

*In the Beginning*

Studies in Genesis

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Jersey Shore Baptist Church

Pastor Phil Erickson

June 1, 2016 (revised from original Sunday School Series started in January 2008)

## **Chapter Forty-Seven - Joseph's Family Is Presented to Pharaoh**

Memory Verse – Genesis 47:7

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

### **Introduction**

In the last chapter we saw the reunion of Jacob and Joseph in the land of Goshen. Jacob has packed up his family and has moved them into the land of Egypt after God had assured him that He would bless him there. Now Jacob is settling in the land and he and his family are introduced to Pharaoh and formally given positions as shepherds for Pharaoh. This chapter will span seventeen years. God does not show us all that takes place in the land of Egypt; he merely tells us that Israel grew and prospered during this time. At the end of the chapter, we are near the end of Jacob's life.

### **I Joseph Presents His Family (vs. 1 – 10)**

#### **A Five Brothers Meet Pharaoh (vs. 1 -6)**

We are not told which of Joseph's five brothers were presented to Pharaoh, but it is probably safe to assume that Benjamin would have been among them. Possibly, the other four were the four oldest sons of Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.

The brothers are asked by Pharaoh regarding their occupation and they reply that they are shepherds. Pharaoh, not only gives them good land for their cattle; but also hires them to take care of his cattle. Note the phrase "men of activity", which means men of strength and virtue, and men of value.

These men from Canaan came into the land of Egypt basically as beggars, but Pharaoh puts them in charge of all of his cattle. Because of their connection to Joseph, the king of the land promoted them. The Bible tells us:

*"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." (Proverbs 21:1)*

These men of Canaan had a connection that proved to be a tremendous blessing, and so do we.

## B Jacob Blesses Pharaoh (vs. 7 – 10)

*And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. (Hebrews 7:7)*

Notice the humility of Jacob here when he is asked about his age by Pharaoh. Jacob could have said a lot about his life, but he just simply states that the days of his life had been “few and evil”. “Evil” in this context means full of pain and misery.

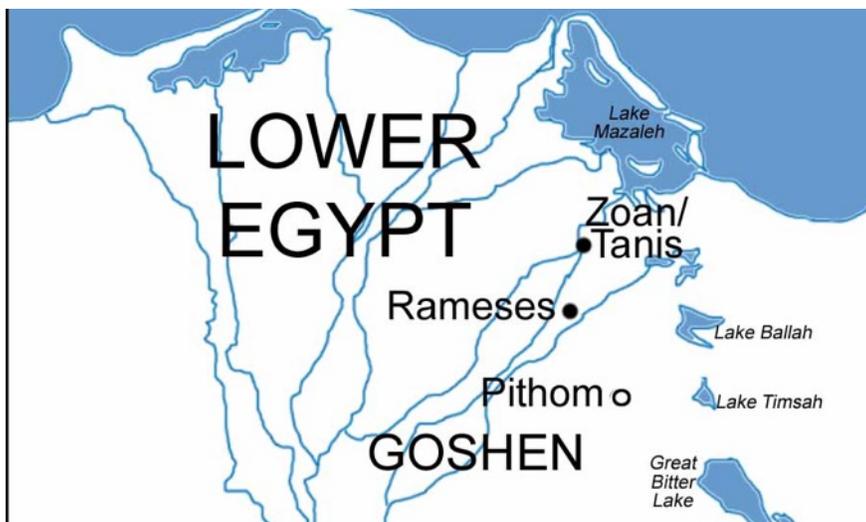
Notice also that Jacob used the word “pilgrimage” to describe his life. He recognized that he was a “stranger and a pilgrim here on the earth:

*"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. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."*

(Hebrews 11:13-16)

Notice also that even though Jacob was not exactly now living the life he had probably imagined, he accepted it as the will of God and sought to be a blessing to those who he came in contact with.

Preaching Point – Stop complaining about your circumstances and look for the purpose for which God has placed you in them. Maybe he wants you to learn something or maybe He wants you to be a vessel than God can use to pour out a blessing to someone else.



## II Joseph Places His Family in Rameses (vs. 11 – 12)

Rameses is in the land of Goshen and, according to Pharaoh, was the best land in Egypt for the purpose of supporting cattle.

## III Joseph Possesses All of Egypt for Pharaoh (vs. 13 – 26)

The famine in the land is continuing as promised by God,

and soon the people need to turn to the government to feed their families. The government does feed their families, but not without a price. Pharaoh ends up owning all of the gold, all of

the cattle, and all of the land. It is very interesting to note that the same thing seems to be happening today: the economy is bad and many people are suffering financially and they are asking the government to do something. The government is doing something, but, again, not without a price. Every time the government steps in to bail us out, they take from us a little more of our liberty.

#### **A The Money (vs. 13 – 15)**

First the people spend all of their money in order to purchase food.

#### **B The Cattle (vs. 16 – 18)**

Next the people give their cattle in exchange for food. These cattle were probably turned over to Pharaoh and placed under the care of Joseph's brothers in the land of Canaan.

#### **C The Land (vs. 19 – 26)**

The final step that gave Pharaoh complete control over the people was the purchase of the land. When Pharaoh controlled the land, he allowed the people to live in it and work it, but he would receive 20 % of whatever increase the land yielded. It is important to realize, however, that Pharaoh could now assess whatever tax he wished. The people had no choice but to pay it.

#### **IV Joseph Promises Jacob (vs. 27 – 31)**

Notice that when Jacob came to Egypt he was near death, but God had given him seventeen good years in Egypt. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Jacob was pretty happy now that he had Joseph back, and the joy that he received from his family just may have extended his life.

After seventeen years in Egypt, Jacob is now ready to die but makes Joseph promise to bury him in the land of Canaan with Abraham and Isaac. He wanted to be buried in the land that God had promised to his family, and he didn't want his family to become comfortable in Egypt. He wanted them to have a reason to return to Canaan. The Old Testament saint had the promise of the Kingdom which has to do with the earth. Jacob wanted to be buried in the land that was promised to him by God. He wanted to be resurrected in that land. The New Testament saint has the promise of the New Jerusalem. It does not matter where we are buried. God will raise us up to heaven and eventually to the New Jerusalem.

Note regarding Joseph's age. He was seventeen when he was sold into slavery. (Genesis 37:2) He was thirty when he stood before Pharaoh. (Genesis 41:46) There were seven plentiful years, and then two years of famine when Joseph was finally reunited with his father. It had

been a total of twenty-two years of separation. They were reunited for another seventeen years, making Joseph 56 at the end of this chapter.

## Conclusion

I think that there are a couple of lessons that we can glean from this passage that will help us in a practical way.

- 1 Provide for your own. Depend upon God, but not the government to take care of you. In times of plenty, do a little storing away of your own, so that if times get a little lean, you will have something to fall back on.
- 2 Don't get all stressed out about your financial future. God took care of His children, even though they were just as ill-prepared as everyone else for the famine, and there is no record of them surrendering their land.
- 3 Joseph and his family were a good testimony to Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. They glorified God – they made God look good.

*"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." (1 Peter 2:11-17)*