

Genesis 47:1–31 (verses 1–12, 27–31)

1 So Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan. They are now in the land of Goshen."
2 And from among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh.
3 Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers were."
4 They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen."
5 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you.
6 The land of Egypt is before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land. Let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."
7 Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.
8 And Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many are the days of the years of your life?"
9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning."
10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh.
11 Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.
12 And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their dependents.
27 Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.
28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.
29 And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt,
30 but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place." He answered, "I will do as you have said."
31 And he said, "Swear to me"; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.

1. God's Guidance

Jacob and his family, who had gone through many hardships and trials, finally crossed over into Egypt, where Joseph lived, and came to live in the land of Goshen, sharing in the glory that Joseph was enjoying. We have looked at how God transformed Joseph and his entire family through this journey of suffering. In the end, by realizing God's sovereign decree, providence, great love, and grace, they repented, forgave in love, reconciled, humbled themselves to serve even by bearing one another's burdens, kept unity, and ultimately lived together. In other words, this is the process of God establishing His kingdom. The process of the Holy Spirit transforming us through the gospel of the cross is also

revealed here. Repentance, love, forgiveness, reconciliation, a life of service, and living as one body—these transformations are all ultimately conforming us to the likeness of Jesus.

Also, last time we looked at the changed character of Jacob. When Joseph sent wagons to bring his father, Jacob, and Jacob heard the news that his son Joseph, whom he thought was dead, was alive, he set out to meet Joseph in Egypt, where there was abundant food in a world ravaged by famine. But before doing so, he first willingly worshiped God, held fast to the word of God's promise, and sought God's good and pleasing will. No matter how much he wanted to meet Joseph, he first discerned whether going to Egypt was in accordance with God's good and pleasing will. Through various trials, God trained him with the Word and changed the principles and purpose of his life to be centered on God and His Word. More than Joseph, more than the glory of Egypt, it was God and His Word that came to rule Jacob's life first. God caused Jacob to grow further into the image of Jesus and to reveal His glory. This is the grace of God shown through Joseph, his brothers, and their father Jacob through suffering.

But there is also the fulfillment of God's redemptive history, which was predestined before the foundation of the world, unfolding in this reality. In Genesis 46:1, when Jacob came to Beersheba and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac, and in verse 3, God identified Himself as the God of Isaac and promised the future exodus. What does this tell us? Beersheba was the place where Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac, had stayed for a long time and built altars to the Lord. Jacob also built an altar there and offered sacrifices, worshiping the Lord God, who had made a covenant with Abraham and Isaac and faithfully fulfilled it by holding on to the covenantal promise that God had given and believing that God's salvation would be accomplished through this entire process. God, in His grace, led not only Jacob but also the lives of Jacob's family and Joseph to faithfully fulfill the covenant He made with His people. Jacob came to realize this.

Dear saints, what is a covenant? Simply put, a covenant is God's gracious and faithful relationship with His people, through which He promises salvation and blessings, and accomplishes it by His sovereign grace. In this way, God becomes the God of His people, and they become His people, living together with God forever in the land of the covenantal inheritance that He gives. God faithfully fulfills the covenant He made with His people throughout redemptive history and finally brings it to full reality in the salvation of heaven through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the entire Bible teaches us through redemptive history that our God is the faithful covenant-keeping God.

Thus, in order for God's covenant to be fulfilled, not one of Jacob's sons was lost, and all the family entered the land of Egypt and lived there. There, the descendants of the twelve sons became a great nation. In the land of Egypt, the Kingdom of God—Israel—is established, and the Church is established. In this way, God shows that His covenant is faithfully fulfilled regardless of the surrounding circumstances. Following this, in Genesis 46:8–27, the genealogy of Jacob's sons is recorded. According to that passage, even Joseph's family is included, and a total of seventy people came to live in Goshen, lived with God there, received God's blessings, were fruitful and multiplied, and eventually became a great nation. After four hundred years, the Exodus occurred, and they were brought into the inheritance of the land of Canaan. In the book of Exodus, which follows Genesis, Exodus 1:1–7 also states that Jacob's family of seventy people entered Egypt and became a great nation:

Genesis 46:26–27 (ESV): "All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy."

Exodus 1:1–7 (ESV): “These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. All the descendants of Jacob were seventy persons; Joseph was already in Egypt. Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.”

However, there is one more thing we must consider. In Acts 7:14, during Stephen's sermon, it says:

Acts 7:14 (ESV): “And Joseph sent and summoned Jacob his father and all his kindred, seventy-five persons in all.”

So it says seventy-five people, not seventy. Why the difference of five? During Stephen's time, the commonly read version of Scripture was not the Hebrew text but the Greek Septuagint (LXX), which also gives the number of Jacob's family members as seventy-five. Why then did the translators of the Old Testament into Greek add five more people? Is there a mistake in Scripture? No, there is not. Though there are various opinions, the most common view is that the five additional people were Joseph's grandsons. In fact, when counting the seventy people, Scripture mainly mentions the sons of Jacob and their sons, but in the case of Judah and Benjamin, even their grandsons, who had not yet been born at that time, are counted as sons. In 1 Chronicles 7 and Numbers 26, we see the names of five grandsons born to Joseph's two sons. So in the Septuagint, the number is counted as seventy-five by including even Joseph's grandsons, who are considered important figures in the later history of Genesis.

What is important here is this: not one of God's people was lost; they all entered Egypt and lived, and their descendants became the nation of Israel and received the salvation of the Exodus. Let us remember this. Even now, not one of God's elect will be lost. All will be saved and will enter the kingdom of heaven.

2. The Glory and Authority of the Saints

Eventually, Jacob—the father of Joseph—and his brothers entered Egypt and met Joseph. Afterward, they stood before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Today's passage begins from this point. And here, we find once again the testimony of Jacob's faith. In Genesis 47, there is a repeated phrase: Jacob blessed Pharaoh. This phrase appears twice—once in verse 7 and again in verse 10—where Jacob blesses Pharaoh after being brought into his presence.

Genesis 47:7, 10 (ESV): “Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh...10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh.”

Of course, one could say that this was just a cultural greeting of that time. However, when the Bible records this event, we should understand that it reveals an important principle of the gospel. But doesn't something feel off? Hasn't the one who should be receiving the blessing been reversed? Isn't it normally the one in the higher, more glorious position who blesses the one beneath him? That's also the general principle found in Scripture and in the covenantal order.

Hebrews 7:7 (ESV): “It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior.”

In God's covenant with His people, the greater and higher One—God, the Lord of the covenant, blesses His covenant people. The same holds true in the world: the greater blesses the lesser. Now, even though Joseph is in Egypt, Jacob is in a position where he must come to a foreign land and receive food from its

king. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was one of the most powerful and glorious rulers at the time, possessing abundant food even during a global famine. He was a man who held the power of life and death over Jacob and his family. Yet it is not Pharaoh who blesses Jacob—it is Jacob who blesses Pharaoh. Then, who is greater? Who is more glorious? It is Jacob. Jacob offers the blessing because Jacob's God is greater than Pharaoh. A similar scene appears in the New Testament when the Apostle Paul, while on trial for preaching the gospel, stands before King Agrippa and Governor Bernice and says:

Acts 26:29 (ESV): "And Paul said, 'Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.'"

Paul, though in chains and defending himself in court, says to the king and governor—who held his fate in their hands—that he hopes they become like him. Does that make any sense? It does—to Paul. No matter how great the worldly power and glory of kings and governors may be, Paul knew that they were under the far greater authority of God. Compared to the heavenly glory and authority that he enjoyed in Christ, their earthly greatness was nothing. So it was with Jacob. Compared to the covenantal promise of blessing given by God, Pharaoh's earthly glory and power were nothing. Moreover, because Jacob had, by faith, discovered his true value and glory within God and His Kingdom, he could look upon those who sought their worth and glory in this world without faith, and instead of envying them, he felt compassion for them and offered them a true blessing. Paul also makes a similar confession in Philippians 3:

Philippians 3:8–9 (ESV): "Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him..."

Because of Jesus, and because he had gained Christ, Paul discovered the highest glory and value in Christ and rejoiced—even if he lost everything else. Therefore, those who live by faith, even when standing before the powerful and glorious of this world, even if the other possesses everything the world offers, will instead boast in the heavenly glory that they have in Christ. And they will pity those who live as if this world is all there is, without Jesus and the hope of heaven, and bless them with the true blessing. At that time, Pharaoh—the king who ruled the entire known world—received a blessing from Jacob, who had only seventy family members and came to Egypt in search of food. That's because the glory of this world is nothing compared to the glory of living as a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Wasn't that also true for Moses? In Hebrews 11, it says that Moses, by faith, chose to suffer with the people of God rather than enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin and the treasures of Egypt. He chose what was more precious by faith and bore witness to it. Therefore, he gave up the glory, status, and wealth of being a prince of Egypt to live among the enslaved people of Israel as one of God's own. Even if the world does not understand this, we must. Because the same applies to us. No matter what our status may be in this world—no matter how poor, lowly, or insignificant we may appear—those who belong to Christ are enjoying a glory in Him that far surpasses anything the world can offer. It is a glory that is imperishable, undefiled, and eternal. The saints live by faith as people whom this world cannot handle. We are not those who cower or feel ashamed or pitiful in front of those who possess worldly power and glory. On the contrary, we look upon those who live as if this world is all there is—those who live without Jesus and without the hope of heaven—with compassion, and we pray that they too may come to know Jesus and share in the blessing of the kingdom of heaven. Like the Apostle Paul, we go out into the world and declare, "I wish that you might become like me."

3. Pilgrims Toward Heaven

Jacob's faith is testified to once again in today's passage. Even though he lived amidst the abundance and glory of Egypt, Jacob did not desire to remain there forever. Starting in verse 29, he gives his final request to Joseph:

Genesis 47:29–31 (ESV): “And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, ‘If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place.’ He answered, ‘I will do as you have said.’ And he said, ‘Swear to me’; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.”

Jacob earnestly asks Joseph not to bury him in Egypt but to ensure his body is carried to Canaan. He makes Joseph swear this by placing his hand under Jacob's thigh. Jacob did not want to remain in Egypt, no matter its wealth and glory—he longed to be taken to a land of far greater glory. This was not a mere sentimental wish to be buried in his homeland. Canaan, in the Old Testament, represents the Promised Land—an inheritance symbolizing heaven itself. Jacob, longing to dwell with God, desired that even his bones not remain in Egypt. He knew Egypt was not his true home, and its glory was not his final destination. Jacob was seeking a better country, a heavenly one. Even as he lived in Egypt, he lived as one passing through—as a sojourner, not as one settled. His life testified that he was not living to stay, but preparing to leave. What about Joseph? Did he settle into Egypt, having reached a place of great power and honor? No. Though he was exalted in Egypt for a time by God's providence, Joseph also confessed himself to be a pilgrim, longing for his true home.

Genesis 50:24–25 (ESV): “And Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.’ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.’”

Joseph's final request mirrors that of his father Jacob. He, too, desired to be buried not in Egypt but in the Promised Land. Even in death, Joseph testified that he belonged to the Kingdom of God. He knew the riches and power of Egypt were not his end. He sought a better, heavenly country, and longed to return to it as a pilgrim. He did not do so begrudgingly but wholeheartedly. This is the kind of faith that allows someone not only to walk away from worldly glory but to bless even kings who do not know the true God.

Dear saints, what about us? Are we shrinking back before the powers and glories of this world? Or are we boasting in the glory we have in Christ as sons of God? Are we showing compassion toward those who seek glory only in this world, without hope or Christ? Our glory is not of this world. Jacob lived as a foreigner in Pharaoh's land, depending on its food. His descendants would soon become slaves in Egypt. Yet, their glory as God's people—though hidden for a time—was greater and eternal, revealed and received only by faith. Moses saw that glory by faith and chose to suffer with God's people rather than enjoy Egypt's riches and glory. So must we. Regardless of the circumstances we face in this life, we are called to fix our eyes by faith on the glory we already possess in Christ and live accordingly.

This was also the life of Jesus. Though He was the Son of God, the Creator of all things, and the King of the kingdom of heaven, He lived on earth as a carpenter's son—one of the lowest positions in a subjugated people under Roman rule. Yet Jesus considered the power and glory of this world as nothing. He had compassion on those who sought only this world. He lived and died as a pilgrim proclaiming the gospel of heaven, longing to return to His eternal home. Jacob, Joseph, and every saint throughout

Scripture bore witness to this same life. And now, we are called to live that same life. Notice what Jacob says between the two blessings he offers Pharaoh in Genesis 47. There, we glimpse Jacob's faith clearly:

Genesis 47:9 (ESV): "And Jacob said to Pharaoh, 'The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years...'"

Jacob describes his life as a sojourning—a pilgrimage. He viewed himself as one journeying home to the glory that awaits. It is this faith that enabled him to bless Pharaoh, who had no eternal home to return to—only worldly glory that would pass away. This faith was shared by all the saints and is powerfully described in Hebrews:

Hebrews 11:13–16 (ESV): "These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. They desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city."

Dear believers, we too are heavenly pilgrims. For a little while, we are scattered across this earth to proclaim the glory of heaven and to testify by faith to our true home. The Apostle Peter calls all believers "elect exiles," scattered yet chosen:

1 Peter 1:1–2 (ESV): "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you."

What a glorious and blessed identity we have! We are those with a homeland to return to. Dear saints, you are pilgrims of heaven. You are not small or pitiful before the mighty and glorious of this world. You are not to envy them. Instead, you possess the glory and authority of the kingdom of heaven in Christ. And you are called to have compassion on those who live as if this world is all there is—who do not know Jesus or the hope of heaven.

You are to proclaim the gospel and bless them with the true blessing. And as you seek your eternal homeland and its glory, your very life is a testimony that you are on your way home. No matter what temporary struggles you face, never forget this identity. Live with joy and courage in this faith. Boldly testify to the gospel where you are. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. Above all, may the gospel help you to know more deeply by faith the glory and blessing you have in Christ. As sons of God who possess eternal heavenly glory, let us never envy the fleeting powers of those walking toward destruction. Hold fast to Christ and His gospel. Enjoy the rich blessings that are in Him. And in compassion, preach the gospel and bless those who are still lost in a world that is perishing.