

CHAPTER 47

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 47

This chapter gives an account of the presentation of five of Joseph's brethren, and then of his father, to Pharaoh, and of what passed between them, (^{<0470>}Genesis 47:1-10); of Joseph's settlement of them, according to the direction of Pharaoh, in the land of Rameses in Goshen, and of his provision for them there, (^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11,12); of his getting into his hands, for Pharaoh, the money, cattle, and lands, of the Egyptians, excepting the lands belonging to the priests, for corn he had supplied them with, (^{<0473>}Genesis 47:13-22); of his giving them seed to sow with, on condition of Pharaoh's having a fifth part of the produce, (^{<0473>}Genesis 47:23-26), of the increase of Jacob's substance in Egypt, and that of his children; of the time of his living there, and his approaching death, when he called Joseph to him, and obliged him by an oath to bury him in the burying place of his fathers, (^{<0477>}Genesis 47:27-31).

Ver. 1. *Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh,* etc.] After he had been with his father, had had an interview with him, and had took his leave of him for a time, he came to Pharaoh's court:

and said, my father, and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; Pharaoh had desired they might come, and Joseph now acquaints him they were come; not being willing it should be said that they were come in a private manner, and without his knowledge; nor to dispose of them himself without the direction and approbation of Pharaoh, who was superior to him; and he makes mention of their flocks and herds, and other substance, partly to show that they were not a mean beggarly family that came to live upon him, and partly that a proper place of pasturage for their cattle might be appointed to them:

and behold, they [are] in the land of Goshen; they are stopped at present, until they should have further directions and orders where to settle; and this is the rather mentioned, because it was the place Joseph proposed with himself to fix them in, if Pharaoh approved of it.

Ver. 2. *And he took some of his brethren*, etc.] Along with him, when he left his father in Goshen; the word for “some” signifies the extremity of a thing: hence some have fancied that he took some of the meanest and most abject, so Jarchi, lest if they had appeared to Pharaoh strong and robust, he should have made soldiers of them; others on the contrary think he took those that excelled most in strength of body, and endowments of mind, to make the better figure; others, that he took of both sorts, or some at both ends, the first and last, elder and younger; but it may be, he made no choice at all, but took some that offered next:

[even] five men: whom the Targum of Jonathan names as follow, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher; but Jarchi will have them to be Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Issachar and Benjamin; but on these accounts no dependence is to be had:

and presented them, unto Pharaoh; introduced them into his presence, that he might converse with them, and ask them what questions he thought fit.

Ver. 3. *And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, what [is] your occupation?* etc.] Which is the question he had told his brethren beforehand would be asked them, and prepared them to give an answer to it, (^{46:33}Genesis 46:33,34); which was perhaps an usual question Pharaoh asked of persons that came to settle in his dominions, that he might have no idle vagrants there, and that he might know of what advantage they were like to be of in his kingdom, and might dispose of them accordingly:

and they said unto Pharaoh, thy servants [are] shepherds, both we [and] also our fathers; (see ^{46:34}Genesis 46:34).

Ver. 4. *They said moreover unto Pharaoh, for to sojourn in the land are we come*, etc.] Not to obtain possessions and inheritances, as if natives, and to abide there always, but to continue for a little time; for they kept in mind that the land of Canaan was given to them as an inheritance, and would be possessed by them, in due time, and therefore had no thought for the present of continuing here long:

for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine [is] sore in the land of Canaan: they say nothing of the want of corn for themselves, because they could have it from Egypt, fetching it, and paying a price for it, but of pasture for their cattle; for the land of Canaan lying higher, was so scorched with the heat of the sun, and parched with drought, that scarce any grass grew upon it; whereas Egypt, and especially the land of Goshen,

lying lower, and being marshy and fenny places, near the Nile, had some grass growing on it, even when the Nile did not overflow to make it so fruitful as it sometimes was:

now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen: which request Joseph, no doubt, directed them to make, it being the spot he had chosen for them in his own mind, and even had promised it to his father; and which his brethren, by their short stay in it as they came along, saw would be very convenient for them, and was the true reason why Joseph instructed them to be particular in the account of their trade and business, that Pharaoh might be inclined of himself to propose it to them or however to grant it when requested.

Ver. 5. *And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph,* etc.] Who was present at the conversation that passed between him and his brethren:

saying, thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee; which is observed, not for Joseph's information, but to lead on to what he had to say further.

Ver. 6. *The land of Egypt [is] before thee,* etc.] To choose what part of it he should judge most suitable and agreeable to his father and brethren:

in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell, in the land of Goshen let them dwell; as is requested; and which was, as Pharaoh here suggests, the best part of the land, the most fertile and fruitful, and the fittest for cattle, being full of pastures through the river Nile and the canals of it, and Goshen being the most fertile portion in the land of Rameses, as in (⁽¹⁴⁷¹⁾Genesis 47:11); this, Dr. Shaw observes ^{f1829}, could be no other than what lay within two or three leagues at the most from the Nile, because the rest of the Egyptian Arabia, which reaches beyond the influence of this river to the eastward, is a barren inhospitable wilderness:

and if thou knowest [any] man of activity among them; strong in body, and of great parts, and endowments of mind, and of great skill, and diligence, and industry in the management of flocks and herds:

then make them rulers over my cattle; or "rulers of cattle over those that are mine" ^{f1830}: that is, over his shepherds, to take care that they do their work well and faithfully: from whence it appears that Pharaoh had flocks and herds and shepherds; and therefore it cannot be thought that the Egyptians in those times abstained from eating of animals, or that all shepherds, without exception, were an abomination to them, only foreign

ones that lived on spoil and plunder, and made excursions into their country for such purposes: the office he assigned to men of skill and industry was like that which Doeg the Edomite was in, who was the chief of the herdsmen of Saul, (~~1~~1 Samuel 21:7).

Ver. 7. *And Joseph brought in Jacob his father*, etc.] That is, some time after he had introduced his five brethren, and had gotten the grant of Goshen for them, when he sent, for his father from thence, or he came quickly after to Tanis or Memphis, where Pharaoh's court was:

and set him before Pharaoh; presented Jacob to him, and placed his father right before Pharaoh, perhaps in a chair, or on a seat, by Pharaoh's order, because of his age, and in honour to him:

and Jacob blessed Pharaoh; wished him health and happiness, prayed for his welfare, and gave him thanks for all his kindness to him and his; and he blessed him not only in a way of civility, as was usual when men came into the presence of princes, but in an authoritative way, as a prophet and patriarch, a man divinely inspired of God, and who had great power in prayer with him: the Targum of Jonathan gives us his prayer thus,

“may it be the pleasure (i.e. of God) that the waters of the Nile may be filled, and that the famine may remove from the world in thy days.”

Ver. 8. *And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, how old [art] thou?* Or, “how many are the days of the years of thy life?” which way of speaking Jacob takes up, and very pertinently makes use of in his answer that follows: Dr. Lightfoot^{f1831} thinks Pharaoh had never seen so old a man before, so grave a head, and so grey a beard, and in admiration asked this question.

Ver. 9. *Jacob said unto Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage [are] an hundred and thirty years*, etc.] He calls his life a “pilgrimage”; as every good man's is; they are not at home in their own country, they are seeking a better, even an heavenly one: Jacob's life was very emphatically and literally a pilgrimage; he first dwelt in Canaan, from thence he removed to Padanaram, and sojourned there awhile, and then came to Canaan again; for some time he dwelt at Succoth, and then at Shechem, and after that at Hebron, and now he was come down to Egypt, and he had spent one hundred and thirty years of his life in this way: and with this perfectly agrees the account of Polyhistor from Demetrius^{f1832}, an Heathen writer, who makes the age of Jacob when he came into Egypt one hundred and

thirty, and that year to be the third year of the famine, agreeably to (⁰¹⁸¹⁶Genesis 45:6);

few and evil have the days of the years of my life been; (see ⁰¹⁸⁴⁰Job 14:1); he calls his days but “few”, in comparison of the long lives of the patriarchs in former times, and especially in comparison of the days of eternity: and “evil”, because of the many afflictions he had met with; as from Esau, from whose face he was obliged to flee lest he should kill him, (⁰¹⁷⁴¹Genesis 27:41); and in Laban’s house, where he served for a wife fourteen years, and endured great hardships, (⁰¹³⁴¹Genesis 31:41); and at Shechem, where his daughter was ravished, (⁰¹³⁴²Genesis 34:2), and his sons made that slaughter of the Shechemites, (⁰¹³²⁵Genesis 34:25), which he feared would cause his name to stink, (⁰¹³⁴³Genesis 34:30); and at Ephrath, where he buried his beloved Rachel, (⁰¹³¹⁶Genesis 35:16); and at Hebron, where his sons brought him such an account as if they believed his beloved son Joseph was destroyed by a wild beast, (⁰¹³⁷²Genesis 37:32);

and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage; his grandfather Abraham lived to be one hundred and seventy five years of age, (⁰¹²⁷¹Genesis 25:7), and his father Isaac lived to the age of one hundred and eighty, (⁰¹³⁵⁸Genesis 35:28).

Ver. 10. *And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.]*

When he took his leave of him, he blessed him, in like manner as when he came into his presence, by wishing all happiness to him, and giving him thanks for the honour he had done him, and the favours he had conferred on him and his.

Ver. 11. *And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, etc.]* Houses to dwell in, lands to till, and pastures to feed their flocks and herds in:

in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh commanded; according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, the land of Rameses was a part of the land of Goshen: Jerom ^{f1833} says, that Rameses was a city the children of Israel built in Egypt, and that the province was formerly so called in which Jacob and his sons dwelt; but if it is the same with the city which was built by them, it is here called so by anticipation: but Aben Ezra is of opinion that it is not the same, and indeed the names are differently pointed and pronounced; that built by the Israelites is Raamses, and was one of the treasure cities of Pharaoh, and never inhabited by the Israelites; the

Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call this land the land of Pelusium; but this part of the country lay not in the Pelusiatic, but rather in the Heliopolitan home: Sir John Marsham is of opinion ^{f1834} that Rameses is the name of Pharaoh, the then present king of Egypt, as there were several of the kings of Egypt of that name; and therefore he thinks this land was the king's land, the land of King Rameses, which Joseph placed his father and brethren in by the order of Pharaoh: but it seems rather to be the name of a place, and is thought by Dr. Shaw ^{f1835} to be the same with Cairo: a very learned man ^{f1836} takes this to be the name of the land of Goshen, after the coming of the Israelites into it, and observes, that, in the Egyptian language, "Remsosh" signifies men that live a pastoral life, and so this country was called Ramses or Remsosh, as being the country of the shepherds; and the same learned writer ^{f1837} is of opinion, that the land of Goshen is the same with the Heracleotic nome, or district, which lies in the great island the Nile makes above Memphis, and which is now called by the Arabs Fium, it being the best and most fruitful part of all Egypt; which is confirmed by the testimony of Strabo, who says ^{f1838} it excels all the rest of the nomes, or districts; that it is the only one that produces olives, large and perfect, with fine fruit, which, if well gathered, make good oil, but all the rest of Egypt is without oil; moreover it produces wine not a little (whereas Herodotus says ^{f1839} vines were wanting in Egypt, i.e. in other parts of it), also corn and pulse, and other seeds: and that Fium, as it is now called, is the most fruitful, and is the most pleasant part of all Egypt, having vines, olives, figs, and fruits of all sorts, the most excellent, and some of which are not to be found in other parts of the country, the same, writer proves from various travellers and historians ^{f1840}; particularly Leo Africanus says ^{f1841}, that the Sahidic nome, in which he places Fium, excels all the other parts of Egypt in plenty of pulse, as peas, beans, etc. and of animals and linen, though all Egypt is very fruitful: and Vansleb ^{f1842} says, the province of Fium has been always esteemed one of the most excellent in all Egypt, because of its fruitful fields, its great riches, and pleasant gardens,--all that grows here is of a better taste than in other provinces: here are fields full of rose trees, and woods of fig trees, which are not in other parts of Egypt; the gardens are full of all manner of trees, pears, oranges, lemons, peaches, plums, and apricots:--in Fium only, says he, of all the provinces of Egypt, are vineyards--nor is any province so much cut into channels as this: they all proceed from Joseph's river, and have bridges over them, made with burnt bricks very strong; and tradition says they were built in the days of the Pharaohs; and it is the opinion of the Coptics,

that these kings employed the Israelites in making: bricks for those bridges, which is very probable, from the infinite number of men needful to make such a prodigious quantity: this part of Egypt where Israel dwelt, by all relations, being so excellent, the impudence of Celsus ^{f1843} the Heathen is very surprising, when he affirms that the nation of the Jews, becoming numerous in Egypt, were ordered to dwell apart as sojourners, and to feed their flocks in places vile and despicable.

Ver. 12. *And. Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and his father's household, with bread,* etc.] For though there might be in Rameses pasture sufficient for their cattle, yet not corn for their families, the famine still continuing; during which time Joseph, as a dutiful and affectionate son, and as a kind brother, supplied them with all necessary provision, signified by bread:

according to [their] families; according to the number of them, some of his brethren having more and others less in their families; and in proportion to their number he distributed food unto them, so that there was no want: or “according to the mouth of an infant” ^{f1844}; he nourished them like infants, he put as it were the bread into their mouths, and fed them with as much care and tenderness as infants are fed; and they had no more care to provide food for themselves than children have, such a full and constant supply was handed forth to them: in this Joseph was an eminent type of Christ, who supplies the wants of his people.

Ver. 13. *And [there was] no bread in all the land,* etc.] The land of Egypt and the parts adjacent, but in Pharaoh's storehouses, all being consumed that were in private hands the first two years of the famine:

for the famine [was] very sore; severe, pressed very hard:

so that the land of Egypt, and [all] the land of Canaan, fainted by reason of the famine; that is, the inhabitants of both countries, their spirits sunk, as well as their flesh failed for want of food: or “raged” ^{f1845}; became furious, and were like madmen, as the word signifies; according to Kimchi ^{f1846}, they were at their wits' end, knew not what to do, as Aben Ezra interprets it, and became tumultuous; it is much they had not in a violent manner broke open the storehouses of corn, and took it away by force; that they did not must be owing to the providence of God, which restrained them, and to the care and prudence of Joseph as a means, who, doubtless, had well fortified the granaries; and very probably there were a body of soldiers

placed everywhere, who were one of the three parts or states of the kingdom of Egypt, as Diodorus Siculus^{f1847} relates; to which may be added, the mild and gentle address of Joseph to the people, speaking kindly to them, giving them hopes of a supply during the famine, and readily relieving them upon terms they could not object to.

Ver. 14. *And Joseph gathered up all the money*, etc.] Not that he went about to collect it, or employed men to do it, but he gathered it, being brought to him for corn as follows: even all

that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: by which means those countries became as bare of money as of provisions:

and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house: into his repository, as the Targum of Jonathan, into his treasury, not into his own house or coffers, in which he acted the faithful part to Pharaoh; for it was with his money he bought the corn, built storehouses, kept men to look after them to sell the corn; wherefore the money arising from thence belonged to him; nor did he do any injury to the people: they sold their corn in the time of plenty freely; he gave them a price for it, it then bore, and he sold it out again to them, at a price according to the season; nor was it ever complained of, that it was an exorbitant one; it was highly just and necessary it should be at a greater price than when it was bought in, considering the great expense in the collection, preservation, and distribution of it: it must be a vast sum of money he amassed together, and Dr. Hammond^{f1848} thinks it probable that this Pharaoh, who, by Joseph's advice, got all this wealth, is the same with Remphis, of whom Diodorus Siculus^{f1849} says, that he spent his time in minding the taxes and heaping up riches from all quarters, and left more behind him than any of the kings that reigned before, even in silver and gold four million talents, the same that Herodotus^{f1850} calls Rhampsinitus, who, he says, had the greatest quantity of money of any of the kings of Egypt.

Ver. 15. *And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan*, etc.] It had been all spent in the third, fourth, and fifth years of the famine; for it seems to be at the end of the fifth, or beginning of the sixth year of the famine, that this was the case, since we after read of a second or following year, which was very plainly the last, since seed was given them to sow the land with, which shows the time of drought to be near at an end:

all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, give us bread; freely, for nothing, since they had no money to buy any with: no mention is made of the Canaanites, who could not presume to come and ask for corn on such a footing:

for why should we die in thy presence? before his eyes, he not relieving them when it was in his power to do it; they knew such an argument as this would work upon a mind so humane, tender, and generous as was Joseph's:

for the money faileth; all was gone, they had none left to purchase corn with; or they suggest they should not have desired to have had it at free cost.

Ver. 16. *And Joseph said, give your cattle*, etc.] Oxen, sheep, horses, asses, as follows:

and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail; that is, corn for cattle, if they had no money to give.

Ver. 17. *And they brought their cattle unto Joseph*, etc.] Which they might the more readily do, since there was scarce any grass to feed them with; and though some of them were creatures used for food, yet might be so lean and poor for want of grass, as not to be fit to eat; and besides, they could do better without flesh than without bread:

and Joseph gave them bread [in exchange] for horses; with which Egypt abounded, to which many places of Scripture have respect, (^{<6876>}Deuteronomy 17:16) (^{<1108>}1 Kings 10:28 ^{<2109>}Song of Solomon 1:9 ^{<2301>}Isaiah 31:1,3);

and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds; the sheep and the oxen; which shows that these creatures were bred and fed by them, and were, no doubt, slain, and used for food:

and for the asses; which were used for carrying burdens:

and he fed them with bread for all their cattle, for that year; which seems to be the sixth year of the famine: one would wonder what Joseph should do with all their cattle, where put them, and feed them, in such a time of drought; though it is probable the number was not exceeding large, since they only fetched one year's provision of bread.

Ver. 18. *When the year was ended, they came unto him the second year,* etc.] Which seems to be the seventh and last year of the years of famine; not the second year of the famine, as Jarchi, but the second year of their great distress, when having spent all their money they parted with their cattle; for it cannot be thought that they should be drained of their money and cattle too in one year:

and said unto him, we will not hide [it] from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; both these were well known to Joseph, and therefore cannot be the things which they say they would not hide: Musculus thinks it should be rendered in the past tense, “we have not hid”; this they told him the last year, that their money was gone, and he knew he had their cattle for their last year’s provision: the sense seems to be this, that seeing their money was spent, and their cattle were in the hands of Joseph, they would not, and could not conceal from him what follows:

there is not enough left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands; and the one were starving and the other desolate.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land?* etc.] Beholding their miserable condition, and not helping them; die they must unless they had bread to eat, and their land die also if they had not seed to sow; that is, would become desolate, as the Septuagint version renders it; so Ben Melech observes, that land which is desolate is as if it was dead, because it produces neither grass nor fruit, whereas when it does it looks lively and cheerful:

buy us and our land for bread; they were willing to sell themselves and their land too for bread to support their lives, nothing being dearer to a man than life:

and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh; both should be his; they would hold their land of him, and be tenants to him:

and give [us] seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land may not be desolate; entirely so; some parts of it they could sow a little upon, as on the banks of the Nile, or perhaps that river might begin to overflow, or they had some hopes of it, especially from Joseph’s prediction they knew this was the last year of famine, and therefore it was proper to sow the ground some time in this, that they might have a crop for the provision of the next year; and they had no seed to sow, and if they were not furnished

with it, the famine must unavoidably continue, notwithstanding the flow of the Nile.

Ver. 20. *And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh*, etc.] Not for himself, nor did he entail it on his posterity, but for Pharaoh, who became sole proprietor of it:

for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them; everyone that had a field sold it to buy bread for his family, so great was the famine; no mention is made of their houses, either because these went with their lands, or they were so mean that they were of little account, and would scarce bear any price; for as Diodorus Siculus^{f1851} reports of the Egyptians, they were less careful of the structure of their houses, and exceeded all bounds in the magnificence of their sepulchres:

so the land became Pharaoh's; not only with respect to dominion and government, so it was before, but with respect to property; before, every man's field, and garden, and vineyard were his own, and he was in possession thereof for his own use, but now being sold, were Pharaoh's; and they held them of him, and paid a rent for them in a manner hereafter directed by a law.

Ver. 21. *And as for the people, he removed them*, etc.] From the places where they dwelt, that it might appear they had no more property there, and might forget it, and be more willing to pay rent elsewhere; and their posterity hereafter could have no notion of its being theirs, or plead prescription; and besides, by such a removal and separation of the inhabitants of cities, some to one place, and some to another, sedition and mutiny might be prevented: he had them

to cities, from [one] end of the borders of Egypt, even unto the [other] end thereof; according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, those that dwelt in provinces, or in country towns and villages, he removed to cities, and those that dwelt in cities he removed into provinces, and placed them at the utmost distance from their former habitations, for the reasons before given; and the above Targums suggest another reason, to teach the Egyptians not to reproach the Israelites with being exiles and strangers, when they were all of them removed from their native places, and were strangers, where they were.

Ver. 22. *Only the land of the priests bought he not*, etc.] Not from any special affection for them, or any superstitious veneration of them, which

can never be thought of so good a man, but for a reason following, which shows they had no need to sell them:

for the priests had a portion [assigned them], by Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; they had a certain allowance by the day of provision granted them, on which they lived; so Herodotus says ^{f1852} of the priests of Egypt, that they spend nothing of their own, but sacred food is provided for them, and great plenty of the flesh of geese and oxen is given daily to everyone of them. And this was a delicate affair, which Joseph could not intermeddle with, but in prudence must leave it as he found it, and do as had been used to be done; this depending on the will and pleasure of Pharaoh, if not upon the constitution of the land, as it seems to be from Diodorus Siculus ^{f1853}, who divides Egypt into three parts; and the first part he assigns to the priests, who, according to him, were maintained out of their own revenues. Some understand this of “princes” ^{f1854}, the word sometimes being used of them, and interpret it of the officers and courtiers of Pharaoh, his nobles, that dwelt in his palace, and had their portion of food from him; but the former sense seems best:

wherefore they sold not their lands; they were not obliged to it, having provision from the king’s table, or by his appointment.

Ver. 23. *Then Joseph said unto the people,* etc.] After he had bought their land, and before the removal of them to distant parts:

behold, I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: which he observes to them, that they might take notice of it, and confirm it, or object if they had anything to say to the contrary:

lo, [here is] seed for you, and ye shall sow the land: by which it should seem that they were not removed from the spot where they lived, but retained their own land under Pharaoh, and had seed given them to sow it with, which may seem contrary to (⁰¹⁴⁷¹Genesis 47:21); wherefore that must be understood of a purpose and proposal to remove them, and not that it was actually done; or, as Musculus gives the sense, Joseph by a public edict called all the people from the extreme parts of Egypt to the cities nearest to them, and there proclaimed the subjection of them, and their lands to Pharaoh, but continued them to them as tenants of his; unless it should be said, that in those distant parts to which they were sent, land was put into their hands to till and manure for the king, and have seed given

them to sow it with; but this seems to be said to them at the same time the bargain was made.

Ver. 24. *And it shall come to pass, in the increase,* etc.] When the land shall produce an increase, and it shall be gathered in:

that you shall give the fifth [part] unto Pharaoh; a fifth part of the increase:

and four parts shall be your own; for the following uses, one part

for seed of the field: to sow again with for the next year: a second part

for your food; for food for themselves: a third part

for them of your household; their servants and maids: and the fourth part

for food for your little ones; for their children, be they young or old; or however four parts of five he proposed they should have for their own use, and for the maintenance of their families, which was a kind and generous proposal, when all might have been demanded, and they and theirs treated as slaves.

Ver. 25. *And they said, thou hast saved our lives,* etc.] Preserved them from death through famine, by laying up stores of corn, which he had sold out to them for their money, cattle, and land, or otherwise they must have perished, they and theirs, and this favour they thankfully acknowledge:

let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants; signifying, that they esteemed it a great favour to be so on the foot of the bargain made with them, and they desired a continuance in it.

Ver. 26. *And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day,* etc.] With the consent of Pharaoh, his nobles, and all the people of the land, who readily came into it; and so it became, a fundamental law of their constitution, and which continued to the times of Moses, the writer of this history:

[that] Pharaoh should have the fifth [part]; that is, of the increase the whole land of Egypt produced:

except the land of the priests only, [which] became not Pharaoh's; it not being bought by him; so Diodorus Siculus^{f1855}, as he assigns the first part

of the land to the priests, so he says they were free from all taxes and tribute, and next to the king were possessed of honour and authority.

Ver. 27. *And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen,* etc.] The historian returns to the account of the Israelites, having before observed the placing of them in Goshen by Joseph, at the direction of Pharaoh, in compliance with their own request; and here they continued until they were grown more numerous, when they were obliged to spread themselves further in this same country:

and they had possessions therein; fields and vineyards, as the Targum of Jonathan; all the land was Pharaoh's, and they rented of him as his people did, it may be supposed:

and grew, and multiplied exceedingly; even in Jacob's lifetime they grew rich and numerous.

Ver. 28. *And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years,* etc.] He lived just the same term of years with Joseph in Egypt as he had lived with him in Syria and Canaan, (^{<037D>}Genesis 37:2); about two hours' walk from Fium are now to be seen the ruins of an ancient town, which the Coptics say was inhabited by the patriarch Jacob, and for this cause they name it, yet, Modsellet Jacob, or the tabernacle of Jacob ^{f1856}, which place is supposed to be in the land of Goshen, (see ^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11);

so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years; he was one hundred and thirty when he stood before Pharaoh, (^{<047D>}Genesis 47:9); and now had lived in Egypt seventeen years, as in the above clause, which together make up the sum; and this exact time of the years of his life is given by Polyhistor from Demetrius, an Heathen writer ^{f1857}.

Ver. 29. *And the time drew nigh that Israel must die,* etc.] As all men must, by the appointment of God, even good men, the Israel of God; though they shall not die a spiritual death, nor an eternal one, yet a corporeal one, which is for their good, and is a blessing to them; the sting being removed, and so not a penal evil, which is owing to Christ's dying for them, who has abolished death as such; and there is a time fixed for their death, beyond which they must not live, and before which they must not die, but when the time comes there is no avoiding it; the time of Jacob's death was drawing on, as he perceived by the great decline of his natural strength, and perhaps by a divine impulse on his mind:

and he called his son Joseph; sent for him, by a messenger, to come to him:

and said unto him; when he was come:

if now I have found grace in thy sight; which is not spoken in a way of submission, as from an inferior to a superior, as the phrase is sometimes used; or as signifying what would be esteemed as a favour should it be granted, but it is as if he should say, if thou hast any filial affection for me as a parent, and art willing to show love and respect to me, do as follows:

put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: a gesture in swearing, as Jarchi observes, (^{Q124D}Genesis 24:2,3); adding, for explanation's sake,

and deal kindly and truly with me; “kindly”, by promising and swearing to do what he after desires; and “truly”, by observing his oath, and fulfilling his promise:

bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt; not choosing to lie among idolaters at death, with whom he cared not to have any fellowship in life.

Ver. 30. *But I will lie with my fathers*, etc.] Abraham and Isaac, whose bodies lay in the land of Canaan, where Jacob desired to be buried; partly to express his faith in the promised land, that it should be the inheritance of his posterity; and partly to draw off their minds from a continuance in Egypt, and to incline them to think of removing thither at a proper time, and to confirm them in the belief of their enjoyment of it; as well as to intimate his desire after, and faith in the heavenly glory he was going to, of which Canaan was a type:

and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt; into the land of Canaan:

and bury me in their burying place; in the burying place of his fathers, in the cave of Machpelah, near Hebron; (see ^{Q143B}Genesis 49:30,31);

and he said, I will do as thou hast said; Joseph promised his father to fulfil his request, and do as he had desired of him.

Ver. 31. *And he said, swear unto me*, etc.] This he required, not from any distrust of Joseph, but to show his own eagerness, and the intenseness of his mind about this thing, how much he was set upon it, and what an important thing it was with him; as also, that if he should have any objections made to it, or arguments used with him to divert him from it, by

Pharaoh or his court, he would be able to say his father had bound him by an oath to do it, which would at once stop their mouths, and be judged a sufficient reason for what he did, (see ^{<01516>}Genesis 50:5,6):

and he sware unto him; not only gave his promise, but confirmed it with an oath:

and Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head: not in a way of civil respect to Joseph, giving him thanks for the assurance he had given him, that he would bury him, not in Egypt, but in Canaan; but in a religious way to God, giving thanks to him that he had lived to see his son Joseph, who, according to the promise, would close his eyes, and that he had inclined his heart to fulfil his request; though some think that no more is meant, than that after Jacob had spent himself in discoursing with Joseph, he sunk down and reclined on his pillow at his bed's head, to take some rest; for as for what the apostle says in (^{<58121>}Hebrews 11:21); that refers to another thing at another time; (see Gill on "^{<58121>}Hebrews 11:21").