

Introduction

I was talking to someone this week about our passage today. The person said that there were lots of names and it was not an interesting chapter. There are lots of names given in the middle part of our text today, but I love our passage. I especially love the first part of the passage. It really spoke to my heart. Jacob is living in the land that the Lord told him to go to. He is living in the land that God promised to Abraham and to his father Isaac. Now, he is getting ready to move his whole family to Egypt, away from the land that God told him to go to. He wants some confirmation about what he is doing. So, he purposely stops in Beersheba and offers sacrifices to the Lord. He wanted to hear a word of confirmation about what he was doing. How many of you want to hear words of confirmation about your plans? I do. In fact, I really love this passage because I feel that this is where I am.

Forty-two years ago my father started a training company in Albuquerque. We have held classes for forty-two years. I made the decision to stop offering classes in Albuquerque and just make it our corporate office. I have a sadness in closing it down, even though I know it is the right decision. As I make decisions about business, family, and church, I want to know that I am on track. I want to be led by the Spirit, and I don't want to go astray or lead others astray. I greatly appreciate Jacob's heart to go to Beersheba and get a word of confirmation from the Lord. Some of you may be making decisions, and you may be looking for a word of confirmation. Hopefully, this passage will speak to you as well.

Our passage is about Jacob moving to Egypt, and it has three sections. In the first section, Jacob hears from the Lord. In the second section, we are given all the names of the sons of Jacob at that time that went to Egypt. Last, we are given the emotional meeting that Joseph and Jacob have.

Jacob Moves To Egypt

1. Jacob Hears From The Lord (Gen 46:1-4)
2. Jacob and Family Arrive in Egypt (Gen 46:5-27)
3. Jacob and Joseph Meet (Gen 46:28-34)

1. Jacob Hears From The Lord (Gen 46:1-4)

(Gen 46:1-4) "So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. {2} God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." {3} He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. {4} "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes."

Our text today starts with Israel and all of their family setting out for Egypt. They have a 670-mile journey in front of them. They first went to Beersheba, which is 26.4 miles south of Hebron, where they are living. Beersheba is where Abraham made a covenant with Abimelech in Genesis 21:28-33. Beersheba means a well of seven. It was named that because Abraham gave him seven ewe lambs as a witness that he had dug the well. Then, Abraham planted a tamarisk tree there and called upon the Lord. So, Beersheba has been a place for their family to call upon the Lord for many generations. It was a very special place to them.

Beersheba may have been a good stopover place. But, I believe that Jacob made an intentional stop there. He went there to offer sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. I believe that Jacob wanted to hear from God. Jacob wanted to get some confirmation from the Lord about what they were doing. He is moving his whole family to Egypt and that is a big move. I think it is wise to get counsel about a move this big. It was God who told Jacob to go to Bethel and build an altar. It was God who told him to return to Canaan and the land of his birth. He is about to leave and he wants to make sure that he is not straying from God's path for him.

At the beginning of 2010, I heard from the Lord about planting a vineyard in the East Mountains. He told me to build my own house, meaning spiritual house. At that time, just like now, I was working a full-time job managing Murchison Drilling Schools. We were experiencing a lot of growth, and I spent a good bit of time traveling. Planting a church is a lot of work and my wife wisely asked for a word of confirmation. She wanted to go to Beersheba and hear a word of confirmation. We went to Joshua's Vineyard and asked the Lord before we went that He would speak a word of confirmation to us about the church plant, and that He would also give our children a prophetic word. When we got there a woman came up to us before the service began and shared a prophetic word to me about the church plant. Then, during the service Kathleen got a very accurate prophetic word. Joshua's Vineyard had been our Beersheba that day. We heard from the Lord, and we received a prophetic word of confirmation. So, we moved forward and planted the East Mountain Vineyard. It is a good thing to ask God for confirmation, especially when you are considering major decisions.

What God spoke to Jacob confirms why he went and offered sacrifices to God. The Lord spoke to him in visions of the night and told him several things. First, He said that He is God, the God of his father. Second, He told him not to be afraid to go down to Egypt. Third, He told him that He will make him a great nation there. Fourth, He tells him that He will go down to Egypt with him and He will bring him up again. It is comforting to know that God is with us. Fifth, God told him that Joseph will close his eyes. In other words, he was not going to die before seeing Joseph. I think the stopover in Beersheba was well worth it.

Jacob was in disbelief about Joseph until he saw the evidence that his sons brought back. Then, he said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die." I believe that Jacob put seeing Joseph on his bucket list that day. And now, God has told him that he will see Joseph and that he will close your eyes.

(Gen 45:28) "Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

I want to make a couple of comments about worship. First, Jacob went and offered sacrifices. There are many people who go to church for the worship music or the message. They go there for their own edification. I think it is wonderful for people to grow in their knowledge of God. I think it is wonderful for people to be equipped and encouraged. Those things should happen. But, worship is about offering sacrifices to God. We present our bodies as living and holy sacrifices. We offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise. We offer our tithes and offerings as sacrifices. When we come to worship, we should come ready to honor God and bless him. Second, worship is interactive. When we present our sacrifices to God, and we should come expecting to hear from God. Jacob did not go to hear some good worship music or preaching; he went to Beersheba to hear from God, and God spoke to him in visions during the night.

2. **Jacob and Family Arrive In Egypt** (Gen 46:5-27)

(Gen 46:5-7) “Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their little ones and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. {6} They took their livestock and their property, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him: {7} his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

After hearing from God at Beersheba, they traveled on to Goshen. It says that his sons carried him in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. I think he probably sat in the first class section of the wagon. I believe that Pharaoh and Joseph probably sent the best wagon they could for Jacob to ride in. They also took all their livestock and property. They had a lot of livestock so this was a pretty big caravan going down to Egypt.

A large part of the chapter is about Israel’s family that moved to Egypt. It is broken down into four sections of people. We first learn about the sons of Jacob that he had with Leah. Then, we learn about the sons that he had with Zilpah, Leah’s maid, who became one of Jacob’s concubines. Third, we are given the sons of Jacob that he had with Rachel. Finally, we are given the sons that Jacob had with Bilhah, Rachel’s maid. The list of sons and grandsons is similar to the list given in Numbers 26, which is the list of people that came out of Egypt at the end of the four hundred years. There are a couple of minor differences, either in the spelling of the names or some other minor reason.

(Gen 46:8-15) “Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. {9} The sons of Reuben: Hanoch and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi. {10} The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. {11} The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. {12} The sons of Judah: Er and Onan and Shelah and Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. {13} The sons of Issachar: Tola and Puvvah and Iob and Shimron. {14} The sons of Zebulun: Sered and Elon and Jahleel. {15} These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all his sons and his daughters *numbered* thirty-three.

Jacob had six sons with Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. We are also given the names of all their sons. Reuben had four sons at that time: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. Simeon had six sons: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul. Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Judah had three sons with his wife: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Then, he had Perez and Zerah with Tamar. Perez had two sons, Hezron and Hamul. Issachar had four sons: Tola, Puvvah, Iob, and Shimron. Zebulun had three sons: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. There were thirty-three people in this group.

| Sons of Jacob with Leah | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Reuben (9) | Simeon (10) | Levi (11) | Judah (12) | Issachar (13) | Zebulun (14) |
| Hanoch | Jemuel | Gershon | Er | Tola | Sered |
| Pallu | Jamin | Kohath | Onan | Puvvah | Elon |
| Hezron | Ohad | Merari | Shelah | Iob | Jahleel |
| Carmi | Jachin | | Perez | Shimron | |
| | Zohar | | (Hezron, Hamul) | | |
| | Shaul | | Zerah | | |

The next section is about the sons of Jacob with Leah's maid, Zilpah. He had two sons with her, Gad, and Asher.

(Gen 46:16-18) "The sons of Gad: Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli. {17} The sons of Asher: Imnah and Ishvah and Ishvi and Beriah and their sister Serah. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. {18} These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and she bore to Jacob these sixteen persons."

| Sons of Jacob with Zilpah (Leah's Maid) | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Gad (V. 16) | Asher (V. 17) |
| Ziphion | Imnah |
| Haggi | Ishvah |
| Shuni | Ishvi |
| Ezbon | Beriah (Heber, Malchiel) |
| Eri | (Serah – sister) |
| Arodi | |
| Areli | |

It is difficult for me to tell, but according to the punctuation, it looks like Gad has two sets of twin and one set of triplets. After Ziphion and Haggi, there is a comma. Then, after Shuni and Ezbon there is another comma. Then, the last three are mentioned together. It could be a translating issue, or it could signify three groups of children. It could also mean that Gad had three wives and these are three sets of children. There is not much information given. In Numbers 26:15, Ziphion is called Zephon. I don't believe that is a mistake. I am known as William and I am also known as Bill. One of those may have been his formal name and the other the name that people called him.

Another couple of peculiarities is the mention of Beriah's two sons. These are Asher's grandsons. In Scripture, all the grandsons, great grandsons, etc. are all called sons. Another thing is the mention of Serah. All of these lists were sons, and there is no mention of the wives or daughters, except in the case of Dinah in verse 15 and Serah in verse 17.

The next sons to be mentioned are from Jacob's marriage with Rachel. The sons of Joseph are included in the list, even though they are already living in Egypt. We are also given the names of the ten sons that Benjamin has. There are two views by scholars on the age of Benjamin. I believe that he was already born before Joseph was sold to the Midianite traders. Therefore, I think that he is around thirty-two to thirty-five at the time. This view supports his ability to already have ten sons at this time.

(Gen 46:19-22) “The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. {20} Now to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. {21} The sons of Benjamin: Bela and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppm and Huppm and Ard. {22} These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; there were fourteen persons in all.”

Jacob had two sons with Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin. Joseph was already in Egypt and had two sons. Benjamin may have been the youngest, but he already has ten sons by the time they went to Egypt. In this list, Ehi's name is slightly different than in Numbers 26:38, where he is called Ahiram. Scholars say that Ehi was a nickname for Ahiram.

| Sons of Jacob with Rachel | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Joseph (V. 20) | Benjamin (V. 21) |
| Manasseh | Bela |
| Ephraim | Becher |
| | Awhbel |
| | Gera |
| | Naaman |
| | Ehi |
| | Rosh |
| | Muppm |
| | Huppm |
| | Ard |

The next list contains the names of the sons of Jacob with Bilhah, Rachel's maid. She bore two sons, Dan and Naphtali.

(Gen 46:23-25) “The sons of Dan: Hushim. {24} The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel and Guni and Jezer and Shillem. {25} These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and she bore these to Jacob; there were seven persons in all.”

| Sons of Jacob with Bilhah (Rachel's Maid) | |
|---|------------------|
| Dan (V. 23) | Naphtali (V. 24) |
| Hushim | Jahzeel |
| | Guni |
| | Jezer |
| | Shillem |

Moses wraps up this section of all the persons belonging to Jacob that moved to Egypt.

(Gen 46:26-27) “All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob's sons, were sixty-six persons in all, {27} and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob, who came to Egypt, were seventy.”

We see that the total that moved down from Canaan were sixty-six people. Joseph and his wife and two children were already there, so the total number of people belonging to Jacob were seventy.

In Numbers 26, the Lord told Moses to take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel from the age of 20 and up. Here are the results of that census. There were 601,730 men above the age of 20 that could go out to war. This did not include the women, daughters, men under 20, or the Levites. The total came out to be 601,730 men. If we added the Levites, the total would be 624,730 men. They came with 70 people and left with 624,730. That is a growth of 99.99%. In Genesis 15, God told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land where they would be oppressed and enslaved for 400 years. Afterwards they would come out with much wealth. People think of worldly wealth. I believe they came out with worldly wealth, but I believe their real wealth was their people. God blessed Abraham and his descendants. I believe the reason for the number of people in our chapter today is so that we can compare it with Numbers 26 and see how they prospered and multiplied while in Egypt.

(Num 26:1-2) “Then it came about after the plague, that the LORD spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying, {2} ‘Take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel from twenty years old and upward, by their fathers' households, whoever is able to go out to war in Israel.’”

| Son/Tribe | Number of +20 | Reference |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Reuben | 43,730 | Num 26:5-11 |
| Simeon | 22,200 | Num 26:12-14 |
| Gad | 40,500 | Num 26:15-18 |
| Judah | 76,500 | Num 26:19-22 |
| Issachar | 64,300 | Num 26:23-25 |
| Zebulun | 60,500 | Num 26:26-27 |
| Joseph | 85,200 | Num 26:28-37 |
| Benjamin | 45,600 | Num 26:38-41 |
| Dan | 64,400 | Num 26:42-43 |
| Asher | 53,400 | Num 26:44-47 |
| Naphtali | 45,400 | Num 26:48-50 |
| Total | 601,730 | Num 26:51 |
| Levi | 23,000 | Num 26:57-62 |
| Grand Total | 624,730 | |

3. **Jacob and Joseph Meet** (Gen 46:28-34)

In the final section today, Jacob and Joseph meet. It is an emotional meeting for both Joseph and Jacob. Joseph also gives some instructions to his brothers and his father about what to say when they meet with Pharaoh.

(Gen 46:28-34) “Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out *the way* before him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. {29} Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; as soon as he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. {30} Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive." {31} Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me; {32} and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.' {33} "When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your

occupation?' {34} you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' that you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."

Jacob sent Judah before him to Joseph to point out the way to Goshen. Judah has made two trips to Egypt and is familiar with the area. In one sense all of us are Judahs. God has called us to point the way for others. Judah was pointing the way to Goshen, which was the best land available. We are pointing the way to Christ and an eternal place.

Once they arrived in Goshen, Joseph prepared his chariot to go and meet them. The Hebrew word literally means to tie or bind, so Joseph harnessed his chariot to go and meet them. As soon as he saw his father, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. Joseph is obviously very emotional. He and his father had a very special relationship. His father had given him the varicolored tunic (Gen 37:3). His father loved him more than all of his brothers. They had a very special relationship. They have not seen each other for seventeen years, and this is obviously a very emotional time. These are not tears of sorrow, but tears of joy. Joseph is overjoyed at seeing his father again.

This was a very emotional meeting for Jacob as well. He said to Joseph, "*Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive.*" Jacob had mourned over his son and had refused to be comforted (Gen 37:25). Now that he has seen Jacob, he is ready to die. His bucket list has been fulfilled. Some of this may have to do with the word that the Lord spoke to him at Beersheba. God said that Joseph would close his eyes (Gen 46:4). Part of it may be his age. Jacob is 130 years old (Gen 47:9) at the time. But, in Gen 47:28, we find that Jacob would live another 17 years and die at the age of 147. He was old and his eyesight was poor, but he still had some years left in him.

I look at his statement a little differently. I think it is sad to think that you have nothing else to live for. Paul wrote that he was ready to go, and he said to die is gain. He knew that he would be with the Lord. But, he also wrote that it was necessary for him to remain in the flesh for their sake. He said, "To live is Christ, to die is gain." (See Philippians 1:21-25.) I think that older people can pray for their families. Older people can encourage and strengthen people. It is sad to think that you have no more purpose to live, and want to die.

Then, Joseph gave instructions to his brothers and his father's household. He told them that he was going to tell Pharaoh that his brothers are shepherds and that they have brought their flocks and herds. He tells them that when Pharaoh asks them about their occupation, they are to tell him that they are keepers of livestock. They are to tell him exactly what he has already told Pharaoh. Joseph may have told them this to make sure they told Pharaoh the truth. Some of his brothers may have wanted to say something different, knowing that shepherds were loathsome or hated by the Egyptians. They may have been tempted to say something different. Joseph was not ashamed of his heritage and he wants them to tell the truth. I believe the main reason for wanting them to tell this to Pharaoh is because the land for the cattle was in Goshen, the very best land available. Joseph wanted them to have the very best land. Even though shepherds were hated, they would be given the best land for livestock.

In Matthew Poole's Commentary, he gave an insight as to why shepherds were loathsome. There were some Phoenician shepherds that had come to Egypt and waged a cruel war with the Egyptians. They had burned their temples and murdered multitudes of people. Therefore, the

Egyptians had a hatred for shepherds because of their experience with these barbaric Phoenician shepherds.

Every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians; either, 1. Because they did both kill and eat those creatures which the Egyptians adored. Or, 2. Because of the fresh remembrance of the horrid cruelties lately committed there by the Phoenician shepherds, who, as some very ancient writers affirm, were seated in Egypt in great numbers, and had arrived to great power, and waged a cruel war with other Egyptians, wherein they wasted divers cities, and burned their temples, and barbarously murdered a multitude of people. And therefore it is no wonder if the calling of shepherds was grown out of use and credit among them.¹

Conclusion, Questions, and Applications (Jer 29:11, Eph 2:10, Col 1:28-29)

As we wrap up this morning, I mentioned that I loved this chapter because I am looking for confirmation about the things that I am doing, the decisions that I am making, the plans that I am making. I want my life to be in step with God's plans. In Jeremiah 29:11, I know that He has plans for me, plans for welfare and not for calamity, to give me a future and a hope. I know that He has prepared good works in advance for me to walk in. (Eph 2:10) I want regular confirmation as I live my life for Christ.

I don't think that you are any different than me. I know that He has plans for each of you. I know that He has a purpose for each of you, and that He has prepared good works in advance for each of you to walk in. I know that He wants you to live your lives for Him and to bear much fruit. I know that you want your lives to be in His will. What are you wanting to hear from the Lord about? What confirmations are you wanting to hear from the Lord about?

After Jacob arrived in Egypt and saw Joseph, he was ready to die. He lived another seventeen years. Paul did not live that way. Paul would rather have died and been with Jesus; he called that gain. But, he knew that his remaining days would mean effective service for him to the church. In Colossians 1:28-29 he said that he proclaimed Christ, admonishing and teaching every man with all wisdom so that he could present every man complete in Christ. It was for that purpose that he labored and strived. He had purpose in his life. What purpose(s) does God have for your life?

(Col 1:28-29) "We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. {29} For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me."

¹ Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Holy Bible

Introduction

- 1. Jacob Hears From The Lord** (Gen 46:1-4, 21:28-33, 45:28)
- 2. Jacob and Family Arrive In Egypt** (Gen 46:5-27, Num 26:1-62)
- 3. Jacob and Joseph Meet** (Gen 46:28-34, 37:3, 37:25, 46:4, 47:9, 47:28, Phil 1:21-25)

Conclusion, Questions, and Applications (Jer 29:11, Eph 2:10, Col 1:28-29)

What am I wanting to hear from the Lord about?

What confirmations am I asking God to give me?

What purpose(s) does God have for my life?