

INTRO: In our last study (**ch.45**), we learned of **God's Prevailing Promises**, where Joseph 'Revealed Himself' to his brothers. We learned that **when God is in charge, everything comes together for the greatest good**; and that **Forgiveness and Reconciliation are important parts of every relationship**. – As we continue the story of Israel, Genesis 46, reveals three additional **MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE** for Jacob and his entire family. *

CONTEXT: When Jacob was told that Joseph was ALIVE (45:28), he immediately rose to make his way to Egypt to *"see Joseph before he died."* But first...

I. IMPORTANT REST STOP (1-4) – As Israel left the **Promised Land**, it would be **for the LAST TIME!** And because he was journeying into the unknown once again, **he needed God's reassurance**. So, he went back to the place where he grew up. A familiar place where he had left before to worship the Lord and ask for His help.

A. Returning To Beersheba (1-2) – Rather than darting straight for Egypt, Jacob took the time to **Pause at Beersheba (1)**, *"the well of seven-fold oaths."* – There he **WORSHIPPED!**

– **Beersheba was a special place to Jacob... a place of spiritual strengthening**. His grandfather **Abraham** has dug a well there (**22:19**). God also appeared to Hagar there (**22:17**) – **NOW, God appears to ease Israel's concerns about dwelling in Egypt (2a)**. – How so? By *Using a Vision...*

- He Calls to him: *"Jacob, Jacob"* (more on this later)
- He Identifies Himself: as *"The God of your father"* (Israel knew that God spoke with Isaac)
- He Calms him – *"Do not fear to go to Egypt"* (He was concerned... protection, provision, prosperity, etc.)
- He Reassures him – *"I will make you a great nation there"* and *"I will go down with you"*
- He Promises his return – *"to bring him back to Canaan"* (b/c it was his family's promised posterity)
- He Foretells of Comfort at his death – *"Joseph will put his hand on your eyes"*

– **Notice in (v.2b)** that Israel, positioned himself to receive from God... *"Here I am."* – God desires to lead and guide us likewise: **(tt. Psalm 32:7-9)**

B. Reassurance For Egypt (3-4) – God evidently knew that Jacob had a fearful reserve in his heart about "Going to Egypt" thus, the **double name emphasis!** Elsewhere in the Bible we see God repeating the names of His servants, **who needed a special word from God**: In (**Gen 22:11**), *"Abraham, Abraham;"* in (**1 Sam 3:10**), we learn of young *"Samuel, Samuel."* Then there is the busy beaver, *"Martha, Martha"* in (**Luke 10:41**). Ahh, and we can't forget the former persecutor of the early Christians, *"Saul, Saul!"* (**Acts 9:4**); He answered, *"Who are You, Lord?"*

P/A – Israel knew the IMPORTANCE of A REST STOP! In the busyness of our lives, we too should take the time to **PAUSE, PRAY, & WORSHIP** when facing new ventures! – When we do, we set ourselves up to hear a Word from our Heavenly Father. – **LISTEN for HIM**, so that He doesn't have to speak your name 2x's!

II. IMPORTANT RECORDS (5-27) – This section of scripture is significant because it serves as a **Genealogical Registry for Israel**, before entering Egypt.

A. Jacob's Entourage (5-7) – Jacob left Beersheba, ready for *whatever happens next* because he knew that God was with him. On their Journey it says that, "*his sons carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives.*" (5a-c).

1. They did so in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him (5d) – (*An easier trip*)
2. They took ALL their belonging with them (6a-c)
3. Jacob and ALL his descendants with him, *his sons* and *his sons' sons, his daughters* and *his sons' daughters*, to Egypt (6d-7) – Which speaks of commitment to the move! (*All IN!*)

CONTEXT: Now these were the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons who went to Egypt (8a) – The lists that follow are ordered first by Jacob's wives, then by the sons each bore.

B. Jacob's Sons from LEAH (8b-15) – First mentioned are **The Sons of Leah**, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, (15) – This list is not chronological, but arranged by **birth order from Leah** She began with the Reuben who was Jacob's firstborn (8b).

- **The sons of ¹Reuben**: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi (9)
- **The sons of ²Simeon**: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the *son of a Canaanite woman* (10) – *Not desirable, but still permitted by God and named in the record (seed)*
- **The sons of ³Levi**: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari (11) – *Tribes used for the service of the tabernacle*
- **The sons of ⁴Judah**: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (*Er and Onan died in Canaan*). The sons of Perez were ^{GGS}Hezron and ^{GGS}Hamul (12) – *The Messianic seed would stem from Judah*)
- **The sons of ⁹Issachar**: Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron (13) – *And Leah thought she was done!*
- **The sons of ¹⁰Zebulun**: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel (14)

– **Worth noting** is that *even though Leah was seemingly less loved by Jacob*, it is well recorded in the history of Israel, *that LEAH, the unwanted wife, actually became the primary Matriarch of Israel. She definitely became the most fruitful...*

Census: 6 Sons, 25 Grandsons, and 2 Great Grandsons and 1 Daughter. All the persons from Jacob and Leah, his sons and including (Dinah), were **Thirty-Three (15)**

C. Jacob's Sons from ZILPAH (16-18) – She had **two sons**, which were Gad and Asher. (*Technically, these were also considered Leah's sons, born during her birth competition with Rachael!*)

- **The sons of ⁷Gad**: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. (16)
- **The sons of ⁸Asher**: Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and ^{GD}Serah, *their sister*. And the sons of Beriah were ^{GS}Heber and ^{GS}Malchiel (17)

Census: These were the sons of **Zilpah**, the *maidservant of Leah*, whom **Laban** gave to his daughter. 2 Sons, 11 Grandsons, and 2 Great Grandsons and 1 Grand Daughter. **The total record Zilpah bore to Jacob before entering Egypt was Sixteen persons (18).**

D. Jacob's Sons from RACHEL (19-22) – RACHEL WAS HIS BELOVED WIFE; she bore two sons to Jacob: Joseph and Benjamin (19). **But Rachel died in labor with Benjamin! (35:16-20)**

- **The sons of ¹¹Joseph**, who were born in the land of Egypt were **Manasseh** and **Ephraim**. Also mentioned is the name of their Egyptian mother, Asenath (20)
- **The sons of ¹²Benjamin:** Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard **(22)**

Census: 2 Sons, and 12 Grandsons. **These were the sons of Rachel (23),** who were born to Jacob: **Fourteen persons** in all.

E. Jacob's Sons from BILHAH (23-25) – Bilhah was the maidservant of Rachel (Gen 30:1-8).

- **The son of ⁵Dan:** Hushim **(24)** – (*Joke: It seems, he was a rather quite man who dwelt alone...ha!*)
- **The sons of ⁶Naphtali:** Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem **(25)**

Census: 2 Sons, and 5 Grandsons. – **These were the sons of Bilhah,** whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: **Seven persons** in all **(26a)**

A Confirmation of FAMILY Records (26-27) – All the persons **who went with Jacob** to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob's sons' wives, were **Sixty-Six persons in all (26b);** and **the sons of Joseph** who were born to him in Egypt were two persons.

- The inclusion of **Jacob and Joseph** would **Total Seventy**, from Jacob's house who went to Egypt **(27) – The testimony of Scripture is 70 persons,** also confirmed (**Ex. 1:5**) and (**Deut 10:22**), where Moses declares, "Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude."
- Vs. 15 = 33, Vs. 18 = 16, Vs. 22 = 14, Vs. 25 = 7, a TOTAL of 70.
- In (**Acts 7:14**) **Stephen mentions 75 people,** because he was referring to the **LXX**, which includes the **three sons of Ephraim** and **two sons of Manasseh** (*cf. Num 26:28-37*)
- **The NUMBER 70 is used much in scripture** beginning with: The list of **70 Nations** (**Gen 10**). – In (**Num 11:16**) it lists the **70 Elders**, and in (**Dan 9:24**), we read of the **70 Weeks Prophecy**. – Even in the **NT** we learn that there were the **70 Members of the Sanhedrin**.

CLOSING THOUGHTS: I know this all may seem rather boring to learn about, however **These IMPORTANT RECORDS** serve God's purposes re: **ISRAEL'S EXISTENCE:** Past, Present, and Future!

– In His infinite wisdom, **God knows how to keep track of Important Records!** – The tribes of Israel are listed in (**Rev 7:5-8**), but they are not the same tribes as **listed here**, or even in **Joshua**. – God cares about their existence, just like He cares about our existence. **YOU MATTER TO GOD!**

– **He MADE YOU and He KNOWS YOU!** – We see this communicated when God told Jeremiah, **“Before I formed you in the womb I KNEW YOU; Before you were born, I SANCTIFIED YOU; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” (Jer 1:5)**

Our Final Matter of Importance Involves an...

III. IMPORTANT REUNION (28-30) – Here we have **another emotional event in Joseph’s life**, the long-awaited reunion of Joseph and his father Jacob. *Both have waited for so long...*

A. Drawing Near Goshen (28-29a) – As Jacob drew near, **he sent Judah ahead** to meet Joseph and **obtain directions to the Goshen area (28)** – *He probably sent Judah* because **he exhibited a true spirit of repentance and change of heart** among Joseph’s brothers. *(They arrived at Goshen)*

- In (v.29a) we see that **Joseph prepares to meet his father, Israel.** – **Can you imagine his excitement?** **“I get to see my dad! I love my dad, I miss my dad, I want to tell my dad what God has done in my life!”** *(Personally, I can identify with that thought! – My dad passed-on Feb. 7th, 2002, which makes it 22 years since I’ve seen him!)* – Furthermore, even **King David** expressed this same also kind of excitement and expectation... but to **SEE HIS HEAVENLY FATHER, (Psalm 17:15) As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.** *(Is this your hope and desire?)*
- And so, we see both **Jacob and Joseph Drawing Near** to each other for their Important Reunion – Ironically, I researched the meaning of **GOSHEN**, it literally means **“Drawing Near.”** Both are drawing near each other to meet in a safe place!
- Goshen would later become a place of Separation and Protection from the plagues of Egypt (Ex 8:22; 9:26), and a Place of Light, when darkness consumed Egypt (Ex 10:23).

P/A – Do you have a Goshen in your life? A place where you “draw near to God.” – **CHURCH!**

B. Delightful Reacquaintance (29b-30) – Joseph **“presented himself”** to his father – **ALIVE!** *This reunion of Israel with Joseph was more than he ever before dreamed.* He had heard the news that his favored son lived, and **now he was able to embrace him in person!**

- The delight of seeing your loved one that you thought was dead, actually standing before you would bring **“elation”** and of course **“tears” of joy, as it did for them!**
- **Israel’s comment** meant that he could now die a happy man! – Yet, he would live in Egypt for another 17 years (Gen 47:28)

P/A – God is a God of Restoration! He understands reunions very well. – He also delights in **MENDING BROKEN FAMILIES!** – But it all starts with Drawing Near to Him. – Because of Jesus Christ, we can **“Draw Near to God,”** our Heavenly Father (Heb 10:22)

- *This family reunion is a picture of our HEAVENLY family reunion.* – **(1 Cor 13:12a)** says, **“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face...”**

ALTAR CALL: We all have Matters of Importance in LIFE, **Knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior is the MOST IMPORTANT MATTER OF ALL!**