

GENESIS

Chapter 46

Joseph Brings His Family to Egypt

So Israel took his journey with all that he had and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.” 3 Then he said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. 4 I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes.” 5 Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6 They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, 7 his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt. 8 Now these are the names of the descendants of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, 9 and the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 10 The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. 11 The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Yob, and Shimron. 14 The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 15 These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; altogether his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three. 16 The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. 17 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, with Serah their sister. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. 18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons. 19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. 20 And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera the priest of On, bore to him. 21 And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. 22 These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all. 23 The son of Dan: Hushim. 24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. 25 These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all. 26 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. 27 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.

46:1 *took his jouuney.* Probably from the family estate at Hebron (see 35:27). (CSB)

when he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices. Abraham and Isaac had also worshiped the Lord there (see 21:33; 26:23–25). (CSB)

Where Abraham worshiped and where the Lord reaffirmed His covenant with Isaac. (TLSB)

Luther: “He preached the Gospel about the Son of God and exhorted his hearers to fear God, to believe and hope in Him, to live saintly and honorable lives, to pray, to give thanks, and to hope for a future life” (AE 8:76). (TLSB)

46:2 *God spoke to Israel in a visions of the night.* Probably in dreams. (TLSB)

46:3–4 As Israel and his family were about to leave Canaan, God reaffirmed his covenant promises. (CSB)

46:3 *I am ... the God of your father ... Do not be afraid.* A verbatim repetition of God's statement to Isaac in 26:24. (CSB)

God assured Jacob this was not contrary to His promise that Jacob's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan, and that He would protect him. (TLSB)

I will make you into a great nation. The Lord reaffirmed one aspect of his promise to Abraham (see 12:2). *there.* See Ex 1:7. (CSB)

46:4 *I will go down to Egypt with you.* God would be with Jacob as he went south to Egypt just as he was with him when he went north to Haran, and would again bring him back as he had done before (see 28:15; see also 15:16; 48:21). (CSB)

Most people assumed gods had power only in certain places. Here, the Lord showed that He is the God of all the earth, present with His people wherever they are. (TLSB)

bring you up again. These words were fulfilled in Jacob's offspring, at the time of the exodus. (TLSB)

Joseph's hand shall close your eyes. Jacob would die in Egypt, and Joseph would provide honorable burial for his body. (TLSB)

46:8–25 *descendants of Israel.* The 12 sons are listed not by birth order but according to mothers, with all children and grandchildren, living or deceased: Leah (33 descendants, vv 8–15), Zilpah (16 descendants, vv 16–18), Rachel (14 descendants, vv 19–22), and Bilhah (7 descendants, vv 23–25). Two other women are listed: Dinah, Jacob's daughter by Leah (v 15), and Serah, Jacob's granddaughter through Asher (v 17). (TLSB)

46:15 *thirty-three.* There are 34 names in vv. 8–15. To bring the number to 33 the name Ohad in v. 10 should probably be removed, since it does not appear in the parallel lists in Nu 26:12–13; 1Ch 4:24. The Hebrew form of "Ohad" looks very much like that of the nearby "Zohar" (see Ex 6:15), and a later scribe probably added Ohad to the text accidentally. (CSB)

46:18 *persons.* Lit, "souls." (TLSB)

46:19 *Jacob's wife.* His most beloved; the wife with the highest status. (TLSB)

46:26 *All those who went to Egypt with Jacob ... numbered sixty-six persons.* The total of 33, 16 (v. 18), 14 (v. 22) and 7 (see v. 25) is 70 (v. 27). To arrive at 66 we must subtract Er and Onan, who "had died in the land of Canaan" (v. 12), and Manasseh and Ephraim (v. 20), who "had been born ... in Egypt" (v. 27). (CSB)

46:27 *seventy.* Seventy is the ideal and complete number of Jacob's descendants who would have been in Egypt if Er and Onan had not died earlier (see 38:7–10). (CSB)

two. LXX: "nine." *seventy.* LXX: "seventy-five." The discrepancy may have come about by differences in how Joseph's children were counted. Cf v 20; 48:5–6. (TLSB)

Jacob and Joseph Reunited

28 He had sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him in Goshen, and they came into the land of Goshen. **29** Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. **30** Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive." **31** 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. **32** 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.' **33** When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' **34** you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' in order that you may dwell in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

46:28 *Jacob sent Judah ahead.* Judah continued to be the leader of the 11. (TLSB)

46:30 *let me die.* He can now depart in peace and joy. (TLSB)

46:34 *shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.* Various explanations are offered. E.g., bulls frequently symbolized pharaohs. A bull and a cow represented the Egyptian god Apis and the goddess Hathor, respectively, which might make those who cared for sheep or lesser creatures religiously and culturally offensive. Also, Egyptians had a caste system in which shepherds were lowly ranked. (TLSB)

Ch 46 Jacob leaves Canaan for Egypt only when he knows it is the Lord's will. The Lord is not limited by geography. He will fulfill His promise to make Abraham's Seed a great nation in Egypt. Israel's children are called by name as they journey to Egypt. Like Jacob, we should seek the Lord's guidance and blessing for our plans. He has revealed His will for our deeds and our salvation in His Word. Where He has not spoken, He gives us freedom to make reasonable choices. The tearful reunion of Jacob and Joseph is a pattern of the reunion that God seeks with His children. The Lord knows our name, and in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, His name has been given to us. • Lord God, give us courage to follow You each new day, especially when You call us to paths unknown; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (TLSB)