

Lesson 9 25th June, 2017

Jacob Migrates Into Egypt

Lesson Scope: [Genesis 45:25 to 47:31](#)

References in brackets refer to Genesis chapters 45 to 47 unless otherwise noted

Lesson Focus

After about twenty years of believing Joseph had died, Jacob received word through his sons that Joseph was yet alive and was ruler of Egypt. He and his family were to come to Egypt where Joseph would sustain them through the remainder of the famine. Was Joseph really alive? Would his family find acceptance within the kingdom of Egypt? Did the God of his fathers want him to go to idolatrous Egypt? Would the influence of the Egyptian culture be devastating to the faith of this family?

But God in His sovereignty had been and still was providing a way for Jacob and his family to live as strangers and pilgrims even in the land of Egypt.

God's people are "in the world" but "not of the world." To keep themselves from the evil of the world, they must live as strangers and pilgrims.

Be sure to understand the necessity of the pilgrim's heart being changed. No amount of separation will compensate for a carnal heart. Movement toward the world is a warning to check the condition of the heart.

Just as God had a place for Israel to be separate from Egypt, God has a way prepared for us to be separate from the sin and destruction of the world. It is only as we live in this way that God can protect us as He would desire. In 2 Corinthians 6:17-18, Paul reveals the desire of our heavenly Father to receive and nurture those who will separate themselves from evil, and to save them from the coming judgment that awaits evil men.

Lesson Aim: To see how to live as strangers and pilgrims.

Theme Verse: [Hebrews 11:13](#). These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Lesson Text

"I Will Go Down With Thee"

Genesis 46:1-6

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. ² And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I. ³ And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: ⁴ I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. ⁵ And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶ And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

"Thy Servants Are Shepherds"

Genesis 46:29-34

And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. ³⁰ And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive. ³¹ And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; ³² And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. ³³ And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation? ³⁴ That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians.

Genesis 47:3-6

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.

"Israel Dwelt in ... Goshen"

Genesis 47:8-10

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.

Genesis 47:27

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

Questions for Study

"I Will Go Down With Thee"

1. Why did Israel offer sacrifices at this time?
2. Upon what facts does the certainty of God's promises rest?
3. Why are specific times of worship necessary for the pilgrim?
4. How can strangers and pilgrims find satisfaction in difficult experiences?

"Thy Servants Are Shepherds"

5. How was Israel's separation in the land of Goshen for their good? How can our separation be for our good?
6. How does our choice of an occupation affect our separation from the world?
7. Why does maintaining a stranger-and-pilgrim outlook require an active choice?

"Israel Dwelt in ... Goshen"

8. Why did Jacob bless Pharaoh?
9. What are some practical expressions of appreciation for a stranger-and-pilgrim lifestyle?

Analyzing the Passage

When Israel reached the southern end of the Promised Land, he stopped at Beer-sheba (46:1) and worshiped "the God of his father." Here Abraham (21:33) and Isaac (26:23-25) had worshiped years before. Possibly this stop was partially due to God's command to Isaac to not go down to Egypt during an earlier famine (26:2), but here God assured Jacob that this was

His plan for him (46:3, 4).

Chapter 46:27 indicates that seventy people traveled in this group to Egypt. Joseph was close to forty years old (41:46; 45:11) and Jacob one hundred thirty years old at their meeting. They had been separated over twenty years (37:2).

Since Joseph's brethren were shepherds and "every shepherd is an abomination [abhorrence] unto the Egyptians," "Pharaoh agreed with Joseph's plan to give the Hebrews the land of Goshen, the best land, allowing the Hebrews to keep their lowly occupation. Goshen, being separate from the main Egyptian culture, became a haven where exposure to Egyptian culture, religion, and society was limited. Possibly, Goshen was made available, at least in part, by the Egyptians' moving to cities because of the famine (47:21).

Principles and Applications

"I Will Go Down With Thee"

1. Strangers and pilgrims make worship to God a priority (46:1). As citizens of the heavenly country, it is imperative that we stay closely connected to our Leader. In worship we grasp God's all-sufficiency and His immutable promises, and our faith finds rest in the leading of the Lord no matter what the circumstances.

As strangers and pilgrims we should pray for God's protection and direction before trips or decisions. To practice this ourselves and develop it in those who follow us strengthens our connection with our King and our homeland.

2. Strangers and pilgrims willingly sacrifice their all to God (46:1). Old Testament sacrifices pointed forward to Christ's perfect sacrifice and typified reconciliation, sanctification, and consecration. The New Testament believer is called to offer himself "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1). This includes my whole life. Do the style and size of my wardrobe, my selection of electronic devices or other gadgets, the conveniences and decorations of my house, my vehicle and accessories, and my eating habits all declare plainly that I seek a country beyond this world? God accepts only those who give their all to Him.

3. Strangers and pilgrims take their direction from the God of their fathers (46:2-6). God will direct those who wholly give themselves to Him. Although we cannot understand all God's workings, we lay hold on God's unchanging promises and follow His omniscient leading. As the Lord went with Jacob, so He will go with those who follow Him.

"Thy Servants Are Shepherds"

4. Strangers and pilgrims find fulfillment as God's will unfolds (46:29-31). Now Jacob could understand in part how God was using Joseph's absence from his home for good. Many times the fruits of our labors are not obvious to us immediately, but those who diligently follow God's way experience abundant joy as His will unfolds.

5. Strangers and pilgrims are not ashamed of humble, despised occupations (46:33, 34). In a world of technology with faster and easier ways to do many things, men despise lowly hand labor. The stranger and pilgrim has more interest in the souls of men than in his own enterprise; therefore he chooses occupations that serve the basic needs of men. He avoids occupations that feed man's fleshly lusts for luxury and pleasure, which bind one to this decaying world. The scribes and Pharisees despised Jesus. Are we willing to accept the same treatment?

6. Strangers and pilgrims recognize that they live on this earth for only a short time (47:4, 9). The home of Jacob and his family was Canaan. They planned to sojourn in Egypt. Are my life and possessions proof that I plan to be here but for a season, or might the world wonder if I consider this world my home?

7. Strangers and pilgrims live by separation principles (46:3; 47:4). Persecution has kept and still keeps many Christians separate from the world. But while the world invites us to mix our religion with their lifestyle of vacationing, hunting, camping, and church socials, we need to actively plan and follow a separate course (1 Peter 2:11). The stranger and pilgrim must carefully avoid unequal yokes with the world, worldly advice, or too much association with relatives and friends with weak convictions. Those who allow their separation to break down are giving Satan an opportunity to bind them to this earth and take from them their stranger-and-pilgrim status.

"Israel Dwelt in ... Goshen"

8. Strangers and pilgrims maintain a healthy respect and appreciation for their pilgrim fathers (47:9). Jesus strongly denounced those of His day who honored the faithful of the past with their words but lived like those who had killed them (Matthew 23:27-33). Although our spiritual heritage cannot save us, we need to embrace the values of the faithful in the past if we want to enjoy the blessings they enjoyed.

9. Strangers and pilgrims retain an attitude of humility and unworthiness before God (47:8-10). Realizing that our life and all that we have is a gift from God, we carefully avoid drawing glory to ourselves but rather direct

it to God. As Jacob recognized Pharaoh's part in saving his family, so we should thank God and others for their blessings to our lives.

10. God's approval is upon those who live as strangers and pilgrims (47:27). God can bless with peace, joy, and spiritual prosperity those who, by the power of God, keep themselves free from the allurements of this world. Finally, He will give eternal life to all those who have followed "the strait and narrow way" to the end.

Important Teachings

1. Strangers and pilgrims make worship to God a priority (46:1).
2. Strangers and pilgrims willingly sacrifice their all to God (46:1).
3. Strangers and pilgrims take their direction from the God of their fathers (46:2-6).
4. Strangers and pilgrims find fulfillment as God's will unfolds (46:29-31).
5. Strangers and pilgrims are not ashamed of humble, despised occupations (46:33-34).
6. Strangers and pilgrims recognize that they live on this earth for only a short time (47:4, 9).
7. Strangers and pilgrims live by separation principles (46:3; 47:4).
8. Strangers and pilgrims maintain a healthy respect and appreciation for their pilgrim fathers (47:9).
9. Strangers and pilgrims retain an attitude of humility and unworthiness before God (47:8-10).
10. God's approval is upon those who live as strangers and pilgrims (47:27).

Answers to Questions

1. Why did Israel offer sacrifices at this time?

At Beersheba, both Abraham and Isaac had worshiped. Israel was likely uncertain of the wisdom of this journey and was seeking God's direction. He wanted to renew his covenant with the God of his fathers. Perhaps he wanted to impress on the minds of his posterity the importance of worshipping God.

2. Upon what facts does the certainty of God's promises rest?

God does not lie (Hebrews 6:18). God makes promises based on perfect knowledge of present and future. God holds full power, so no power is able to keep Him from performing what He has promised.

3. Why are specific times of worship necessary for the pilgrim?

The allurements around us tend to pull our vision down. These times of

worship can help to lift our vision. Since all men worship something or someone, our times of worship help to keep our eyes focused on God rather than something else. In these times, God speaks to us and gives us direction.

4. How can strangers and pilgrims find satisfaction in difficult experiences?

They know that God is with them and will supply what is needed. They trust that God has a purpose in everything and can use any circumstance to further His purpose. As they rest in God's provision, they find true satisfaction. They allow these times to refine them and bring them to a closer relationship with God.

5. How was Israel's separation in the land of Goshen for their good? How can our separation be for our good?

It allowed them to keep their occupation. They were shielded from mainstream Egyptian culture and worship.

Separation can be for our good only if our whole heart and life are separate. It helps us keep in mind that we are the people of God and not of the world. It protects us from many evil influences that could warp our perception of Bible truth.

6. How does our choice of an occupation affect our separation from the world?

Some occupations put us in close contact with worldly business practices and associations, which may undermine a simple, Biblical view of life and business. Some businesses provide for men to fulfill their fleshly lusts. Some feed men's pride. These occupations run directly counter to the pilgrim's purpose: that of helping men to find salvation, overcome the flesh, and remain separate from this decaying world. Therefore, they are a part of the world and not for the Christian. We should choose businesses that meet necessary needs of men and allow us to leave a clear Christian testimony all through our work.

7. Why does maintaining a stranger-and-pilgrim outlook require an active choice?

Our carnal man has limited vision and tends to see only the present and the immediate results. It takes a choice of faith to see beyond into eternity. We see, feel, hear, and use temporal things, whereas spiritual things are abstract and are not as easily perceived.

8. Why did Jacob bless Pharaoh?

Jacob recognized the part Pharaoh was filling in preserving God's people. Jacob had connection with and authority from God to place a blessing on

those who aided in God's plan.

9. What are some practical expressions of appreciation for a stranger and-pilgrim lifestyle?

We express appreciation by living it all day, every day. The way we dress and train our children shows where our home is. We will not be ashamed to tell others why we live the way we do. The stranger and pilgrim adheres to the tried and proven dress code rather than following shrinking covering sizes, constantly changing dress patterns, and worldly fads in shoes, trousers, or hairstyles.

Summarizing the Lesson

The pilgrim who seeks eternal life worships earnestly, prays fervently, and lives sacrificially. By God's power he keeps himself free from the evil of the world so he can help others find salvation. He receives direction from heaven and lays up his treasure there. His choice of a humble dwelling and a humble occupation speaks to all of his anticipation of a heavenly city.

Research Guide

1. Read John 17:13-23 and John 15:19. Christ desires that we would follow Him and remain separate from evil.
2. Read Matthew 13:30 and 25:31-46. Sometime there will be a final separation. If we want to be separate from the condemned world then, we must be separate today.