gentile churches, Barnabas and Paul were described as *"Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 15:26).
- ➡ When admonishing the Corinthian brethren to receive certain men, Paul wrote, *"I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they*

have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboreth" (1 Cor 16:16).

- ➡ Younger believers are admonished, *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an **example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity**"* (1 Tim 4:12).
- ➡ Both elders and deacons are to be noted for being exceptional believers: *"blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity . . . Not a novice . . . Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil . . . grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure*

conscience . . . "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre . . . a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:7-11).

All believers are accepted by God in Christ, but all are not on the same spiritual level. Recommendations for certain godly works, and holding forth certain people as believers should be done with these things in mind. Being of *"good report"* is important (Acts 22:12; 1 Tim 3:7; 3 John 1:12). **It should be understood that this is referring to a person's manner of life, which is not to be tailored to please the world.** Involvement in the work of the Lord is not based upon worldly achievement or natural talent and aptitude. While such things are not unlawful, they are strictly secondary. **Each laborer in the Kingdom must be a suitable representative of Jesus.**

WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION

"³ And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation?"

brothers have arrived with their *"flocks and herds"* (Gen 47:1). He had also sent

When people are told that so-and-so are "Christian," conscientious people want to know if that is really true. Do the people of reference merely profess to be "Christians?"

And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers."

Pharaoh will now ask something relevant, which will confirm to him whether or not the decision of where they are to live is an appropriate one. Joseph has already told him that his father and

word to his father saying, *"I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have"* (Gen 46:31-32).

Now Pharaoh will determine whether they really are shepherds, or only professing to be shepherds. Perhaps they **should** have been shepherds. Were they actually practicing shepherds, or merely ones who had been trained to be shepherds.

Something to Ponder

When people are told that so-and-so are "Christian," conscientious people want to know if that is really true. Do the people of reference merely profess to be "Christians?" Have they received training that was supposed to yield "Christians?" Do they live like "Christians," following Jesus, laying down their lives for Him, seeking to honor Him, etc? Do they match the objective that has been laid down in Scripture: *"And that he died for all, **that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again"***

(2 Cor 5:15).

Of course, it is quite common to view the church as a collection of people who are struggling with various sins – which is an open admission that such people are **not** putting off the old man, and putting on the new man (Eph 4:22-24; Col 3:9-10).

WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?

“³ And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? . . .”

Just as Joseph had said, Pharaoh

did ask them of their occupation. It was doubtless for verification, and to ensure that a mistake was not made in giving the right to live in Goshen.

THY SERVANTS ARE SHEPHERDS

“ . . . And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers.”

Answering as Joseph had instructed them, they established they were not new to the work of shepherding. This was an occupation that had been handed down from the fathers. Abraham had flocks and

herds from the beginning (Gen 13:5; 24:35). Isaac also had flocks and herds (Gen 26:14). Jacob himself had flocks (Gen 30:40; 32:5). **These men were not only shepherds, they were tenured shepherds.**

Keep in mind that “every shepherd” was “an abomination to the Egyptians” (Gen 46:34). Yet, the brothers did not draw back from affirming that was their occupation. They would provide an excellent example of what shepherds should be. Therefore, they were not ashamed to acknowledge their occupation – even in Egypt.

WE HAVE COME TO SOJOURN IN THE LAND

“⁴ They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now

As used here, the word means to “sojourn” – being in the country, but never really being a part of its citizenry.

The prophecy given to Abraham

I do know that Joseph was aware of the promise, and reminded the rest of the family of it before he died. Even at that time, the oppression had not yet begun. **Yet, Joseph knew they would never become permanent citizens of this land.** Even though the promised deliverance was four centuries away, Joseph had grasped the bigger picture. It is written, “*And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt*” (Gen 50:24-26).

Years later, Moses was acutely aware of the fact that Israel would be delivered from Egypt. Stephen says about Moses, on the occasion when he defended one his brethren against a Egyptian, “*For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that **God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not***” (Acts 7:25). I do not know the extent of this knowledge among the Israelites. However, it seems to me that it would be something that was frequently mentioned during four hundred years of oppression.

When Moses was born, there was a

I do know that Joseph was aware of the promise, and reminded the rest of the family of it before he died. Even at that time, the oppression had not yet begun.

therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.”

FOR TO SOJOURN IN THE LAND

“They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come . . .” Other versions read, “to dwell in the land,” ^{NKJV} “to live here a while,” ^{NIV} “to reside as aliens,” ^{NRSV} “to make a living,” ^{BBE} “as immigrants,” ^{CEB} “to live in the land,” ^{CJB} “for a while,” ^{CSB} “to live as temporary residents,” ^{NET} “to stay in this country for the time being,” ^{NJB} “We have come to live here in Egypt,” ^{LIVING} “to stay in the land,” ^{LITV} “to find a new place to live.” ^{MESSAGE}

The word translated “sojourn” has a variety of meanings, to be determined by the context. “TO SOJOURN, ABIDE, DWELL IN, DWELL WITH, REMAIN, INHABIT, BE A STRANGER, BE CONTINUING . . . DWELL FOR A TIME . . . TO ABIDE, STAY, TEMPORARILY DWELL.” ^{STRONG'S}

made this clear. “*And He [God] said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years*” (Gen 15:13).

I do not know the extent to which Joseph’s brothers were clear about what God had promised Abraham, or if they clearly perceived that the time of being a stranger in the land was beginning at the time they entered into Egypt. **It would be thirty years until they would experience any hostility in the land.** It would appear during that time that this was not the time foretold to Abraham. God did not tell him his offspring would sojourn in the land peacefully for thirty years, only that they would be oppressed for four hundred years (Gen 15:13).

law in Egypt that all of the male Israelite children should be killed as soon as they were born (Ex 1:16,22). Yet, when Moses was born his mother “saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months” (Ex 2:2). I do not imagine she was thinking of him being a good slave in Egypt. It seems to me that she had the promise of God in mind. She probably taught this to Moses when she raised him in the house of Pharaoh’s daughter. That would account for his knowledge of the deliverance.

Something to Ponder

The posture of the saints of God today is much like that of the Israelites during their oppression. We are in land that is really not ours. We experience oppression and opposition because of our faith. And, we are expecting deliverance when Jesus comes again. Even if things go well with us for a season, like they did for Israel, we know that we will eventually enter a better country, “that is, an heavenly” (Heb 11:16).

It is a fatal error to seek for, and delight in, security in this world. Having everything you require to live a supposed secure and successful life is not enough. The Lord has said, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15). The Amplified Bible reads, “Guard yourselves and keep free from all covetousness (the immoderate desire for wealth, the greedy longing to have more); for a man’s life does not consist in and is not derived from possessing **overflowing abundance or that which is over and above his needs.**” That contradicts the thinking of this world. The economist does not see things this way, nor does the opportunist. However, that is the unvarnished truth, and it needs to be spoken to this generation.

NO PASTURE FOR THE FLOCKS

“ . . . the servants have no pasture for their flocks . . . ” Other versions read, “there is no pasture,”^{ASV} “we have no grass,”^{BBE} “there are no more pastures,”^{CEB} and “there is no grazing land.”^{CSB}

Can there come a time when God’s people have no immediate

access to needed supplies? Some would deny that such a circumstance could exist – yet here is an example of a time it **did** exist. We can say with confidence that such a circumstance will not continue until the people expire. The saints may experience storms on the ocean of life, but a way to be delivered will eventually come – even if they have to be driven about by a turbulent sea for “fourteen” days (Acts 27:20-33).

Here is a family whose work consists of caring for flocks and herds, and they have run out of place to graze them. Actually, the whole experience has been orchestrated from heaven, but it looks on the surface as though chaos is on the throne.

THE FAMINE IS SORE IN CANAAN

It seems to me that there is often a hesitancy to lay out a cause before the God of heaven – but it should not be so.

“ . . . for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan . . . ” Other versions read, “is severe,”^{NKJV} “is grievous,”^{DOUAY} “the famine has prevailed,”^{SEPTUAGINT} “very bitter,”^{LIVING} “grew in strength,”^{ABP} “all pastures are dried up,”^{CEV} “is very bad,”^{ERV} “is heavy,”^{LITV} and “very bad.”^{MESSAGE}

As used here, the word “sore” means, “HEAVY, . . . MASSIVE, ABUNDANT . . . HARD, DIFFICULT, BURDENSOME . . . VERY OPPRESSIVE . . . ”^{STRONG’S} **The idea is that the famine was increasing in its ferocity, growing and spreading everywhere in Canaan.**

LET THY SERVANTS DWELL IN GOSHEN

“ . . . now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.” Other versions read, “please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen,”^{NKJV} “please let your servants settle in Goshen,”^{NIV} “we ask you,”^{RSV} “make a place for themselves in the land of Goshen,”^{BBE} “allow your servants,”^{CEB} “give orders that we thy servants may be

in the land of Goshen,”^{DOUAY} and “we request permission to live in the region of Goshen.”^{NLT}

The brothers have ordered their cause (Job 13:18), and brought forth their arguments (Job 23:4). Further they have presented their cause just as Joseph had said (Gen 46:34).

Saints, and the Ordering of Their Cause

When Job was pondering his own case, he did so without an awareness of the Lord’s presence. Because of the nature of this trial, God hid this from Job, so that he did not know why these bitter experiences had taken place. Yet, his knowledge of God moved him to reason, “Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I

would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments” (Job 23:3-4). Other versions read, “I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments,”^{NIV} “I would plead the cause before him,”^{GENEVA} and “I arrange before Him the cause.”^{YLT}

The “cause” Job says he would order and present before the Lord was not one of self-justification. It rather pertained to the false charges that had been made against him by his “friends” (Job 19:21-22; 32:3).

While the “cause” of the saints may differ as to particularities, the manner in which we present petitions to the Lord is at least as important as the way Joseph admonished his brothers to present their case before Pharaoh.

It seems to me that there is often a hesitancy to lay out a cause before the God of heaven – but it should not be so. Through Paul the Spirit admonishes us, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with

thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil 4:6). An immediate response is guaranteed: "And the peace of God, which passeth all

understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:7). What a marvelous guarantee!

The actual working out of the matter will then take place while the saints are at peace, not tossed too and fro, or filled with care.

GIVE THEM THE BEST OF THE LAND

"⁵ And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: ^{6a} The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell."

THY BRETHREN ARE COME TO THEE

"And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee . . ."

Behold how Pharaoh speaks to

John 3:35; 5:20). Just as the Hebrews could not have moved into Egypt without Joseph, so we cannot come to God or traffic in the heavenly realms without Jesus. Thus it is written, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25). That is why we make much of Jesus: not an institution, not a theological position, not as special plan, **but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!** It is a Person who stands between God and us – not a

NLT and "Choose anywhere you like for them to live." LIVING

The degree of favor Pharaoh had bestowed upon Joseph is confirmed by his magnanimous offer made to his relatives. Aside from the present famine, the land of Egypt was a bountiful land. Even with the famine, because of the blessing of God upon it, Egypt was the best place to be.

In the Best Part of the Land

Other versions read, "the best part of the land," NIV "the land's best location," CEB "the best property in the country," CJB and "the best place." DOUAY

Now Pharaoh offers the best of the land to Jacob's household. "Best" is not merely according to appearance, but according to the manner of life maintained by the Hebrews. It had to be land with much pasture, and commodious for flocks and herds.

One might wonder how the flocks could be sustained during the famine. The cattle would graze on "grass," as compared to cultured grain, or wheat. Thus God promised the Israelites after they left Egypt, "That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full" (Deut 11:14-15). The "famine" that was in Egypt concerned the first part of that promise – "corn" – not the latter part. Goshen could sustain their cattle.

The Spiritual Parallel

Those who are in Christ Jesus have also been given the best of the land – the kind of land required to maintain the resources they have been given in Christ Jesus. **They have been put into Christ,**

Were it not for Joseph, there would have been no place for them in Egypt. It is his presence that guaranteed a place for them. People of their nationality and occupation were an "abomination" to the Egyptians (Gen 43:32; 46:34). Yet, because they were Joseph's brothers, they were welcome to dwell in the land.

Joseph. His brothers have said, "For to sojourn in the land are we come" (v 4). Now Pharaoh says to Joseph, "thy brethren are come to thee." **Were it not for Joseph, there would have been no place for them in Egypt.** It is his presence that guaranteed a place for them. People of their nationality and occupation were an "abomination" to the Egyptians (Gen 43:32; 46:34). **Yet, because they were Joseph's brothers, they were welcome to dwell in the land.**

The Spiritual Parallel

The parallel of this circumstance to life in Christ Jesus is precise and glorious. **We are welcome in the heavenly places and before God only because of Christ Jesus.** God does not receive us because He loves men, but because He "loveth the Son," to whom we have "fled" (Heb 6:18;

system. It is a Person who is interceding for us, not an institution.

Just as surely as Pharaoh's attitude toward Joseph's brothers was because of the favor he granted him, so God is granting the saints favor because of Jesus. It is no wonder we are admonished to behold Him while we are running, and that we are changed as we behold His glory (2 Cor 3:18).

THE LAND OF EGYPT IS BEFORE THEE

"The land of Egypt is before thee in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell." . . . Other versions read, "The land of Egypt is at your disposal," NASB "all the land of Egypt is before you" BBE "is available to you" CEB "choose any place in the entire land of Egypt for them to live,"

who is the ultimate Environment (1 Cor 1:30). From another perspective they are said to have been *"raised . . . up together, and made to . . . sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* (Eph 2:6). This is what is required to sustain the new life they have been given. Should they choose

to live out their lives in a different realm – one that does not allow for the sustaining of the soul – they will die, for spiritual life cannot be sustained elsewhere.

Should any person in the whole world, and during all time, choose to

attempt to sustain spiritual life and their identity with God in any place other than in heavenly places in Christ, they will be met with utter frustration. God will simply not allow any person to stay alive in any other place.

IF THERE ARE ANY MEN OF ACTIVITY

"^{6b} . . . and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle."

ANYMEN OF ACTIVITY

" . . . and if thou knowest any men of activity among them . . ." Other versions read, *"any competent men,"* NKJV *"any capable men,"* NASB *"with special ability,"* NIV *"able men,"* RSV *"particularly competent,"* CJB *"industrious men,"* DOUAY *"are qualified,"* GWN and *"special skills."* NLT

The word translated *"activity"* has the following lexical meaning: *"STRENGTH, MIGHT, EFFICIENCY, WEALTH . . . EFFICIENCY"* STRONG'S In our manner of expression *"men of ability"* would be **men who could get the job done**. These would be men that were competent and reliable in the keeping of flocks and herds. They were especially good at what they were doing. These would not be men who were trained to be shepherds, but never were active in that field.

MAKE THEM RULERS OVER MY CATTLE

" . . . then make them rulers over my cattle." Other versions read, *"herdsmen over my cattle,"* NKJV *"in charge of my livestock,"* NASB *"overseers of cattle over what I have,"* DARBY and *"put them in charge of my livestock, too."* NLT

Again, Pharaoh's trust in Joseph

is evident. He was already in charge of

under the care of Peter (Gal 2:7), with

Although Paul has done especially well in his apostleship to the Gentiles, laboring more abundantly than the other apostles, he has been almost universally rejected by the Gentile church as its apostle and teacher. The modern church has treated Paul with the disdain that the Israelites had for Moses.

the storage and distribution of grain, and was ruler over all of Egypt. Now Pharaoh does not hesitate to have Joseph appoint an Israelite from his family to be over the care of all his cattle, which were no doubt the finest of all livestock.

I imagine that if this did take place, it was more of a relief to the Egyptians than a cause of jealousy – for shepherds, regardless of their pedigree, were an abomination to them (Gen 46:34).

A Spiritual Parallel

We have an interesting parallel in the body of Christ. When it comes to the things of God, Christ has appointed the care of the Gentiles to *"a Jew of Tarsus"* (Acts 21:39; 22:3). He is appropriately called, *"an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles"* (2 Tim 1:11). While the church in Jerusalem, with other Jewish bodies, were

James, and John assisting (Gal 2:9), Paul was especially over the Gentiles.

Although Paul has done especially well in his apostleship to the Gentiles, laboring more abundantly than the other apostles (1 Cor 15:9-10), **he has been almost universally rejected by the Gentile church as its apostle and teacher**. The modern church has treated Paul with the disdain that the Israelites had for Moses (Ex 15:24; 16:2; 17:3; Num 14:2). His teaching is little known, and his emphasis is treated like a black hole in space. If the truth were known, the nominal church has little use for Paul, and therefore gives little heed to what he has written. Much of the teaching of the nominal church is in stark contradiction of what Paul taught and wrote. That, of course, is why his writings are largely neglected, and sometimes debated.

JACOB BLESSED PHARAOH

"⁷ And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh."

JOSEPH BROUGHT JACOB TO PHARAOH

"And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh . . ."

Other versions read, *"presented him,"* NASB *"made his father Jacob come before,"* BBE *"gave him an audience"* CEB *"stood him before,"* ESV *"stand in front of"* GWN

“introduced him,” ^{CEV} *“to come in to meet,”* ^{ERV} *and “placed him before.”* ^{LITV}

Jacob does not present his father to Pharaoh until everything is settled concerning the land. The kindness and consideration of Pharaoh being duly noted, Joseph now brings his father, the patriarch Jacob, to the King. He has already told his *“his father’s house”* and his brethren how to conduct themselves before, Pharaoh (Gen 46:31-31).

The presentation of Jacob to Pharaoh probably involved a proper

less than four times, and acknowledging that the king was familiar with some of the things he mentioned (Acts 26:2-27). When speaking of worldly rulers, Paul said believers should give everyone what is owed to him, *“custom to whom custom”* was due (Rom 13:7). Peter admonished believers, *“Honor the king”* (1 Pet 2:17).

Proper Decorum Before God

All of this is a faint reflection of appearing before God with due honor for Him. David exclaimed, *“Let us **come before His presence** with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with*

JACOB BLESSED PHARAOH

“ . . . and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.”

Other versions read, *“and Jacob blessed Pharaoh [greeted],”* ^{NIV} *“gave him his blessing,”* ^{BBE} *“paid his respects to Pharaoh,”* ^{NJB} *“greeted Pharaoh,”* ^{TNK} *and “gave the king his blessing.”* ^{CEV}

Some of the versions, in my judgment, misrepresent what Jacob did when he *“blessed Pharaoh”*—i.e. *“Paid his respects,”* ^{NJB} and *“greeted Pharaoh.”* ^{TNK} In this activity, Jacob was not merely conforming to Egyptian customs. He was a spokesman for the Almighty – one with whom God had made a covenant.

I do not doubt that Jacob at least did what Jeremiah told the Israelites to do when they were captives in a foreign land: *“And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace”* (Jer 29:7). Now that they were residing in Egypt, Jacob no doubt spoke as one seeking a peaceful and flourishing environment which they could, and did, enjoy for some years – as long as this Pharaoh was alive.

It seems to me that this is an area where believers ought to be very active. This should be done in the interest of the people of God.

In this activity, Jacob was not merely conforming to Egyptian customs. He was a spokesman for the Almighty – one with whom God had made a covenant.

protocol for coming before a king. In Esther’s day, it was the king’s custom to formally recognize the person before they were allowed to speak (Esth 4:11; 5:2). In the book of Acts, Tertullus presented himself to Felix the governor in a formal manner (Acts 24:3). When Paul stood before Agrippa, he did not speak until he was formally recognized by the king. Paul then spoke, referring to *“king Agrippa”* no

psalms.” (Psa 95:2). And again, *“Serve the LORD with gladness: **come before His presence** with singing”* (Psa 100:2).

Apostolic doctrine also addresses this matter. *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water”* (Heb 10:22).

JACOB TESTIFIES OF HIS AGE

“⁸ And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? ⁹ And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.”

HOW OLD ART THOU

“And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? . . .” Other versions read, *“How many years have you lived?”* ^{NASB} *“How many are the years of your life,”* ^{NRSV} and *“How long have you lived.”* ^{CSB}

Some are of the opinion that Pharaoh had never seen a man this old, and therefore asked this question. This is a distinct possibility. God promised Abraham, the progenitor of this race, *“And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age”* (Gen 15:15). God said of those calling upon the Lord, *“With long life will I satisfy him, and show Him my salvation”* (Psa 91:16). Solomon said to his son that he should keep his commandments in expectation, *“For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee”* (Prov 3:2).

This is not to say that the godly

consistently live longer than the ungodly. However, in Scripture the point of the longevity of the wicked is rarely, if ever, mentioned. That is an area in which men are not to presume.

Something is important to note: in the history of the descendants of Abraham, age was an important factor. This had to do with the development and sustaining of the nation from which the Savior of the world would spring forth. There was a reason for longevity.

NOTE: A table of the Age-averages of the world is included on the last page.

JACOB'S ANSWER

"The Years of My Pilgrimage"

"... And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years . . ."

I find the expression "days of the years" to be most interesting. It is a precise translation of the Hebrew words "yowm" (days), and "shanedh" (years). It is used in the Authorized version one other time when accounting for the age of Abraham (Gen 25:7). The following versions read, "days of the years" – ASV, NKJV, RSV, DARBY, ERV, ESV, JPS, SEPTUAGINT, RSV, RWB, WEB, YLT, ABP, BRENTON, JPS, JUB, LITV, and AMPLIFIED.

Other versions read, "the years," NASB "my stay on earth," CJB "The days of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years," DOUAY "The whole time," GENEVA "130 long hard years," LIVING and "a short life." ETRV

There is a perspective of life contained in the words "the days of the years." **"Days" speaks of the details of life: works, growth, chastening, revelations, lessons, etc. "Years" speaks of purpose, objective, profitability, assessment, testimony, etc.** It is the "days" that add up to the "years." They are what make life liveable. Advancement in the Lord, for example, is in terms of "days." Divine approval and being shaped into the image of Christ is from the standpoint of "years."

Jacob refers to his life as a "pilgrimage." I gather that Hebrews referred to this in the words, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and **confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth**" (Heb 11:13).

"Few and Evil Have Been the Days"

"... few and evil have the days of the years of my life been . . ." Other versions read, "few and unpleasant," NASB "my years have been few and difficult," NIV "few and hard have bene the years," NRSV "small in number and full of sorrow have been the years of my life," BBE "they have been few and difficult" CJB "130 hard years," NLT "and I have had to move from place to place," CEV "I have had "a short life with many troubles," ETRV and "a short and hard life." MESSAGE

The expression "the days of my years" are in the Hebrew text, as in the first part of this passage. The versions that ignore this expression and assign "few and evil" to the entirety of his life, have not given the sense of the text. The hardship that Jacob experienced was significant, but it was broken down into days during which he could renew his faith.

Jacob's Hard Experiences

- 1 The conflict with Esau (Gen 27:41).
- 2 Tricked by Laban into marrying Leah (Gen 29:24-26)
- 3 Twenty years with Laban (Gen 31:38-41).
- 4 The death of Rachel (Gen 35:19).
- 5 The molestation of Dinah (Gen 34:1-31).
- 6 The harsh retaliation of his sons to the Shechemites (Gen 34:25-30).
- 7 The seeming loss of Joseph (Gen 37:34-35).
- 8 The incest of Reuben (Gen 35:22).
- 9 Grief over Simeon's retention in Egypt (Gen 42:36).
- 10 The years of famine (Gen 42:1-2).

Jacob's Blessed Experiences

- 1 Obtains Esau's birthright (Gen 25:29-34).
- 2 The vision of the ladder (Gen 28:12).
- 3 God confirms the covenant of Abraham with him (Gen 28:13-15).
- 4 Obtains Rachel as wife (Gen 29:29-30).

- 5 Joseph is born to Rachel (Gen 30:24).
- 6 Obtains flocks and herds (Gen 30:37-42).
- 7 Increased exceedingly in cattle, maidservants, menservants, camels, and asses (Gen 30:43).
- 8 Met by angels when returning to Canaan (Gen 32:1-2).
- 9 Wrestles with an angel, and survives, having his name changed (Gen 32:24-30).
- 10 Is reconciled to Esau (Gen 33:4-16).
- 11 God appears to him telling him to go to Bethel (Gen 35:1-7).
- 12 Benjamin is born to Rachel (Gen 35:6-19).
- 13 Sees Joseph again (Gen 46:28-34).

From the standpoint of experience, this would seem like years, while from the standpoint of faith, it would seem like days – even as when Jacob labored for seven years for Rachel, "and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her" (Gen 29:20).

One of the ways God enables His people to triumph over sorrow and grief is by interspersing life with blessing.

"I Have Not Attained To My Fathers"

"... and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." Other versions read, "they have not attained," NKJV "they do not equal," NIV "they do not compare," NRSV "than the years," BBE "don't come close to the years," CEB "fewer than the years," CJB "have not surpassed" CSB "my life has been short compared," NLT "I am not nearly as old." LIVING

Abraham lived to be 175 years of age (Gen 25:7). Isaac died when he was 180 (Gen 35:28). Jacob will die 17 years later at the age of 147 (Gen 47:28).

There is no perceived pattern in the lives and deaths of these three patriarchs. Less is said about Isaac, yet he lived the longest. As the progenitor, and the one to whom the promises were

made (Gal 3:16), Abraham was more significant, yet his lived less than Isaac.

Jacob had a greater diversity of experience, yet had the shortest lifetime.

Once again we see that God's way is in the sea (Psa 77:19).

JACOB BLESSED PHARAOH

“¹⁰ And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.”

Other versions read, “blessed or <said farewell to>,” ^{NIV} “gave Pharaoh his blessing,” ^{BBE} “took leave of Pharaoh,” ^{GENEVA} “bade Pharaoh farewell,” ^{TNK} “blessed Pharaoh again,” ^{LIVING} “having blessed,” ^{ABP} “a farewell blessing.” ^{GNB}

When Jacob came before Pharaoh he blessed him (Gen 47:7), and when he leaves he also blesses him (Gen 47:10). Because of the exceeding rarity of blessing someone in our times, it is difficult for some to comprehend what is meant by saying “he blessed Pharaoh.” However, this is a rather common thing in Scripture – one person blessing another. In Genesis:

- ➔ Melchizedek blessed Abraham (Gen 14:19).
- ➔ Isaac blessed Jacob (Gen 27:23,27; 28:1).
- ➔ Laban and Bethuel blessed Rebekah (Gen 24:60).
- ➔ Laban blessed his daughters and their sons (Gen 31:55).
- ➔ Jacob blessed Pharaoh (Gen 47:8,10).
- ➔ Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen 48:20).
- ➔ Jacob blessed his twelve sons (Gen 49:28).

A Premier Example of Blessing

When one person blesses another, they are seeking the benefit of the person; representing God, and often prophesying over the individual.

An example would be the Aaronic blessing that the high priest Aaron was to pronounce upon the people. God told Moses, “*Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name*

Jacob blesses him with the increase of the people of God, in mind. Indeed, as long as this Pharaoh lived, it went well for Israel, and they multiplied during his reign until they filled the land

upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them” (Num 6:23-27).

Keep in mind, this was pronounced upon the very people of whom God had said, “*I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people*” (Ex 32:9). Yet, this blessing was intended for the people God had chosen. **In the spirit of a prophet, Aaron was to pronounce this Divine intention upon them.** It was the declaration of what God desired to do – to preserve and protect these people until He would raise up the holy child Jesus from among them, causing the Child to be born among them, and giving them a Son (Isa 9:6).

In our text, Pharaoh had welcomed Jacob and his household into the land for the sake of Joseph. He had given them the best of the land, and withheld nothing from them. Now, in holy reciprocation, Jacob blesses him with the increase of the people of God, in mind. **Indeed, as long as this Pharaoh lived, it went well for Israel, and they multiplied during his reign until they filled the land** (Ex 1:7). Then, a Pharaoh “*arose up*” who did not know Joseph (Ex 1:8). He would not be blessed by the appointed leader of Israel, Moses, but would instead be cursed because he did not honor the people of God.

JOSEPH GAVE THEM A POSSESSION

“¹¹ And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, 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.”

As the scene develops, it will perfectly coincide with the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. Pharaoh will foreshadow the role of the Father, and Joseph the function of the Lord Jesus.

JOSEPH PLACED HIS FATHER AND BRETHREN

“And Joseph placed his father and his brethren . . .” Other versions read, *“situated,”* ^{NKJV} *“settled,”* ^{NASB} *“made a place for,”* ^{BBE} *“found a place for,”* ^{CJB} *“gave them property in the best part of the land,”* ^{CSB} *“gave a possession,”* ^{DOUAY} *“assigned the best land of Egypt,”* ^{NLT} and *“caused.”* ^{LITV}

Jacob and his household did not have the luxury of choosing the part of the land in which they wished to dwell. Pharaoh had told them they could have the best of the land – but they were not familiar with the land. **Therefore Joseph, who had become very familiar with the land as he administered the gathering and distribution of grain made the choice.** The Authorized Version says he *“placed”* them. The word used here means *“TO SET, PLACE . . . TO CAUSE TO SIT . . . TO CAUSE TO ABIDE . . . TO CAUSE TO DWELL.”* ^{STRONGS}

Whatever was required to situate them in the location he had chosen, Joseph did it. The strength of the word is confirmed by the way it is translated in the various versions: *“situated,” “settled,” “made a place for,” “have them property,” “assigned,”* and *“caused.”*

What better person could have done such a work? Joseph knew the people he was placing, and what they would require to live there as shepherds. He also knew the land of Egypt, and what could appropriately be called *“the best of the land.”* He also knew the will of Pharaoh, and had already been given the authority to execute his will.

The Type Proclaimed

How perfectly this depicts the salvation of God’s people. Knowing full well what salvation requires of them, the Lord has placed them where He wants them – in the heavenly places. There they have everything they need to grow and mature, and they will be fully satisfied with the arrangement.

JOSEPH GAVE THEM A POSSESSION

“ . . . and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land . . .”

By giving them the possession, they became responsible for its proper use. As long as they sojourned in the land, this would be **their** possession. They were not

to spread out and mingle in the other cities. This is where they were to live, and when the time of their appointed deliverance would come, as promised Abraham, that is where they would be (Ex 8:22; 9:26).

The Type Proclaimed

Again, this precisely coincides with the situation of those in Christ Jesus. They have been assigned a place to live – *“the heavenly places”* – and that is where they are to remain, not mingling with the world. Further, their affection is to be placed there, and remain there. When Jesus comes, only that area will be exempt from the curse, like only Goshen was exempt from the plagues God wrought in Egypt.

IN THE LAND OF RAMESES

“ . . . in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.”

This area was located in lower Egypt, and is thought to be called *“the land of Rameses”* later, when Moses wrote the book of Exodus. I am not sure this is an accurate statement of the case, but have not been able to uncover what I perceive to be a better explanation. Moses states in the book of Exodus that the children of Israel built the city Rameses (Ex 1:11).

JOSEPH NOURISHED HIS FATHER AND HIS BRETHREN

“^{12a} And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father’s household, with bread . . .”

JOSEPH NOURISHED HIS FATHER, HIS BRETHREN, AND ALL OF HIS FATHER’S HOUSEHOLD

“And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father’s household . . .” Other versions read *“provided,”* ^{NKJV} *“took care of,”* ^{BBE}

“maintained,” ^{DARBY} *“sustained,”* ^{JPS} and *“furnished.”* ^{LIVING}

Joseph *“nourished”* his brothers, his father, and all of his father’s household by providing what they required. He brought what they needed, and they had to prepare it and distribute it as needed.

This is also the way God supplies all of our *“need.”* As it is written, *“But my God*

shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19). And how is it that God does this? He does it like Joseph did. He has it delivered to our door, so to speak. We have the responsibility of doing like the beasts of the earth. Thus the Psalmist wrote, *“These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them **they** gather: thou openest thine hand, they are*

filled with good" (Psa 104:28).

WITH BREAD

"... with bread..." Other versions read, "with food." ^{NASB}

It goes without saying that this was proper food. It was not the provender that the cattle ate, or food for creeping things.

It may sound like a very simple thing, but when we transfer the picture into the spiritual realm, we suddenly realize that much is being served to the people of God today that is not appropriate for the spiritual palate. It is not the kind of food that strengthens the heart, and nourishes faith and hope.

ACCORDING TO THEIR FAMILIES

"... according to their families." Other versions read, "according to the number in their families," ^{NKJV} "according to their little ones," ^{NASB} "according to the number of their children," ^{NIV} "according to the number of their dependents," ^{NRSV} "taking full care of even the youngest," ^{CJB} "allowing food to every one" ^{DOUAY} "based on the number of children they had" ^{GWN} "according to the want of their little ones" ^{JPS} "corn for each person," ^{SEPTUAGINT} "according to the mouth of the infants," ^{YLT} and according to [the needs of] their families." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Some of these versions border on the preposterous and absurd. **Why would the amount of food families receive be based upon the number of infants they had?** That is not the meaning of the text, and it is an insult to our intelligence to offer such a word to us.

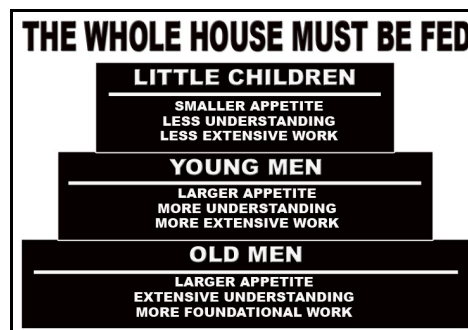
The idea here is that the food was distributed according to the number of dependents in the house – which would include husbands, wives, children, handmaidens, and men servants.

I do not doubt that the distribution was made much like that of the manna. They were given so much for every person in the household, whether infant or a robust worker. In the end, each would have sufficient. The formula for the distribution of the manna was as follows: "This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer [about two quarts] for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating" (Ex 16:16-18).

THE MANNER OF FEEDING THE FLOCK

The feeding of the flock of God, which is mandatory (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:1), is on the same basis.

Enough food must be served up for the whole household – so that everyone present can be nourished. The "little children" must be able to eat to their full capacity. The "young men" must also be able to eat to their full capacity. In addition, the "old men" must be able to be filled also.



John classified members of the

body in this manner: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:12-14).

All of these levels must be fed. None of them have finished with either feeding or growing. Their spiritual lives must be sustained – but it takes more to sustain the more mature. They cannot live on spiritual pabulum.

In modern church circles it has become fashionable to direct most of the preaching and teaching to the immature. That is like a family of Israelites with a broad spectrum of offspring gathering enough manna for the babies only. It will not be long before no work will be done, for the workers will all become malnourished, and the children will just play harder.

Jesus did not give His disciples what He gave the multitudes. He never spoke to the multitudes like He did to His disciples: explaining the parables, the Olivet discourse, and the marvelous teaching He delivered to them on the eve of His betrayal.

If the church is going to be strong, it has to be fed, from a spiritual perspective, from the "old men" up, including the "young men" and the "little children." The table must contain enough for everyone to be filled.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 2/7/14. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The seventy-sixth lesson will cover verses 13 thru 26 of chapter 47: "THE FAMINE REACHES ITS APEX." All the land of Canaan fainted. Joseph gathered all of the money the people had paid for the grain, and brought it to Pharaoh's house. When the people's money ran out, Joseph gave the people corn for their cattle. When the cattle of the people ran out, the people gave themselves and their fields for corn. Only the priests were excluded. Joseph made it a law of the land, that the people would give a fifth part of their produce to Pharaoh – and the law was still in force when Moses wrote the book of Genesis. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

TABLE OF AGE AVERAGES, 2013 CENSUS

United States is #51

Rank	Country	Years	Rank	Country	Years	Rank	Country	Years	Rank	Country	Years	Rank	Country	Years
1	Monaco	89.68	46	Saint Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha	78.91	90	West Bank	75.24	135	Trinidad and Tobago	71.67	180	Laos	62.77
2	Macao	84.43	47	Gibraltar	78.83	91	Tunisia	75.24	136	Indonesia	71.62	181	Equatorial Guinea	62.75
3	Japan	83.91	48	Denmark	78.78	92	Lebanon	75.23	137	Fiji	71.59	182	Comoros	62.74
4	Singapore	83.75	49	Portugal	78.7	93	Hungary	75.02	138	Belarus	71.48	183	Sudan	62.57
5	San Marino	83.07	50	Guam	78.5	94	Cook Islands	74.92	139	Bahamas	71.44	184	Haiti	62.51
6	Andorra	82.5	51	United States	78.49	95	Syria	74.92	140	Azerbaijan	71.32	185	Djibouti	61.57
7	Guernsey	82.24	52	Taiwan	78.48	96	China	74.84	141	Greenland	71.25	186	Mauritania	61.53
8	Hong Kong	82.12	53	Bahrain	78.29	97	Saint Kitts and Nevis	74.84	142	Guatemala	71.17	187	Western Sahara	61.52
9	Australia	81.9	54	Chile	78.1	98	Colombia	74.79	143	Suriname	71.12	188	Ghana	61.45
10	Italy	81.86	55	Qatar	78.09	99	Algeria	74.73	144	Cape Verde	71	189	Benin	60.26
11	Liechtenstein	81.5	56	Cyprus	78	100	Mauritius	74.71	145	Iraq	70.85	190	Senegal	60.18
12	Canada	81.48	57	Panama	77.96	101	Maldives	74.69	146	Honduras	70.71	191	Burundi	59.24
13	Jersey	81.47	58	British Virgin Islands	77.95	102	Serbia	74.56	147	Honduras	70.35	192	Guinea	58.61
14	France	81.46	59	Costa Rica	77.89	103	Barbados	74.52	148	Bangladesh	70.06	193	Rwanda	58.44
15	Spain	81.27	60	Cuba	77.87	104	Oman	74.47	149	Kazakhstan	69.63	194	Liberia	57.41
16	Sweden	81.18	61	Libya	77.83	105	American Samoa	74.44	150	Moldova	69.51	195	Cote d'Ivoire	57.25
17	Switzerland	81.17	62	Albania	77.59	106	Solomon Islands	74.42	151	Kyrgyzstan	69.45	196	Ethiopia	56.56
18	Israel	81.07	63	Slovenia	77.48	107	Saint Vincent & Grenadines	74.39	152	Korea, North	69.2	197	Sierra Leone	56.55
19	Iceland	81	64	Dominican Republic	77.44	108	Saudi Arabia	74.35	153	Turkmenistan	68.84	198	Botswana	55.74
20	Anguilla	80.98	65	Czech Republic	77.38	109	Romania	74.22	154	Ukraine	68.74	199	DR Congo	55.74
21	Netherlands	80.91	66	Georgia	77.32	110	Gaza Strip	74.16	155	Mongolia	68.63	200	Republic of the Congo	55.27
22	Bermuda	80.82	67	Kuwait	77.28	111	Venezuela	74.08	156	Belize	68.28	201	Cameroon	54.71
23	Cayman Islands	80.8	68	Northern Mariana Islands	77.27	112	Malaysia	74.04	157	Timor-Leste	68.27	202	Angola	54.59
24	Isle of Man	80.76	69	Argentina	77.14	113	Bulgaria	73.84	158	Bolivia	67.9	203	Burkina Faso	54.07
25	New Zealand	80.71	70	Saint Lucia	77.04	114	Thailand	73.83	159	Bhutan	67.88	204	Niger	53.8
26	Ireland	80.32	71	New Caledonia	76.94	115	Seychelles	73.77	160	Guyana	67.39	205	Uganda	53.45
27	Norway	80.32	72	United Arab Emirates	76.71	116	El Salvador	73.69	161	India	67.14	206	Tanzania	53.14
28	Germany	80.19	73	Mexico	76.66	117	Estonia	73.58	162	Nepal	66.51	207	Mali	53.06
29	Jordan	80.18	74	Uruguay	76.41	118	Armenia	73.49	163	Papua New Guinea	66.46	208	Zambia	52.57
30	United Kingdom	80.17	75	Paraguay	76.4	119	Jamaica	73.43	164	Russia	66.46	209	Malawi	52.31
31	Greece	80.05	76	French Polynesia	76.39	120	Montserrat	73.41	165	Tajikistan	66.38	210	Gabon	52.29
32	Saint Pierre and Miquelon	80	77	Brunei	76.37	121	Grenada	73.3	166	Pakistan	66.35	211	Namibia	52.17
33	Austria	79.91	78	Poland	76.25	122	Egypt	72.93	167	Nauru	65.7	212	Nigeria	52.05
34	Faroe Islands	79.85	79	Dominica	76.18	123	Latvia	72.93	168	Burma	65.24	213	Mozambique	52.02
35	Malta	79.85	80	Morocco	76.11	124	Brazil	72.79	169	Tuvalu	65.11	214	Lesotho	51.86
36	European Union	79.76	81	Slovakia	76.03	125	Turkey	72.77	170	Vanuatu	65.06	215	Zimbabwe	51.82
37	Luxembourg	79.75	82	Croatia	75.99	126	Uzbekistan	72.77	171	Kiribati	64.76	216	Somalia	50.8
38	Belgium	79.65	83	Sri Lanka	75.94	127	Peru	72.73	172	Yemen	64.11	217	Central African Republic	50.48
39	Virgin Islands	79.47	84	Ecuador	75.94	128	Samoa	72.66	173	Madagascar	64	218	Afghanistan	49.72
40	Finland	79.41	85	Aruba	75.93	129	Vietnam	72.41	174	Gambia	63.82	219	Swaziland	49.42
41	Korea, South	79.3	86	Antigua and Barbuda	75.69	130	Nicaragua	72.18	175	Sao Tome and Principe	63.49	220	South Africa	49.41
42	Turks and Caicos Islands	79.26	87	Lithuania	75.55	131	Palau	72.06	176	Togo	63.17	222	Chad	48.69
43	Wallis and Futuna	79.12	88	Tonga	75.38	132	Marshall Islands	72.03	177	Kenya	63.07			
44	Puerto Rico	79.07	89	Macedonia	75.36	133	Philippines	71.94	178	Cambodia	63.04			
45	Bosnia and Herzegovina	78.96				134	Micronesia	71.8	179	Eritrea	62.86			