

Genesis Session 24: Joseph and Jacob Reunited (Genesis 46-47)

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Abstract

This session examines the migration of Jacob and his family to Egypt and their emotional reunion with Joseph, marking the critical transition of the patriarchal family from Canaan to Goshen. Dr. Mathews highlights how this physical journey is undergirded by divine presence and covenant promises, ensuring Israel's survival, protection, and future multiplication. The narrative showcases Joseph's administrative wisdom as he secures the fertile land of Goshen for his family while managing the worsening famine for the Egyptian populace. Finally, the session emphasizes Jacob's deathbed request to be buried in the Promised Land of Canaan, illustrating an unyielding faith in God's covenant promises and future deliverance.

Outline

I. Introduction to the Merging Conclusions of Genesis (Chapters 46–50)

- A. The intersection of the Joseph story (Gen 37–47) and the Jacob story (Gen 25–50)
- B. The literary structure of the "Toledoth" (generations/accounts of)
- C. Three prominent figures in the final chapters: Joseph, Jacob, and Judah
- D. The overarching motif of blessing (partial fulfillment of patriarchal promises)
- E. Forward-looking orientation: Anticipation of the future exodus and resettlement in Canaan
- F. God's sovereignty persisting through crises, with famine driving the patriarchal journeys

II. The Migration of Jacob and His Family to Egypt (Genesis 46:1–27)

- A. Jacob's decision to move after learning Joseph is alive (Gen 45:28)
- B. Worship and sacrifice at Beersheba: Seeking divine confirmation
- C. The night vision and the "Here I Am" response (echoing Abraham's faith)
- D. God's reassurance and covenant promises
 - 1. Promise of presence ("I will go down to Egypt with you")
 - 2. Promise of nationhood ("I will make you into a great nation there")
 - 3. Promise of return ("I will surely bring you back again")
 - 4. Personal promise regarding Joseph closing his eyes

- E. The inclusive descent: Totality of the household migrating
- F. The genealogical catalog of Jacob's descendants
 - 1. Numerical count: Reconciling the 66 direct descendants and the total of 70
 - 2. The symbolic significance of the 70: Whole of Israel's tribal ancestors in Egypt

III. The Reconciliation and Settlement in Goshen (Genesis 46:28–47:12)

- A. Judah sent ahead to secure directions to Goshen
 - 1. Rising prominence of Judah as the source of the royal line (pointing to David and Christ)
- B. The emotional reunion of Joseph and Jacob in Goshen
 - 1. Jacob's readiness to die in peace after seeing his son alive
 - 2. Echoes of Simeon's Nunc Dimittis in the New Testament (Luke 2)
- C. Segregation policy and preparing Pharaoh for their arrival
 - 1. Emphasizing their occupation as shepherds
 - 2. Isolation in Goshen to preserve ethnic and religious identity
- D. The family's presentation before Pharaoh (Gen 47:1–6)
 - 1. Pharaoh granting the best land of Goshen and placing them in charge of royal livestock
- E. Jacob blessing Pharaoh (Gen 47:7–12)
 - 1. Theological significance: Jacob (though a sojourner) is greater than Pharaoh
 - 2. Jacob's review of his difficult 130-year pilgrimage

IV. Joseph's Administrative Wisdom During the Famine (Genesis 47:13–26)

- A. Joseph's role as a wise, state-level administrator and mediator
- B. Three chronological stages of the famine administration
 - 1. Stage 1: Collection of money in exchange for grain
 - 2. Stage 2: Exchange of livestock and possessions for food
 - 3. Stage 3: Detour into voluntary servitude and sale of land to Pharaoh
- C. Exemption of the priestly class from land surrender and servitude
- D. The perspective of the Egyptian people: Gratitude to Joseph as their savior
- E. The theological typology of Joseph as a mediator and savior of the world

V. Jacob's Dying Days and Enduring Hope (Genesis 47:27–31)

- A. Israel thriving and multiplying greatly in Goshen
- B. Jacob's approaching death and focus on the Promised Land
- C. Jacob's solemn oath to Joseph: Insistence on burial in Machpelah, Canaan
- D. Expression of worship: Leaning on the top of his staff (Hebrews 11:21)
- E. Outlook: Preview of the blessings in chapters 48–50 and God's reliable deliverance