

TODAY'S READING: GENESIS 46-50

OVERVIEW:

Jacob's vision at Beersheba; the journey to Egypt; Joseph and the famine; the best land given to Jacob; Jacob blesses Joseph's sons; Jacob's prophecies upon his sons; the deaths of Jacob and Joseph.



HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

In today's reading, Jacob begins the journey toward Egypt to be reunited with his beloved son, Joseph. At Beersheba, God spoke to Jacob in a vision of the night, assuring him that it was his will that he go to Egypt, and that though he would die there, God would eventually return His people to the Promised Land. As has been already noted, God is consistently hammering the point that Egypt is a downward move, and one must be brought up out of Egypt (Gen. 46:4). Egypt is a picture sin and the world.

When Jacob is reunited with Joseph, it has been 22 long years, with an incredible amount of "water that has passed under the bridge." Joseph is now 39, and Jacob is 130.

Joseph introduces his father to the Pharaoh and he grants Jacob the best part of Egypt for his family to settle in, an area called Goshen.

After 17 years in Egypt, Jacob realizes that he was close to death. He has one major thing that he makes Joseph promise him: "*Bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt.*" (47:29-31).

Chapter 48 records Jacob's (Israel's) last blessing. Joseph brings his two sons before his father, and he adopts them as his own sons and assures them of an equal inheritance. A strange thing happens as Israel bestows the blessing upon his sons. As Joseph brings his two sons before his father, Manasseh is brought toward Jacob's right hand, and Ephraim is brought toward his left hand. As Jacob reaches out to impart the blessing, he crosses his hands, giving the firstborn blessing of his right hand to Ephraim, the younger son. Though Joseph objected, Israel explained that God was once again going to bestow the firstborn blessing upon the younger son.

What is the meaning of this bizarre story? It is all an incredible picture! The Bible refers to Christ as the "firstborn among many brethren," who is "seated at the Father's right hand." When we came before the Father, and asked Him to bestow the blessing of eternal life upon us, God the Father crossed His hands. Since He only has one gift of eternal life, and that life is in His Son (I John 5:11-12), God took His right hand and placed it on us, and took His left hand and placed it on His Son. He gets our *sin*; we get His *righteousness* (II Cor. 5:20). He dies our *death*; we get His *life* (Rom. 5:10). He gets our *curse*; we get the firstborn *blessing* (Gal. 3:13-14).

The scene in chapter 50 as the dying Jacob calls his sons into his bedroom is not only incredibly prophetic (Gen. 49:1 – "*Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days*"), it is also an incredible picture! It is an extremely graphic and detailed picture of the Judgment Seat of Christ! (II Cor. 5:10-11)

As Joseph comes to the end of his life in Genesis 50, he has the same passion as did his father before him, manifest through one major request. He wanted to be certain that his bones did not remain in Egypt! Like his father, he wanted to be buried in Canaan. Why? Because Canaan was

the land of Promise. Jacob and Joseph both realized, that though they were in Egypt (the world), they were not of Egypt (the world)! (John 17:11-16) Joseph's request was not forgotten; 400 years later, as the children of Israel set out for Canaan, Exodus 13:19 says that they took Joseph's bones with them. We also have the promise of God that He will not allow our bones to remain in Egypt (I Thess 4:11-17)!

Genesis begins with a man in a Garden and ends with a man in a coffin. It begins with life and ends with death. God says, "*The wages of sin is death*" (Rom. 6:23) and "*sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*" (James 1:15).

As we conclude the Book of Genesis today, here is a simple way to remember the content of this vitally important Book. The Book of Genesis is comprised of:

▲ FOUR KEY EVENTS (Genesis 1-11)

1. Creation (1-2)
2. The Fall (3-5)
3. The Flood (6-9)
4. The Tower of Babel (10-11)

▲ FOUR KEY MEN (Genesis 12-50)

1. Abraham (12:1-25:8)
2. Isaac (21:1-35:29)
3. Jacob (25:21-50:14)
4. Joseph (30:22-50:26)

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

Through JOSEPH, WHO SUSTAINED LIFE AND OFFERED PROVISION FROM HIS POSITION ON THE THRONE – Gen. 47:15-17 (John 6:33)

As SHILOH, THE ONE WHO HOLDS THE SCEPTRE FROM THE TRIBE OF JUDAH – Gen. 49:10 (Luke 3:23-33)