

Led by Judah with directions from Joseph, Jacob and his entire family arrive in Egypt. After twenty-two years of sorrow and hardship, God's work of blessing to and through Jacob are especially revealed, a fulfillment of promises that go back over 200 years to Abraham. Though none of those men of faith saw the complete fulfillment of those promises, they believed God and they lived by faith. So also we are encouraged to have a living hope and believe the promises of God.

**I. *God blessed Jacob and his children, now collectively called "Israel."***

1. *God gave a joyful reunion between Jacob and his son, Joseph.* Jacob could have anticipated a reunion with Joseph based upon the dream given to Joseph, a matter which Jacob had kept in mind (Gen 37:11). Having thought Joseph was dead, Jacob's joy is now complete in being reunited by the grace and faithfulness of God.
2. *God blessed Israel with all that they needed materially to grow.* God gave them both well-suited land, Goshen, and food, even in the midst of famine. Note: the term "Rameses" (47:11) was probably supplied by Moses for clarification regarding the region.
3. *God blessed Israel with the favor of Pharaoh.* Pharaoh welcomed Israel, though they were shepherds and as such detested, and gave them land and his trust. He seemed as well to honor Jacob, perhaps because of his apparent age or his relation to Joseph. Behind the human reasons, we can see God's hand in blessing Israel with Pharaoh's favor. Until another Pharaoh would rise, who did not know Joseph, Israel would be welcome in Egypt with royal affirmation.
4. *God blessed Israel with spiritual protection through relative isolation from pagan cultures.* The pagan culture of the Canaanites, with whom Israel had a natural affinity, was dangerous for them. Moving them to Goshen in Egypt distanced them both geographically and as shepherds from their neighbors. They would remain "strangers in a country not their own" (Gen 15:13) until God brought them out.
5. *God blessed Israel with fruitfulness.* In fulfillment of His promise to Jacob (Gen 46:3) and Abraham (Gen 12:1), God greatly increased Israel in number (Gen 47:27).

God had promised to bless Israel and make a great nation of him. God was doing exactly as He had promised, in His time and in His way.

**II. *God blessed through Israel.*** See Genesis 12:2-3.

1. *Jacob twice blessed Pharaoh through which God was blessing Pharaoh.*
2. *God also blessed Pharaoh and all Egypt and many others through Joseph's leadership in the times of plenty and famine.* It was Joseph's God-given wisdom by which Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and advised the program that would provide food for the land during the coming years of famine. Even selling the grain rather than giving it out probably restricted abuse. Not only were the lives of Israel preserved through Joseph's efforts, but lives in Egypt and of other nations who came to Egypt to buy grain.
3. *A further indirect blessing of Pharaoh through Joseph might be found in the acquisition of the land for Pharaoh and the taxation of the people.* The placement of 47:13-26 joins it with the report on Israel. Because of Egypt's dependence upon the Nile, it would be advantageous to centrally oversee that resource. Joseph essentially removed personal ownership and replaced it with a tenant system. His taxation also was reasonable, both in comparison with other taxation rates and as a way to alleviate further potential famine situations. Pharaoh's benevolence toward Israel was returned by God with blessing. "I will bless those who bless you."

Two important concluding observations can be made.

(1) What has already been mentioned throughout is true. God keeps His promises. He fulfills what He says. God did what He had revealed to Joseph in his dreams. God blessed as He had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, both blessing to Israel and through Israel.

(2) God had called Abraham and his descendants to live by faith. Jacob is seen in this passage as one who was living by faith. Jacob believed God by going to Egypt. He furthermore revealed his belief in God by insisting on burial in Canaan. Just as Abraham and Isaac chose to be buried in the land that God had promised them, yet did not yet possess, so also Jacob was insistent that he be buried in the land which God had promised. Jacob believed God that Israel would one day return to Canaan and that the land would be theirs.

God wants in us also a response of faith. In the midst of struggles He wants us to believe His promises. Believe what He has told us in His Word. Trust Him that He is forming us to be like Christ. He is working all things together for the good of His children.

Everyone who has come to God by faith through Jesus Christ may live life with a living hope because God keeps His promises.