

## The Visions of the Night

### Genesis 46:1 – 34



~ In our last report from our Spiritual Safari, we left the sons of Jacob as they returned from Egypt to Canaan - and they have given their dad the report that his other son, Joseph, whom Jacob thought was dead, is really alive after all these years - and is in a high government leadership position down in Egypt. They seemed to have skipped the part about how they had sold Joseph into slavery. Do you think the boys were somehow attempting to take credit for locating Joseph? I think they were - and I think Jacob sensed it. There was, at least, some hesitation on Jacob's part to go with them. It would seem to me that Jacob didn't fully trust his kids; and rightly so. Remember, God had instructed Abraham to stay out of Egypt; and Jacob knew that. Abraham brought a lot of trouble into his home and upon himself with things he acquired in Egypt. God also told Isaac to stay out of Egypt. So, Jacob ultimately goes to Egypt - but hesitantly.

God appears to Jacob at this time because Jacob needs a little more encouragement than an invitation by his sons to a meet some "maybe" Joseph-turned-Egyptian ruler encounter in a foreign land. Jacob isn't about to move a muscle without a direct green light from God! Remember, God had told Jacob that Bethel was going to be the place of worship, so Jacob does not trust completely that Gods will is for him to leave and go to Egypt. Well, God is going to show Jacob the freeway to Egypt, of course.

Amazingly, Israel is going to offer sacrifices to the God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Remember, when Jacob left home the first time and came to Bethel he was not looking for God at that time. No, Jacob thought he had left the Lord behind when he ditched his family. Jacob wasn't seeking the mind of God at all at that time - and Jacob was not asking for the leading of God in his life back then, either. That brings up a big difference between Jacob and the servant that Abraham had sent out to

find a bride for Isaac. The servant that went out from Abraham looked to God for “every step his camels took,” literally. Jacob was just blindly charging forward and taking many reckless steps without looking to God at all. Jacob felt he didn’t need God in his life back then - but he found out - that’s not the proper motivation for living. If you’re a child of God then this simply will not work for you, either.

So many Christians today spend their entire personal lives haplessly doing whatever they want to do; and then, when trouble comes, they expect Jesus to clean up their mess. On Sunday, they think they will sacrifice an hour to God. What fools! I realize today’s modern communications have people chattering obliviously about religion, but they are equally as convoluted and culpable because it’s the same thing. All of the sudden they find themselves super religious and they go to church or worse – they try to teach a class about the Bible; but they tell God good-bye every time they close their Bible and leave the church or surf away on the ungodly ocean of the internet. God is just not in the picture of their normal, every day, day to day lives and activities. Their hearts have never been changed. Their lives are still the same. They find themselves ALWAYS looking back on what God has done and never on what He wants to do as the result of our obedience to Him. Is this a little personal? Jacob has never offered sacrifices until here because he has been living life in his own power and in his own way and for himself....

***1 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:***

~ Jacob has traveled quite a distance in his life. There are three definite and distinctly identifiable spiritual periods in Jacob's life, and they all correspond to geographical locations. First was in Haran; that was the man of the flesh. Then, he went back to Canaan; that's' where he did all of his fighting. Here, we finally see the man of faith as Jacob goes down to Goshen. I would say most, if not all, believers have this similar experience. We have a time when we run off somewhere. Then we turned to the Lord and came into contact with the Gospel. Then, there is always a struggle until the day comes when we actually begin to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

Alright, God has appeared to Jacob to encourage him to go down to Egypt; and off they go! That leaves us at this huge field in the Bible that is nothing but a bunch of names, as far as I can tell. It's just another long genealogy of forgettable people. Remember, we said in chapter thirty-six – concerning Esau – that it would be worthwhile to go through each name and get its meaning. We're not going to do that here; but if you have a good Bible with the definitions of names in it you may want to spend some time here. The difference is – this is the line that will lead to Christ....

***7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.***

***8 And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn.***

***9 And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.***

***10 And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.***

**11 And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.**

**12 And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zerah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.**

**13 And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.**

**14 And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.**

**15 These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.**

**16 And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.**

**17 And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and 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 bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.**

**19 The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.**

**20 And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.**

**21 And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard.**

**22 These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen.**

**23 And the sons of Dan; Hushim.**

***24 And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.***

***25 These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.***

***26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six;***

***27 And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.***

~ Here, we do need to pause and make a note that there were seventy that went down into Egypt. This is very important later. Joseph and his family were already down in Egypt. In Exodus we will read “....and all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.” So, we had this genealogy of seventy people; Jacob and his children, and so on. Why? This is the most important line in the world, and this is part of the genealogy that opens the Book of Matthew; and it also appears in the third chapter of Luke. This genealogy is important for those reasons alone - but there’s another reason: our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. We get into that lineage in the same way we came to this earth – by a birth. We are born again of the Spirit of God as Christians into the family of God by accepting Christ as our Savior. See, God knows YOU! He knows every hair on your head, and He knows your thoughts better than you do. I have to admit these names mean nothing to me; but these names mean everything to God - just as you mean everything to God. Is your name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life? ~

***28 And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.***

***29 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.***

~ What beautiful pictures we have in the Bible. Jacob wasn't going to live much longer. The Lord brought Israel and Joseph back together before Jacob died. Personally, I think Jacob barely made this trip. Interestingly, the Egyptians viewed both Hebrews and shepherds as an abomination. Well, the members of this Hebrew family that's riding into town are all shepherds. They still practice this today very much like it was done back then. The Lord Jesus Christ is known as the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for His sheep. Christ is the Great Shepherd of the sheep today as He watches over them and is the Chief Shepherd – yet to appear. This is very important to understand as we start to develop prophecy in our Spiritual Safari. Christ is the Shepherd – He calls Himself that.

Now, to be sure, we're not talking about the earthy Jesus of liberalism that bears no resemblance whatsoever to the Lord Jesus Christ in the Word of God. People like that liberal, earthly tolerant Jesus who winks at sin very much. In our safari we're talking about an abomination – the Hebrew Shepherd – the one the world doesn't like very much; in fact, they hate

Him! Joseph gives Jacob a little warning here that when he comes before Pharaoh to tell Pharaoh they raise cattle. Is that a lie? No! They had cattle and sheep with them, remember? Well, we're going to find the Egyptians turning their sheep over to the Israelites because they don't want to raise sheep, either. Spiritually, I have a headache from this report!

In the next leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God we are going to see something that is literally amazing as Jacob is introduced to Pharaoh. Jacob will be living in Goshen; which will be their home for a very, very long time - until Moses leads them out of Egypt again! It is important to note that God has not appeared to Joseph, nor does God appear to Joseph at all during his life. This is all about the providence of God in the life of a man who was in God's direct will. We have seen God use Joseph to prepare the way for his family to live and not die; to come down to Egypt and bow down before him, just like the dream  
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