

Genesis 46-50

THE FINAL CHAPTER(S)

Opening Thoughts

- * Gen 46 marks the beginning of the final act of Genesis ...
- ◆ The nation will be resettled in Egypt
- ◆ And — The Patriarchal leadership will reach its end ...

Opening Thoughts

- * Giving way to a theocratic judgeship
- * Where God will “rule” through His appointed judges ...
- * The first and foremost of whom will be Moses

The Big Picture

TEXT	TITLE
Gen 46-47:12	Resettlement in Egypt
Gen 47:13-26	Joseph's Leadership and Legacy
Gen 47:27-48:22	Joseph's Blessing and Portion
Gen 49-50:14	Jacob's Prophetic Blessings
Gen 50:15-26	The Magnanimous Pardon

Genesis 46-47:12

RESETTLEMENT IN EGYPT

Initial Reflections

- * Gen 46 marks an inflection point in Israel's history
- * They will leave the promised land and embark upon ...
- * What will be a 400 year sojourn

Initial Reflections

- * Egypt is the perfect place because ...
 - ◆ The Egyptians pride and disdain for foreigners — particularly shepherds
 - ◆ Geographic isolation away from the cities
 - ◆ And no possibility of intermarriage — thus maintaining ethnic and religious purity

Initial Reflections

- * Yet on the positive side, they can avail themselves of Egyptian societal advancements
- * So — all-in-all they could grow and develop their national identity ...

Initial Reflections

- * Awaiting the testing that will arise later from severe persecution, and ...
- * Ultimately lead to their redemption and deliverance from Egypt ...
- * Recorded in the book of Exodus

Structure of the Text

- * Sacrifice and Affirmation - 46:1-4
- * The “Recording” of the Families - vv. 5-27
- * The Emotional Reunion - vv. 28-30
- * Joseph’s “Resettlement” Wisdom - vv. 31-34
- * Resettlement in Goshen - 47:1-12

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * His mind made up, “Israel” sets out for Egypt ...
- * The journey starts from Hebron where the family has been living since their return from Haran

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * And they pause to worship in Beersheba
- * Beersheba is just over 25 miles from Hebron — thus likely arriving on the 2nd day of their journey

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * Why did Jacob not sacrifice and seek affirmation in Hebron?
 - ◆ Text does not explicitly say, but I can surmise a couple of possibilities
- * First would be that he was overwhelmed with the prospect of seeing Joseph, and ...

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * Had a strong sense of divine providence owing to ...
 - ◆ The brothers personal testimony
 - ◆ The evidence of Joseph's prominence in Egypt
- * So I don't think it was purely an act of self will on Jacob's part

Sacrifice and Affirmation

* More likely though is this ...

- ◆ Beersheba was, at that time, the Southern extremity of the land of promise
- ◆ So as he was about to leave the place where God had directed his forefathers to go and settle ...
- ◆ The momentous nature of what he is about to do strikes home with sharp clarity, and ...

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ He realizes that God has not yet spoken directly w/r/t this endeavor
- ◆ He likely remembers there had been previous “self-willed” pilgrimages to Egypt that ...
- ◆ Had not turned out so well — Remember Abram’s sojourn to Egypt??

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * As well, in a similar period of famine
 - ◆ God specifically instructed Isaac to stay put — cf. Gen 26:1-5 [READ]
- * So better late than never, he pauses his sojourn to seek Divine guidance

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * We might also note that Beersheba was a significant historical site ...
 - ◆ Hagar's encounter with the Angel of God - Gen 21:15ff
 - ◆ The covenant between Abram and Abimelech - Gen 21:31-33

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ Abraham's home base after the "offering of Isaac" - Gen 22:19
- ◆ Where the LORD appeared to Isaac to confirm the covenant blessings - Gen 26:23
- ◆ 2nd Covenant with Abimelech — this one with Isaac - Gen 26:26ff

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ Isaac's home — from where Jacob departed to Haran after his deception - Gen 28:10
- * So — maybe more than you wanted to think about, but ...
- * Beersheba is a quite reasonable, if not ideal, site for Jacob's worship

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * Jacob offers his sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac — **Why the qualifier?**
 - ◆ Again — no clear textual answer ...
 - ◆ Perhaps “Patriarchal” solidarity
 - ◆ Or — childhood memories of Beersheba

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * Now — We are not told if Jacob made any specific petitions ...
- * But in v. 2 God speaks to Jacob in visions of the night — note the plural ... [visions](#)
- * Which would surely cause Jacob to recall prior patterns and take notice!

Sacrifice and Affirmation

* Based vv. 3-4 what would you surmise might have been on Jacob's mind?

- ◆ Is God with me?
- ◆ Is it "OK" to go to Egypt?
- ◆ Will I ever return?

Sacrifice and Affirmation

* So what does God do first in the vision?

- ◆ He affirms His identity — "I am (the) God"
... The very same one of your father

* What does God do next?

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ He quells any fear that Jacob has about going down to Egypt
- * The nature of the fear is not clear, but it was either ...
- ◆ Fear of leaving the land w/o clear “Divine sanction,” or ...

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ Fear of what would happen in Egypt — or “both”
- * Then God provides a reason for why he should not be afraid — **What?**
- ◆ Because this is where the “great multitude” promises of the A.C. will be fulfilled!

Sacrifice and Affirmation

* What does God do next?

- ◆ He affirms His presence with Jacob in Egypt, emphatically — “I myself will go down with you,” and ...
- ◆ He emphatically promises that He will bring him back — “I will SURELY”

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * The “you” in v. 4 is singular — but it carries a “corporate” nuance meaning
- * You — as the head of the nation
- * So it is not just that Jacob’s bones will return to Canaan ... as we learn later

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * But rather God will go down with “the nation of Israel,” and ...
- * He will bring the nation back
- * These are rich promises of reassurance at a time of deep uncertainty

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * **And how does the vision end?**
- ◆ Jacob learns he will die in Egypt ...
- ◆ Along with the sweet assurance that his “lost” son will close his eyes —
- ◆ Instead of dying in sorrow (“bring my gray hair to Sheol in sorrow”) ...

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- ◆ His beloved “lost son,” Joseph will be at his side on his deathbed, and will ...
- ◆ Provide a last loving act — he will close his father’s eyes
- * There are a couple interesting observations we should make b4 leaving this section

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * What God specifically forbid for Abraham and Isaac ...
- * He now permits for Jacob
- * Which does not make God fickle or inconsistent, rather ...

Sacrifice and Affirmation

- * It reflects that God will provide differing guidance in different circumstances that is ...
- * Consistent with his greater, and not always revealed, plan!
