

A new venture at an unexpected time of life

• Confirmation of God's will

• As he worships God confirms that his promises will be carried forward

The predictions and plans of God get fulfilled

• Leaves Canaan with the assurance that one day they will be back

• Seventy families

Jacob is given the desire of his heart

'Israel' (as Jacob is sometimes called) is now to travel to Egypt. **Sometimes God calls us to new ventures at a time of life when we think we are going to be settled for the rest of our life.** Jacob never imagined that at that late stage in his life when he had been settled for many years in the land of promise, he would suddenly be called to spend the rest of his life in Egypt! He has never been to Egypt.

He gets confirmation of God's will before he travels. To leave Canaan to go to Egypt is a serious business. When Abraham did that it brought trouble^{□1}. Isaac had once been forbidden to go there^{□2}. It will involve a very different kind of life for him and he will never see Canaan again.

But as he worships God at Beersheba^{□1} God appears to him for the fourth time in his life^{□2} and confirms that he should go to Egypt. He need have no fear^{□3}. The previous promises given to Isaac and to Abraham will be carried forward. 'Israel' and his descendants will become a nation while they are in Egypt. 'Israel' will be with Joseph for the rest of his life and he will come back as the nation of Israel in later years^{□4}.

The predictions and plans of God get fulfilled. Many years before God had told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a land that was not theirs^{□1}. God said that they would stay there in a foreign land for four hundred years and then the oppressive nation in which they stayed would be judged by God and God's people would be released.

Now the time has come. Jacob is in the purpose of God and is about to be used by God to bring about something which God had predicted many years before. Encouraged by God, Jacob with all his people and all his possessions leaves Canaan with the assurance that one day they will be back^{□1}. The text of Genesis emphasizes that the entire people of Israel are there. There are thirty-three families mentioned in Genesis 46:8–14, including the six sons of Jacob via Leah (with Judah traced to a further generation). Another sixteen descended from Zilpah are mentioned in Genesis 46:15–18, including a woman Serah. The sons of Berah are traced to an extra generation.

There are fourteen families descending from Rachel's two sons^{□1} and another seven families descending from Bilhah^{□2}. Leaving out two who had already died^{□3} and two who were born in Egypt sixty-six persons went to Egypt with their wives and children^{□4}. If the two families of Er and Onan^{□5} are included plus the families of Joseph and Benjamin there were seventy^{□6}.

Jacob is given the desire of his heart. A wonderful meeting takes place. Judah, who is now being regarded as the oldest son, goes to meet Jacob and the family arrives in Goshen^{□1}. Then Joseph goes out to meet his father^{□2}. What a day it was! They had not seen

□1 12:10-20
□2 26:2

□1 46:1
□2 46:2
□3 46:3

□4 46:4

□1 15:13-14

□1 46:5-7

□1 46:19-22
□2 46:23-25
□3 46:12
□4 46:26
□5 46:12
□6 46:27

□1 46:28

• A wonderful meeting!

• Every desire which is within God's will- will be given to us if we inherit it with faith and patience

Jacob is given a continuing ministry

• Becomes a friend to Pharaoh

• Jacob and Joseph received 'many times' what they had given to God

• The high privilege of being instruments in the forward move of God's kingdom

each other for more than twenty years. Jacob had never expected to see Joseph again. Joseph had longed for God's promises to him many years before to be fulfilled. When we commit our ways to God His promises will be fulfilled and He will give us the desires of our hearts. Jacob had loved Rachel with a passionate love ever since he had first seen her. Joseph was the oldest of her sons. All his life he had wanted Joseph to be someone special. Years before when Joseph predicted that he would be an eminent person admired by his family, Jacob had kept the saying in mind^{□3}. Now the longings of his heart were fulfilled. Every desire which is within God's will will be given to us if we inherit it with faith and patience. Jacob's desires were given to him at last. He was a satisfied man, now that he had seen the face of Joseph^{□4}. He was given a place of security, a place to call home for the rest of his life^{□5}.

Jacob is given a continuing ministry. Jacob becomes a friend to Pharaoh, the most powerful man in the world in those days^{□1}. He could never have dreamed that the day would come when he would be treated by Pharaoh with such respect and honour. It was a time of reward for Jacob. God likes to reward us. Of course Jacob's life had been full of ups and downs. There had been times of deceitfulness and immaturity. There had been times of self-pity when he swore he would spend the rest of his life in mourning. But now all the desires of his heart were given him. All his sufferings and trials were being counteracted. Despite the great sufferings Jacob had been through '*he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart*'^{□2}. God is able to make it up to us for what we have suffered. Everyone who has left houses (as Joseph had left his house in Canaan) ... everyone who has lost brothers ... or children (as Joseph had left his brothers for many years and as Jacob had lost Joseph) . . . shall receive many times as much^{□3}. Jacob and Joseph received 'many times' what they had given to God and had the high privilege of being instruments in the forward move of God's kingdom.

□2 46:29

□3 37:11

□4 46:30
□5 46:31-47:6

□1 47:7-10

□2 Eccl 5:20

□3 Matt 19:29



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