

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You are the God of my spiritual fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. You are the God who has been my shepherd and redeemed me from all evil (Gen 48:15–16). You have led me beside still waters and restored my soul. You have led me in the paths of righteousness for your name's sake (Ps 23:2–3). I worship you today and praise you for your watchful care!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me how Jacob moved his entire family to Egypt. Jacob was afraid of leaving Canaan, but you appeared to him in a dream and assured him that you would go with him and make him into a great nation. You arranged this departure so Israel would not be absorbed into the wicked culture of the Canaanites (some of Jacob's sons had already married Canaanites). The Egyptians loathed (lit. 'abominated') shepherds, and thus Jacob's family could live in Egypt without danger of being assimilated by the Egyptians. This teaches me that you orchestrate events far in advance so that your purposes and plans will be accomplished. Jacob was reunited with his son, and Joseph held his father close as they washed away the years of pain and sorrow with their tears. This reminds me that it will be worth it all to see your precious Son in heaven! Israel lived in Egypt for the next 17 years, and when the time came for him to die, he was 147 years old. He called Joseph to his side and made him promise to bury him with his fathers in Canaan. He also adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his own and blessed them. His blessing put Ephraim, the younger, before Manasseh, the firstborn. Hebrews tells us that Jacob did this *by faith*—he flouted custom and acted in obedience to what you had revealed to him (Heb 11:21).

Reflection

Joseph wisely took advantage of the cultural prejudices of his day in order to keep Israel separate and distinct from the Egyptians. Am I being careful to keep myself and my family separate from the world?

Request

Father, Jacob said that you had been his shepherd all his life. In his old age, he could clearly see his dependence on you. What a change from his scheming and deceitful youth! Help me to develop an attitude like Jacob's. May I always trust in your provision and care.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for being my guide and protector. I'm grateful for the discipline and encouragement that comes from being led by your loving hand!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: "[O God, Your Constant Care and Love](#)" – H. Glen Lanier.

Meditation Verse: Genesis 48:15.