

Genesis

Israel in Egypt

Lesson #13 for June 25, 2022

Scriptures: Genesis 46:1-50:21; Romans 10:12-13; Acts 3:25-26; Philippians 2:10-11.

1. In this lesson we will note several major themes. The blessings of Jacob: (1) Point unquestionably to the coming of the Messiah to be born in the line of Judah; (2) Draw attention to several occasions in which through God's power, evil worked out to be for the good. Think of the selling of Joseph into Egypt by his brothers and his eventually becoming the "savior" for his entire family as well as providing physical "salvation" for that part of the world.
2. The prophecies of Jacob pointed to the end of time and to the blessings that the descendants of Jacob/Israel would bring to the entire world through their production of the Bible and spreading of the plan of salvation.
3. Jacob had been convinced by the wonderful gifts that Joseph had sent as well as by the testimony of his eleven sons that because of the famine he and his family should move to Egypt for the preservation of their lives. But, he received additional assurance when he was given a vision from God that it was God's will for him to move to Egypt.

Genesis 46:3: "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "**Do not be afraid to go to Egypt; I will make your descendants a great nation there.**"—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Genesis 46:3). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{††}

4. Clearly, God interacted with Jacob and his family, repeatedly showing them what the right thing to do was and where they needed to go next. Can we depend upon God for that kind of guidance in our day?
5. Read **Genesis 46**. Jacob and his family were welcomed by Joseph into Egypt, moving from starvation to a land with plenty of food. Abraham had been called out of Haran, and earlier from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into an unknown land where he would be blessed by God. He was told **not to fear but to go**. We see Jacob being told **not to fear but to go** to Egypt where his descendants, though suffering through a lot of problems, would grow into a nation. So, how many people moved to Egypt? And how many cattle and sheep went? And how many shepherds and guards? Remember that Abraham had 318 trained soldiers! (Genesis 14:14) There were also many keepers of the sheep and cattle. There were definitely a lot more than 70 people who went to Egypt with Jacob. The children of Jacob/Israel were in Egypt for about 215 years. There were 430 years between the time Abram/Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees and the exodus. (Exodus 12:40)
6. There are interesting but subtle links in the Scripture between the fact that Jacob had 70 descendants going into Egypt, including the family of Joseph who were already living in Egypt, and the 70 nations that were ultimately the descendants of Noah's three sons. (Genesis 10) **All people on this earth were to be blessed by God's work through the Hebrew people.**

Genesis 46:7: ⁷ His [Jacob's] sons, his grandsons, **his daughters**, and his granddaughters [moved to Egypt].—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Do we know of more than one daughter of Jacob?][‡]

7. Through the descendants of Jacob/Israel, the knowledge of the salvation of mankind was spread. It was not just for the children of Abraham or Israel to be blessed, but also for all the world.

Romans 10:12-13: ¹²**This includes everyone**, because **there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles**; God is the same Lord of all and richly blesses all who call to him. ¹³As the scripture says, “Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

Galatians 3:28-29: ²⁸So **there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles**, between **slaves** and free people, between men and **women**; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus. ²⁹**If you belong to Christ, then you are the descendants of Abraham and will receive what God has promised.**—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Remember that Paul had been a Pharisee of the Pharisees. The Pharisees had a prayer that said: “Thank You Lord, that I was not born a Gentile, a slave, or a woman!”][‡]

8. It might seem counterintuitive for Jacob to leave the land of promise, all of which had been promised to his grandfather, to go into the land of Egypt which we realize became a land of captivity and slavery for the Israelites.
9. However, it is important to realize that if the family of Jacob/Israel had remained in Canaan or had intermarried with the Egyptians, they would have faded into one of those groups. If either of those things had happened, we would never have heard of the Israelites! **They had to leave Canaan where most of the sons of Jacob had married Canaanite wives and go to Egypt where the Egyptians were forbidden to associate with shepherds because of Pharaoh's experience with Abraham in order to grow into a distinct, separate nation! Did God have that all planned?**
10. Remember the story of Abraham during his first visit to Egypt.

[From the writings of Ellen White=EGW:] The Lord in His providence had brought this trial upon Abraham to teach him lessons of submission, patience, and faith—lessons that were to be placed on record for the benefit of all who should afterward be called to endure affliction. God leads His children by a way that they know not, but He does not forget or cast off those who put their trust in Him....

Abraham had been greatly favored by the king; even now Pharaoh would permit no harm to be done him or his company, but ordered a guard to conduct them in safety out of his dominions. **At this time laws were made prohibiting the Egyptians from intercourse [interaction] with foreign shepherds in any such familiarity as eating or drinking with them.** Pharaoh's dismissal of Abraham was kind and generous; but he bade him leave Egypt, for he dared not permit him to remain. He had ignorantly been about to do him a serious injury, but God had interposed, and saved the monarch from committing so great a sin. Pharaoh saw in this stranger a man whom the God of heaven honored, and **he feared to have**

in his kingdom one who was so evidently under divine favor. Should Abraham remain in Egypt, his increasing wealth and honor would be likely to excite the envy or covetousness of the Egyptians, and some injury might be done him, for which the monarch would be held responsible, and which might again bring judgments upon the royal house.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 129.2-131.0.†‡ [This is an incredibly important insight!][‡]

11. Review **Genesis 47**. Before the family of Jacob arrived in Egypt, Joseph realized that there were two things he needed to do and did when they arrived. First, he took five of his brothers and introduced them to Pharaoh and told them they must tell Pharaoh that they were herders of cattle and sheep. This reminds us of the time when Abraham was in Egypt and lied about his wife; as a result of Abraham's lie, the Egyptians had made a rule that Egyptians could not associate with shepherds! Thus was assured the survival of the Hebrew people as a separate and distinct people. Second, Joseph took Jacob to Pharaoh and introduced him. Jacob was not overwhelmed by the splendor of the Egyptian Pharaoh but blessed him, recognizing that as one who was directly guided by the God of heaven, he, Jacob, was superior to this heathen king.

[EGW:] Joseph took five of his brothers to present to Pharaoh and receive from him the grant of land for their future home. Gratitude to his prime minister would have led the monarch to honor them with appointments to offices of state; but Joseph, true to the worship of Jehovah, **sought to save his brothers from the temptations to which they would be exposed at a heathen court**; therefore he counseled them, when questioned by the king, to tell him frankly their occupation. **The sons of Jacob followed this counsel, being careful also to state that they had come to sojourn in the land, not to become permanent dwellers there, thus reserving the right to depart if they chose.** The king assigned them a home, as offered, in "the best of the land," the country of Goshen.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 233.2.†‡ [Topsoil from most of East Africa had been washed down to Goshen, forming the delta of the Nile River!][‡]

12. Jacob chose to bless Pharaoh for the way he treated his family. It also meant that Jacob recognized his superiority to that heathen king. And what about us? Are we not supposed to be "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people"? (1 Peter 2:9, NKJV*)
13. Joseph had made arrangements for the country of Egypt to store an enormous amount of grain. It was purchased and stored at a time when it was very cheap during those years of "plenty." Later, he sold it back to the Egyptians at a much higher price and eventually required all the Egyptians to sell their land and themselves to Pharaoh in order to buy food. Meanwhile, the children of Israel were growing and becoming a nation.
14. As described in **Genesis 49:1-28**, as Jacob approached the end of his life of 147 years, Jacob blessed his sons, one by one.
15. He called for Joseph's sons to be brought to him. Instead of blessing Joseph directly, he blessed Joseph's two sons, recognizing that the younger one would be greater than the older brother.

16. **By bringing his two sons to Jacob for him to bless them, Joseph received the double portion of his father's inheritance**, as Jacob elevated Ephraim and Manasseh to be treated as though they were his own sons. None of the other grandsons of Jacob received that honor.
17. While blessing those two grandsons and his sons, Jacob reviewed several of the very difficult times in his own life. He pronounced on them the blessing that he knew that God had pronounced on him. As we know from the rest of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the tribe of Dan wandered away and basically separated itself from the children of Israel. As a result, **Dan's name was dropped from the list of the 12 sons of Jacob. In its place, the tribe of Manasseh is named in Revelation instead of Dan.** (Revelation 7:5-8) **The rest of the tribe of Joseph became known as the tribe of Ephraim.**
18. Many of those who believe in predestination believe that those prophecies were fulfilled at God's command, thus pre-determining the fate of those brothers. That is not true. God is able to foresee the future, and He was able to tell in advance what the descendants of each of those sons of Israel were going to do and what they were going to become.
19. Particularly noteworthy in the group is the story of Jacob's blessing of Judah. **The line of Judah was given the spiritual inheritance by becoming the ancestors of Jesus Christ.** Why did Judah receive the blessing of becoming the future kingly line as opposed to Joseph? Notice Jacob's words about Judah. **Judah had spoken up to save the life of Joseph at Shechem. He was also the one who spoke up to take the place of Benjamin in Egyptian prison.** This set him apart from the other brothers.

Genesis 49:8-12: ⁸ "Judah, your brothers will praise you.

You hold your enemies by the neck.

Your brothers will bow down before you.

⁹ Judah is like a lion,

Killing his victim and returning to his den,

Stretching out and lying down.

No one dares disturb him.

¹⁰ Judah will hold the royal sceptre,

And his descendants will always rule.

Nations will bring him tribute

And bow in obedience before him.

¹¹ He ties his young donkey to a grapevine,

To the very best of the vines.

He washes his clothes in blood-red wine.

¹² His eyes are bloodshot from drinking wine,

His teeth white from drinking milk."—*Good News Bible*.*

20. Jacob, in prophetic vision, saw the hope of the coming Messiah. Notice his expression *in the last days*. This expression is used in several places in the Old Testament and the New Testament, suggesting "the time of the end." See Isaiah 2:2 and Daniel 10:14.

21. While we have free will and free choice, God does not limit our freedom; but, He does have ways that we do not understand for knowing the future. And He knew that, one day, Jesus Christ would be born in the line of Judah.

Isaiah 9:6-7: ⁶ A child is born to us!

A son is given to us!

And he will be our ruler.

He will be called, “Wonderful Counsellor”, [sic]

“Mighty God”, [sic] “Eternal Father”, [sic]

“Prince of Peace”. [sic]

⁷ His royal power will continue to grow;

his kingdom will always be at peace.

He will rule as King David’s successor,

basing his power on right and justice,

from now until the end of time.

The LORD Almighty is determined to do all this.—*Good News Bible*.*†

22. But, this promise included more than just the arrival of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the first time. It extends down throughout all eternity.

Philippians 2:10-11: ¹⁰ And so, in honour of the name of Jesus

all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below

will fall on their knees,

¹¹and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.—*Good News Bible*.* [Every single individual who has ever lived, including Satan, will one day bow before Christ.]†

23. As Ellen G. White wrote about the tribe of Judah:

The lion, king of the forest, is a fitting symbol of this tribe, from which came David, and the Son of David, Shiloh, the true “Lion of the tribe of Judah,” **to whom all powers shall finally bow and all nations render homage.**—
Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 236.3.†

24. It is interesting to note that Jacob’s blessing of his children is the third time in the book of Genesis that a blessing was addressed to an entire group of people: (1) The blessing God gave to Adam and Eve at their creation; (2) The blessing given to Noah’s three sons, outlining their future destinies; and (3) Jacob expressed his blessings for his children. Did Dinah receive any blessing?

25. In the midst of those blessings, he blessed Judah, saying that a Scepter, a Lawgiver would not depart from his descendants for all time. This, of course, can only refer to the fact that at the second coming of Jesus, He will become the King who rules the universe for eternity.

26. The descendants of Jacob will include One to whom all the nations of the world will come and give obeisance or allegiance.

27. Why was Judah’s Descendant described as **riding a donkey**? Horses were offensive weapons for military conquests; donkeys were for kings to ride upon.

Zechariah 9:9-10: ⁹Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion!

Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem!

Look, your king is coming to you!

He comes triumphant and victorious,

but humble and riding on a donkey—

on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰ The LORD says,

“I will remove the war chariots from Israel

and take the horses from Jerusalem;

the bows used in battle will be destroyed.

Your king will make peace among the nations;

he will rule from sea to sea,

from the River Euphrates to the ends of the earth.”—*Good News Bible*.*

28. And this is how it happened. Thousands of people were in Jerusalem at that final Passover of Jesus; many of them were there to see Jesus crowned as King of the Jews.

Mark 11:1-11: ¹... Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead ²with these instructions:

“Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³And if someone asks you why you are doing that, tell him that the Master needs it and will send it back at once.”

⁴ So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, ⁵some of the bystanders asked them, “What are you doing, untying that colt?”

⁶ They answered just as Jesus had told them, and the bystanders let them go. ⁷They brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. ⁸Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the fields and spread them on the road. ⁹The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, “Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰God bless the coming kingdom of King David, our father! Praise God!”

¹¹ Jesus entered Jerusalem, went into the Temple, and looked round at everything. But since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples.—*Good News Bible*.*

29. We need to honor and worship Jesus Christ because He is our Creator and Redeemer. Not only that, but also He wants to be our Friend for the rest of eternity. We will bow down to Him and cast our crowns before Him because that kind of power combined with that kind of humility and friendship is truly divine.

30. It is interesting to notice as we come to the end of the book of Genesis that both Jacob and Joseph commanded their descendants and their associates to take their remains to the land of Canaan because that was the land of promise. Even though they were at that point in time in Egypt, they looked forward to being returned to Canaan and saw it as the

land where the New Jerusalem would come down to this earth and God would rule the universe forever.

31. It is also interesting to notice that Jacob's bones were taken to Canaan and buried without mention of a coffin. By contrast, Joseph's embalmed remains were kept in a coffin until he was carried to Canaan by Moses and the children of Israel without mentioning any grave. In connection with Joseph's request that his body be carried to Canaan, he mentioned that God would bless them, and they would return to Canaan.
32. Compare Ellen White's book, *Patriarchs and Prophets* pages 239-240, with the following passages from the book *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, pages 157-159.
33. **Some have suggested that the life of Joseph was a type of the life of Christ.** What parallels do you see? We reviewed the passages in *Spirit of Prophecy* two weeks ago in lesson #11.
34. **Joseph was arrested and suffered because he was faithful; so was Jesus.**

Joseph illustrates Christ. Jesus came to his own, but his own received him not. He was rejected and despised, because his acts were righteous, and his consistent, self-denying life was a continual rebuke upon those who professed piety, but whose lives were corrupt. Joseph's integrity and virtue were fiercely assailed; and she [Potiphar's wife] who would lead him astray could not prevail, therefore her hatred was strong against the virtue and integrity which she could not corrupt, and she testified falsely against him. The innocent [Joseph] suffered because of his righteousness. He was cast into prison because of his virtue.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 157.2.†
35. **Joseph was sold to his enemies by his family; Jesus was betrayed for money by one of His disciples.**

Joseph was sold to his enemies, by his own brethren, for a small sum of money. The Son of God was sold to his bitterest enemies by one of his own disciples.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 157.2.
36. **Jesus was humble and meek; He refused to use His power to fight His enemies. Joseph humbly served God in whatever place he found himself.**

Jesus was meek and holy. His was a life of unexampled self-denial, goodness, and holiness. He was not guilty of any wrong; yet false witnesses were hired to testify against him. He was hated because he had been a faithful reprove of sin and corruption.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 157.2.
37. **Joseph and Jesus were both stripped of their coats.**

Joseph's brethren stripped him of his coat of many colors. The executioners of Jesus cast lots for his seamless coat.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 157.2.
38. **Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him, but finally, sold him as a slave because they were jealous of him. The Jewish leaders arrested Jesus and arranged for His trial and crucifixion because they were jealous of His miraculous powers and His influence with the people.**

[EGW:] Joseph's brethren purposed to kill him, but were finally content to sell him as a slave, to prevent his becoming greater than themselves. They thought they had placed him where they would be no more troubled with his dreams, and where there would not be a possibility of their fulfillment. But the very course which they pursued, **God overruled to bring about that which they designed never should take place—that he should have dominion over them.**

The chief priests and elders were jealous of Christ, that he would draw the attention of the people away from themselves, to him. They knew that he was doing greater works than they ever had done, or ever could perform; and they knew that if he was suffered to continue his teachings, he would become higher in authority than they, and might become king of the Jews. They agreed together to prevent this by privately taking him, and hiring witnesses to testify falsely against him, that they might condemn him, and put him to death. They would not accept him as their king, but cried out, Crucify him! crucify him! The Jews thought that by taking the life of Christ, they could prevent his becoming king. But by murdering the Son of God, they were bringing about the very thing they sought to prevent.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 158.1-2.†‡

39. **Despite the terrible treatment that both Joseph and Jesus received, each rose to take the pre-eminent position that God planned for him/Him. In neither case did it lessen the guilt of those responsible.**

Joseph, by being sold by his brethren into Egypt, became a saviour to his father's family. Yet this fact did not lessen the guilt of his brethren. The crucifixion of Christ by his enemies, made him the Redeemer of mankind, the Saviour of the fallen race, and ruler over the whole world. The crime of his enemies was just as heinous as though God's providential hand had not controlled events for his own glory and the good of man.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 158.2.

40. **Despite everything that Satan could throw at them, neither Joseph nor Jesus could be persuaded to depart in the least manner from his/His walk with God. In the end, both graciously forgave those who had done them wrong.**

[EGW:] Joseph walked with God. He would not be persuaded to deviate from the path of righteousness, and transgress God's law, by any inducements or threats. And when he was imprisoned, and suffered because of his innocence, he meekly bore it without murmuring. His self-control, and patience in adversity, and his unwavering fidelity, are left on record for the benefit of all who should afterward live on the earth. When Joseph's brethren acknowledged their sin before him, he freely forgave them, and showed by his acts of benevolence and love that he harbored no resentful feelings for their former cruel conduct toward him. The life of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, was a pattern of benevolence, goodness, and holiness. Yet he was despised and insulted, mocked and derided, for no other reason than because of his righteous life, which was a constant rebuke to sin. His enemies would not be satisfied until he was given into

their hands, that they might put him to a shameful death. He died for the guilty race; and, while suffering the most cruel torture, meekly forgave his murderers. He rose from the dead, ascended up to his father, and received all power and authority, and returned to the earth again to impart it to his disciples. He gave gifts unto men. And all who have ever come to him repentant, confessing their sins, he has received into his favor, and freely pardoned them. And if they remain true to him, he will exalt them to his throne, and make them his heirs to the inheritance which he has purchased with his own blood.—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 159.1.‡

41. Why do you think the brothers of Joseph were so worried about what would happen to them after their father died? Did they have any reason to be worried about the behavior of Joseph himself? Or, did they just feel guilty?
42. Some people have suggested that the book of Genesis can be summarized by reading the first five words and the last four words: “In the beginning God created.... A coffin in Egypt.” (KJV*) This certainly represents the story of the entrance of sin to this earth. But, the messages we have already seen in this lesson suggest that God will turn evil into good. (See Genesis 50:20 and Romans 8:28.)
43. So, we see that Genesis begins with the glorious creation and ends with a death in Egypt. The Pentateuch begins the same way and ends with the death of Moses on Mount Nebo. A death without a grave—without a known burial place.

There is a story about a New Testament teacher who said to his students, “If you want to be a good Christian, you will have to kill the Jew in you.” Then one student answered: “Do you mean killing Jesus?” How does the blessing of Jacob to his sons relate to you personally? Is it possible to receive the blessings of Jacob while denying their Jewish component? What makes these blessings your blessings, as well?—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 174.

44. Our church’s name, Seventh-day Adventist, suggests that we believe in God’s creation of the entire universe; it also points forward to the final events connected with the second and third advents that will turn this world into the dwelling place of God Himself.
45. Are we ready and preparing ourselves to be a part of that vision?

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