

“One Big, Happy Family” (Genesis 46-47)

Have you ever taken a lengthy family vacation? I have. While I was growing up, the Krell family took many long vacations. But two stand out. If you can believe this, our family of four took two (not one, but two) six-week-long family vacations around the United States in a Subaru. Yes, that’s right, a Subaru! Not a min-van...not a motor home...a Subaru. Needless to say, these two trips led to some serious family bonding. I don’t think any of us have ever fully recovered.

In Genesis 46-47, Jacob and his family embark on their own family vacation. You could call it “Family Reunion in Egypt.” Jacob has just received news that his favorite son, Joseph, is alive. So he prepares the family to leave Canaan and head out to join Joseph in Egypt.¹

Scene 1: God leads Jacob and his family to move to Egypt (46:1-7). Our account begins in 46:1: “So Israel [Jacob]² set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.” Jacob is 130 years old as he sets out for Egypt. If he were alive today, he would have been retired and living on Social Security for over 65 years. This is not the time when people begin making radical changes in their lives. But Jacob is about to launch into one of the most remarkable faith ventures of his life. Yet, in order to participate in God’s incredible plan:

- 1) *He has to leave everything familiar and the security of his earthly comforts.* Often, following God’s plan includes stepping out in faith and taking a risk. If God calls you to another location or another job, will you go where He leads despite the risks to your personal comfort and security?³
- 2) *He has to believe that he still has a mission from God.* When most Christians would have long-since turned the ministry over to the next generation, Jacob is taking giant steps of faith. Are you willing to find creative ways to keep serving and fulfilling God’s plan for your life?
- 3) *He has to be willing to obey God’s Word no matter the cost.* Do you love the Lord enough to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Him (Luke 9:23-25)?

Fortunately, Jacob starts off right by *first* offering sacrifices to God!⁴ Jacob’s sacrifices are not burnt offerings, but offerings of thanks that Joseph was alive and likely vows to follow God.⁵ One of the things that has been a help to me in my Christian life is learning to give thanks in everything (1 Thess 5:18; Heb 13:15). I challenge you to regularly spend some time in prayer without asking for a thing. Instead, spend the whole time thanking the Lord for who He is and what He has done. Sacrifice what you would like to ask Him and just express thanks.⁶ As you do so you will find that the disappointments and frustrations of life are not nearly as troubling and you will recognize all that you have to be thankful for.

Moses records that Jacob offered sacrifices at Beersheba. Why? Beersheba was the southern-most boundary line of Israel. In essence, it was the point of no return. Before Jacob advanced into the desert wasteland that separated Canaan and Egypt, he determined to inquire of the Lord to be absolutely certain he was in God’s perfect will. Furthermore, Beersheba was a significant place to Jacob’s family. This is where Abraham had dug a well, planted a tamarisk tree, and called on the name of the Lord (21:30-33). Abraham even lived in Beersheba after offering Isaac on Mt. Moriah (22:19). Isaac also lived in Beersheba (26:23, 32-33) and built an altar there (26:24-25). It was perhaps at this altar that Jacob now presents his sacrifices.

Sooner or later, we all find ourselves at significant intersections in life when we must make critical life decisions that will have far-reaching consequences on our own lives and the lives of others. How do you make decisions at such points? Many people simply make the best decision they can based on the information they have. But the Bible warns us against this strategy (Prov 3:5-6; Jas 1:5; 4:2).

In 46:2, Moses writes, “**God spoke to Israel in visions of the night.**” The Bible indicates that God primarily reveals His will to believers through His written Word (2 Tim 3:16-17). However, He can and does communicate through a variety of other means, including: prompting by the Holy Spirit, godly counsel, circumstances, and dreams and visions (Joel 2:28). But these other means of revelation must be measured against the revealed will of God recorded in His Word. Anything that contradicts Scripture must be rejected. As significant as experience can be, experience never trumps Scripture.

In this vision, God twice calls Jacob by name: “**Jacob! Jacob!**” (46:2) God also did this with Abraham (22:11), Moses (Exod 3:4), Samuel (1 Sam 3:10), Martha (Luke 10:41), and Saul (Acts 9:4). If you can’t figure out why someone would call out a person’s name repeatedly, then you must not have children. Jacob is smarter than most because he immediately responds with the words, “**Here I am.**” These are the same words Jacob’s grandfather Abraham used when God called on him (22:1). When God speaks either audibly or through His Word this is the only proper response.

God now identifies Himself. He says, “**I am God, the God of your father**” (46:3). He is saying, “I am the true deity.” This is virtually the same introduction the Lord gave when He spoke to Jacob during his vision of the stairway to heaven (28:13). God then comforts Jacob with the words: “**Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt.**”⁷ Why would Jacob have been afraid? He is having an encounter with the God of the universe. For this reason alone, Jacob has every reason to be afraid. In fact, whenever God reveals Himself to man in a supernatural way, His first words are invariably, “Do not fear!” Jacob is concerned about making a mistake that would affect his life, the lives of those in his family, the future of the nation of Israel, and the fulfillment of the covenant promises of God. So God affirms His promises to Jacob (46:3b-4). He declares what His good purpose is in bringing Jacob’s family to Egypt.

- 1) *I will make you a great nation in Egypt.* This promise is a reaffirmation of the covenant God made with Abraham and his descendants (12:2; 13:16; 22:17; 26:4; 28:14-15). This reaffirmation demonstrates the unconditional faithfulness of God.
- 2) *I will go down to Egypt with you.* God informs Jacob that He will go with him into hostile enemy territory. Where God guides, He provides...and protects. There is no need to ever fear.
- 3) *I will bring you back to Canaan again.* God is fulfilling the words He spoke in 15:13-14 when He told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a land that was not theirs. God said that they would stay there in this foreign land for 400 years and then God would judge the oppressive nation in which they stayed and God’s people would be released. God’s Word always comes to pass. So what you and I really need is to hear from Him.
- 4) *Joseph’s own hand will close your eyes.* Jacob would enjoy 17 more years of life. And instead of dying without his son to comfort him, God promises Jacob that his son, Joseph, would be there to close his eyes at the moment of his death. God often gives His children the desires of their heart as they attempt to seek Him (Ps 37:4).

Jacob faced a critical, life-changing decision. But instead of forging ahead (like he had done in the past) he stopped and sought God’s guidance. Then he listened for God’s answer. When he heard the answer he moved forward obediently and with confidence. That’s the sequence. It’s not complicated. We must ask, listen, and obey. If we do that, God will lead us, protect us, and give us the strength to face the future.

After hearing directly from the Lord, Jacob and his family left Beersheba and traveled to Egypt (46:5-7). While this must have been a challenging endeavor, there must have also been some excitement in the air. It’s easy to get excited about a move. Maybe life has been a bit boring and making a move is an adventure. That’s U-Haul’s motto, “Adventure in Moving.” If you’ve ever driven a U-Haul, you know what that means!

Maybe you're tired of your problems in a job or locale and you're ready to trade them in for a new situation. Maybe the move means more money, a greater challenge at work, a bigger home, a more desirable place to live. But if God isn't in it, don't do it! Put the brakes on your excitement long enough to yield yourself fully to Him, to seek Him, and to pray.⁸ Jacob had a direct and divine encounter from God. He knew with the utmost of confidence that he was to move to Egypt. American Express used to run a series of commercials that declared, "American Express: 'Don't leave home without it.'" The same could be said of God's will: "Don't leave home without it."

Scene 2: Jacob and his family depart for Egypt (46:8-27). The second section of our text consists of a long list of names of people we know nothing about. It's not even useful if you're looking for names for your baby, unless you want something like Muppim, Huppim, or Ard (46:21). But God saw fit to include it in Scripture and we need to think about the reason why. We need to remember that to the first readers of this book, these names meant something. This is a list of every tribe (and every major family group within that tribe) that later formed the nation Israel. Every Hebrew knew his family ancestry. The division of labor, the organization of the army, and the parceling of the land all were based on the tribes. Even the coming of the Messiah was through the particular tribe of Judah. God's way of working is to call individuals to Himself, just as He called Abraham. Through those individuals, He calls families, and through those families, nations are called to obedience to the Savior. God's plan is to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham (12:1-3). That's why, in 46:1, the text says that Jacob offered sacrifices to the God of his father, Isaac, and in 46:3, God identifies Himself to Jacob as "the God of your father," instead of "Jacob's God." Why? For the simple reason that this is covenant history—the story of God's dealings with His people. There is a corporate flavor, a sense of continuity between the generations. God is moving from the individual to the family to the nation in His working.

One of our major blind spots as American Christians is our individualistic approach to the Christian life. I'm not suggesting that we do not need an individual relationship with God. Of course we do! But we have made Christianity so personal that we have lost the sense of belonging to the church as God's covenant people, His extended family, just as Israel was His people. Because we don't know church history, we don't have a sense of continuity with those who have gone before us. We join and leave a church according to our personal likes and dislikes. So many people attend a church for years yet hardly know the others who attend. This lack of belonging makes us vulnerable to the enemy. God wants us to be in community. Are you? If so, to what degree do you have relationships with God's people?

This list of boring names reminded Moses' readers of their identity as God's people in fulfilling His purposes.⁹ Additionally, this list would have reminded them that the outworking of God's purposes takes time, but it is absolutely certain. When Abraham was 75, God told him that He would make of him a great nation. Abraham was 100 before Isaac was born. Isaac was 60 before Jacob and Esau were born. It took 50 or 60 years for Jacob to have 12 sons and one daughter. Now Jacob was 130, and the "great nation," after 215 years, consisted of these 70 descendants of Abraham. That's not a quick start. But in the 400 or so years from Jacob to Moses, the number mushroomed from 70 to over two million!¹⁰

This section demonstrates the power of exponential multiplication. While discipleship is painfully slow at the beginning, eventually multiplication occurs. One of my mentors likes to say, "If you work the process, the process will work." Nowhere is this truer than with discipleship. Discipleship is God's A-plan (Matt 28:19-20). When we faithfully make disciples, God fulfills His will. Our lifetimes are too short to measure God's purpose. Our task is to understand God's missionary purpose for the world (to bless all nations through Abraham's seed) and to devote our lives to seeing that purpose brought about, even if it seems as if God is slow about His promises (see 2 Pet 3:3-13).¹¹

Scene 3: Jacob's reunion with Joseph (46:28-30). Moses writes, **“Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph,¹² to point out the way before him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.”** That Jacob chose Judah to be their guide indicates that he trusted his son, which suggests that the men had told their father everything and were in his good graces again. Now Jacob could see the hand of God in all that had happened. In spite of his past failures, Judah now proved himself faithful, and his descendants were eventually named the royal tribe (49:8-12). Regardless of what you've done or how you've lived, God is a God of grace and He loves to forgive His children. Like Judah, God's grace can propel you forward. He can make a success out of the shambles of your life.

Jacob and Joseph are reunited in 46:29-30. Moses records these words: **“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. Then Israel said to Joseph, ‘Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive.’”** The eleven brothers had already been reunited with Joseph, but now Jacob meets him after a separation of 22 years. Previously, Jacob had said that the loss of his sons would bring him to his grave in mourning (37:35; 42:38). But Joseph's “resurrection” enables his father to die in peace. Similarly, the resurrection of a greater Joseph has allowed many to face death with courage and hope (cf. Phil 1:21-26; 1 Pet 1:3). Here Jacob beheld his son, his temporal savior, and he said he could now die. Simeon would behold the Son, his eternal Savior, and knew he would die in peace (Luke 2:29-30).¹³

Scene 4: God provides Jacob land and food (46:31-47:12).¹⁴ Moses writes, **“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; 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.’ ‘When Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ 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.’”** Joseph encouraged his family to be completely honest with Pharaoh (46:34). Dishonesty has long plagued Jacob's family, but now Joseph led them out of this destructive behavior. Believers should respond to divine providence by making their decisions in response to the initiative of His wise leaders. They should do so with confidence in His promises and dependence on His continuing guidance and provision.¹⁵

Why did Joseph place such emphasis on having his family live in Goshen? Goshen had some of the best pastureland in all of Egypt. Goshen was located near to Joseph's place of residence (45:10). Goshen would keep the Hebrews isolated and insulated from the culture and religion of Egypt since the Egyptians considered sheep unclean and Hebrews detestable (43:32). One of the greatest dangers to the covenant promises of God was intermarriage between the Hebrews and the Egyptians. Why was this a danger? Because intermarriage would inevitably lead to spiritual compromise and the worship of the false gods of the Egyptians. Hidden in this text is the wisdom of God! If God had allowed the Israelites to remain in Canaan, they would have inevitably intermarried with the Canaanites and become ethically, morally, and spiritually corrupt. So God places them in one of the most racist societies on earth at that time, thereby protecting them from spiritual adultery and allowing them the time and opportunity to multiply into the millions.¹⁶

God is an amazing God! He continually reminds me that He is my protector and provider. Often, this means that He protects me and provides for me despite myself. That's how gracious our God is. He often delivers us from our flesh and the evil one even when we desire to sin and live for ourselves. Even when He doesn't directly deliver us Himself, He provides us with a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13).

In 47:1-6, Joseph explains to Pharaoh the needs of his family. He even introduces five of his brothers to Pharaoh. After the brothers answer Pharaoh's questions, they ask his permission to live in Goshen. Pharaoh tells Joseph that his family can live in the land of Goshen. He even offers any capable brothers a job—to be put in charge of Pharaoh's livestock.

Joseph knows God is on a roll so he brings his father before Pharaoh and Jacob blesses Pharaoh (47:7). Jacob's blessing of Pharaoh (47:7, 10) is unusual since it implies that in one sense (i.e., as one of God's elect) Jacob was superior to Pharaoh.¹⁷ Pharaoh was a man of immense worldly power and influence. But this is a case of "the lesser is blessed by the greater" (Heb 7:7). This account reminds us that the least and most faltering of God's children has the superiority in the presence of the most elevated men of the world.

In 47:8-9, Pharaoh says to Jacob, "**How many years have you lived?**" Jacob answers, "**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.**" When we first encountered Jacob he was struggling inside his mother's womb with his twin brother. As we come to the end of Jacob's days, he is struggling for his life in a famine-devastated Canaan. In between these first and last moments of struggle have been many trying experiences for Jacob. His life has had more sorrow than joy.¹⁸ Why is this so? Jacob's words in 47:9 appear to be the author's attempt at a deliberate contrast to the later promise that one who honors his father and mother should "live long and do well upon the land" (Deut 5:16). Jacob, who deceived his father and thereby gained the blessing, must not only die outside the Promised Land but also, we learn here, his years were few and difficult. From his own words, then, we can see a final recompense for Jacob's actions earlier in the book.¹⁹

A summary of Jacob's life:

1. He struggled with his brother in the womb (25:21-26).
2. He was raised by parents who were dysfunctional (25:28).
3. He stole his father's blessing by means of deception and was forced to leave his family because of the hatred of Esau (27:1-46).
4. He spent years in exile, serving his uncle, Laban, who repeatedly cheated him (29:13-30).
5. He planned to marry one wife and ended up with four (29:18), and the outcome of this was continual competition and strife (29:30ff).
6. He finally fled from his uncle and eventually had to make a nonaggression pact with him lest further conflict arise (31:1-55).
7. His only daughter, Dinah, was violated at Shechem (34:1-4).
8. He lived in fear of reprisal from Shechem's neighbors when his sons killed the men of Shechem (34:30).
9. He lost his favorite wife, Rachel, at an early age (35:16-19).
10. His oldest son, Rueben, lay with one of his concubines (35:22).
11. His favorite son, Joseph, was tragically lost and presumed dead (37:33-34).
12. And now he was on the verge of losing everything due to a seven-year, worldwide famine. It had been a hard life!²⁰

In 47:11-12, Joseph settled his father and his brothers and generously provided them "**the best of the land.**" This was a time of reward for Jacob. Of course, Jacob's life had been full of ups and downs. There had been times of deceitfulness and immaturity. There had been times of self-pity when he swore he would spend the rest of his life in mourning. But all the desires of his heart were given him. All the sufferings and the trials had been counteracted.²¹ Why? Because God is gracious and loves to reward His people. He does the same for us as we follow after Him.

Scene 5: God's provision of land and food for Pharaoh (47:13-27). This section demonstrates the fulfillment of Jacob's blessing on Pharaoh (46:31-47:6; 47:7-10). Joseph was able to save Egypt and its neighbors from a very severe famine and to alleviate the desperate plight of the Egyptians. Pharaoh received money from Egypt and Canaan (47:13-14), livestock (47:15-17), land and slaves²² (47:18-21, 23, 25), and 20 percent of future harvests (47:23-26).²³ God blessed Pharaoh because he had blessed the Israelites with the best of Egypt. In 47:22, Joseph gave preferential treatment to the pagan Egyptian priests. This may be the most troubling of all the issues. This concession was no doubt due to the powerful lobby that the priests had with Pharaoh. Thus, despite what Joseph may have wanted to do, it is likely that Pharaoh tied his hands.²⁴ **“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. 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.’ 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.’ 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. Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen, and they acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous” (47:23-27).**

Scene 6: Jacob prepares to finish well (47:28-31). Our story begins to draw to a close in 47:28: **“Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years.”** Jacob thought he was going to die soon (45:28; 46:30; 47:9), but he lived for 17 more years. Some people think they’re at death’s door, but God will give them many more years. Others think they have many more years, but they’re unknowingly at death’s door. Since none of us knows how long we’re going to live, we need to live each day in light of eternity.

I also find it interesting to note that Jacob enjoyed the blessings of God for 17 years—the same number of years he enjoyed Joseph until Joseph was sold into slavery to Egypt by his older brothers (37:2). Coincidence? I don’t think so. God is gracious and merciful. Genesis is silent about these years, but a fast-forward to his ultimate age of 147 suggests uneventful, unruffled tranquility for both father and son. How sweet it must have been for Jacob and Joseph. No doubt these years were used to further inform and deepen Joseph for the continuing role he would play in God’s plan.²⁵

Jacob’s decidedly dysfunctional family is on the verge of coming together again in genuine community.²⁶ There is always hope for your family. I don’t care what has taken place in the past; God can still reconcile and restore your family. Don’t give up hope. God loves to bring loved ones back together again. Persevere in your marriage and family and just see what God will do.

Our story concludes in 47:29-31: **“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, 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.’ He said, ‘Swear to me.’ So he swore to him. Then Israel bowed in worship at the head of the bed.”** Why does Jacob insist on being buried in Canaan? It wasn’t because he had already invested in a family plot. Knowing that the day of his departure drew near, Jacob made 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 (49:29-32; 50:24-25). 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 (Heb 11:22).

Few Christians give much thought to the impact they will have after they have gone to heaven. Yet, men and women of faith should be like Abel who “still speaks, even though he is dead” (Heb 11:4). Jacob’s demand to be buried in Canaan would speak to later generations of the fact that he was living in expectation that God’s future was in despised Canaan, not in luxurious, powerful Egypt. We too should give thought to ways of affecting later generations.

Our passage concludes with Jacob worshipping God (47:31). For the first time, Jacob stopped striving and simply worshipped God. Worship is the highest calling of a believer and one of God’s primary purposes for saving man. He wants to fill heaven with worshippers! May God give us the grace and wisdom to be men and women who, in our old age, are still worshipping Him. It is also to be noticed that Jacob was determined to serve God even in extreme old age. If God allows us to live to be very elderly we shall find that there are ways of serving Him even when we are frail and worn.²⁷

Hence, the bookends of this account are living for the Lord in our later years. Today, regardless of your age, will you commit that you will live out your fully allotted days for the Lord? This is the only way to live life.

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Notes

¹ Jacob must have had mixed feelings as he looked forward to seeing Joseph again. At the same time he realized he was leaving the land promised to his family by God. This move was as momentous for Jacob as Abram's journey from Ur (12:1-3), Jacob's flight to Paddan-aram (28:1-22), or his return to Canaan (31:3-54), all of which God encouraged with visions.

² The fact that the names "Israel" and "Jacob" are used interchangeably indicates that the earlier negative connotations of the name Jacob have faded (Gen 31:11; 32:28; 35:10).

³ Humanly speaking, relocating to Egypt seemed to be at odds with God's promise to give His people the land of Canaan. 215 years earlier, Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, faced a similar dilemma. During a time of severe famine, he went down to Egypt without inquiring of the Lord and brought great harm to his family as a result of failing to seek God's counsel (12:10-20). And later, Jacob's own father, Isaac, considered going down to Egypt during another famine. But when he inquired of the Lord, God instructed him not to go down to Egypt, but to trust in Him to provide for their needs (26:2-3). And He did! Understandably, Jacob was concerned about stepping outside of God's will. So, rather than guessing, or leaning on his own understanding, he inquired of the Lord. This was a huge step for Jacob to take.

⁴ How different is Jacob's descent to Egypt from his grandfather's (ch. 12)! Both seek out the safety of Egypt because of famine. To save himself Abraham engages in deceit. To save his family Jacob engages in blessing. The Pharaoh at Abraham's visit was only too happy to see Abraham return to his own country. The Pharaoh at Jacob's visit insists that Jacob stay and settle on some choice land. Abraham retreats from Egypt. For Jacob Egypt is his new home. Abraham leaves Egypt alive (and happy to be so!). Jacob will leave Egypt dead. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*: NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 613.

⁵ Wenham notes that the word "sacrifice" (*zebach*) is a general term for sacrifice, often restricted to peace offerings (see Lev 3), which could be offered in making vows, or acts of thanksgiving. Such motive would be appropriate here. The offering of sacrifice sometimes is seen as a preliminary to prophetic inspiration (Num 23:1, 14, 29; Ps 50:5 Isa 6:6). Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, Vol. 2: WBC (Waco, TX: Word, 1994), 414.

⁶ R.T. Kendall, *All's Well that End's Well: The Life of Jacob* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1998), 272.

⁷ This is the fourth and final "do not be afraid" consolation that God gave in Genesis (cf. 15:1; 21:17; 26:24).

⁸ Steven J. Cole, "Should I Move, Should I Stay?" (Genesis 46:1-30):

http://www.fcfonline.org/site/search_methods.asp?search=1&search_method=advanced&sermon_book=Genesis.

⁹ Sailhamer observes, "It can hardly go without notice that the number of nations in Genesis 10 is also 'seventy.' Just as the 'seventy nations' represent all the descendants of Adam, so now the 'seventy sons' represent all the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the children of Israel. Here in narrative form is a demonstration of the theme in Deuteronomy 32:8 that God apportioned the boundaries of the nations (Ge 10) according to the number of the children of Israel. Thus the writer has gone to great lengths to portray the new nation of Israel as a new humanity and Abraham as a second Adam. The blessing that is to come through Abraham and his seed is a restoration of the original blessing of Adam, a blessing which was lost in the Fall." John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 225. If there were 70 descendants then why does Stephen in Acts 7:14, quoting from Septuagint version of Genesis 46 (Greek translation of the Hebrew OT), indicate that there were 75 people rather than 70? Because the Septuagint included the five grandchildren born to Joseph in Egypt (1 Chron 7:14, 20).

¹⁰ Israel will leave Egypt with 603,550 men not including women and children (Num 1:45-46).

¹¹ Cole, "Should I Move, Should I Stay?"

¹² This reunion recalls Jacob's former meeting with Esau (Gen 32:3). In both situations, after a long period of separation, Jacob sent a party ahead to meet the relative.

¹³ R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 529.

¹⁴ Genesis 46:31 is an inappropriate place for the chapter to end; this section extends to 47:12. There are several places in Genesis where the chapter divisions are not at the best place in the narrative (2:1, 4; 27:46; 29:31; 30:25). It would seem that the better place for the end of chapter 46 would be at 47:1, with chapter 47 beginning with what is presently 47:13. Earl Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, H. Wayne House, eds., *New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Nelson, 1999), 79.

¹⁵ Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Genesis* (<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/genesis.pdf>, 2005), 260.

¹⁶ Bob Hallman, "The Best Is Yet To Come" (Genesis 46:1-34):

<http://www3.calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis.html>

¹⁷ The precise meaning of the Hebrew verb translated “blessed” is difficult in this passage, because the content of Jacob’s blessing is not given. The expression could simply mean that he greeted Pharaoh, but that seems insufficient in this setting. Jacob probably praised Pharaoh, for the verb is used this way for praising God. It is also possible that he pronounced a formal prayer of blessing, asking God to reward Pharaoh for his kindness. See NET Study Notes.

¹⁸ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*, 612.

¹⁹ Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 227.

²⁰ Bob Hallman, “... In Exchange For Your Soul?” (Genesis 47:1-31):

<http://www3.calvarychapel.com/kauai/teachings/genesis.html>.

²¹ Michael Eaton, *Preaching Through the Bible: Genesis 24-50* (Kent, England: Sovereign World, 1999), 110.

²² The MT reads “and the people he removed to the cities,” which does not make a lot of sense in this context. The Samaritan Pentateuch and the LXX read “he enslaved them as slaves.” See NET Study Notes.

²³ Such a tax was not out of line with what was common in that day in the ancient Near East. Really it was small since the average was 33 and one third percent. See Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 591; Brian Alexander McKenzie, “Jacob’s Blessing of Pharaoh: An Interpretation of Gen. 46:31-47:26,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 45 (Fall 1983): 386-99.

²⁴ Radmacher, Allen, House, eds. *New Illustrated Bible Commentary*, 80.

²⁵ Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing*, 536.

²⁶ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 18-50*, 593.

²⁷ Eaton, *Preaching Through the Bible: Genesis 24-50*, 114.