



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## Jacob Learns Joseph Is Alive!

*The Story of Joseph, Part 27*

In last month's issue, as Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, we reached the acme of the story insofar as its greatest emotional climax is concerned. Yet there are two nearly equal climactic events to come: (1) when Jacob learns Joseph still lives, and (2) the actual reunion of Jacob and Joseph. As the brothers head back to their father's house in Canaan, they have one great concern foremost in their minds.

For the past 17 years, Jacob has thought his beloved Joseph was dead. How can they break the news not only that he lives, but of his very high position in Egypt? They fear the shock could kill the elderly Jacob! Let us continue with the narrative from the book of Jasher, since these wonderful details necessarily had to be omitted from the compact account we have in the Word of God, the holy Bible.

Jasher 54:90 And Joseph ceased to command them, and he turned and went back to Egypt, and the sons of Jacob went to the land of Canaan with joy and cheerfulness to their father Jacob.

91 And they came unto the borders of the land, and they said to each other, What shall we do in this matter before our father, for if we come suddenly to him and tell him the matter, he will be greatly alarmed at our words and will not believe us.

92 And they went along until they came nigh unto their houses, and they found Serach, the daughter of Asher, going forth to meet them, and the damsel was very good and subtle, and knew how to play upon the harp.

93 And they called unto her and she came before them, and she kissed them, and they took her and gave unto her a harp, saying, Go now before our father, and

sit before him, and strike upon the harp, and speak these words.

94 And they commanded her to go to their house, and she took the harp and hastened before them, and she came and sat near Jacob.

95 And she played well and sang, and uttered in the sweetness of her words, Joseph my uncle is living, and he ruleth throughout the land of Egypt, and is not dead.

96 And she continued to repeat and utter these words, and Jacob heard her words and they were agreeable to him.

97 He listened whilst she repeated them twice and thrice, and joy entered the heart of Jacob at the sweetness of her words, and the spirit of God was upon him, and he knew all her words to be true.

98 And Jacob blessed Serach when she spoke these words before him, and he said unto her, My daughter, may death never prevail over thee, for thou hast revived my spirit; only speak yet before me as thou hast spoken, for thou hast gladdened me with all thy words.

99 And she continued to sing these words, and Jacob listened and it pleased him, and he rejoiced, and the spirit of God was upon him.

100 Whilst he was yet speaking with her, behold his sons came to him with horses and chariots and royal garments and servants running before them.

101 And Jacob rose up to meet them, and saw his sons dressed in royal garments and he saw all the

treasures that Joseph had sent to them.

102 And they said unto him, Be informed that our brother Joseph is living, and it is he who ruleth throughout the land of Egypt, and it is he who spoke unto us as we told thee.

In other words, they are telling their father: all those threats that the king of Egypt told us about not seeing his face again unless Benjamin was with us?—That was **Joseph**, Dad!

103 And Jacob heard all the words of his sons, and his heart palpitated at their words, for he could not believe them until he saw all that Joseph had given them and what he had sent him, and all the signs which Joseph had spoken unto them.

104 And they opened out before him, and showed him all that Joseph had sent, they gave unto each what Joseph had sent him, and he knew that they had spoken the truth, and he rejoiced exceedingly an account of his son.

105 And Jacob said, It is enough for me that my son Joseph is still living, I will go and see him before I die.

106 And his sons told him all that had befallen them, and Jacob said, I will go down to Egypt to see my son and his offspring.

107 And Jacob rose up and put on the garments which Joseph had sent him, and after he had washed, and shaved his hair, he put upon his head the turban which Joseph had sent him.

108 And all the people of Jacob's house and their wives put on the garments which Joseph had sent to them, and they greatly rejoiced at Joseph that he was still living and that he was ruling in Egypt,

109 And all the inhabitants of Canaan heard of this thing, and they came and rejoiced much with Jacob that he was still living.

110 And Jacob made a feast for them for three days, and all the kings of Canaan and nobles of the land ate and drank and rejoiced in the house of Jacob.

We will stop the reading there from the Book of Jasher and once again, I tell you that I will in fact, spend more time in the future issues of this series message expounding the lessons from these episodes in the life of Joseph the Overcomer. Obviously, forgiveness and reconciliation are the two major themes.

Before we downsized the resources we stock, we had offered the book, *Choosing Forgiveness*, as a very practical resource in the life of any Christian. It is one of the best books I have read on that subject, but I do not plan to be repeating that material in these lectures/writings.

(As of this writing, *Choosing Forgiveness* by Sandford and Bowman, is available from online sources. A web search brings up another book with the same title but by a different author, Nancy Leigh DeMoss. I have not read it.) Also, for those who might not be aware of it, we offer my two-CD testimony on forgiveness, free for the asking. Ask for: *Could You Forgive God?*

An amazing prophetic type leaped off the page at me as I concluded this portion of the narrative in Jasher. For those who have known me for more than 25 years, then you know that 25 years ago I could not, and absolutely would not have made the statement I am about to make. So if you find the forthcoming statement hard to believe, then may I suggest you make a study of it. We have four albums of CDs on the subject of God's Plan for (All) Men. See more information at the end of this issue.

You see, at this point in the story, all the 12 sons of Israel are bedecked in robes of royalty, robes of rulership which Joseph (a type of King Jesus) had given them. This points prophetically to the millennial kingdom when the overcomers rule with Christ. Now let me re-read the last couple verses from Jasher:

109 And all the inhabitants of Canaan heard ...., and they came and rejoiced much with Jacob ....that he was still living.

110 And Jacob made a feast for them for three days, and all the kings of Canaan and nobles of the land ate and drank and rejoiced in the house of Jacob.

It's a three day feast with the Canaanites in attendance! Biblically, a "day" is as a thousand years. Therefore, after two thousand years from Jesus—on the third day—is a great feast as the overcomers will rule over the earth with Christ as Head. And when they do, even all the Canaanites will rejoice because of the house of Israel and King Jesus. *Why?* Because they too, are part of the creation which even now still groans waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God! (Romans 8:23)

The Canaanites will rejoice because they will also *ultimately* be turned from their wicked ways, just as Israel does first. The Canaanites also will willingly bow the knee and confess with their mouths that Jesus

Christ is Lord. It's a picture of universal reconciliation in the book of Jasher. And it confirms God's Word in the Holy Bible. Hallelujah! Now let us return to the account from the Bible. The last two verses we gave (in the previous FMS) were:

**Genesis 45:27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:**

**28 And Israel said, *It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.***

**46:1 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.**

Beersheba is the southernmost major town as one is traveling to Egypt. Jacob may have had some trepidation and anxiety about going down to Egypt and this may have been the reason he stopped to offer sacrifices at the place where his father and grandfather had heard a word from the Lord. Jacob needed to have some reassurance from God that this was the right thing to do. Why? Well, Jacob was recalling how his father Isaac had been *expressly forbidden* to go down to Egypt.

**Genesis 26:1 And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.**

**2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:**

So what I am suggesting is that Isaac had undoubtedly shared with Jacob how God had told him *not* to go down to Egypt. Yet now, here comes word from Joseph to do just that—to relocate to Egypt. So Jacob is confused and unsure of what to do. He needs some guidance from God that it is now permissible to go down to Egypt. Back when God had forbid Isaac to go to Egypt, God went on to make these covenant promises to Isaac.

**3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;**

So actually, God is renewing the covenant He had made with Abraham.

**4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these**

**countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;**

**5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.**

Notice also, that this is an unconditional covenant. It was not a situation where God was saying "IF you do this or that, THEN I will bless you and do all these other things." There were no conditions. God said, I am going to do these things because of what Abraham had already done.

Furthermore, we realize that Jacob surely would have been privy to the sovereign prediction by God to Abraham that Abraham's seed would be afflicted in Egypt for 400 years. (Genesis 15:13) Therefore, we can imagine the turmoil in Jacob's mind as he reflects on this. This is confirmed in the book of Jasher.

**Jasher 55:1** And it came to pass after this that Jacob said, I will go and see my son in Egypt and will then come back to the land of Canaan of which God had spoken unto Abraham, for I cannot leave the land of my birth-place.

In his perplexity about what to do now, Jacob's thought processes might have gone something like this: "God told Grandpa Abraham that his descendants would suffer in Egypt. How can that be if Joseph is indeed the ruler of all Egypt, second only to the Pharaoh himself? And yet, here is the proof that my son rules Egypt. He has sent all these fine suits of clothing for all of us and our wives. He has sent gold and silver in no small quantities. He has commanded a large contingent of servants to serve us on the way. He has sent massive quantities of food for our journey. And he has sent it all in these exceedingly fine royal wagons.

How can it be that the Egyptians will afflict us? I do believe that Grandpa heard the word of the Lord correctly, and yet it doesn't make sense. Yahweh had forbid my father, Isaac, to go down to Egypt. Is the prohibition now released. Is this the time we are supposed to go down there? I must hear from God on this matter."

And so, he went to Beersheba and there offered sacrifice. I continue now in Jasher 55, verse 2. In verse 1, Jacob was saying to himself that he would go down and visit and then return to his home in Canaan.

**Jasher 55:2** Behold the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Go down to Egypt with all thy household and remain there, fear not to go down to

Egypt for I will there make thee a great nation.

3 And Jacob said within himself, I will go and see my son whether the fear of his God is yet in his heart amidst all the inhabitants of Egypt.

4 And the Lord said unto Jacob, Fear not about Joseph, for he still retaineth his integrity to serve me, as will seem good in thy sight, and Jacob rejoiced exceedingly concerning his son.

5 At that time Jacob commanded his sons and household to go to Egypt according to the word of the Lord unto him, and Jacob rose up with his sons and all his household, and he went out from the land of Canaan from Beersheba, with joy and gladness of heart, and they went to the land of Egypt.

As we return to Genesis 46, here is the sacred account of how God gives Jacob that assurance he needed to proceed down to Egypt.

**Genesis 46:2 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:**

So, in fact, in that one condensed statement “for I will there make of thee a great nation” God is once again confirming the covenant with Jacob that He had made with Abraham and Isaac. (To be continued.)

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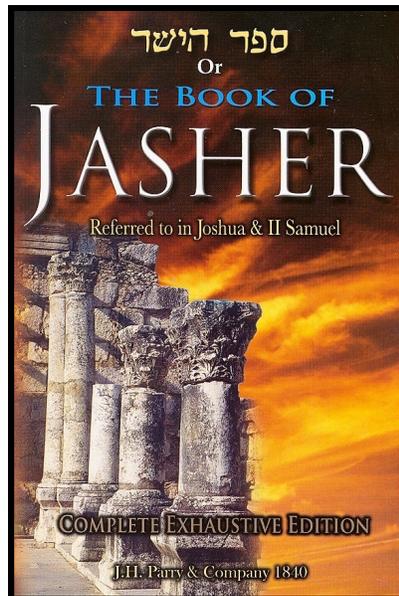
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