

Genesis Chapter 47 - Commentary By Mike Wells

Overview of Genesis 47:

In this chapter: (1) Joseph presents his brethren to Pharaoh. In verses 1-12. (2) Joseph's dealings with the Egyptians during the famine in verses 13-26. And (3) Jacob's desire to be buried in Canaan in verses 27-31.

Genesis 47 : 1-10 - *1 Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. 2 And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. 3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. 4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. 5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: 6 The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle. 7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? 9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. 10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.*

- Upon arriving in Egypt and getting settled, Joseph brought his father and five of his brothers to meet Pharaoh.
- Not listening to Joseph's admonition to avoid mentioning being a shepherd, Jacob tells Pharaoh that he is a shepherd.
- He requested permission to dwell in Goshen.
- Pharaoh granted that permission and offered to put to work to any of his sons in taking care of his cattle.
- Upon being asked how old he was, Jacob replied, *"the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."*
- Though he was 130 years old, in comparison to his ancestors, he was a young.
- Through his 130 years he had experienced his share of troubles.
- He compared his life to a *"pilgrimage"* which literally has the sense of a sojourn.
- Life for God's people is a pilgrimage.
- This world is not our home as noted in Hebrews 11:13-16.

Genesis 47 : 11-12 - *11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, 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 nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families*

- Joseph gave his family a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land.

- There, he took care of them and provided for all their needs.
- Joseph once again emerges as a type of Christ.

Genesis 47 : 13-26 – *13 And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth. 16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. 17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year. 18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: 19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate. 20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. 21 And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. 22 Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands. 23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. 24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. 25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.*

- Meanwhile, the famine continued across the region.
- Joseph according to plan consolidated the resources of Egypt to meet the needs of the nation.
- He also shrewdly worked to gather wealth for Pharaoh.
- He first took money (i.e., silver and gold) for food which under his direction had been accumulated.
- The idea of money failing in Egypt is not in the sense of the paper money becoming worthless.
- Rather, Joseph foresaw when gold and silver would run out, which it did.
- He then ordered that livestock be given in exchange for grain.
- After there was no more livestock to give, he ordered land to be given for bread.
- That land was transferred into Pharaoh's name, "*so the land became Pharaoh's.*"
- In addition, Joseph knew after seven years, the famine would cease, so he had set aside seed for them to thereafter sow the land.

- He also made it a law that Pharaoh should have the fifth part meaning that he would obtain one fifth of their harvest thereafter.
- And we complain about giving 1/10 to the God that saved our soul.
- So, Joseph increased the wealth and power of his lord the Pharaoh of Egypt.

Genesis 47 : 27-28 - 27 *And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.*

- Meanwhile, Israel (Jacob) continued to live in Egypt and prospered, “*and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.*”
- God blessed them!
- Jacob himself lived in Egypt a total of seventeen years, eventually dying at the age of 147.

Genesis 47 : 29-31 - 29 *And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: 30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. 31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.*

- Anticipating his days were few, Jacob called for Joseph and made him vow by placing his hand under his thigh—a middle-eastern gesture indicating profound importance.
- He asked Joseph to not bury him in Egypt.
- Jacob wished to be buried with his fathers “*in their burying place.*”
- Joseph agreed.
- It is clear that Jacob knew Egypt was not either his home nor the land God had promised to his seed.