

A Prince Meets A King
(Genesis 47)

GIVE ME A LIFETIME
Part 12



Wadi Tumilat

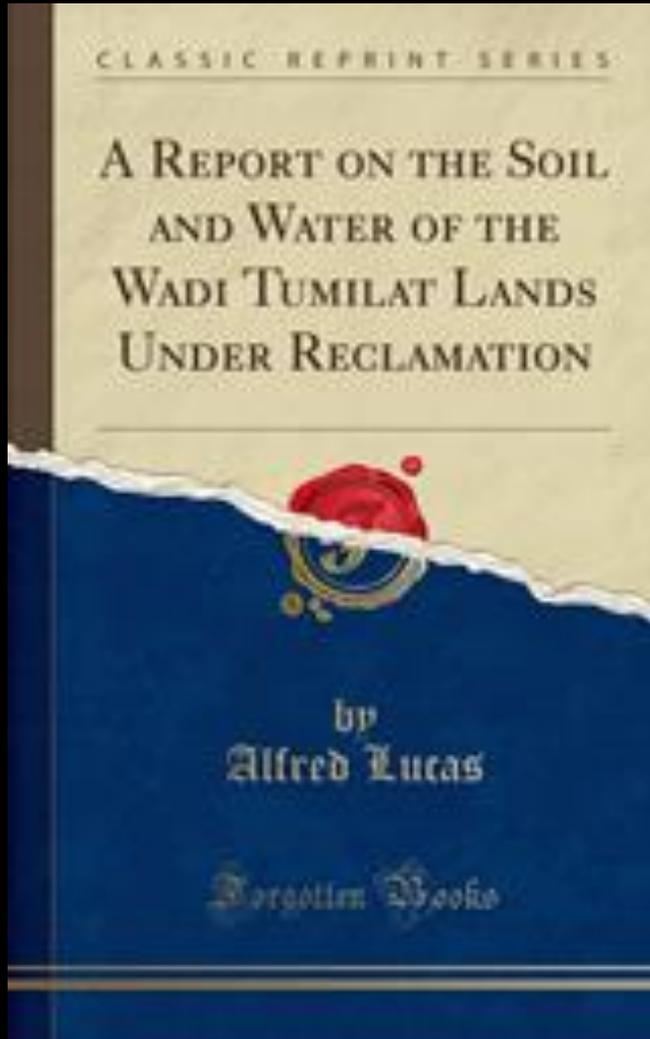


“The descent into Egypt and soldier in there or what might be expected of any submitted tribe at this time. The allocation in Goshen (Genesis 47:27) was the most suitable as that was on the eastern border of the Delta, at the mouth of the Wadi Tumilat, And was a district isolated from the general Egyptian population. The whole of this area in Goshen is not more than 100 mi.² being bounded by the deserts and buy the large Egyptian city of Bubastis on the west.”

(Evans, Morris, International Bible Encyclopedia, (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1939), 910)

I will go before you (says he), and will tell the king that you are shepherds, and have been so all your lives, and your fathers before you. This will prevent his making any proposals for raising you to posts of honor in the state and he will at once feel the propriety of assigning you a part of the country which is suited to the sustenance of your flocks and herds, and there you may live by your, selves unbothered by Egyptian customs.

Knowing that the Egyptians were prejudiced against shepherds, Joseph's emphasis was on the herds of cattle and not the flocks of sheep.



“ISRAEL MEETS EGYPT”

The object that meets his eyes is Pharaoh, sitting in his royal robes before him. The sight of a King who had shown such kindness to him and his, in a time of distress, calls forth the most lively sensations of gratitude, and which he is prompted to express by a solemn blessing fitting a King.



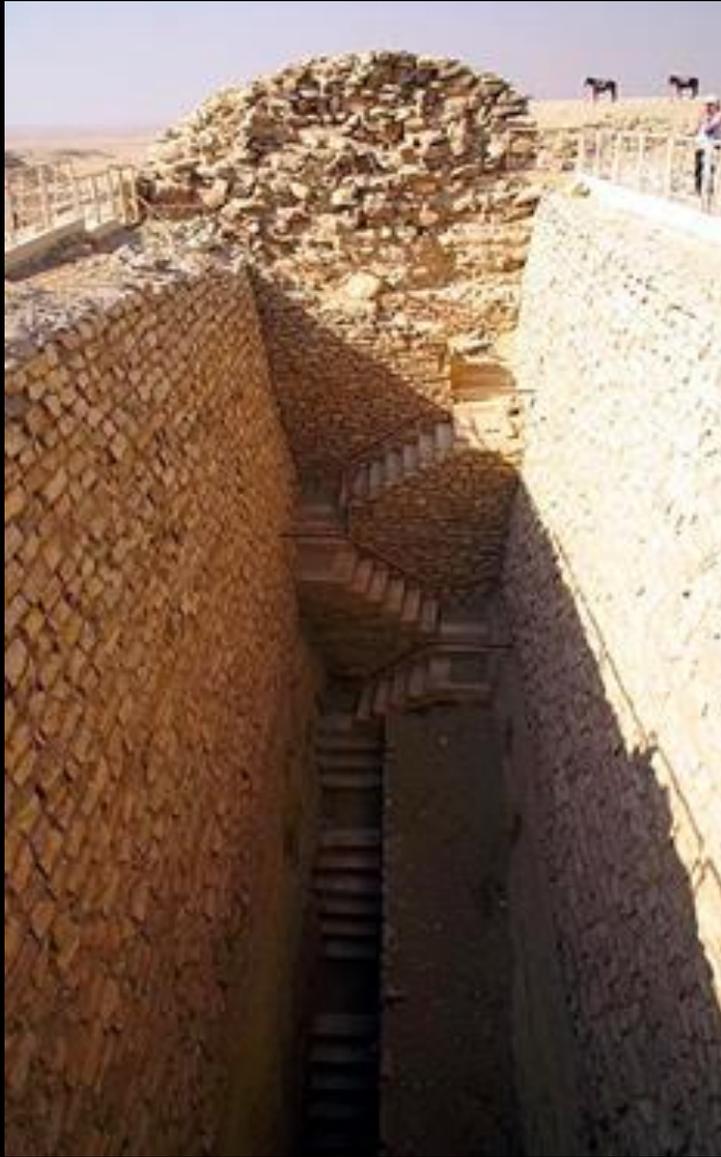
*Where Abraham had been a curse to Pharaoh; Jacob was a blessing!
Rising up Jacob blessed Pharaoh. "Without all contradiction, the less
is blessed of the better," says God (Hebrews 7:7).*



REMNANTS OF JOSEPH'S AGRARIAN POLICY



Egyptian Grain Silos, extremely large in size -- much larger than any burial chambers; they are all centrally accessible by a connecting tunnel, extend to well above ground level, and one has a staircase extending down to the bottom (see next slide). For this reason, we know that they were not built as tombs -- if they were, they would have been constructed underground and they certainly would not have been so incredibly large.



What is believed to be regional grain silos in the ground for the local delivery and storage of grain throughout the region. While at the palace and near the Imperial capital of "Joseph The Vizier" they were built to impress and encourage trade the silos stood above ground. In other parts of the region, they appear to all be underground, except one (which may have been built as an offsite Imperial balance or Imperial trade office).

FOOTNOTE 1

The Land of Rameses. The LXX equates this “land” with Goshen (46:28). It is believed by some that it was more probable that it was a section of the land of Goshen, being as the territory of Goshen covered such a broad area. The name of this land recorded in vs. 11 was obviously given by the writer anticipating the era of the famed Rameses as recorded in Exodus 1:11.

(Treece, Genesis, 258)

FOOTNOTE 2

ESSAY: THE MORAL POWER OF EMPATHY

Awareness of their ancestors' status in Egypt—first as strangers, then as slaves— left a deep imprint on the Jewish consciousness. Thus, the repeated Torah injunction to "love the stranger because you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (see, for example, Exodus 22:20 (22:21 in the Christian Bible), Exodus 23:9, Leviticus 19:34, and Deuteronomy 10:19.)

This Torah law is predicated on the principle that empathy is a prerequisite for living morally. It is probably fair to say that universal empathy would end evil. Yet many people lack empathy, and why they do is one of the riddles of life. How can a person see another person suffer, let alone deliberately inflict suffering, and not feel empathy?

Since it is impossible for people with empathy to understand people who lack empathy, one can draw only one of two conclusions. Either some people are born without the ability to empathize, or they are people who can empathize—but only with those who are like them.

I think many—but not all—people in the first group can be taught some degree of empathy. As for the second group, they need to be taught that people unlike them are just as human as they are and suffer just as they do. When people regard those unlike them as less than fully human—as Jews are viewed by antisemites, blacks by racists, or landowners and the "bourgeoisie" by Communists—empathy cannot exist.

(Prager, Dennis, *The Rational Bible: Genesis, God, Creation, and Destruction* (Washington, DC, Regnery Faith, 2019), 521,522)

FOOTNOTE 3

ESSAY: JACOB WAS A REALIST

"Few and hard have been the years of my life, nor do they come up to the life spans of my fathers during their sojourns."

Jacob briefly described his life as if he were talking to a long-lost friend, not the king of Egypt. He regarded his years as having been few and difficult. The difficult part is easy to understand. From his youth, since his schism with his twin brother Esau, struggle and pain had been hallmarks of his life. And he regarded his years as "few" because he assumed he would soon die and compared his 130 years to his father's 180 and his grandfather's 175. His assumption, however, was wrong; he lived to 147. Jacob was no stoic. He tended to regard himself as a victim and let others—even Pharaoh—know it. Here is Alter's view of Jacob's summation of his life:

"[Jacob] achieved everything he aspired to achieve: the birthright, the blessing, marriage with his beloved Rachel, progeny, and wealth. But one measure of the profound moral realism of the story is that although he gets everything he wanted, it is not in the way he would have wanted, and the consequence is far more pain than contentment. From his 'clashing' (Genesis 25:22) with his twin in the womb, everything has been a struggle. He displaces Esau, but only at the price of fear and lingering guilt, and long exile. He gets Rachel, but only by having Leah imposed on him, with all the domestic strife that entails, and he loses Rachel early in childbirth. He is given a new name by his divine adversary but comes away with a permanent wound. He gets the full solar-year number of twelve sons, but there is enmity among them (for which he bears some responsibility), and he spends twenty-two years continually grieving his favorite son, who he believes is dead. This is, in sum, a story with an ending that withholds any simple feeling of happiness at the end."

In other words, given Jacob's response to Pharaoh, it would appear he did not subscribe to the well-known saying, "All's well that ends well"

The truth is much of humanity could sum up their lives the way Jacob did—too few years, and hard. Such is life. Jacob was real. The Torah is real.

(Prager, Dennis, *The Rational Bible: Genesis, God, Creation, and Destruction* (Washington, DC, Regnery Faith, 2019), 524, 525)