

Jacob Blesses His Sons (1859 BC)

Genesis 49:1–28

Jacob Gathers His Sons Together

1 Then Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather together so that I can tell you what will happen with you in days to come.

- 2 Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob!
Listen to Israel your father!

Reuben

- 3 Reuben, you *are* my firstborn,
my strength, and the firstfruit of my vigor,
excelling in rank and excelling in power.
4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel *any longer*,
for you went up upon the bed of your father,
then defiled *it*. You went up upon my couch!

Simeon and Levi

- 5 Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
weapons of violence *are* their swords.
Let me not come into their council.
6 Let not my person be joined to their company.
For in their anger they killed men,
and at their pleasure they hamstringed cattle.
7 Cursed be their anger, for *it is* fierce,
and their wrath, for *it is* cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob,
and I will scatter them in Israel.

Judah

- 8 Judah, *as for* you, your brothers shall praise you.
Your hand *shall be* on the neck of your enemies.
The sons of your father shall bow down to you.
9 Judah *is* a lion’s cub.
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He bowed down; he crouched like a lion and as a lioness.
Who shall rouse him?
10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler’s staff between his feet,
until Shiloh comes.
And to him shall be the obedience of nations.
11 Binding his donkey to the vine
and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine,
he washes his clothing in the wine
and his garment in the blood of grapes.
12 The eyes *are* darker than wine,
and the teeth whiter than milk.

Zebulun

- 13 Zebulun shall settle by the shore of the sea.
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
and his border *shall be* at Sidon.

Issachar

- 14 Issachar *is* a strong donkey,
crouching between the sheepfolds.
15 He saw a resting place that *was* good,
and land that *was* pleasant.
So he bowed his shoulder to the burden
and became a servant of forced labor.

Dan

- 16 Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
- 17 Dan shall be a serpent on the way,
a viper on the road
that bites the heels of a horse,
so that its rider falls backward.
- 18 I wait for your salvation, O Yahweh.

Gad

- 19 Bandits shall attack Gad,
but he shall attack *their* heels.

Asher

- 20 Asher's food *is* delicious,
and he shall provide from the king's delicacies.

Naphtali

- 21 Naphtali *is* a doe running free
that puts forth beautiful words.

Joseph

- 22 Joseph *is* the bough of a fruitful vine,
a fruitful bough by a spring.
His branches climb over the wall.
- 23 The archers fiercely attacked him.
They shot arrows *at him* and were hostile to him.
- 24 But his bow remained in a steady position;
his arms were made agile
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob.
From there *is* the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.
- 25 Because of the God of your father he will help you
and *by* Shaddai he will bless you
with the blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that crouches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and the womb.
- 26 The blessings of your father
are superior to the blessings of my ancestors,
to the bounty of the everlasting hills.
May they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the forehead of the prince of his brothers.

Benjamin

- 27 Benjamin *is* a devouring wolf,
devouring the prey in the morning,
and dividing the plunder in the evening.

Conclusion

- 28 All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel, and this *is* what their father said to them when he blessed them, each according to their blessing.

The Death of Jacob (1859 BC)

Genesis 47:28b; 49:29–33; 50:1–21

Jacob's Death

- 49:29 Then he instructed them and said to them, "I am *about to be* gathered to my people. Bury me among my ancestors in the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite,
30 in the cave that *is* in the field of Machpelah that *is* before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site.
31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife. And there I buried Leah—

32 the purchase of the field and the cave which *was* in it from the Hittites.”

33 When Jacob finished instructing his sons he drew his feet up to the bed. Then he took his last breath and was gathered to his people.

47:28b And the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were one hundred and forty-seven years.

Joseph Buries Jacob in Canaan

50:1 Then Joseph fell on the face of his father and wept upon him and kissed him.

2 And Joseph instructed his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 Forty days were required for it, for thus *are* the days required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

4 When the days of his weeping had passed, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying,

5 ‘My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I *am about* to die. In the tomb that I have hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan—there you must bury me.” So then, please let me go up and let me bury my father; then I will return.’”

6 Then Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father as he made you swear.”

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father. And all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, went up with him,

8 with all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and the household of his father. They left only their little children and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen.

9 And there also went up with him chariots and horsemen. The company *was* very great.

10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which *was* beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful wailing. And he made a mourning ceremony for his father seven days.

11 And when the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, saw the mourning ceremony at the threshing floor of Atad they said, “This is a severe mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore its name was called Abel-Mizraim, which *is* beyond the Jordan.

12 Thus his sons did to him just as he had instructed them.

13 And his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which field Abraham had bought as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite before Mamre.

14 And after burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

Joseph’s Brothers Fear Him After Jacob’s Death

15 And when the brothers of Joseph saw that their father *was* dead, they said, “It may be *that* Joseph will hold a grudge against us and pay us back dearly for all the evil that we did to him.”

16 So they sent *word* to Joseph saying, “Your father commanded *us* before his death, saying,

17 “Thus you must say to Joseph, ‘O, please now forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did evil to you.’ So now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18 Then his brothers went also and fell before him and said, “Behold, we *are* your servants.”

19 Then Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God?

20 As for you, you planned evil against me, *but* God planned it for good, in order to do this—to keep many people alive—as *it is* today.

21 So then, do not be afraid. I myself will provide for you and your little ones. And he consoled them and spoke kindly to them.

The Death of Joseph (1806 BC)

Genesis 50:22–26

22 So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and the house of his father. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years.

23 And Joseph saw Ephraim’s children to the third generation. Moreover, the children of Makir, son of Manasseh, were born on the knees of Joseph.

24 And Joseph said to his brothers, “I *am about* to die, but God will certainly visit you and bring you up from this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

25 Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall bring up my bones from here.”

26 So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old. They embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt. [[Heb 11:22](#)]

Israel in Egypt (1806–1526 BC)

Exodus 1:6–22

Israel Fills the Land

6 And Joseph died and all of his brothers and all of that generation.

7 And the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied and were many and were very, very numerous, and the land was filled with them.

Oppression Under a New King (Hyksos c. 1730?)

8 And a new king rose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. [[Acts 7:18](#)]

9 And he said to his people, “Look, the people of the Israelites *are* greater and more numerous than us.

10 Come, we must deal shrewdly with them, lest they become many, and when war happens, they also will join our enemies and will fight against us and go up from the land.”

11 And they appointed commanders of forced labor over them in order to oppress them with their forced labor, and they built storage cities for Pharaoh—Pithom and Rameses.

Continued Oppression (18th Dynasty c. 1570)

12 And as he oppressed them, so they became many, and so they spread out, and *the Egyptians* were afraid because of the presence of the Israelites.

13 And the Egyptians ruthlessly compelled the Israelites to work.

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard work with mortar and with bricks and with all *sorts* of work in the field—with all their work in which they ruthlessly enslaved them.

Pharaoh Orders the Murder of Newborn Israelite Males

15 And the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives—of whom the name of the one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the second *was* Puah—

16 and he said, “When you help the Hebrews give birth, you will look upon the pairs of testicles; if he *is* a son, you will put him to death, and if she *is* a daughter, she will live.”

17 But the midwives feared God, and they did not do as the king of Egypt had said to them. They let the boys live.

18 And the king of Egypt summoned the midwives, and he said to them, “Why have you done this thing and let the boys live?”

19 And the midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew *women are* not like the Egyptian women, because they *are* vigorous; before the midwife comes to them, they have given birth.”

20 And God did the midwives good, and the *Israelite* people became many and were very numerous.

21 And so because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

22 And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, “Every son who is born you will throw into the Nile, and every daughter you will let live.”

The Birth of Moses (1526 BC)

Exodus 2:1–10

Numbers 26:59

1 And a man from the family of Levi went, and he took a descendent of Levi.

2 And the woman conceived, and she gave birth to a son, and she saw him, that he was a fine baby, and she hid him three months. [[Acts 7:20–21](#); [Heb 11:23](#)]

59 The name of the wife of Amram *was* Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whose *mother* bore her for Levi in Egypt; she bore to Amram: Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam.

3 But when she could no longer hide him, she got a papyrus basket for him, and she coated it with tar and with pitch, and she placed the boy in it, and she placed *it* among the reeds on the bank of the Nile.

4 And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him.

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh went down to wash at the Nile, *while* her maidservants were walking alongside the Nile, and she saw the basket in the midst of the reeds, and she sent her slave woman *for it* and took it

6 and opened *it* and saw him—the boy—and it was a lad weeping, and she had compassion for him and said, “This *must be* from the boys of the Hebrews.”

7 And his sister said to the daughter of Pharaoh, “Shall I go and call for you a woman from the Hebrews *who is* nursing *so that* she will nurse the boy for you?”

8 And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, “Go.” And the girl went, and she called the mother of the boy.

9 And the daughter of Pharaoh said, “Take this boy and nurse him for me, and I myself will give you wages, and the woman took the boy, and she nursed him.

10 And the boy grew, and she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh, and he became her son, and she called his name Moses, and she said, “Because I drew him out from the water.”

Chronological Notes

1) Length of the Sojourn.

A) My chronology places the length of the Israelite sojourn in Egypt at 430 years (see Exodus 12:40–41). For a defense of this view, see the following:

- Harold W. Hoehner, “The Duration of the Egyptian Bondage,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 125 (1969): 306–316.
- Jack R. Riggs, “The Length of Israel’s Sojourn in Egypt,” *Grace Theological Journal* 12.1 (Winter 1971): 18–35.
- Paul J. Ray, Jr., “The Duration of the Israelite Sojourn in Egypt,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24.3 (Autumn 1986): 231–248.
- Gleason Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, (Moody Press, 1994), 238.
- Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 93–96.
- Andrew E. Steinmann, “Israel’s Patriarchs,” *From Abraham to Paul*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 68–70.

B) Below is an overview of the various references to Israel’s time in Egypt:

- (1) Paul’s statement in Galatians 3:17 to “the law, which came 430 years afterward” (ESV) refers, not to the original promise to Abraham, but to God’s last promise to Jacob as he was beginning the journey to Goshen in 1876 BC (see Gen 46:1–6). From Jacob’s entry into Egypt to the Exodus in 1446 BC is $1876 - 1446 = 430$ years.
- (2) God’s statement in Genesis 15:13 that “your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years” (NAS, see also Acts 7:6) is a round number referring to the length of time Israel would sojourn in Egypt. From Jacob’s death in 1859 BC to the Exodus in 1446 BC is $1859 - 1446 = 413$ years or about 400 years.
 - (a) The “fourth generation” of Genesis 15:16 should be understood in context. The word “generation” can reference a person’s entire lifetime (see *TWOT* 418c.1). Since Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all lived well over 100 years, the “fourth generation” may well be intended to indicate somewhat less than four complete lifetimes in terms understandable to Abraham.
- (3) Paul’s statement in Acts 13:17–20 that from Israel’s stay in the land of Egypt until the end of the Canaan conquest was “about 450 years” (ESV) is a reasonable approximation of the total time involved. The actual time was 447 years: the 400 year sojourn (Gen 15:13) plus the 40 years of wilderness wandering (Num 32:13) plus the 7 years of conquest (Josh 14:6–12) is $400 + 40 + 7 = 447$.

2) A New King Over Egypt.

A) Some identify the unnamed Pharaoh mentioned in Exodus 1:8 as one of the first kings of the Hyksos (lit. “foreign rulers”). Proponents of this view include:

- George Bush, *Notes on the Book of Exodus*, Vol. 1, (Boston, 1841), 11–12.
- John Rea, “The Time of the Oppression and the Exodus,” *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 3.3 (Summer 1960): 58–66.
- John J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt*, Second Edition, (BHM Books, 1998), 53–57.
- Bryant G. Wood, “From Ramesses to Shiloh: Archaeological Discoveries Bearing on the Exodus-Judges Period,” *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts*, ed. David M. Howard, Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti (Kregel Publications, 2003) 256–282.

B) Others identify the unnamed Pharaoh as the first king of Egypt’s 18th Dynasty (c. 1570 BC). Proponents of this view include:

- John D. Hannah, “Exodus,” *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, (Victor Books, 1985), 108.
- Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, Rev. Ed., (Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 227–228.
- Douglas K. Stuart, “Exodus,” *The New American Commentary*, (Broadman & Holman, 2006), 62.
- Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75.
- Andrew E. Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul*, (Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 82.

3) Historical Setting of Moses' Birth.¹A) Kings of the 18th Dynasty ("high" dates from *Cambridge Ancient History*).

- Amosis (Ahmose) 1570–1546
- Amenhotep I 1546–1526
- Thutmose I 1526–1512
- Thutmose II 1512–1504
- Hatshepsut 1503–1483
- Thutmose III 1504–1450
- Amenhotep II 1450–1425

- B) Given a 1446 BC date for the exodus, we can establish the birth date of Moses, a fact of greatest interest at this juncture. The Old Testament relates that Moses was 80 just before the exodus (7:7) and 120 at his death (Deut. 34:7). Since his death was at the very close of the wilderness period, it occurred in 1406. Simple calculation yields a birth date of 1526. Thus Moses was born in the very year of Amenhotep's death.
- C) Amenhotep was succeeded by Thutmose I (1526–1512), a commoner who had married the king's sister. He was probably the author of the decree of infanticide, for, although Moses was in imminent danger of death, Aaron, born three years earlier (Exod 7:7), appears to have been exempt. One must assume that the king who promulgated the policy came to the throne after the birth of Aaron and before that of Moses. Thus the biblical evidence points directly at Thutmose I.
- D) Thutmose II (1512–1504) married his older half-sister Hatshepsut. He died young under mysterious circumstances. Sensing, no doubt, his impending demise, he had named his son Thutmose III (1504–1450) as coregent and heir. This energetic ruler, the most illustrious and powerful of the entire New Kingdom, distinguished himself in many ways. His beginnings were not promising—he was the son of a concubine and married his own half-sister, the daughter of Hatshepsut and Thutmose II—but he eventually went on to achieve notable victories in surrounding lands, including sixteen campaigns to Palestine alone. The first twenty years or so of his reign, however, were dominated by his powerful mother-in-law, Hatshepsut. Forbidden by custom to be pharaoh, she acted out the part nonetheless and by all criteria was one of the most fascinating and influential persons of Egyptian history. Without question, she pulled the strings in the early years of Thutmose III, a relationship he detested but was powerless to oppose. Only after her death did he show his contempt by expunging as many inscriptional and monumental references to her as possible.
- E) The general picture of Hatshepsut leads to the possibility that this bold queen was the pharaoh's daughter who rescued Moses. Only she, of all known women of the period, possessed the presumption and independence to violate an ordinance of the king, and under his very nose at that. Although the birth date of this daughter of Thutmose I is unknown, she was probably several years older than her husband, Thutmose II, who died in 1504 while in his late twenties. She may have been in her early teens by 1526, Moses's birth date, and therefore able to effect his deliverance.

¹ Sourced from Eugene Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, Second Edition, (Baker Publishing, 2008), 75–78.