

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

Focus	Four Great Events								Four Great Persons				
Divisions	1	2	3	4	5	9	10	11	12	25:19	27	37:2b	50
	Creation		Fall		Flood		Nations (Babel)		Abraham	Isaac	Jacob	Joseph	
Topics	Primeval History of Humanity								Patriarchal History of Israel				
	Beginning of the Human Race								Beginning of the Hebrew Race				
Locations	East (Eden to Ur)								West (Canaan to Egypt)				
Time	2,000 + years (20% of Genesis)								About 286 years (80% of Genesis)				

Author: Moses

Date written: after 1445 BC

Theme: Israel's Origin & Early Years

Purposes: 1) to present the beginning of everything but God
 2) to record God's choice of Israel & His covenant plan for the nation
 3) to show how the sin of man is met by the redemption of God



The Book of Genesis

1:1-2:3 – The Creation of the Heavens and the Earth

2:4-4:26 – The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth

5:1-6:8 – The Generations of Adam

6:9-9:29 – The Generations of Noah

10:1-11:9 – The Generations of Shem, Ham and Japheth

11:10-26 – The Generations of Shem

11:27-25:11 – The Generations of Terah

25:12-18 – The Generations of Ishmael

25:19-35:29 – The Generations of Isaac

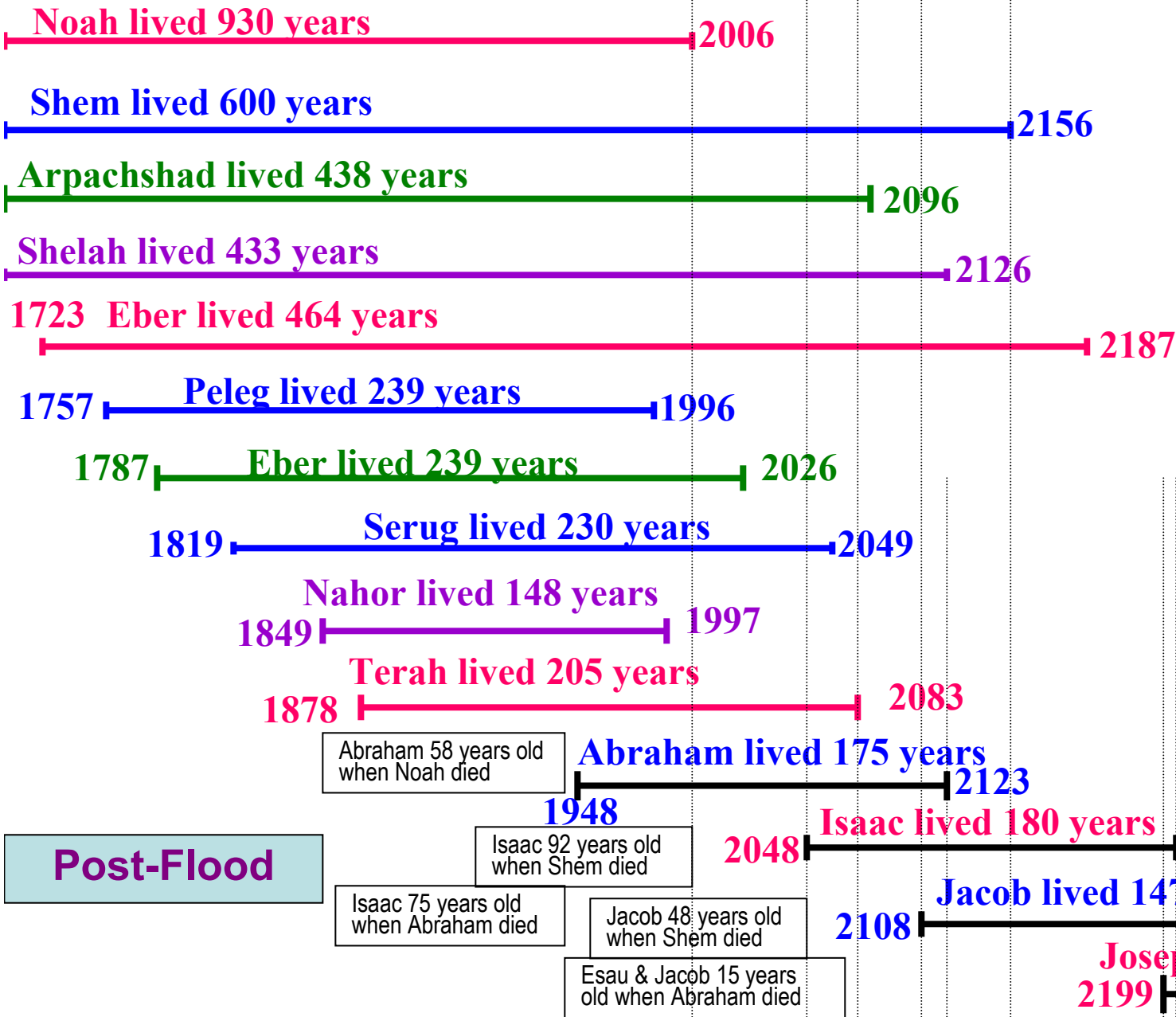
36:1-43 – The Generations of Esau

37:1-50:26 – The Generations of Jacob



Years from Creation

1700	1800	1900	2000	2100	2200	2300
------	------	------	------	------	------	------



BC

- 2165 - Abram born
- 2090 - Abram reaches Canaan
- 2089 - To Egypt because of famine
- 2066 - Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed
- 2065 - Isaac born
- 2028 - Sarah dies
- 2025 - Isaac marries Rebekah
- 2005 - Esau and Jacob born
- 1990 - Abraham dies
- 1928 - Jacob flees to Haran
- 1921 - Reuben born
- 1914 - Joseph born
- 1897 - Joseph sold into slavery
- 1885 - Isaac dies
- 1875 - Jacob and family enter into Egypt
- 1858 - Jacob dies
- 1804 - Joseph dies

Post-Flood

Abraham 58 years old when Noah died

Isaac 92 years old when Shem died

Isaac 75 years old when Abraham died

Jacob 48 years old when Shem died

Esau & Jacob 15 years old when Abraham died

Joseph 29 years old when Isaac died
Joseph 54 years old when Jacob died



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

While it is not the solution to every instance of anger, forgiveness is the answer to much, if not most, of the anger we experience in life. Unresolved anger leads to bitterness, hostility, and revenge. Forgiveness leads to freedom and reconciliation. No character in the drama of the book of Genesis better illustrates the fundamentals of forgiveness than Joseph, and no chapter more clearly defines and describes the essentials of forgiveness than chapter 45.

Those years which Joseph spent in slavery and prison could have been the occasion for a slow burn that might have ignited into an explosion of anger at the sight of his brothers. How angry Joseph could have been with God for getting him into such a situation. But Joseph recognized that God was with him in his sufferings and that these were from the loving hand of a sovereign God. Most of all, Joseph could have been angry with his brothers, who had callously sold him into slavery.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

The high point of Joseph's relationship with his brothers comes in chapter 45, for it is here that there is a reconciliation brought about between them. This was made possible on the brothers' part by their genuine repentance, regretting their sin with regard to Joseph, and reversing their actions when a similar situation was presented with regard to Benjamin. But on Joseph's part, reconciliation was achieved through his sincere and total forgiveness of his brothers for the evil they had committed against him.

Forgiveness is a vital part of the Christian experience. It is necessary in terms of our relationship with God: **"For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions"** ([Matthew 6:14-15](#)).

Forgiveness is also an essential part of our responsibility toward others, both friends and enemies: **"Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you"** ([Ephesians 4:31-32](#))....



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

v1-15 Joseph's Tearful Reunion with His Brothers

1 Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, “Have everyone go out from me.” So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *of it*.

3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

A Speech to the Speechless (45:1-15)

It may appear at first glance that Joseph simply was overcome by his emotions so that he was compelled to disclose his identity. (Not so.) ... Even when his emotions did involuntarily emerge, Joseph simply left the presence of his brothers, wept, and returned (cf. 43:30-31). **Joseph revealed himself to his brothers because they had evidenced real repentance, which made reconciliation possible.**

Now that it was time to reveal himself, Joseph wished this to be done alone... Several possible reasons...: **First**, this was a family matter. It was to be an intimate time, and outsiders would not add anything to that moment. Perhaps also Joseph felt that the full release of his emotions, held in check for years, would cost him the esteem of his servants. Mainly, however, I believe that it was for another reason that Joseph commanded everyone to leave except his brothers: **it was in order to deal with the matter of the sin of his brothers in strictest privacy.** If Joseph intended for no one but his brothers to observe the outpouring of his emotions, it didn't work, for "the Egyptians heard it" (verse 2), and this report even reached Pharaoh's ears (verses 2, 16).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Put yourselves in the sandals of these brothers for a moment. They had been treated graciously by Joseph, given the hospitality of his home and his table and bountiful provisions for their families back in Canaan (cf. 43:32-44:1). Then they were stopped and searched, each of them being found with their money in their sack and Benjamin with Joseph's cup in his possession (44:6-13). Their guilt was acknowledged and all were willing to remain as Joseph's slaves, but Joseph refused to detain any except Benjamin, the "guilty" party (44:14-17). Judah then made an impassioned appeal for mercy on his aged father, offering himself in place of Benjamin (44:18-34).

It is at this point that chapter 45 begins. Judah and his brothers anxiously await a verdict from Joseph, one that will affect the course of their lives. Without knowing who Joseph is or what he intended to do, the brothers saw this potentate send everyone out of the room. They could perhaps see the tears flowing down his cheeks and his chest heaving with emotion. But what was the source of this great emotion? Was it anger, which would lead to further trouble? How could it be otherwise?

If they thought the worst had come, it had not, at least in their minds, for now this Egyptian blurted out in their own tongue, "I am Joseph!" That was the worst news they could ever have hoped to hear. It brought them no relief, but only new avenues of anxiety. It was bad enough to stand before a powerful Egyptian governor who was angered at the theft of a cup, but to realize that he was their brother whom they had sold into slavery—that was too much! **Before, they at least had a hope that this judge would be impartial and that mercy might motivate him to accept their appeal. But now their judge must surely be their enemy, whom they had unjustly condemned. How could they hope for better treatment from him? No wonder they were petrified (cf. verses 3ff.).**



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer to me.” And they came closer. And he said, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, **because** you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 **For** the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. 8 Now, **therefore**, it was not you who sent me here, **but** God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Fear and guilt were written on their ashen faces, and their silence confirmed this to Joseph. They had nothing more to say, no more appeals left, no hope for mercy. Every word recorded in the first 15 verses of chapter 45 is spoken by Joseph because his brothers were speechless (verse 3). Not until Joseph had demonstrated that he had forgiven them and loved them did they speak (verse 15).

Joseph's first words declared his identity, followed quickly by an indication of concern about his father (verse 3). **He, like Judah and the others, cared greatly for his elderly father. The thought of Jacob's grief was unbearable to Joseph as well as to the rest. But he also cared for his brothers.** They must have shrunk back from him in horror, but Joseph asked them to draw near (verse 4).

Nowhere in this chapter is the sin of his brothers minimized. At the very outset Joseph identified the treatment they had given him as sinful. **Forgiveness**, you see, **does not seek to minimize sin, but to neutralize it.** We must remember, though, that they have already come to the point of recognizing their actions as sin (cf. 42:21) and of repenting of it (chapter 44). Since they have come to recognize the magnitude of their sin, Joseph need not belabor that point. The stress, instead, falls upon the totality of the forgiveness he has given them or, as the song writer has described it, "grace greater than all my sins."

Joseph's words are filled with hope and encouragement. Verses 5-8 assure these men that their sin had not thwarted the purposes of God. "You sold me," Joseph said, "but God sent me" (verse 5). Their purpose was to destroy, but God's was to save. Men may sin by attempting to do what is unacceptable to God, while at the same time they are accomplishing what God has purposed....



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

...**Salvation, not destruction, was the purpose of God in what had happened. How, then, could Joseph even consider doing to his brothers what they feared?** The famine, now two years long, had five years remaining before it had run its appointed course. Jacob and his sons must come to Egypt where Joseph could provide for them, thus sparing the nation. While God did not sanction their means or their motives, Joseph was destined to go to Egypt where he would be the instrument by which Israel would be spared as a remnant and which would later be kept alive by a “great deliverance” (literally, an “escaped company,” verse 7, margin, NASV).

This prophecy goes beyond to the previous revelation given to Abram concerning Israel’s sojourn in Egypt: **“And God said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions’”** ([Genesis 15:13-14](#)).

...In the final analysis, it was not his brothers who were responsible for sending Joseph to Egypt, but God, for the purpose of bringing about their salvation. And in the process Joseph was elevated to his position of power and prominence, advisor to Pharaoh and ruler over all of Egypt. We have a saying, “All’s well that ends well,” which finds a measure of truth in these words of Joseph. Joseph’s explanation of all that had happened and God’s reason for it is followed by an exhortation to return quickly to the land of Canaan, get their father, their families, and their flocks and return to Egypt (verses 9-13).



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

9 “Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘**Thus** says your son Joseph, “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. 10 And you shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. 11 There I will also provide for you, **for** there are still five years of famine to come, **lest** you and your household and all that you have be impoverished.” 12 And **behold**, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. 13 Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here.”

14 Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. **15** And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Approximately a year had passed since Joseph's brothers had first arrived in Egypt, but this delay was not due to any apathy or aloofness on Joseph's part—he simply had to wait patiently until his brothers had evidenced a change of heart and mind (repentance). Now Joseph urges his brothers to quickly bring their father down to Egypt (verse 9) where they would live near him in the land of Goshen. Here, it would seem, his family would be able to pasture their flocks, be relatively close to him, and yet remain somewhat distant from the urban populace of Egypt, who disliked Hebrews (cf. 46:34).

In these verses there is a noticeable emphasis upon the glory and splendor which Joseph has attained in Egypt. ... Why would he now flaunt his position before his brothers? There are several explanations, one or more of which may satisfy our concerns.

First, the glory which Joseph now possesses would serve to encourage his brothers, who are guilt-ridden for the wicked deed they committed against him by selling him as a slave. Joseph would thus be reminding them that his humiliation and suffering were the means to his promotion and exaltation. Look what their sin had brought about in Joseph's life! **Second**, it would comfort Jacob and assure him of Joseph's ability to provide for the entire family during the famine. **Finally**, it was a glory which Joseph desired to share unselfishly with his brothers. His motive would thus be Christ-like...

With this, Joseph fell upon the neck of his closest brother, Benjamin, and wept. Benjamin likewise wept on his neck. Finally, Joseph wept on the rest of his brothers, who, in the end, were relieved sufficiently to begin conversing with him. It would be a long time before these men could fully grasp the grace of forgiveness which was granted by Joseph.



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

v16-20 Pharaoh Welcomes Israel to Egypt

16 Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants.

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan, **18** and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you shall eat the fat of the land.’ **19** Now you are ordered, ‘Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. **20** And do not concern yourselves with your goods, **for** the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Pharaoh Is Pleased (45:16-20)

Pharaoh had received the report (if indeed he had not heard Joseph weeping loudly himself, cf. verse 2) that there was a reunion between Joseph and his brothers. We almost expect Pharaoh to be pleased, but such a response would have to be unusual. We know that Hebrews were not well thought of by Egyptians (43:32; 46:34). If Pharaoh knew the specifics of how Joseph had come to Egypt, he would certainly not have any warm feelings toward his brothers.

I can think of only two reasons why Pharaoh should be so pleased to hear of the arrival of Joseph's brothers. **The first reason** is obvious: Pharaoh had the greatest respect for Joseph. Joseph had virtually saved his kingdom and would greatly enhance his position in Egypt (cf. 47:13-26). Anything that pleased Joseph would make Pharaoh happy.

There is yet another explanation for the joy of Pharaoh which I believe to be very instructive. It also helps us to better understand why Joseph sent out his Egyptian servants when he revealed his identity to his brothers. **It would seem that Joseph never informed Pharaoh of the injustice done to him by his brothers. Joseph did insist to the butler and the baker of the Pharaoh that he was innocent, yet he did not reveal the guilt of his brothers: ... (Genesis 40:14-15).**

While Joseph maintained his own innocence, he never exposed the guilt of his brothers or of Potiphar's wife. As a result, Pharaoh did not have to overcome any feelings of anger toward Joseph's brothers and thus could warmly welcome them as long-lost relatives who had finally found their way to their brother. **Silence about the sins of others makes their restoration a much easier process.**



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

v21-28 The Good News Reported to Jacob

21 Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. 22 To each of them he gave changes of garments, **but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of silver* and five changes of garments.** 23 And to his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey. 24 **So** he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, **“Do not quarrel on the journey.”**



Joseph's Journey Instructions (45:21-24)

Why... did Joseph also show partiality to Benjamin? Of course, Benjamin was the only other son of his mother. And Benjamin did not have a part in the sale of Joseph either. But was this partiality toward him wise?

I believe that Joseph's actions were deliberate and with good intention. Partiality was one of the factors in Joseph's rejection by his brethren (cf. 37:3-4). Joseph had shown partiality toward Benjamin just as his father had persistently done, but now his brothers had chosen not to sacrifice him for their own gain. Joseph, I believe, did not avoid showing partiality toward Benjamin because that is the way life is. Some people are better looking than others. Some are good athletes, while others are not. Some are smarter than others. Life is full of distinctions. Joseph did not stop making distinctions because they would always exist, and his brothers would have to learn to live with them. ...Repentance and conversion do not make our problems go away, but they do give us the strength to deal with our problems.

...As they parted Joseph gave his brothers one last word of instruction, "Do not quarrel on the journey" (v24). ...Joseph knew his brothers well. I imagine that quarreling was a part of the bad report that he had given his father many years before (37:2). Being sons of four mothers, such rivalry would not be uncommon. Probably the only thing they ever agreed upon completely was doing away with Joseph. They, like the many rival groups in Jesus' day, could unite when it came to rejecting one who threatened them all.

Although they were forgiven, they would face a great temptation to try to assess the precise measure of guilt of each person. The buck would be passed, and a heated argument would no doubt ensue. All of this was profitless since all had been forgiven. Their trip would be a happier one if they focused upon grace and not guilt.



Genesis 45:1-28 – Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

25 Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. 26 And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.” But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. 27 When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 28 Then Israel said, “It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 -

Jacob Rejuvenated (45:25-28)

The words “Joseph is alive” were impossible to believe. How could this be true? Hadn’t his sons assured him that Joseph had died? Wasn’t the evidence compelling? Now Jacob may have been old, but he was far from senile. Things just did not add up. There had to be some explaining by his sons. Painful though it was, I believe that the whole sordid story was spelled out. I am persuaded that **confession was made because it was necessary in order to convince Jacob that Joseph was alive...**

Isn’t it interesting that Joseph is never said to command his brothers to confess to their father, nor is their confession reported by Moses. But why should it be made public? This was a family matter that was dealt with in private. Just as Joseph had asked the Egyptians to leave his presence when he dealt with matters between himself and his brothers, so we are not present for their confession to Jacob. Moses wrote these things for our instruction (I Corinthians 10:11), not to satisfy our curiosity.

All of the evidence led to the conclusion that Joseph was indeed alive. The broken spirit of Jacob was immediately revived. He now yearned to see his son before his death. And lest we think that Jacob was on the verge of death, let us recall that he had yet seventeen years to spend with his son in Egypt (47:28). **All that Jacob had feared was going against him suddenly appeared in its true light. It was the hand of God in his life, sparing him from the physical and spiritual death of Canaan by preparing a place for him in Egypt.**



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Conclusion

If the key word for chapter 44 is repentance, then the key to chapter 45 is forgiveness. These two elements are essential for any genuine and lasting reconciliation: repentance and forgiveness. Let us give careful attention to this matter of forgiveness as it is illustrated in the life of Joseph.

A Definition of Forgiveness

If we are to be a forgiving community, we must first of all know what forgiveness is. While several Greek and Hebrew words are employed to convey forgiveness, essentially forgiveness means to release or set free. It is used of the cancellation of a debt, of release from a legal obligation, and of the termination of marriage by divorce (which frees the divorced party to re-marry, cf. [Deuteronomy 24:1-4](#)). In general, we can say that forgiveness is a conscious decision on the part of the offended party to release the offender from the penalty and guilt of the offense committed. This release not only frees the offender from guilt and punishment, but it also frees the forgiver of anger and bitterness.

Forgiveness is not leniency or overlooking sin. Only once in the New Testament do we find reference to sin being “passed over”: “... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed,” ... ([Romans 3:23-25](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Here, God “passed over” man’s sins not because He took them lightly, but because He took them so seriously that He shed the blood of His only Son. He “passed over” the sins of the past, knowing that the price would be paid when Christ appeared and was rejected of men and put to death on the cross of Calvary. When we pass over sins, it is because we do not wish to deal with them—ever, now or later.

Forgiveness is not free. Sin must always have a price that is paid. But forgiveness is the decision on the part of the offended to suffer the penalty due the offender. If a banker pardons a loan, it means that the borrower does not have to repay his debt, but it also means that the lender suffers the loss of the money loaned and not repaid. If society pardons a criminal, it means that society suffers the consequences of the criminal’s act, not the criminal. If I go to your house and break a vase and you forgive me for my error, you suffer the loss of the vase, not I.

This definition of forgiveness perfectly describes the pardon which God offers to men through the cross of Jesus Christ. All men have sinned against God and deserve the penalty of eternal destruction ([Romans 3:23](#); [6:23](#)). But God loved us and sent His Son to die for our sins so that we might have eternal life ([John 3:16](#)). God did not overlook our sins, but He bore the penalty for them. That is genuine forgiveness. And all who place their trust in Jesus Christ as the One who died for their sins will experience this forgiveness. It is this forgiveness which all men must either accept (resulting in salvation) or reject (resulting in damnation): “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” ([John 3:18](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

Finally, our definition of forgiveness must include the fact that **true forgiveness is not earned**. If a man commits a crime and he serves out his prison sentence, he is not forgiven; he has simply paid his debt to society. If a man cannot pay back a loan within the time allotted but is forced to pay it out over some more extended period of time, his debt has not been forgiven. If our forgiveness is the kind that demands that the person “pay for it” before we will forgive, then we are not giving forgiveness. That may be justice, but it is not mercy. It may be law, but not grace. Just as we can in no way contribute to the forgiveness and salvation which Christ has accomplished on the cross of Calvary, so no one we forgive can be forgiven and yet forced to pay for their offense against us.

Principles of Forgiveness

Having defined biblical forgiveness, let us seek to lay down some principles of forgiveness which we learn from the example of Joseph in [Genesis 45](#).

(1) **Biblical forgiveness should be granted quickly**. Joseph could hardly have granted forgiveness to his brothers here in chapter 45. The forgiveness that was expressed for the first time here by Joseph was first experienced here by his brothers, but long before this, Joseph had forgiven these men in his heart. How else could he have walked so closely to his Lord and so cheerfully and faithfully served, regardless of his circumstances? Joseph had experienced the freedom of forgiveness long before his brothers.

In the New Testament, anger is always to be dealt with quickly: **“Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity”** ([Ephesians 4:26-27](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

The sooner forgiveness is granted and reconciliation is achieved, the better it is for all involved: “Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way; in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison” ([Matthew 5:25](#)).

(2) **Biblical forgiveness should be granted privately.** I see a great deal of wisdom in Joseph requiring his servants to leave the room while he dealt with the sins of his brothers. It made matters much easier for Pharaoh and the Egyptians to be ignorant of all the injustices these brothers had committed against Joseph. This, too, is according to biblical instruction: “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions” ([Proverbs 10:12](#)).

“And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother” ([Matthew 18:15](#)).

We should always seek restoration and reconciliation on the lowest, most private level so that the fewer there are who are aware of the sin, the easier the offender can be forgiven and forgotten.

(3) **Biblical forgiveness must be given freely and unconditionally.** Forgiveness is free in that the forgiver willingly accepts the loss or pain personally. In brief, forgiveness is a matter of grace, not works, and grace does not make demands upon the one who receives it. Joseph must have forgiven his brothers long before they had come to repentance. He did not wait to see the anguish of their souls until he forgave them, but he did so freely and without requirement. This suggests also that forgiveness may be refused. As He was dying upon the cross, our Lord said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” ([Luke 23:34](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

That forgiveness accomplished by His death on the cross is rejected by many. Those who perish do not do so because there is no forgiveness, but because they have rejected God's forgiveness.

(4) **Forgiveness that is biblical must be granted sacrificially.** The price of Joseph's forgiveness was more than twenty years of separation from his father, slavery, and even a sentence in prison. Not a small price to pay, but then forgiveness does not come without sacrifice. Because of this, forgiveness is better shown than said. Joseph never actually used the word "forgive," but his words and actions conveyed it. Just as it is too easy to say, "I'm sorry," so it is possible to glibly say, "I forgive you." **Genuine forgiveness has a price tag, and few are those who are willing to pay it.**

(5) **Biblical forgiveness is not provisional, but permanent.** Just as conditions cannot be demanded before forgiveness is granted, neither can they be laid down for forgiveness to remain in force. Seventeen years after Joseph assured his brothers they were forgiven, they feared that this grace had terminated at the death of their father (50:15-21). **While we will hardly "forget" the transgressions of others against us, we can certainly refuse to call them to remembrance or to dredge them up in the future. "For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (Jeremiah 31:34).**



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=123 - Bob Deffinbaugh

(6) **Biblical forgiveness seeks the correction and restoration of the offender.** I fear that what has been said might lead to the conclusion that once forgiveness is granted, all need for correction is gone. Not so! I believe that Joseph forgave his brothers years before he saw them, but remember that it was a year or so until he disclosed his identity to them. This was because he needed to be assured that they had changed their attitude toward their sin (repented).

When our children sin we may very well need to spank them as well as to forgive them. We may forgive the thief for stealing our money, which we may never see again, but the law still exacts a punishment for theft. **A forgiving spirit dissolves our anger and animosity toward the offender, and it commits our vengeance to God, since He alone knows the extent of the sin** (cf. [Romans 12:11-21](#); [1 Peter 2:21-25](#)).

Forgiveness, as I understand it, deals first of all with our personal animosity and violated rights in such a way that we can deal with sin impartially and lovingly, or we can commit the matter entirely to God where we cannot or should not take matters into our own hands. Forgiveness, like one facet of love, seeks the best interest of another, even at our own expense. But since we do seek the good of the other party, correction may be required (cf. [Matthew 18:15ff.](#); [Galatians 6:1](#)).



Genesis 46



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

v1-4 God Reassures Jacob

1 **So** **Israel** set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spoke to **Israel** in visions of the night and said, “**Jacob, Jacob.**”

And he said, “**Here I am.**”

3 And 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.**”



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

1875 BC

v5-7 Jacob Prepares to Leave for Egypt

5 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 And 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.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

Divine Guidance (46:1-7)

Jacob had hastily packed his belongings, gathered his family, and begun the long trek to Egypt, just as Joseph had urged (45:9). When he had gotten as far as Beersheba, Jacob seemed to feel the full impact of what he was setting out to do. Beersheba was a place rich in the history of his forefathers. Abraham had called upon the name of the Lord here (21:33) and had settled in this place after offering up Isaac on Mt. Moriah (22:19). Here at Beersheba Isaac had been visited by God, and the covenant made with Abraham was reiterated (26:23-25). It would seem that Jacob lived at Beersheba when he deceived his father and obtained his blessing (chapter 27), for it was from this place that he had fled from Esau and departed to Haran (28:10).

Beersheba was also at the southern extremity of the land of Canaan. Later the land of promise would be spoken of as “from Dan to Beersheba” (e.g., [Judges 20:1](#)), Dan being at the northern border and Beersheba at the south. Once Jacob left Beersheba, traveling south, he would be leaving the land of promise, which was the land that God had promised Abraham (12:1-3; 15:7,18-21), Isaac (26:2-4), and Jacob (28:13; 35:12). How could Jacob be assured of God’s blessing if he was leaving the land of promise?

More than this, Jacob was leaving Canaan to go to Egypt. Many years before, there had been a famine in Canaan, and Abram had gone to Egypt to survive. This had proven to be a very painful experience, one that seemed to be contrary to God’s word (cf. [Genesis 12:10ff.](#)). Later there was yet another famine, and Isaac considered going to Egypt, but God forbade him ...: ([Genesis 26:2-3](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

...By means of a vision which must have come in his sleep (cf. 15:12ff.) God assured Jacob that it was His will for him to depart from Canaan to dwell in Egypt. Three assurances were revealed to confirm God's approval of the move to Egypt. **First**, the God of Isaac (and, of course, Abraham, 26:24) promised Jacob that He would go with him to Egypt and in that pagan land would make of him a great nation. Many years before, God had assured Jacob at Bethel that He would be with him as he journeyed north to Haran (28:15). Now He would be with him as he traveled south to Egypt. Strangely, it would be in Egypt, not Canaan, that his offspring would multiply into a great nation (verse 3).

Second, God would bring Jacob back to Canaan, the land of promise. I do not think that Jacob felt he would bodily and personally return to Canaan so quickly, for he knew his death must be imminent. Furthermore, God told Jacob that Joseph would close his eyes, and it was unlikely that Joseph would be leaving Egypt for some time, if ever. It was necessary for the nation of Israel to return to the land of promise, for there all of God's promises would be fulfilled concerning the land: **"And the land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you And I will give the land to your descendants after you"** ([Genesis 35:12](#)).

Third, God would give Jacob comfort in his time of death. After the report of Joseph's brothers, Jacob drew the conclusion that his favorite son had been killed by a wild beast, just as they had hoped (37:20,31-33). He believed that the loss of Joseph would bring about his premature and painful death:

...With this, Jacob could enthusiastically proceed to Egypt. The entire family now made their way to Egypt with Jacob the patriarch.



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

v8-27 The Sons of Jacob Who Went to Egypt

8 Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob's first-born.

9 And **the sons of Reuben**: Hanoch and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi.

10 And **the sons of Simeon**: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman.

11 And **the sons of Levi**: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 And **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 And **the sons of Issachar**: Tola and Puvvah and Iob and Shimron.

14 And **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.**



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

16 And **the sons of Gad**: Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli.

17 And **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.**

19 **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 And **the sons of Benjamin**: Bela and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppim and Huppim and Ard.
22 These are **the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; there were fourteen persons in all.**



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

23 And **the sons of Dan**: Hushim.

24 And **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.*

26 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.*



The Mystery of the 69/70

- sons of Leah – 33 (actual count is 32)
- sons of Zilpah – 16
- sons of Rachel – 14 (minus Joseph and 2 sons) = 11
- sons of Bilhah – 7
- Total = 69 (actual count) but the Scriptures say 70 in all
- Scriptures say 66 persons (actual count came to Egypt) not including Jacob & wives & Joseph's sons
- Plus Joseph Plus one more daughter born on the journey while in Egypt (66 + 1 daughter + Joseph & 2 sons = 70)
- Acts 7:14 "And Joseph sent *word* and invited Jacob his father and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five persons *in all.*"
- 70 + Jacob + 4 relatives (3 wives - Rachel died) + ??
- Gen 46:4 – "I will go down with you to Egypt"



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

The Genealogy of Jacob (46:8-27)

Several observations seem necessary to understand the purpose for including the genealogy of Jacob at this point in the book of Genesis. **First**, in later genealogical lists slight differences appear, but this is only to be expected and does not in any way affect the reliability of the accounts. **Second**, by-and-large, women are not included in this list. This is not because they are unimportant, but because it does not fit the purpose of the listing. **Third**, the expression “the sons of Israel” (verse 8) must be taken in the broader sense of “the descendants of Israel,” for more than his sons are named, and thus some of those named may not have been born at the time Jacob and his descendants went down to Egypt. **Fourth**, all those named in Numbers 26 as heads of tribes or families are found in this listing of descendants in Genesis 46.93

The explanation for all of these observations is rather simple: **Moses here intended not to name every person who went into Egypt, but every leader of family or clan who would come forth from Egypt**. It was vitally important for those who came forth from Egypt to know their “roots” since the land would be divided according to tribes. In addition to this, tasks were assigned and the nation was administrated by tribal and family divisions. **The purpose of Moses in this genealogy, therefore, is selective.** It does not intend to name every person coming out of Canaan, but to name those who will become tribe and family heads. Thus there is a genealogical continuity throughout the entire sojourn in Egypt.



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

v28-34 Joseph is Reunited with Jacob

28 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 And **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.**”



The region of Goshen is located in northeastern Egypt, in the [The Delta](#) of the [Nile River](#), where it empties into the [Mediterranean Sea](#). The [Sinai Peninsula](#) is just to the east. To the south are the famous [Pyramids](#), and the Valley of The Kings, where many [Mummies](#) have been discovered



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

Joseph Greets Jacob (46:28-30)

More years have been lived away from Joseph than with him. Now, after a separation of nearly 22 years, father and son meet once again in happy reunion...

Judah had been sent ahead by his father to get directions to Goshen. Israel proceeded ahead, guided by Judah, until their party arrived in Goshen. Joseph traveled there by chariot and met his father. **Years of fears, regrets, and bitterness must have flowed from the soul of the patriarch as the tears flooded from his eyes.** Much that could have been said of this reunion was not recorded, for it was an intimacy not to be invaded by curious eyes. Jacob, satisfied at the sight of his son, was now ready to die in peace (verse 30), but God still had 17 years of blessing in store for him (47:28).



Genesis 46:1-34 – Jacob Goes to Egypt

31 And 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 And it shall come about when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' 34 that 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."



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

v1-12 Jacob & His Sons Presented to Pharaoh

1 Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, “My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they have, have come out of the land of Canaan; and behold, they are in the land of Goshen.” 2 And he took five men from among his brothers, and presented them to Pharaoh.

3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?” So they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers.” 4 And 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. Now, therefore, please let your servants live 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 at your disposal; settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land, let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know any capable men among them, then put them in charge of my livestock.”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

Getting Goshen (46:31-47:6)

Joseph is known to be a capable and efficient administrator. He is not about to become careless when it comes to settling his family in Egypt. The utmost care is given to seeing that the family is located in the land of Goshen. The meticulous details of Joseph's instructions are followed exactly by his brothers....

Pharaoh had already promised Joseph's family the best of Egypt (45:18), but Joseph was careful to see to it that this became reality. His family was sent to Goshen even before he greeted them or they were presented before Pharaoh. Possession may have been nine points of the law in those days also. When Joseph reported the arrival of his family, he knew that Pharaoh would want an interview with them. They were told to stress the fact that they were shepherds and that this was their sole occupation, as it had been for generations. This would assure that they would be given the land of Goshen, not only because it would provide pasture for their flocks, but because it would keep the Hebrews somewhat removed from the Egyptians, who despised shepherds (46:34).

The conversation went as Joseph expected, and the result was that Pharaoh gave Joseph's family the land of Goshen to dwell in. Furthermore, since Pharaoh owned herds also, some of Joseph's family could be employed in caring for his livestock (verse 6). I doubt that this was the kind of job many of the Egyptians were willing to accept, disliking shepherds as they did.

But why was getting Goshen such an important objective that so many verses were devoted to the details of its acquisition, while such an emotional moment as the reunion of Jacob and Joseph was so sketchily described?



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

Let me suggest several reasons, beginning with those least important. **First**, Goshen must have been some of the best land in Egypt. That is what Pharaoh promised (45:18) and what he professed to give (47:6). **Second**, it was located near enough to Joseph that he could see his family frequently.... ([Genesis 45:10](#)).

By far the most important reason for settling in the land of Goshen was in order **to keep his family isolated and insulated from the culture and religion of Egypt**. Joseph was strong enough to survive life in the city and in the palace, but he had already been given an Egyptian wife, the daughter of a priest, and an Egyptian name (41:45). What would become of the nation Israel if they were brought into the city and integrated into Egyptian life? That is why Joseph ordered his brothers to say that their only occupation was that of a shepherd. **Joseph saw the disdain for shepherds as a blessing in that it would keep the two cultures from merging**. To have lived and worked in the city with the Egyptians would have been disastrous. Joseph, I believe, clearly saw this, and thus he was diligent to have his family settled in Goshen.



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

7 Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him to Pharaoh; and **Jacob blessed Pharaoh.**

8 And Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How many years have you lived?”

9 **So** Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning.” 10 **And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from his presence.**

11 **So** 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 ordered. 12 **And Joseph provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to their little ones.**



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

A Patriarch Blesses a Pharaoh (47:7-12)

The time came for Joseph to present his father to Pharaoh. Pharaoh's graciousness to Jacob no doubt reveals his respect for this aged man as well as his regard for Joseph. How strange it seems to read that Jacob blessed Pharaoh (47:7,10). While it is possible that this was little more than a greeting, I take it in the stronger (and much more common) sense of blessing, such as that in the next chapter (48:15,20). After all, the Abrahamic Covenant contained the promise that Abraham and his offspring would be a blessing to all those who blessed them: "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

Is this not what we see taking place in chapter 47? Pharaoh had greatly exalted Joseph and blessed him. Now he is extending that blessing to all of Joseph's family. Jacob responds by pronouncing a blessing upon Pharaoh. And indeed, Pharaoh was blessed by Israel. Joseph had virtually saved his kingdom, and in the next section he will obtain possession of almost all of Egypt's wealth, including the people themselves (47:13-26). The presence of Israel in Egypt was a blessing to this emerging nation, but it also greatly blessed the Egyptians. The Abrahamic Covenant is finding partial fulfillment in this sojourn.

The most surprising feature of Jacob's interview with Pharaoh is Jacob's appraisal of his life to this point in time: "So Jacob said to Pharaoh, 'The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning'" (Genesis 47:9).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

This does not fit the contemporary concept of a good testimony. In essence, Jacob has told Pharaoh that his life has been short and sour. That isn't a very good case for Christianity is it? The thrust of much evangelism today is that trusting Christ and following God makes your life happy, joyful, and free from trials and tribulation. If it hadn't been for the testimony of Joseph, Pharaoh would have thought very poorly of the God of Israel.

And yet what Jacob said was true. His earthly beginnings were prophetic of his life. He struggled with his brother in the womb (25:21-26). He lived in a home where the parents were divided in their affection for their children (25:28). He gained the blessing of his father by deception and then was alienated from his family because of the hatred of Esau (chapter 27). He spent years in exile, serving his deceitful uncle Laban. He sought one wife and ended up with four (29:18ff.), and the outcome of this was continual competition and strife (29:30ff.). He finally fled from his uncle and eventually had to make a non-aggression pact with him lest further conflict arise (chapter 31). He suffered the loss of the purity of his daughter Dinah at Shechem and feared the reprisal of Canaanite kinsmen when his sons killed the men of the city and took the women, children, and cattle as booty (chapter 34). Rachel, his most beloved wife, died prematurely along the way to Bethlehem (35:16-19). His oldest son lay with one of his concubines (35:22), and his favorite son was tragically lost and presumed dead. Finally, there was the famine which threatened the existence of his family, and the second in command to Pharaoh appeared to be taking even his youngest son away. Jacob, you see, was correct in his evaluation of his life.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

There was a significant difference between the suffering which Jacob alluded to and that which Joseph endured. Joseph's suffering was undeserved; Jacob's was not. Jacob suffered virtually every painful experience because of his willfulness and foolish choices. He deceived his brother. He chose to live near Shechem rather than to go up to Bethel. He unwisely showed preference for Joseph. The suffering which Jacob experienced was due almost entirely to his sinful decisions and responses.

Jacob did not see the hand of God in his adversity, but Joseph did. Jacob became more fearful and protective, while Joseph was forgiving and eager to serve others, even at his own expense. In his adversity Joseph grew closer to God, while Jacob seemed to drift farther and farther away. In this interview with Pharaoh all of these bitter experiences may have begun to come into focus. He was wrong when he had concluded that "all these things are against me" (42:36). His fears did not conform to the facts.

Conclusion

I see this as the great turning point in Jacob's life. Just as his sons had to come to the place where they acknowledged their sins and turned from their wicked ways, so Jacob seems to do here. I believe that he saw all of his sorrow as the result of his sin, but now he was beginning to see God in an entirely different light. The things which Jacob tried to withhold and protect (Rachel, Joseph, Benjamin) were the very things that were taken from him. It was only by giving up Benjamin that he gained him. And in giving up Benjamin he preserved not only Benjamin's life, but that of the entire nation.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=124

...I find it noteworthy to observe that while the book of Genesis covers a period of thousands of years, almost half of the book is devoted to the life and times of Jacob. Abraham, the great man of faith, spans chapters 11-24; Isaac, chapters 21-35; Joseph, chapters 30-50; but Jacob outspans them all, from chapter 25 through chapter 50. Why is it that Joseph was such a great and godly man, and yet he had no tribe named after him? Why did he not have a son whose heir would be the priestly line? **Why did Messiah not come forth from Joseph rather than Judah?** I do not know, other than the fact that **God chooses to accomplish His purposes through men like Jacob and Judah, and you and me.** **If Joseph is a type of Christ, then surely Jacob is a type of most Christians.** One reason why so much time and space is allotted to Jacob (in my opinion) is that it took this long for him to grasp the matters of salvation and sanctification.

The primary lesson I have learned from the life of Jacob is **the greatness of the grace of God. Surely it was nothing else, nothing less than grace which saved and sanctified Jacob.** And so it is for you and me. We cannot bargain with God, for we have nothing to offer. We cannot get ahead by striving in our own strength, but only by resting in Him. We must labor to enter into that rest (Hebrews 4:1), but by His strength, not ours. That is the lesson which Jacob learned. And this is the truth which made the last chapter of Jacob's life the best...

Perhaps you have not yet come to know God as Jacob did. For you the message of the gospel is clear, **"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved"** (Acts 16:31). Recognize that your striving has only led to struggle and suffering. Believe that God's offer is one of free grace, that it is only He who can give you peace, rest, and the assurance of blessing and salvation.



BREAK TIME



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

v13-26 The Remaining Years of the Famine

13 Now there was no food in all the land, because the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain which 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, for why should we die in your presence? **For our money is gone.**” 16 Then Joseph said, “**Give up your livestock, and I will give you food for your livestock, since your money is gone.**” 17 **So they brought their livestock to Joseph**, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses and the flocks and the herds and the donkeys; and he fed them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year.



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

18 And when that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent, and the cattle are my lord’s. There is nothing left for my lord except our bodies and our lands. 19 Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we and our land will be slaves to Pharaoh. So give us seed, that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate.”

20 So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. Thus the land became Pharaoh’s. 21 And as for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of Egypt’s border to the other. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh, and they lived off the allotment which Pharaoh gave them. Therefore, they did not sell their land.



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

23 Then Joseph said to the people, “**Behold**, I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh; now, *here* is seed for you, and you may sow the land. 24 And at the harvest you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own for seed of the field and for your food and for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

25 **So** they said, “You have saved our lives! Let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s slaves.” 26 **And Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt valid to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth;** only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's.

2 years + years 3 +4 (money) + year 5 (livestock) + years 6 + 7(fields & selves sold) (given seed)



Pharaoh's Prosperity and Egypt's Poverty (47:13-26)

And so the ownership of the land in Egypt changed hands—that is, all the land except that being acquired by the Israelites (verse 27) or maintained by the priests, who were supported (like the Israelites) by Pharaoh (verse 22). The people were brought in from the rural areas to the cities (verse 21). This was probably for a couple of administrative reasons. First of all, the grain was stored in the cities (41:35) and thus could be more efficiently distributed there. Perhaps also, removing the people from their land made the transfer of ownership more tangible and permanent. Once their land was left, the emotional attachment to it would tend to weaken.

The terms of the servitude of the Egyptians were spelled out by Joseph (verses 23-24). Joseph acquired both the people and their land for Pharaoh. When the famine ended, he would provide them with seed for planting. When crops were again harvested, one fifth would be given to Pharaoh. The rest would belong to the people for food, fodder, and seed for the next crop. Moses writes that it was under these conditions that Egypt was found in his own day. What happened during Joseph's administration continued on until the time when Moses was in the palace of the Pharaoh (verse 26)... \

Some find it hard to believe that Joseph could be a party to the acquisition of all the wealth of Egypt, along with the people themselves. Before we are too quick to condemn Joseph, several observations should be considered.

(1) **Neither the grain nor the gain belonged to Joseph, but to Pharaoh...** Joseph cannot be condemned for selling the grain rather than giving it away because it was not his to give. And all the profit was Pharaoh's. Joseph's actions did not bring him personal gain at Egypt's expense. His duty was to further Pharaoh's interests, and this he did very well.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=125

(2) The favor which Pharaoh bestowed on Joseph's relatives was a matter of grace, which he determined to grant the Israelites just as he did the priests. There was a great discrepancy between the good fortune of the Israelites and the economic failure of the Egyptians, but this was not due to Joseph's choice so much as it was Pharaoh's.

(3) The "slavery" which the Egyptians submitted to was not the harsh and unfair variety which we know from our own nation's history. Slavery does not have to be cruel and harsh, although it can be, just as a dictatorship does not have to be harsh and repressive (as when Christ will reign over the world). The slavery of which Joseph spoke was more the arrangement that a "sharecropper" would make with a land owner and could still do in our nation today. Slavery to these Egyptians meant the non-ownership of their lands and a 20% tax on their production...

(4) Such "slavery," even among the Israelites, was not condemned... ([Leviticus 25:39-43](#)).

Even when a fellow Israelite was overtaken by poverty, he could sell himself as a slave to another. Such slavery was not forbidden, but the slave owner was cautioned to possess this slave in a gentle and gracious way. This is just what we see Joseph doing.

(5) We should not be distressed at the actions of Joseph when the Egyptians praised him and regarded him as their savior... ([Genesis 47:25](#)).

If the Egyptians suggested this arrangement in the first place (verse 19) and then gratefully submitted to it (verse 25), why should we become so upset, unless, of course, we do not like to think such a thing could happen to us? Such an economic condition may be undesirable, but it is not unbiblical.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=125

(6) Much of the dilemma of the Egyptians was of their own making. Joseph created neither the seven years of plenty nor the seven years of famine; he predicted both and proposed a program to deal with them. His plan did cost the Egyptians their fortunes and some of their freedom, but it also saved them from certain death. The dire need of the land of Canaan is readily explainable, but why was there this need in Egypt?...

If Joseph was the competent administrator he was portrayed to be, surely he informed the general population of the famine coming after the seven years of plenty. This would secure their cooperation in carrying out the plan Joseph had proposed to alleviate the devastation of the coming years of drought. Furthermore, if Joseph believed “that government governs best which governs least,” he would have endeavored to get the nation to follow his example in saving up for the years of adversity. Joseph accumulated one fifth of the crops of the land during the abundant years. That left four-fifths of a bumper crop for the Egyptians. Should they not have been storing up grain for the famine as well as Joseph? But it would seem that they thought the years of plenty would go on and on. Why not spend some of this excess profit? They seem to no more have expected the famine to come than the people in Noah’s day looked for a flood. The Egyptians, I believe, were informed that hard times were coming, yet they failed to prepare for them. No wonder they did not complain about Joseph’s handling of this matter and heralded him as a savior.

All lines of evidence lead us to the same conclusion: Joseph was just as godly a man here as he had been elsewhere. He wisely had prepared for the future, and his laying up a store of wheat made it possible for him to save his nation from disaster.



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

v27 Israel's Prosperity

27 Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen, and they acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=125

Israel's Prosperity and Egypt's Poverty (47:27)

While the Egyptians were fainting under the famine, the Israelites were flourishing. Egypt's loss, to some degree, was their gain...

Israel prospered in spite of the famine and the poverty which Egypt experienced. This small, select group prospered while the mainstream of Egyptian populus were impoverished. It may not be too much to say that the Israelites prospered at Egypt's expense. For example, the land they acquired was probably purchased at a good price from an Egyptian farmer who knew he would lose his land anyway. The cattle that were obtained were possibly purchased from a farmer who would have otherwise watched them starve to death. What was purchased might have been at ten cents on the dollar.



Genesis 47:1-31 – Jacob Settles in Goshen

v28-31 Jacob's Last Wish

2005 BC – 1858 BC (147 years)

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years. 29

When the time for Israel to die drew near, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Please, **if** I have found favor in your sight, place now your hand under my thigh and deal with me in kindness and faithfulness. Please do not bury me in Egypt, 30 **but** when I lie down with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.”

And he said, “I will do as you have said.”

31 And he said, “Swear to me.” **So** he swore to him. Then Israel bowed *in worship* at the head of the bed.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=125

Jacob Prepares for His Death (47:28-31)

Jacob, who seemed to be dying for years, lived longer than he expected. But as he approached his death, we can see that his prosperity in Egypt did not change his priorities...

How easy it would have been for prosperity to rearrange Jacob's priorities. After living in a land that was irrigated and relatively free from famine, who would wish to return to Canaan where God must supply rain, contingent upon the obedience of His people...

Knowing that the day of his departure drew near, Jacob purposed to make his death a testimony to his faith and a stimulus to the faith and obedience of his descendants. Jacob urged Joseph, his most trusted son, to swear a solemn oath promising that he would not bury his father in Egypt, but in Canaan in the cave of Machpelah with his forefathers. This would serve as a reminder to his descendants that Egypt was not home, but only a place to sojourn until God brought them back "home" to Canaan, the land of promise.

Having been assured of his request, Jacob bowed in worship on the head of his staff.¹⁰¹ It is this incident, coupled with the blessing of Joseph's sons in chapter 49, which the writer to the Hebrews cites as evidence of the faith of Jacob: "By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff" (Hebrews 11:21).

Little wonder, for this is surely the high point of Jacob's spiritual life. For the first time, Jacob has ceased striving to do something for God and simply stopped to worship and adore Him. I believe that worship is the highest calling of the saint and one of God's primary purposes for saving men...



Genesis 48:1-22 – Jacob Blesses Joseph’s Sons

1 Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, “**Behold**, your father is sick.” **So** he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. 2 When it was told to **Jacob**, “**Behold**, your son Joseph has come to you,” Israel collected his strength and sat up in the bed.

3 Then **Jacob** said to Joseph, “**God Almighty** appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 and He said to me, ‘**Behold**, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.’ 5 And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. 6 **But** your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. 7 Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”



The View From the Graveyard ([Genesis 48:1-22](#))

Only 17 years earlier Jacob had described his life in the most negative terms: “**The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant**” ... ([Genesis 47:9](#)).

That was Jacob’s perspective from the palace of the Pharaoh. But now, standing in the proverbial graveyard of his ancestors and facing imminent death, Jacob’s testimony is one of deep faith and joyful gratitude for God’s faithfulness and care through all the days of his life (cf. 48:15-16).

How do we explain this change in Jacob’s attitude? His perspective has radically changed, for he now looks back upon his life... We need not be at death’s door to view life as Jacob did here. What we must do is grasp the reasons for his changed outlook and apply them to our lives now rather than when we think we are at death’s door....

The Adoption of Manasseh and Ephraim (48:1-7)

Joseph’s sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, were born in the land of Egypt. As sons of Joseph their future in Egypt may have seemed very bright. Perhaps they might fill the shoes of their father, taking places of power and influence in Pharaoh’s administration. But their greatest hope lay in a land they had not yet seen, for they were destined to be a part of the “company of peoples” (verse 4) that God had promised Jacob.

Reuben, due to his sin of laying with Bilhah, Jacob’s concubine (35:22), would be stripped of his birthright (cf. 49:4). This privilege was conveyed upon Joseph, but in an unusual way... Jacob achieved his purpose by adopting both of Joseph’s sons as his own, on a par with Reuben and Simeon (verse 5). Now each of them would receive one portion, but in so doing Joseph received a double portion...



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=126

...Joseph was the son of Rachel, Jacob's chosen wife. His partiality to Joseph significantly contributed to Joseph's rejection by his brothers and his journey to Egypt (cf. 37:4). A major factor in his preference for Joseph was the fact that he was the first-born of Rachel, his bride by choice. (Leah was his wife "by chance," Bilhah and Zilpah "by competition.")

While Rachel was the younger of his wives, she died prematurely on the way to Ephrath (Bethlehem). By inference, had she not died so early in life she would have presented Jacob with many other sons. The adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh provided Jacob with two more sons, technically "through Rachel." **The promise of God at Bethel in combination with the preference of Jacob for Rachel provides the backdrop for the adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh.** In addition to this must be mentioned the faithfulness of Joseph to the God of his fathers, even while in a foreign land and in adverse circumstances. He, as the savior of his people, surely was worthy of the favor his father bestowed upon him.



Genesis 48:1-22 – Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons

8 When **Israel** saw Joseph's sons, he said, “Who are these?”
9 And Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me here.” So he said, “Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them.” 10 Now the eyes of **Israel** were so dim from age *that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 11 And **Israel** said to Joseph, “I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well.”

12 Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward **Israel's** right, and brought them close to him.



Genesis 48:1-22 – Jacob Blesses Joseph’s Sons

14 **But Israel** stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the first-born.

15 And he blessed Joseph, and said,

“The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,

The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,

16 The angel who has redeemed me from all evil,

Bless the lads;

And may my name live on in them,

And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;

And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”



The Blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh (48:8-22)

Joseph, knowing that his father was about to bless them (verse 9), drew the boys, now near the age of twenty, from his father in order to arrange them properly for the blessing. Manasseh, the eldest, he had at his left hand (Jacob's right), and Ephraim was at Joseph's right hand (Jacob's left). This was intended so that Jacob's right hand would rest upon Manasseh, the oldest. Israel surprised Joseph by crossing his hands and pronouncing this blessing... ([Genesis 48:15-16](#)).

We must not forget that Jacob's pronouncement of the blessing on Joseph's two sons was primarily a blessing upon Joseph, as Moses reminds us in verse 15. The blessing contains the testimony of Jacob, one that is in stark contrast to his words spoken before Pharaoh... ([Genesis 47:9](#)).

First, Jacob's God is the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, the God who had made His covenant with them and kept them all the days of their lives.
Second, Jacob, the shepherd (cf. 30:27ff.), recognized that God had cared for him as his Shepherd. Jacob, in effect, testified, "The Lord is my shepherd ..." Third, Jacob's God was the "Angel" (cf. 32:22-32) who had redeemed him from all evil.

...This God, this Shepherd, this Angel, will bless the sons of Joseph in a special way. In them, Jacob's name (Israel) will live on. The work which God began in Abraham and Isaac and faithfully continued in Jacob, He will carry on in these men. They will grow into a great multitude in fulfillment of God's promise.



Genesis 48:1-22 – Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons

17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the first-born. Place your right hand on his head.”

19 **But** his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people and he also shall be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.” 20 And he blessed them that day, saying,

“By you Israel shall pronounce blessing, saying, ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!’”

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=126

When Joseph saw his father crossing his hands and giving the preeminence to Ephraim, he assumed it was a mistake and attempted to correct it, but he learned from his father that his action was intentional....

The book of Genesis is full of instances in which the younger was chosen over the older. Seth was chosen over Cain; Shem over Japheth; Isaac over Ishmael; Jacob over Esau; and now, Ephraim over Manasseh. Of course, it was not always to be so. Jacob had endeavored to choose Rachel over Leah, but Laban was not about to let this happen. In the providence of God, neither was He, for Leah was the first wife of Jacob, the mother of Judah, the head of the messianic line, and Levi, the head of the priestly line. Leah, not Rachel, was given the honor of being buried with Jacob in the cave of Machpelah (49:31).

Jacob had been wrong in choosing Rachel over Leah because he made his decision on the basis of her outward appearance, not her character. Also, his actions in that choice were not illustrative of the principle of divine election because there was a selfish motive in choosing Rachel over Leah. God's election is without regard to the outcome so that His choice may be free:

In the choice of Ephraim above Manasseh the principle of election is clearly illustrated, for Jacob's choice is not conditioned by selfish motives. Why, then, does Jacob set Ephraim over Manasseh? Personally, I believe that this is Jacob's method of demonstrating his belated comprehension of and submission to the doctrine of divine selection....



Genesis 48:1-22 – Jacob Blesses Joseph’s Sons

21 Then **Israel** said to Joseph, “**Behold**, I am about to die, **but** God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 22 And I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=126

Having given priority to Ephraim, the younger, Jacob now turns again to Joseph to give him yet another blessing before the other sons are called to his bedside... ([Genesis 48:21-22](#)).

Jacob's death is imminent, and he will not live to see the return to Canaan. Perhaps, he suggests, Joseph will (verse 20). We know that neither Joseph nor Jacob will return to the land of promise before death overtakes them. Only in a resurrected state will they experience the promises of God. As a special blessing, Joseph is given possession of a particular portion of land, that "which Jacob took with his sword and bow" (verse 22). But what piece of land is this?

The term "portion" is literally Shechem (cf. margin, NASV). Does Jacob give Shechem to Joseph? [Joseph's bones were brought up from Egypt and buried at Shechem...](#) ([Joshua 24:32](#)).



Genesis 49



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

1 Then **Jacob** summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves **that** I may tell you what shall befall you in the days to come.

2 Gather together and hear, O sons of **Jacob**;
And listen to **Israel** your father.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

The Purpose of Prophecy (Genesis 49:1-28)

First of all, these are the last words of Jacob. The prophecy is literally the final word of Jacob, spoken with his dying breath... ([Genesis 49:33](#)).

The dying words of any man should not be taken lightly, much less those spoken by a patriarch and recorded under the superintendence of the Spirit of God.

Second, this is poetry. We might tend to think that a man's last words, spoken with great effort, should be disorganized and difficult to follow. A look at this passage in the NASV reveals that we are dealing with Hebrew poetry, for the form is noticeably different from the preceding pages. There are numerous indications that these final words of Jacob were thought out carefully in advance. Jacob's words are ones that have been carefully planned and probably rehearsed.

Third, this is more than poetry, it is prophecy. While the form is poetry, the substance is prophecy. Jacob's words reveal "things to come" for his descendants. As a rule, the prophecy is general. It is not intended to spell out the future for Jacob's sons as individuals, but as tribal leaders. The future which is foretold is the future of the nation as manifested in the twelve tribes (cf. verse 28). Normally the prophecy will not speak of a particular place, nor of a certain person, nor of a specific point in time, but of the character and disposition of the various tribes throughout their history. This forewarns us that we must be careful to look for fulfillment which is too specific.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Fourth, the words spoken by Jacob are a blessing: “**All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him**” ([Genesis 49:28](#)).

All the sons of Jacob were blessed in that they were to be a part of the nation Israel. All would enter into the land of Canaan and have an inheritance there.

Some would certainly receive a greater blessing than others. Even those who were rebuked by Jacob and whose future was portrayed as dismal were blessed, as we shall point out later.

Fifth, the future which is foretold is not independent of the past, but an extension of it. Moses told us that every one of the sons was given “the blessing appropriate to him” (verse 28). As we think our way through these blessings of Jacob we find that each of them was related to the past. The blessings of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, were based upon the sins which they had committed in the past. Joseph, on the other hand, had been bitterly attacked, but had remained faithful (verses 23-24). Others found their blessings related to the name they had been given at their birth. Judah, derived from the Hebrew root, ‘to praise’ (cf. 29:35), is now prophesied to be praised by his brothers (49:8). Dan whose name seems to be the participle meaning ‘to judge’ (cf. 30:6), is foretold that he will “judge his People” (49:16). Prophecy, then, is not detached from history, but an extension of it into the future.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

- 3 **“Reuben,** you are my first-born;
My might and the beginning of my strength,
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.
- 4 **Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence,**
Because you went up to your father's bed;
Then you defiled it - he went up to my couch.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Reuben (49:3-4)

Reuben, by virtue of his position as the first-born of Jacob, should have had pre-eminence over his brothers and the double portion of the inheritance (which was given to Joseph (cf. 48:5,6,22; [I Chronicles 5:1-2](#))). But these were taken from Reuben because of his instability: ... ([Genesis 49:3-4](#)).

As suggested earlier, I do not think Reuben's lust was sexual as much as it was political —It was a lust for power. Reuben, like Satan, was not content with his exalted position and wanted more power, more pre-eminence (cf. [Isaiah 14:12ff.](#); [Ezekiel 28:12ff.](#)). He therefore took Bilhah, his father's concubine, not because of her sexual desirability, but because she was symbolic of the right to rule over the family. To possess the harem of the ruler was to usurp the authority of the ruler (cf. [I Kings 2:13f.](#)). Since "the last shall be first" ([Mark 10:31](#)) and those who serve shall rule in the kingdom of God ([Mark 9:35](#)), Reuben had to be rejected from his position of power and pre-eminence. He who would rule must surely first rule himself.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

- 5 “**Simeon and Levi** are brothers;
Their swords are implements of violence.
- 6 Let my soul not enter into their council;
Let not my glory be united with their assembly;
Because in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they lamed oxen.
- 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, **for** it is cruel.
I will disperse them in **Jacob,**
And scatter them in **Israel.**



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Simeon and Levi (49:5-7)

Like Reuben, Simeon and Levi had demonstrated character that was not befitting to godliness: ...([Genesis 49:5-7](#)).

These two brothers of Dinah were greatly angered by the violation of her purity at the hand of Shechem, but it was not righteous indignation. By their submitting to circumcision they had deceived the men of Shechem, letting them believe that a treaty was being ratified. And in their anger they slew the men of the city. The hamstringing of the oxen was a further evidence of their uncontrolled anger, a detail not mentioned in the account of [Genesis 34:25-30](#). Horses were hamstrung because of their military use, pulling chariots (cf. [Joshua 11:6](#)), but oxen were used for peaceful purposes. The hamstringing of these oxen evidenced wanton violence and senseless destruction. The alliance of Simeon and Levi was an unholy one, and thus, like those at Babel who joined together in disobedience ([Genesis 11:1ff.](#)), they would be dispersed.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

- 8 “**Judah**, your brothers shall praise you;
Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
Your father's sons shall bow down to you.
- 9 Judah is a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He couches, he lies down as a lion,
And as a lion, who dares rouse him up?
- 10 **The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes,**
And to him *shall be* the obedience of the peoples.
- 11 He ties *his* foal to the vine,
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine;
He washes his garments in wine,
And his robes in the blood of grapes.
- 12 His eyes are dull from wine,
And his teeth white from milk.

Shiloh, Shiyloh,
1x, 1) he whose it is, that which belongs to him, tranquillity 1a) meaning uncertain
occurred in AD7 when the rabbis lost the right to exact the death penalty (see John 18:30)



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Judah (49:8-12)

After learning of Judah's folly in [Genesis 38](#) we would not expect him to prosper spiritually, but Jacob's words speak of a bright future for his descendants: ... ([Genesis 49:8-12](#)).

The pre-eminence which was taken from Reuben is clearly transferred to his younger brother, Judah (cf. also [I Chronicles 5:2](#)). He would not only rule over his brothers in the days to come, but he would also prevail over his enemies (verse 8). His military might is compared to the strength of a lion (verse 9). Verse 10 has long been held to be a messianic prophecy by both Jews and Christians, but the precise meaning of "Shiloh" is uncertain. It is either a reference to a place, as it is elsewhere in the Old Testament (e.g. [Joshua 18:1,8,9](#); 19:51; [I Samuel 1:13](#), etc.), or it may refer to the person of the Messiah.

The prosperity of the tribe of Judah is depicted in verses 11 and 12. He will be so blessed in the vineyard that his vines will be strong enough to hold fast a young donkey, and the produce of the vine will be so abundant that he could, so to speak, wash his garments in its wine. In other words, wine will be as abundant as water. The quantity would be sufficient to more than meet a man's capacity to consume it, thus the reddening of the eyes (verse 12). The cattle will prosper such that milk will also be readily available (verse 12).

The first six sons referred to are the offspring of Jacob and Leah. The next four are the sons of the concubines of Rachel and Leah. The last two sons are the children of Jacob and Rachel, the wife of his preference.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

- 13 “Zebulun shall dwell at the seashore;
And he *shall be* a haven for ships,
And his flank *shall be* toward Sidon.
- 14 “Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between the sheepfolds.
- 15 When he saw that a resting place was good
And that the land was pleasant,
He bowed his shoulder to bear *burdens*,
And became a slave at forced labor.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Zebulun and Issachar (49:13-15)

The prophecy concerning Zebulun is disturbing, for it has not yet come to pass:

Zebulun shall dwell at the seashore; And he shall be a haven for ships, And his flank shall be toward Sidon ([Genesis 49:13](#)).

Kidner comments:

Zebulun's allotted land in Joshua 19:10-16 did not reach the coast, unlike the neighboring Asher's (cf. Jdg. 5:17), nor did it closely approach Sidon. But it was near enough to both to be enriched by seaborne trade (to 'suck the abundance of the seas', Dt. 33:19), and the prepositions in the verse could mean 'towards.'

In contrast to Judah, who subdued his enemies like a lion, Issachar failed to do so, and as a result, instead submitted to the service of the Canaanites. That which we do not master often tends to become our master.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

- 16 **‘Dan** shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.
- 17 **Dan** shall be a serpent in the way,
A horned snake in the path,
That bites the horse’s heels,
So that his rider falls backward.
- 18 **For** Thy salvation I wait, O LORD.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Dan (49:16-18)

Our hopes are raised initially, for it seems that the prospects for this tribe are bright, but they are suddenly dashed upon the rocks of reality: ... ([Genesis 49:16-17](#)).

Dan was the first child of Rachel, through Bilhah her handmaid ([Genesis 30:1-6](#)). Rachel felt that she would be vindicated through this son, and thus his name suggested that God had heard her cries and had judged in her favor. Dan would judge his people, as one of the sons of Israel, but he would eventually serve more destructive purposes. The incident in [Judges 18](#) serves to reflect the bent which this tribe took. In the listing of the tribes of Israel in [Revelation 7:5-8](#), Dan is omitted.

Verse 18 is an unusual outburst of hope and expectation, but it is difficult to relate to its context: "For thy salvation I wait, O Lord ([Genesis 49:18](#)).

I understand it to be a reflection of the faith and hope of Israel, in the light of the prophecies spoken. The prognosis for the tribes of Israel thus far has not been particularly good, with the exception of the tribe of Judah. Through David much of the prophecies will be fulfilled, but the ultimate fulfillment is in the Messiah, who is the son of David. **Having finished his prophecy concerning Dan, and thus being halfway through his descendants, Jacob bursts out with these words in verse 18. An expression that the hope of the nation does not lie in the sons he has borne, but in the God who has borne him along throughout his sojourn. Salvation surely will not come from his sons, but from God. Salvation will not come from within, but from without.** That, I believe, is the substance of Jacob's words here.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

19 “As for **Gad**, raiders shall raid him,

But he shall raid *at their heels*.

20 “As for **Asher**, his food shall be rich,

And he shall yield royal dainties.

21 “**Naphtali** is a doe let loose,

He gives beautiful words.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Gad and Asher (49:19-20)

As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, But he shall raid at their heels.

As for Asher, his food shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties ([Genesis 49:19-20](#)).

Gad would be continually plagued by his neighbors, but would not be overcome.

Asher, with a fertile plain and trade routes to the sea, ... would 'dip his foot in oil' (Deut. 33:24) and produce a notable annual quota for the palace (cf. [I Ki. 4:7](#)).

Naphtali (49:21)

Naphtali is a doe let loose, He gives beautiful words ([Genesis 49:21](#)).

The portrait of Naphtali's future is one of unhindered freedom and increase. While the NASV translates verse 21 to read "words" in the second line, it seems preferable to render it more naturally, "fawns," as in the King James Version. Under Barak, Israel was led to break their bonds ([Judges 4-5](#)).



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

- 22 “Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a spring;
Its branches run over a wall.
- 23 The archers bitterly attacked him,
And shot at him and harassed him;
- 24 **But** his bow remained firm,
And his arms were agile,
From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
- 25 From the God of your father who helps you,
And by the Almighty who blesses you
*With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.*
- 26 The blessings of your father
Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;
May they be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Joseph (49:22-26)

Joseph, we would all have to agree, was most worthy of any blessing which Jacob might pronounce. While he is greatly blessed by God, he does not have the privilege of being the forefather of Messiah, as does Judah....

Joseph's future is described as one of fruitfulness and abundance. He had been bitterly attacked, yet remained steadfast (verses 23-24). I believe the primary reference here to be to the rejection and persecution he experienced at the hand of his brethren. Joseph remained firm and the God of Jacob sustained him. His blessings are largely material. He will be pre-eminent among his brothers, but not in the same way as Judah. Because of Ephraim's pride ([Judges 8:1](#); 12:1) and apostasy ([Hosea 4:17](#); 5:3f.), enjoyment of these blessings was not what it could have been.



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

27 “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
In the morning he devours the prey,
And in the evening he divides the spoil.”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=127

Benjamin (49:27)

Jacob described Benjamin as one who would be fierce and aggressive:

Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he devours the prey, And in the evening he divides the spoil ([Genesis 49:27](#)).

This side of Benjamin can be seen in [Judges 19-21](#). Moses, in a later pronouncement of blessing, has a more gentle word about Benjamin:

Of Benjamin he said, “May the beloved of the Lord dwell in security by Him, Who shields him all the day, And he dwells between His shoulders” ([Deuteronomy 33:12](#)).



Genesis 49:1-33 – Jacob’s Last Words to His Sons

Jacob died in 1858 BC at 147 years old

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them **when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.**

29 Then he charged them and said to them, “I am about to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, **30** in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. **31** There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah - **32** the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth.” **33** When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.



The End of An Era ([Genesis 49:29-50:26](#))

While the circumstances under which death comes may be beyond our control, our attitude toward death is something which we can determine, even now. I would like to suggest that few decisions are as important as our response to death. And no one chapter in the Old Testament has more to say on the subject of death than the final chapter of the book of Genesis.

One of the most dramatic changes in Jacob's thinking was his attitude toward death. In the autumn years of his life, he was preoccupied with death. It probably began with the death of his beloved Rachel ([Genesis 35:16ff.](#)). The only woman he ever loved was gone. And later her oldest son Joseph appeared to be dead as well. Jacob saw little reason to live. The grave was not an appealing escape from pain, but it was the only one Jacob saw: "Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, "Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son." So his father wept for him" ([Genesis 37:35](#)).

When Simeon was detained in Egypt and Benjamin was demanded as part of the integrity of Jacob's sons, once again Jacob became preoccupied with death: "... My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow" ([Genesis 42:38](#)).

Judah, at least, believed his father (cf. 44:22). When Jacob learned that Joseph was alive and was reunited with him, he felt that now, at last, he was ready to die: "Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive" ([Genesis 46:30](#)).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

Jacob Chooses His Cemetery Site (49:29-33)

So far as I can tell, Jacob's last words were not the blessing he gave his sons (49:1-28), but his very careful instruction about his burial... ([Genesis 49:29-33](#)).

There is no deception about Jacob's death (verse 29), but its imminence underscores the import of his words. Clear orders are given, but not for the first time (cf. 47:29-31), concerning his burial in Canaan. He was to be taken up to Canaan to the field of Machpelah, and buried in the cave along with his grandfather Abraham, and his father Isaac, and their wives. Leah, too, was buried there, and it would seem that at that time he had hewn out a place in the cave for his own burial (cf. 50:5). A very precise description of the cave, the field, and its location was given so that no mistakes would be made. In that day, contracts were most often (if not always) verbal (cf. 23:3-20), and so this "deed" must be passed on from one generation to the next.

Knowing that he had fulfilled all of his obligations, Jacob drew up his feet into the bed and shortly, if not immediately, died (verse 33). It would seem that death could not claim him until all of his final responsibilities were completed.



Genesis 50:1-14 – Jacob's Death and Burial

1 Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming.

And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

The Grief of Joseph and the Egyptians (50:1-3)

Moses chose, at this point, to draw our attention to the grief of Joseph and the Egyptians, but without a word concerning his brothers. Their response would be specifically described in later verses (15-21)...

Joseph was probably closer to Jacob than any of his brothers. He wept over his father and kissed him. Then those whose duty it was to care for Joseph's medical needs were commissioned to embalm Jacob (verse 2). This was a lengthy process of 40 days duration (verse 3):

The process of embalming among the ancient Egyptians is thus described by Herodotus, b. ii., c. 86—8, **“The body was given to the embalmers, who first took out the brains and entrails and washed them in palm wine impregnated with strong astringent drugs; after which they began to anoint the body with the oil of cedar, myrrh, cinnamon, and cassia; and this lasted thirty days. They next put it into a solution of nitre (saltpetre) for forty days longer, so that they allowed seventy days to complete the embalming; after which they bound it up in swathes of linen besmeared with gum. Being then able to resist putrefaction, it was delivered to the relatives, inclosed in a wooden or paper case somewhat resembling a coffin, and laid in the catacomb or grave belonging to the family, where it was placed in an upright posture against the wall.”**

As a gesture of respect, love, and sympathy, the Egyptians joined Joseph in mourning Jacob's death a total of 70 days before the burial plan was put into action.



Genesis 50:1-14 – Jacob’s Death and Burial

4 And when the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, 5 ‘My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.’”

6 And Pharaoh said, “ Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”



Genesis 50:1-14 – Jacob’s Death and Burial

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father's household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen. 9 There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. 10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days mourning for his father.

11 Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan. 12 And thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; 13 for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. 14 And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

The Burial of Jacob (50:4-14)

Embalming was the customary Egyptian preparation of dignitaries for burial. For Jacob's burial this was especially helpful for it was a long way back to Canaan to the cave where Jacob was to be laid to rest. Perhaps it was due to the same logistical problem (without the availability of embalmers) that forced Jacob to bury Rachel along the way rather than to transport her body to the cave of Machpelah (cf. [Genesis 35:16-20](#)).

Joseph's next task was to secure the permission of Pharaoh to leave Egypt, along with all the adult members of the Israelite nation.... ([Genesis 50:4-6](#)).

Joseph is said to have asked other Egyptian officials to petition Pharaoh to leave the land temporarily. This may be due to some kind of ceremonial defilement that would make Joseph's personal appearance and appeal offensive to Pharaoh. A report of Jacob's instructions that were sworn as an oath was included in the petition. Joseph reminded Pharaoh that this was Jacob's strong desire and that he was sworn to carry through with it. This was to assure that Pharaoh would not take offense to Jacob's burial in Canaan rather than Egypt. Without reservation, Joseph's request was granted.

Few funeral processions have been so long or so large:... ([Genesis 50:7-9](#)).

Joseph was accompanied by a large delegation of high-ranking Egyptian officials, many, if not all of whom, were subordinate to Joseph (cf. 40:40-44). Verse seven seems to indicate that men of various rank and offices went with Joseph to bury Jacob. In addition, all of Jacob's adult family went along (verse 8). Attached to this large procession was a large company of horsemen and charioteers. Providing transportation and security seems to have been their assignment (cf. verse 9).



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

Upon reaching Canaan, the ceremony was so awesome it made a profound impression on the inhabitants of the land...([Genesis 50:10-11](#)).

For an unknown reason, the procession made its way from Egypt to Canaan by means of an unusual route. Rather than traveling to the north and approaching Canaan from the west, they proceeded northeasterly and entered Canaan from the east, from the other side of the Jordan (cf. verse 10). Perhaps it is not coincidental that this route would more closely parallel the entrance of Israel into Canaan after the Exodus.

Shortly after crossing the Jordan into Canaan, the procession halted at a place identified as “the threshing floor of Atad” (verse 10). Here a seven day period of mourning was observed which especially attracted the attention of the Canaanites who lived near (verse 11).

The seven day mourning period may have been primarily for the Egyptians, allowing them one final opportunity to grieve with Joseph and his family. From here it would seem that Jacob’s family proceeded on with the body to the cave of Machpelah where Jacob was buried. This would then have been a more private family matter neither participated in by the Egyptians nor viewed with curiosity by the Canaanites.

Moses reminds us that in so doing the charge of Jacob to his sons was exactly carried out. ...([Genesis 50:12-14](#)).

Having completed their mission, this large entourage, the Israelites, would then have returned to the threshing floor of Atad, rejoined their retinue of Egyptians, and returned en masse to Egypt.



Genesis 50:15-20 – Joseph Forgives His Brothers

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph should bear a grudge against us and pay us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!” 16 So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father charged before he died, saying, 17 ‘Thus you shall say to Joseph, “Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” 19 But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? 20 And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. 21 So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

Not Grief, But Guilt (50:15-21)

It is at verse 15 that we see why Moses has described only the grief of Joseph and the Egyptians (cf. 50:1,3). While the death of Jacob undoubtedly occasioned grief on the part of Joseph's brothers, another emotion seems to have prevailed—guilt....[Genesis 50:15](#)).

...A message was conveyed to Joseph, perhaps through Benjamin. Joseph was told that Jacob had yet another charge not yet made known, to which Joseph was urged to submit. Before his death Jacob had requested that Joseph forgive his other sons for their sins. Having sent this message ahead, perhaps by Benjamin, the brothers appeared before Joseph. Humbly they fell before Joseph pledging their obedience and submission (verse 18). They now volunteered to do the very thing which Joseph had predicted (37:5-9) and which they had sought to avoid (37:19-20).

Joseph's response is a model for all who would respond in a godly way to ungodly persecution:... ([Genesis 50:19-21](#)).

Vengeance belongs to God, not man. Joseph would not consider usurping a prerogative which belonged only to God (cf. [Romans 12:19](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:15](#); [1 Peter 4:19](#)). Furthermore, while their attitudes and actions were evil, the result was intended by God for the good of all (verse 20; cf. 45:5-8; Acts 2:23). How could Joseph be angry when good had come of their sin through God's providence? Instead, Joseph returned kindness for cruelty (cf. [Proverbs 25:21-22](#); [Romans 12:20,21](#)). The kindness Joseph had shown while his father was alive would continue he reassured them.



Genesis 50:22-26 – Joseph’s Last Days and Death

22 Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. **23** And Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees. **24** And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you, and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.” **25** Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.” **26** So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Joseph died in 1804 BC at 110 years old (1914-1804 BC)

From Creation (Gen 1) to a Coffin (Gen 50)



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

The Death and Burial of Joseph (50:22-26)

More than 50 years elapsed between verses 21 and 22. Moses was intent upon placing the deaths of Jacob and Joseph side by side. Irrelevant details are therefore set aside to take us directly to the death bed of Joseph, and thus to parallel the death of Jacob.

...Joseph's life was full at the age of 110 (verse 22). He lived long enough to hold his great-great-grandsons on his knee (verse 23). Knowing that the day of his death drew near, Joseph like Jacob, charged his brothers concerning his burial. He did not wish his body to be carried back to Canaan, as Jacob had insisted.

While the burial of Jacob and Joseph are quite different, they are both reflective of the same faith and hope. **Both believed that Israel's blessings in the future would be realized in the land of promise. Both were embalmed**—Jacob so that his body could be carried on the long journey to Canaan by his sons, Joseph so that his body could wait for the exodus at which time his bones would be returned to Canaan, borne by the Israelites: **“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, “God shall surely take care of you; and you shall carry my bones from here with you” (Exodus 13:19).**

Jacob's death occasioned a journey to Canaan where the Israelites once again beheld the land of promise to which they (in their offspring) would return at the exodus. The burial of Jacob reminded his descendants of their final home, and that Egypt was only a place of sojourn.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

Joseph, on the other hand, was a continual reminder that some day the exodus would occur. Day after day in Egypt, that coffin spoke of Israel's future and Joseph's faith. And day after weary day, the Israelites trudged through the wilderness carrying the casket of Joseph. **Both men, Jacob and Joseph, determined that their death and burial would be a testimony to their faith and a stimulus to the faith of their offspring.**

Conclusion

And so we come to the end of an era and to the end of a magnificent book. But two funerals do not seem to be a very bright ending for a book. Man's origin began in the garden of perfection and beauty in paradise. It ends in two coffins, one in Canaan, the other in Egypt. What a dismal conclusion. Moses could never make it as a writer in our times.

...Death, Moses would have us learn, is not the end. That was what Jacob had foolishly believed for many years. That is why he was so eager for it to come. He looked forward to death as the end of his earthly woes. So do all who choose the way of suicide to cease from suffering. But the tragedy of such death is that it is not the end at all. It is really only a beginning of an irreversible eternity.

...During those years spent in Egypt, Jacob came to a very different view of death. No longer did he consider death the end of everything. Even if a man were to lose his cherished son, as God had commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, God could raise him again. There was life after death: ([Hebrews 11:17-19](#)).

Jacob had come to see that even if God did not resurrect the dead (in the way Abraham expected Him to raise Isaac), there was still life after death.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

And Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people ([Genesis 25:8](#)).

And Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him ([Genesis 35:29](#)).

When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people ([Genesis 49:33](#)).

The expression, “to be gathered to his people” was no mere euphemism for death; it was an ancient expression of the patriarchs hope of life after death. These men found little comfort in having their bones in close proximity to those of other relatives. They viewed their death as the occasion to be rejoined with those whose death had separated the living from the dead.

When our Lord quoted the statement of God the Father, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” ([Matthew 22:32](#)), He did so to prove there is life after death. For, otherwise, He would have said “I was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”!

May I suggest to you that the way you view death makes all the difference in the world. If it is the end of everything, then there is not any need to seek heaven or to shun hell. Suicide is a tempting option whenever life doesn't seem to be going our way. If there is no life after death, the world is right when it says that we should “... eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.”



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

But if we view death as a beginning rather than the end, then what lies after death must surely compel us to face eternity squarely, before death. And, once we are rightly related to God by faith in His Son, we need not fear death. We need not avoid talking about it. And, in one sense, we can welcome it, for it promises us a time when we shall be intimately and eternally with God and with those in the faith who have been separated from us by death.

...Do you notice how candidly both Jacob and Joseph spoke of their death? That is not so with unbelievers. They avoid the subject with a passion. All kinds of euphemisms are employed so that death's realities need not be faced. We do not speak of the dead, but of the departed; they are not buried, but interred. People do not die; they pass away. We do not bury the dead in graveyards, but in memorial parks.

Both Jacob and Joseph called their relatives to them, where they unhesitatingly spoke of their death and gave clear instructions regarding their burial. Today we do everything possible to conceal the truth from the dying. When the father of one of my best friends was dying of cancer, he would persistently ask his son, "Are they telling me everything?"

A number of years ago I was asked to visit a woman in the hospital. No one told me she was dying. I just knew it. She and I never avoided the subject of death, and it was obvious to me that she wished to talk about it. When she died, I was asked to conduct her funeral. I shall never forget my surprise at hearing the husband repeat to his wife's friends and family, "She never knew she was dying." I never knew she shouldn't know. Her husband found comfort in concealing the truth from her.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

The tragedy with this effort to deny death is that those last few days or hours are spent in deception. Rather than say our farewells and use our dying breath to speak words of lasting import, we dwell on trivia, which seems “safe” and remote from such unpleasant matters as death. And rather than facing the eternity which lies only a breath away, we carefully avoid it.

Most believers should not fall into the trap of denying death or avoiding a frank discussion of it. But there is a way in which we can also lose the joy of those last moments. There are some Christians who would say that sickness and death need not be endured if we would only have the faith to be healed.

Now I want to be quick to say that God can and does heal, and I am grateful for it. But there is no promise of healing or deliverance from suffering for all. I am inclined to believe that such instances are clearly the exception, rather than the rule.

But there are those who would walk into a hospital room and assure the dying that, if they have sufficient faith, God will raise them up and restore them, free from suffering, sickness, and death. Often, the ailing grasp at any hope of deliverance, not out of faith, but out of fear. Often, there is a bold pronouncement of faith and assurance of healing. There may be a period of remission. But often, the disease continues to consume the life of the terminally ill. Now, in the light of the almost certain approach of death, there can be only one conclusion. If one can be healed if he or she has sufficient faith, and they are not being healed, that person must not have sufficient faith.



http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=128

Now, rather than face death with honesty and acceptance, the ill can only question his faith. And if his faith was inadequate to heal, can it be sufficient to save? The last days are spent in doubt and despair. There is no testimony, no joy, no worship—only despair.

Let us look at death as Jacob and Joseph. Let us see it not as the end, but the beginning. Let us, by faith, look forward to being reunited with those we love ([I Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)) and dwelling with our Savior ([John 14:1-3](#)), forever in His presence and experiencing the things he has prepared for us.

Finally, Joseph's brothers, like Jacob (until his final days), felt that death was the end. They believed that God would care for them only so long as Jacob lived. They came to learn that God's care was certain when neither Jacob nor Joseph were around. God's program will never be contingent upon the presence of any one man, of any one church or organization. God's plan and program is as certain as He is sovereign, as enduring as He is eternal.

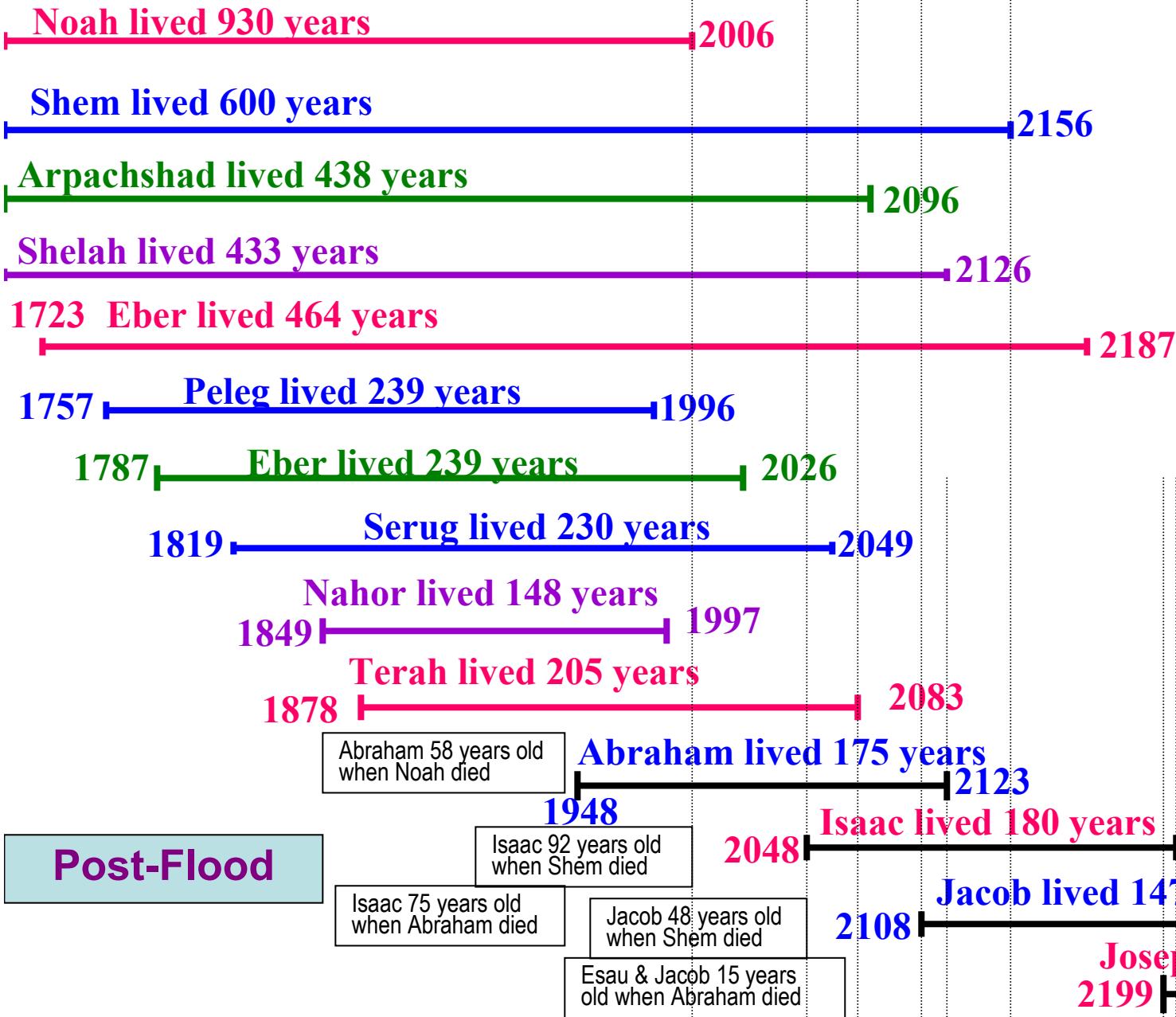
...The fear of death is evidence of our uncertainty as to what lies beyond the grave. That fear can be denied, suppressed, or camouflaged. But it cannot be avoided indefinitely. The fear of death is overcome only by the faith of men like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who trusted in the one Who would eventually overcome it.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ([John 11:25-26](#)).



Years from Creation

1700	1800	1900	2000	2100	2200	2300
------	------	------	------	------	------	------



BC

- 2165 - Abram born
- 2090 - Abram reaches Canaan
- 2089 - To Egypt because of famine
- 2066 - Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed
- 2065 - Isaac born
- 2028 - Sarah dies
- 2025 - Isaac marries Rebekah
- 2005 - Esau and Jacob born
- 1990 - Abraham dies
- 1928 - Jacob flees to Haran
- 1921 - Reuben born
- 1914 - Joseph born
- 1897 - Joseph sold into slavery
- 1885 - Isaac dies
- 1875 - Jacob and family enter into Egypt
- 1858 - Jacob dies
- 1804 - Joseph dies

Post-Flood

Abraham 58 years old when Noah died

Isaac 92 years old when Shem died

Isaac 75 years old when Abraham died

Jacob 48 years old when Shem died

Esau & Jacob 15 years old when Abraham died

Joseph 29 years old when Isaac died
Joseph 54 years old when Jacob died

