



Genesis – 47:1-31
Israel Flourishes and Multiplies in Goshen
(Lesson #58)

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Joseph's Timeline

| Event | Joseph's Age | Genesis |
|--|------------------------|----------------|
| Joseph's father moves family from Haran | 6 | 31:17-21 |
| Joseph is sold into slavery | 17 / Jac 108 | 37:12-36 |
| Joseph interprets the dreams of cupbearer and baker while in prison | 28 | 41:1 |
| Joseph's grandfather Isaac dies | 29 / Jac 120 | 35:28-29 |
| Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams and is released from prison | 30 | 41:46 |
| Seven years of plenty, Manasseh and Ephraim born during this time | 30-37 | 41:47-52 |
| Seven years of famine | 37-44 | 41:47-52 |
| Joseph and Jacob reunite (2 years into famine), and family moves family to Egypt | 39 / Jac 130 | 45:6, 47:9, 28 |
| Jacob dies | 56 / Jac 147 | 47:28 |
| Joseph dies | 110 | 50:22-26 |

Outline of chapter 47:

1. Joseph takes five of his brothers to meet Pharaoh (47:1-2).
2. Pharaoh asks the brothers about their occupation (47:3a).
3. The five brothers respond that they are shepherds (47:3b).
4. The brothers go on to explain what is happening in Canaan due to the famine and they ask Pharaoh for permission to sojourn in Goshen (47:4).
5. Pharaoh allows the family of Israel to move into Goshen (47:5-6).
6. Next Joseph brings Jacob to meet Pharaoh (47:7a).
7. Jacob and Pharaoh chat for a bit and Jacob blesses Pharaoh twice (47:7b-10).
8. Joseph moves his brothers and their families into Goshen and provides food for them (47:11-12).
9. As the famine continues, people begin to run out of money and Joseph offers a plan to take their animals in exchange for grain (47:13-17).
10. At the end of the year, the people come to Joseph explaining that they have no money or animals left to exchange and they offer to sell their land and themselves in exchange for grain (47:18-19).
11. Joseph bought up the land of Egypt and many became servants to Pharaoh in exchange for grain (47:20-21).
12. Moses tells us that the Egyptian priest did not have to sell off their land, for Pharaoh provided for them (47:22).
13. Joseph provided seed to replant the land and imposed a 20% tax (47:23-26).
14. Moses tells us that Israel settled in Goshen and grew and multiplied there (47:27).
15. Moses tells us plainly that Jacob lived to be 147, and then goes on to record Joseph's promise to take Jacob and bury him in the cave that Abraham purchased (47:28-31).

47:1 So Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan. They are now in the land of Goshen." **2** And from among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. **3** Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers were."

Vs 47:1 - So Joseph proceeds to Pharaoh's estate and goes in and informs Pharaoh that his father, along with his eleven brothers, along with their flocks and herds as well as all that they own have arrived in Egypt from the land of Canaan. He goes on to tell Pharaoh that he had temporarily settled them in Goshen.

As we discussed last week, although Moses highlighted the 70, once you factor in wives, daughters, granddaughters, and slaves there are likely 200-300 people.

Also, there were likely **13 wives (or more) not listed**, there were other **daughters** not listed (remember verses 6-7 "daughters"), there were likely other **granddaughters** not listed (remember verses 6-7 sons' daughters, also only 1 granddaughter with 53 grandsons is statistically highly unlikely), there were **likely servants** (number unknown), and **women and children absorbed from what happened at Shechem**. I imagine a few hundred people went initially into Egypt as part of the **extended tribe of Israel**.

Let's be honest, the **decision to give a block of Egypt to a foreign people** does not belong to Joseph, that decision belongs to Pharaoh alone.

GOD'S PLAN: Here through many trials and troubles, God's plan to protect the fledging nation of Israel in Egypt is coming together.

A plan announced to Abraham many years prior!

If you remember, this is what Pharaoh ordered (Gen 45:16-20). Joseph is telling the Pharaoh, as you ordered my family has arrived, and I have temporarily settled them in Goshen.

Vs 2 - Then Moses tells us that when Joseph made the trip to see Pharaoh, he took with him five of his brothers, to present to Pharaoh.

These five are presented to Pharaoh and serve as representatives for the others.

Vs 3 - As Joseph had predicted, Pharaoh asked the brothers what their occupation was. As Joseph had instructed, the brothers told Pharaoh that **they were shepherds, as was their father**.

This was a critical piece of information. If you remember Joseph had been careful to brief the brothers that they were to be clear on this point (Gen 46:33-34).

Joseph seemed to understand that God was using him to **protect** the nation in Egypt and it was important for the nation to be insulated (as much as possible) from the corrupting forces and influences of the Egyptians.

4 They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen." 5 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. 6 The land of Egypt is before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land. Let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."

Vs 4 - Further, as they continue their dialogue with the Pharaoh, they said: **We have come to sojourn**, to temporarily dwell, to live in the land for a time.

This is important for they are not asking Pharaoh for a block of Egypt for eternity, but the opportunity to temporarily dwell in the land, because the famine is **so severe in Canaan**, that there are **no longer any pastures for their flocks**.

For Israel to continue to stay in Canaan, **was to risk disaster**.

Here they clearly request permission of the Pharaoh, to dwell in the land of Goshen, at least until the end of the famine.

Vs 5-6 - I can imagine, after Pharaoh has interacted with the five brothers, after he has heard about their occupation, after he has heard their request to dwell in Egypt. He turns to Joseph and says:

FIRST, the **overview** of what is happening. **Your father and your brothers have come from Canaan**, they have come to you. They are seeking safety and escape from the ravishes of the famine.

SECOND, the **order**. The land of **Egypt is before you**. Settle your brothers in the **best of the land**.

This invitation from this pagan King is all because of Joseph. Pharaoh is doing all this because of Joseph, because of what Joseph has done for Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt.

The blessing is not, here is **some food** and you will survive, instead **the family is blessed, because of Joseph**. Now at this point, it would seem all of Egypt has been opened unto Israel and his family. But as you will see, this is just **Pharaoh being courteous and showing honor to Joseph**.

THIRD, the **limitations**. *Let them settle in the land of Goshen*. Because they are an abomination to the Egyptians, Pharaoh does not want them mixing with Egyptians. But this was always Joseph's goal. This was always God's goal.

FOURTH, the **opportunity**: *if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock*.

Surely out of the eleven, one or more of Joseph's brothers would be put forward to serve as the herdsman for Pharaoh's livestock. It may be an abomination to keep them, but Pharaoh had his own livestock.

7 Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8 And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many are the days of the years of your life?" 9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning."

Vs 7 - Now we do not know how much time passed between verse 6 and verse 7. It would seem to me **it was not likely on the same day, but we do not know**.

But at some point, likely within a short amount of time from the events in verse 6 we are told: Then Joseph, at 39 years old, the second most powerful man in Egypt brings his 130 year old father (Jacob / Israel) in and stood him before Pharaoh. There Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

Do not miss the lesson. This old man is standing before the most powerful man in Egypt and likely as this time the most powerful man on the planet, but Jacob was the superior.

Never forget what the writer of Hebrews tells us in Heb 7:7.

We can imagine that Jacob at 130 years of age offers a blessing over the Pharaoh and even his kingdom. After all, God is using this pagan king as part of the rescue plan for the nation of Israel.

APPLICATION: Never forget Prov 21:1.

Vs 8 - Now it is likely that Moses only records a small portion of their conversation, but we will run with what the Holy Spirit provides through Moses.

Pharaoh asks Jacob: How old are you. How long have you been alive?

Vs 9 - Jacob responds with three points of information:

FIRST: I am **130 years old**. Joseph provides Pharaoh with his biological age. But he goes on:

Notice Jacob refers to his 130 years as sojourning, it could be translated pilgrimage, what Jacob seems to be saying is that I have lived place-to-place, **for 130 years**.

The writer of Hebrews picks up on this point in (Heb 11:13-16).

APPLICATION: This is **not our home**; we are looking for a **heavenly home**. You and I are on a pilgrimage; our citizenship is ultimately in heaven. What God does through us now is important, but this is not our ultimate and final home. Our real citizenship is in heaven.

SECOND: Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life. This does not sound like a **faith-filled statement, but something else.**

I agree, Jacob has had some **hard times**. I agree the **20 years with Laban were difficult**. I suspect having essentially **four wives** (two wives and two hand maidens all **competing for your time and attention**) was very difficult.

Equally, **losing the love of your life**, while she was giving birth to your **12th son** (second from her) had to be tragic and again very difficult. But in the end, this does not appear to be a **faith-filled statement**.

APPLICATION: Is our life going to count for the kingdom, or as we get older and reflect back, will we too say? **Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life.**

THIRD: and my years *have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning.*

I may appear old, but I am **nowhere close** to the age of my dad and my grandfather attained. Abraham died at 175 and Isaac died at 180.

10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. 11 Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12 And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their dependents.

Vs 10 - Then Jacob, it appears, once again blesses Pharaoh. I would just once again add (and it is without controversy, that the lesser is always blessed by the greater) and Jacob went out from Pharaoh's presence.

This is likely the only time that Jacob was in Pharaoh's presence.

INTERESTING: The Egyptians viewed the Pharaoh as a God. Here for whatever reason, this Pharaoh allowed Jacob to bless him and then Jacob left his presence.

Vs 11 - Joseph settles his dad and his family in Egypt, **in Goshen**, in the **land of Rameses**, as Pharaoh had commanded.

So that you are aware, this is one of the verses that has created, in my opinion, the **greatest confusion on the matter of when all of this happened**.

If you can bear it, I would like to hold to the end of this lesson and then **spend time on this point**. **If I do not have time**, I will put up a supplemental video on our website explaining my position.

My short answer for now is that Rameses is a city that will come later, and that this reference to Rameses was added by a later editor (Theologians call this an anachronism).

I believe the actual city, at the time of Joseph, was a city we have excavated and know from antiquity as Avaris, a city that **existed at the same place as Rameses, but existed earlier in time than Rameses**.

Vs 12 - In spite of the ups and downs, God had sent Joseph into Egypt to preserve alive many and in this plan we see the wisdom and the ways of God.

God elevated Joseph, but it was through hardships and trials and tribulations, where Joseph learned to trust God. It was in the crucible that God prepared Joseph to lead, and then God thrust Joseph on the scene to save the fledgling family of Israel from the famine.

As promised, Joseph provided food for his father, his brothers and Israel's entire household.

JESUS: In what is a beautiful picture of Christ providing for His church all that she needs, Joseph provided for Israel and the entire extended family all that they needed.

13 ¶ Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished by reason of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, in exchange for the grain that they bought. And Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15 And when the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? For our money is gone."

Vs 13 - Here Moses reminds us of the severity of the famine. It was not only in Egypt, but even the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.

Vs 14 - Listen to how Moses explains this: Essentially all the **money that had been spread across Egypt and Canaan** now falls into the **hands of Pharaoh** as part of Joseph's famine relief plan.

The money came into Pharaoh from people from this entire region (Egypt and Canaan) and purchased grain during this **horrible famine**. Thus, Pharaoh became rich beyond his wildest imagination, due to Joseph's **famine relief program**.

Now notice, before I make the point, Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. Joseph was a wise, faithful, and trustworthy employee.

Before we leave this point, do you remember when Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, he then went on to tell him the kind of person he needed to find in Gen 41:33? Joseph has proven to be that wise, discerning, and honest man!

APPLICATION: Joseph executed his duties like he was doing them for Yahweh. That is a good lesson for you and I!

Vs 15 - As this famine continues on, most end up spending every penny they have on food.

Joseph was asking a fair price for the grain, but seven years is a long time and it was only a matter of time before people started to run out of money.

Once their money was gone the Egyptians came to Joseph and cried out, **please give us food**. Why should we die before your eyes. We have no money but we still need food.

16 And Joseph answered, "Give your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, if your money is gone." 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the herds, and the donkeys. He supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year. 18 And when that year was ended, they came to him the following year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent. The herds of livestock are my lord's. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our land."

Vs 16 - Thus, Joseph says if your money has run out, I will take payment in livestock. I will allow a barter system of sorts. If your money is gone, I will take livestock in exchange for grain.

This would have worked for the people for the livestock were requiring grain, so this would decrease the amount of grain they need. We suspect that many having expended all of their money, sell their livestock to Joseph in exchange for grain to survive the famine.

We have every reason to believe that Joseph is offering fair prices, he is not gouging anyone. We will see this clearly stated in a few verses.

Vs 17 - Joseph now begins to **collect flocks, herds, horses, and donkeys**, all for Egypt, all as part of his famine relieve plan. The overall wealth is continuing to be transferred from the people and centralized in Pharaoh.

Joseph continues to keep the nation of Egypt (and no doubt many foreigners) alive.

Vs 18 - **Although we are not sure how many** years we are into the seven year famine, it appears from the way that is written, **that when the year ended, likely the seventh year**, many of the people were completely broke.

It appears from the text that some if not many have had some type of meeting. Then we read that **“they”** come to Joseph with both a **confession** and a **proposal**. They did not have money, they did not have animals, and they needed more grain.

First the confession:

The people come to Joseph and what they say is we will not hide it from you. We have exhausted our money; our herds and our livestock have been sold to you in exchange for grain that we might live.

We have nothing left, but our land and our bodies. We have no money, and we have no animals to barter with. That is their condition and here is their **confession**. Now in verse 19, we have the **proposal of the people**.

19 Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we with our land will be servants to Pharaoh. And give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate."

Vs 19 - We should we drop dead before you and drop dead on our land.

Proposal: We will sell you our land and we will sell ourselves in exchange for grain, we will become servants (slaves) if you will just provide us grain, if you will just keep us alive.

Please give us seed in exchange for our land and our own bodies that we may live through this famine and not die.

20 So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. The land became Pharaoh's. 21 As for the people, he made servants of them from one end of Egypt to the other. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on the allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land.

Vs 20 - So Joseph **purchased people's land in exchange for grain**. Notice Moses says that **“all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them.”**

We should once again see that all the wealth of Egypt and much of the wealth of Canaan, has now made its way into the hands of Pharaoh. **The land that was once principally owned by the Egyptians, is now owned by Pharaoh!**

Vs 21 - Equally, as Moses indicates, **many of the citizens of Egypt** having given all their money, having sold off all their animals, having sold of their land, **sold themselves as slaves to Pharaoh**, for grain to survive this famine.

It is likely that Joseph relocated many of the citizens from the land they once owned into cities, but we cannot be sure.

Vs 22 - Then Moses tells us that only in the **land of the priests this did not occur**.

Moses further explains that the reason this did not happen to the priests is that they had a “**fixed allowance**” from **Pharaoh**.

The priests, that served the various false gods were sponsored by money coming directly from Pharaoh. So they had money coming in from Pharaoh and thus they did not need to sell their land.

It is possible and even likely that they had a **fixed allowance** of food as well, again all of this **protecting them from what the nation overall was enduring**.

This was a horrible famine, and Joseph was an amazing deliverer.

23 Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24 And at the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones." 25 And they said, "You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be servants to Pharaoh." 26 So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; the land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

Vs 23 - The Joseph says, **I have purchased you and your land**.

But, here is seed for you to sow. So, the time of the **famine has ended** and now Joseph gives to the people seed to sow, not simply seed to eat to survive, **but grain to sow in the land**.

Vs 24 - Because the Pharaoh owned the bulk of the land he could declare the conditions of use. Joseph says, although Pharaoh owns everything, here is what you are going to do.

You are going to go and sow on your old land, when you **harvest 1/5 of all** that you harvest will belong to Pharaoh and **4/5 will belong to you. It will be food for you and your household**.

Vs 25 - The **people recognized** that **Joseph had saved their lives** and declared that they would be **Pharaoh's servants for they owed Pharaoh their lives**.

APPLICATION: Joseph saved the lives of the Egyptians, and they declared we will be your servants. **What about what Jesus has done for you and I?** Have we responded in faith to his offer to save our lives?

Vs 26 - Thus **Joseph made it a statute that 1/5 of all that is harvested** would come to Pharaoh. Joseph established an annual tax of 20% of all that was harvested, because Pharaoh owned the land.

The tax that started to save for the famine, now becomes **normative** because Pharaoh owns the land and the people, and they are now **like tenant farmers on Pharaoh's land**. The requirement to only pay **1/5 is likely viewed and very gracious and kind**.

Notice Moses (over 400 years after Joseph did this) or possibly even a later editor adds “**it stands to this very day.**”

What Joseph instituted in 1875BC was still the policy in 1446BC (the exodus) or possibly even later.

27 ¶ Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

Vs 27 - Now Moses, pulls us back to **discuss the family of Israel**. Who **settled in the land of Goshen**, they **gained possession of it**. There Joseph cared for them, and there in Goshen they were fruitful and multiplied greatly.

REMEMBER – Seventy are accounted as **descendants of Israel**. But when Joshua numbers the people that came out of Egypt, just the males twenty years and older is numbered at **603,550 (Num 1:45-46)**!

Vs 28 - There in the land of Goshen, Jacob lived for an **additional 17 years**, thus this takes us through the five years of the famine, and an additional 12 years. Now this is an overarching statement and Moses once again gets ahead of his skis, **but that will all work out soon enough**.

Our key takeaway is Jacob lives for 17 years under the watch care of his **eleventh born son, Joseph**.

29 And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, 30 but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place." He answered, "I will do as you have said." 31 And he said, "Swear to me"; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.

Vs 29 - Here Moses backs up a bit, he had just mentioned the end of life for Jacob, but now he pulls back to provide us some specific and indeed insightful details about the end of Israel's life.

As the time **drew near for Israel to die** he called for **Joseph**. He said to him, if I have found favor in your sight, make a promise to me and seal it by putting your hand under my thigh. Make this promise to me, that you will deal kindly and truly with me and **you will not bury me in Egypt**.

Two points here:

FIRST – We had seen this hand under the thigh thing once before (Gen 24:1-3).

SECOND – **Do not bury me in Egypt**. You see, his body may have been in Egypt, but he longed to be back in the Promised Land. The land that God had promised Abraham, Issac, and Jacob.

Vs 30 – Jacob asks Joseph to make the promise to bury him with “his fathers.” He asks Joseph to carry him out of Egypt and bury him in the burying place of his fathers. Joseph provides his promise that he will do this.

Jacob requests to be buried in the **cave at the end of the field at Machpelah**, east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan. You remember that is the field that **Abraham purchased when his wife Sarah died** (Gen 23:8-9).

Later Isaac and Ishmael would bury Abraham in this same cave (Gen 25:9) In Genesis 49 we will also learn that it is in this cave where Isaac and Rebekah were buried. Finally, and we have no idea when it happened, we would imagine it is while Jacob still live in the Promised Land, before he moved to Egypt, it was in this very cave where Jacob buried Leah (Gen 49:29-32).

Vs 31 - Thus, Jacob asked Joseph swear to him and to place his hand under his thigh as a pledge that he would keep his promise. Jacob swore and then we are told that Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed. He is not dead; he likely bows in worship to Yahweh! The writer of Hebrews discusses this (Heb 11:21).
