

Jacob Blesses His Sons (1859 BC)

Genesis 49:1–28

1 Jacob called for his sons and said,

“Gather together so I can tell you
what will happen to you in the future.

2 “Assemble and listen, you sons of Jacob;
listen to Israel, your father.

Reuben

3 Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might and the beginning of my strength,
outstanding in dignity, outstanding in power.
4 You are destructive like water and will not excel,
for you got on your father’s bed,
then you defiled it—he got on my couch!

Simeon and Levi

5 Simeon and Levi are brothers,
weapons of violence are their knives!
6 O my soul, do not come into their council,
do not be united to their assembly, my heart,
for in their anger they have killed men,
and for pleasure they have hamstringed oxen.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,
and their fury, for it was cruel.
I will divide them in Jacob,
and scatter them in Israel!

Judah

8 Judah, your brothers will praise you.
Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies,
your father’s sons will bow down before you.
9 You are a lion’s cub, Judah,
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He crouches and lies down like a lion;
like a lioness—who will rouse him?
10 The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,
until he comes to whom it belongs;
the nations will obey him.
11 Binding his foal to the vine,
and his colt to the choicest vine,
he will wash his garments in wine,
his robes in the blood of grapes.
12 His eyes will be dark from wine,
and his teeth white from milk.

Zebulun

13 Zebulun will live by the haven of the sea
and become a haven for ships;
his border will extend to Sidon.

Issachar

14 Issachar is a strong-boned donkey
lying down between two saddlebags.
15 When he sees a good resting place,
and the pleasant land,
he will bend his shoulder to the burden

and become a slave laborer.

Dan

- 16 Dan will judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
- 17 May Dan be a snake beside the road,
a viper by the path,
that bites the heels of the horse
so that its rider falls backward.
- 18 I wait for your deliverance, O LORD.

Gad

- 19 Gad will be raided by marauding bands,
but he will attack them at their heels.

Asher

- 20 Asher's food will be rich,
and he will provide delicacies to royalty.

Naphtali

- 21 Naphtali is a free running doe,
he speaks delightful words.

Joseph

- 22 Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough near a spring
whose branches climb over the wall.
- 23 The archers will attack him,
they will shoot at him and oppose him.
- 24 But his bow will remain steady,
and his hands will be skillful;
because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
- 25 because of the God of your father,
who will help you,
because of the sovereign God,
who will bless you
with blessings from the sky above,
blessings from the deep that lies below,
and blessings of the breasts and womb.
- 26 The blessings of your father are greater
than the blessings of the eternal mountains
or the desirable things of the age-old hills.
They will be on the head of Joseph
and on the brow of the prince of his brothers.

Benjamin

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

Conclusion

- 28 These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He gave each of them an appropriate 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, "I am about to go to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite.

30 It is the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought for a burial plot from Ephron the Hittite.

31 There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah; there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah; and there I buried Leah.

32 The field and the cave in it were acquired from the sons of Heth."

33 When Jacob finished giving these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet up onto the bed, breathed his last breath, and went to his people.

47:28b The years of Jacob's life were 147 in all.

Joseph Buries Jacob in Canaan

50:1 Then Joseph hugged his father's face. He wept over him and kissed him.

2 Joseph instructed the physicians in his service to embalm his father, so the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 They took forty days, for that is the full time needed for embalming. The Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

4 When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh's royal court, "If I have found favor in your sight, please say to Pharaoh,

5 'My father made me swear an oath. He said, "I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself there in the land of Canaan." Now let me go and bury my father; then I will return.'"

6 So Pharaoh said, "Go and bury your father, just as he made you swear to do."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father; all Pharaoh's officials went with him—the senior courtiers of his household, all the senior officials of the land of Egypt,

8 all Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household. But they left their little children and their flocks and herds in the land of Goshen.

9 Chariots and horsemen also went up with him, so it was a very large entourage.

10 When they came to the threshing floor of Atad on the other side of the Jordan, they mourned there with very great and bitter sorrow. There Joseph observed a seven day period of mourning for his father.

11 When the Canaanites who lived in the land saw them mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians." That is why its name was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

12 So the sons of Jacob did for him just as he had instructed them.

13 His sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, near Mamre. This is the field Abraham purchased as a burial plot from Ephron the Hittite.

14 After he buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, along with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to bury his father.

Joseph's Brothers Fear Him After Jacob's Death

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge and wants to repay us in full for all the harm we did to him?"

16 So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave these instructions before he died:

17 'Tell Joseph this: Please forgive the sin of your brothers and the wrong they did when they treated you so badly.' Now please forgive the sin of the servants of the God of your father." When this message was reported to him, Joseph wept.

18 Then his brothers also came and threw themselves down before him; they said, "Here we are; we are your slaves."

19 But Joseph answered them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God?"

20 As for you, you meant to harm me, but God intended it for a good purpose, so he could preserve the lives of many people, as you can see this day.

21 So now, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your little children." Then he consoled them and spoke kindly to them.

The Death of Joseph (1806 BC)

Genesis 50:22–26

22 Joseph lived in Egypt, along with his father's family. Joseph lived 110 years.

23 Joseph saw the descendants of Ephraim to the third generation. He also saw the children of Makir the son of Manasseh; they were given special inheritance rights by Joseph.

24 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will surely come to you and lead you up from this land to the land he swore on oath to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

25 Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He said, "God will surely come to you. Then you must carry my bones up from this place."

26 So Joseph died at the age of 110. After they embalmed him, his body 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 in time Joseph and his brothers and all that generation died.

7 The Israelites, however, were fruitful, increased greatly, multiplied, and became extremely strong, so that the land was filled with them.

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

8 Then a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power over Egypt. [[Acts 7:18](#)]

9 He said to his people, “Look at the Israelite people, more numerous and stronger than we are!

10 Come, let’s deal wisely with them. Otherwise they will continue to multiply, and if a war breaks out, they will ally themselves with our enemies and fight against us and leave the country.”

11 So they put foremen over the Israelites to oppress them with hard labor. As a result they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

Continued Oppression (18th Dynasty c. 1570)

12 But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more they multiplied and spread. As a result the Egyptians loathed the Israelites,

13 and they made the Israelites serve rigorously.

14 They made their lives bitter by hard service with mortar and bricks and by all kinds of service in the fields. Every kind of service the Israelites were required to give was rigorous.

Pharaoh Orders the Murder of Newborn Israelite Males

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah,

16 “When you assist the Hebrew women in childbirth, observe at the delivery: If it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she may live.”

17 But the midwives feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.

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

19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women— for the Hebrew women are vigorous; they give birth before the midwife gets to them!”

20 So God treated the midwives well, and the people multiplied and became very strong.

21 And because the midwives feared God, he made households for them.

22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “All sons that are born you must throw into the river, but all daughters you may let live.”

The Birth of Moses (1526 BC)

Exodus 2:1–10

Numbers 26:59

1 A man from the household of Levi married a woman who was a descendant of Levi.

2 The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was [beautiful], she hid him for three months. [[Acts 7:20–21](#); [Heb 11:23](#)]

59 Now the name of Amram’s wife was Jochebed, daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt. And to Amram she bore Aaron, Moses, and Miriam their sister.

3 But when she was no longer able to hide him, she took a papyrus basket for him and sealed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and set it among the reeds along the edge of the Nile.

4 His sister stationed herself at a distance to find out what would happen to him.

5 Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself by the Nile, while her attendants were walking alongside the river, and she saw the basket among the reeds. She sent one of her attendants, took it,

6 opened it, and saw the child—a boy, crying!—and she felt compassion for him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”

7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get a nursing woman for you from the Hebrews, so that she may nurse the child for you?”

8 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes, do so.” So the young girl went and got the child’s mother.

9 Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed him.

10 When the child grew older she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, “Because I drew him 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” (NASB, 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.