

Joseph--Genesis 47

The Egyptians Sell Everything for Food

I. Additional Scriptures...

1. Goshen was the place where the children of Israel grew and multiplied exceedingly (v. 27); Jacob lived here for 17 years (v. 28)...
 - 1) A district in Egypt especially suitable for herds and flocks in which the Israelites dwelt (Gen 45:10; 46:28; 47:1).
 - 2) Because of the presence of the children of Israel, it was a district of Egypt which was spared or exempted from the plagues (Ex 8:22; 9:26).
2. SHEPHERD--see special article under VII below.
3. The children of Israel develop into a large nation in the land of Goshen.
 - 1) About 400 years later, the king who knew not Joseph took note of the large number of Israelites (Ex 1:9).
 - 2) He took steps to reduce their numbers, but the more they were afflicted, the more they grew (Ex 1:10-12).
 - 3) Midwives were instructed to destroy male babies, but the midwives feared God and did not follow their instructions (Ex 1:17).
 - 4) God blessed midwives and He caused the children of Israel to multiply (Ex 1:20).

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: **Patriarchy.**

This chapter continues to tell about the arrival of the children of Israel into the land of Egypt. God blesses in a very great way the Israelites as they develop into a very large number of people during the next 400 years.

III. Summary.

Joseph announces to Pharaoh that his family has arrived in the land of Goshen. When some of the brothers are asked by Pharaoh about their occupation, they said as Joseph had instructed that they were shepherds. This would mean that they would be kept separate from the Egyptians. Pharaoh tells Joseph to give the best of the land to his family and asks that some of them take care of his cattle. Jacob is presented to Pharaoh and is asked about his age. Jacob blesses Pharaoh. Joseph feeds all of his father's household and they begin life in a new land.

Joseph manages the stored up grain in such a way that Pharaoh's wealth is greatly increased. The people use up all of their money, their animals, even their land and eventually even enslave themselves in order to purchase food to sustain their lives. Only the priests in the land were spared from the desperate struggle for food. All of the land now belonged to Pharaoh and the people were enslaved to him. Seed was given them to sow the land and one fifth of the produce was to be returned to Pharaoh. The people willingly accepted these terms and were grateful that their lives were saved.

Israel prospered in the land of Goshen and even multiplied exceedingly. For seventeen years Joseph was blessed to have his father with him in Egypt—his father lived to be 147.

His request was not to be buried in Egypt, but in Canaan and Joseph swore to fulfill that request.

IV. Outline.

1. Joseph presents five of his brothers to Pharaoh (1-2).
2. Pharaoh inquires about their occupation and is told they are shepherds (3-4).
3. Pharaoh assigns to Joseph's family the land of Goshen (5-6).
4. Joseph presents his father to Pharaoh (7-9).
5. Jacob blesses Pharaoh (10).
6. Joseph carries out the directive from Pharaoh to place his family in the land of Goshen (11-12).
7. The famine was devastating to the lands of Egypt and Canaan and the stored grain brought in great amounts of revenue to Pharaoh (13-14).
8. The people sold all they had, including themselves, to buy grain (15-20).
9. The people were moved into cities (21).
10. Only the priests were taken care of by Pharaoh and did not sell their land (22).
11. Seed is given to the people to sow, but one fifth of the produce must be given to Pharaoh (23-26).
12. Israel grew and multiplied in the land of Goshen (27).
13. Jacob lives 17 years and as he nears death asks Joseph to bury him in Canaan and Joseph agrees to do so (28-31).

V. Questions.

WHO Am I?

01. _____ I said... "Carry me out of Egypt."
02. _____ Said... "Thy servants are shepherds."
03. _____ I lived with my father 34 of his 147 years.
04. _____ Sold every man his field because the famine prevailed over them.
05. _____ I received the fifth part.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ Which of the following is NOT mentioned as coming out of Canaan with Joseph's family: (a) flocks; (b) herds; (c) all that they have; (d) none of these; (e) all of these.
07. _____ The sign used in connection with the vow Joseph made to his father was: (a) walking between a divided animal; (b) Joseph's hand under Jacob's thigh; (c) there was no sign mentioned.
08. _____ Jacob referred to his age in terms of: (a) a long walk; (b) a pilgrimage; (c) a pleasant season.
09. _____ The cattle the Egyptians sold paid for food for what period of time: (a) five years; (b) six months; (c) a year.
10. _____ Other than the "Land of Goshen," how is the place assigned to Joseph's family identified: (a) the best of the land; (b) the land of Rameses; (c) the promised land; (d) a & b; (e) none of these.

Fill in the Blanks

11. Joseph did this to his father, his brethren, and his father's household _____.
12. "And Joseph bought all the _____ of _____ for Pharaoh."

13. Exodus ____:22... “And I will sever in that day the land of _____, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of _____ shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I am the LORD in the _____ of the earth.”
14. “... the famine was very _____, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan _____ by reason of the famine.”
15. In the land of Goshen the children of Israel multiplied _____.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be given with next week’s lesson.

ANSWERS for Lesson 01-10: [01—False, 2; 02—True, 26; 03—True, 9; 04—True, 16; 05—True, 22; 06—b, 27; 07—c, 3; 08—d, 19; 09—a, 10; 10—c, 16; 11—troubled, 3; 12—governor, 26; 13—worketh; 14—raised, power; 15—corn, bread, meat, 23.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. *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* (Gen 47:1). Here is the migration toward which this story of Joseph has been leading. We were informed earlier that this is the means God is using of preserving to Jacob his posterity (Gen 45:7). Sometimes we may become frightened about wars and terrorism and calamities of all kinds, but the fact is that God is still in control. Truly as the song states it, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.”
2. *...in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell...* (Gen 47:6). Here is God’s provision for His people through Pharaoh. The children of Israel were to Him a special people that He loved (Deut 7:6-8). A study of God’s dealings with this people demonstrates beyond the shadow of a doubt that he loved them and provided for them in the very best ways. Today the chosen people of God are those who are in the church of Christ—spiritual Israel (Gal 6:16). The provision made for us can also be described by that word BEST. The best possible provision has been made in that **all** spiritual blessings are ours in Christ (Eph 1:3).
3. *...The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years...* (Gen 47:9). Hebrews 11:13-16 speaks of heroes of faith who viewed their days upon earth as a pilgrimage. They did not receive the promises but saw them afar off. They desired a heavenly country. It is a healthy conception to view our life on earth in this way. A “pilgrim spirit” will prevent such great attachment to worldly pursuits and will help us to make important that which is truly important (Mt 6:19-21). Peter writes—“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness” (2 Pet 3:11).
4. *...ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones* (Gen 47:24). It is interesting to consider this ratio. The Egyptians had sold themselves to Joseph to be able to provide food for themselves and their families during this time of famine. They were entrusted with the stewardship of land belonging now to Pharaoh and the produce of that land, having all provided by Pharaoh. Their “take” would be 80%, and they were delighted to accept these terms and they said, “Thou hast saved our lives...” (v. 25). As Christians we have all spiritual blessings in Christ; He purchased us (Acts

20:28); and we are blessed with great material prosperity. Yet, many Christians are NOT delighted when they give even 5% and very many give much less than that. Our giving, if it is to be acceptable to God, must be liberal, cheerful, purposed, and according to the way in which we have prospered (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 8:2; 9:7). God knows well how we have prospered; to think we can “pull the wool over His eyes” is certainly foolish. It has been my conviction for many years that there will be more Christians lost on judgment day because of covetousness than for any other cause.

5. *And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly* (Gen 47:27). Remember the promise made to Abraham. God told him, “I will make of thee a great nation...” (Gen 12:2). This great nation would be a blessing to all nations in that a Savior would come through Abraham’s loins. In order for there to be a nation, there are three requirements: (1) People; (2) Precepts (law); (3) Property. This section of Genesis is showing how the descendants of Abraham are developing into a large number of people. All of this is leading to and connected with the coming of the Messiah to “bless” all nations. What a wonderful God we serve!!!

VII. Holman Bible Dictionary Article on Shepherds... SHEPHERD A keeper of sheep. The first keeper of sheep in the Bible was Adam’s son Abel (Gen. 4:2). Shepherding was the chief occupation of the Israelites in the early days of the patriarchs: Abraham (Gen. 12:16); Rachel (Gen. 29:9); Jacob (Gen. 30:31-40); Moses (Ex. 3:1).

As cultivation of crops increased, shepherding fell from favor and was assigned to younger sons, hirelings, and slaves (compare David in 1 Sam. 16:11-13). Farmers such as in Egypt even hated shepherds (Gen. 46:34). The Bible mentions shepherds and shepherding over 200 times. However, the Hebrew word for shepherding is often translated, “feeding.” Shepherds led sheep to pasture and water (Ps. 23) and protected them from wild animals (1 Sam. 17:34-35). Shepherds guarded their flocks at night whether in the open (Luke 2:8) or in sheepfolds (Zeph. 2:6) where they counted the sheep as they entered (Jer. 33:13). They took care of the sheep and even carried weak lambs in their arms (Isa. 40:11).

Shepherd came to designate not only persons who herded sheep but also kings (2 Sam. 5:2) and God Himself (Ps. 23; Isa. 40:11). Later prophets referred to Israel’s leaders as shepherds (Jer. 23; Ezek. 34).

In Bible times the sheep cared for by shepherds represented wealth. They provided food (1 Sam. 14:32), milk to drink (Isa. 7:21-22), wool for clothing (Job 31:20), hides for rough clothing (Matt. 7:15), and leather for tents (Ex. 26:14). Furthermore, sheep were major offerings in the sacrificial system (Ex. 20:24). They were offered as burnt offerings (Lev. 1:10), sin offerings (Lev. 4:32), guilt offerings (Lev. 5:15), and peace offerings (Lev. 22:21).

The New Testament mentions shepherds 16 times. They were among the first to visit Jesus at His birth (Luke 2:8-20). Some New Testament references used a shepherd and the sheep to illustrate Christ’s relationship to His followers who referred to Him as “our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep” (Heb. 13:20). Jesus spoke of Himself as “the good shepherd” who knew His sheep and would lay down His life for them (John 10:7-18). Jesus commissioned Peter to feed His sheep (John 21). Paul likened the church and its leaders to a flock with shepherds (Acts 20:28). The Latin word transliterated “pastor” means shepherd. --by Elmer Gray

VIII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

Q A Z X C V F R M U L T I P L I E D T G
 B F A M I N E H J N O U R I S H E D K L
 P O L I U Y T R F E C A S S D F G H J K
 M N B O V B C X I Z C A S O D F G H J K
 P O I K C M J U F Y U H N B J G T R S F
 L G B V F K R E T D P C X S W O Q A O Z
 A X S W E D S C H V A P F R T G U B R N
 N H Y T G B V F R E T D R C X S W R E Q
 D S H E P H E R D S I A Z E X S W E N D
 D C V F R T G B N M O N E Y S H Y U J M
 M K I O P O H I U Y N T R E W E Q A Z X
 C V B N M T E L K P R I E S T S N J H G
 F D S A S Q R W E R T N Y U I O P T L K
 M J U E Y H D N B G E T R F V E D C E Q
 A Z B X S W S E D H C V F R T G B N H D
 Y U I O P L K M S H Y N T G B V F R X C
 V F R T G B N O Y U I O P L K S E E D J
 H G F D S A G Z X C P A S T U R E V B N
 M K J H G B L E S S E D F D S A Q W E R
 T Y P I L G R I M A G E Y U I O P K J H

[Below are listed some key words from Genesis 47. See how many of them you can find above.]

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| 01. flocks | 02. herds |
| 03. Goshen | 04. presented |
| 05. occupation | 06. shepherds |
| 07. sojourn | 08. pasture |
| 09. best | 10. blessed |
| 11. pilgrimage | 12. nourished |
| 13. sore | 14. famine |
| 15. money | 16. land |
| 17. priests | 18. seed |
| 19. fifth | 20. multiplied |