

**"THE HOUSE OF JACOB" (GEN.46:27) & JACOB'S "KINDRED" (ACTS 7:14)
70 OR 75? Floyd Nolen Jones, Th.D., Ph.D.**

What is the Christian to think when he encounters footnotes such as that at Acts 7:14, which informs him that the Septuagint (LXX) *conforms* in reading "75" in Genesis 46:26-27 (and at Exo.1:5) whereas the Hebrew supposedly errs and contradicts Acts in recording "70" in the Genesis passage.

The footnote continues to add that the 5 missing names in the Hebrew text are preserved in the LXX at Genesis 46:20 where Machir, the son of Manasseh, and Machir's son Galaad (Hebrew = Gilead) are recorded along with Ephraim's two son's Taam (Hebrew = Tahan) and Sutalaam (Hebrew = Shuthelah) and his son Edom (Hebrew = Eran). We are further informed that as the Hebrew text contradicts the Acts account regarding the number of Jacob's family that traveled down to Egypt during the severe famine, the Hebrew text is corrupt here (and at Deu.10:22 as well as Exo.1:5 as they also record "70") and must be corrected by the LXX to bring the count into agreement.

Here is a straightforward example of scholars' placing the Septuagint on a level equal to, yes – at times even above the Hebrew text. But such recourse is totally unwarranted. All that is required is, to begin with, faith in God's many promises that He would preserve His Word – forever! Then careful, prudent examination will expose that there is no real contradiction at all.

However, even a casual reflection on the ramifications involved in accepting the reading of the LXX in the Acts 7 and Genesis 46 passages under discussion will disclose the fallacious nature of so doing. Is it really reasonable or likely that Stephen (having been dragged in before the Sanhedrin by a mob and now in the middle of a spirit-filled address before the very men who had caused the death of his Lord – while speaking as a Hebrew to the Hebrews) would have quoted from a GREEK Old Testament manuscript of Genesis in which five names had been added in violation of the Hebrew laws governing Scripture transmission? We trow not! Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Psalm 12:6-7 and Proverbs 30:6 all declare to neither add nor subtract from God's Word.

Are we to suppose that Stephen is going to "convert" the Sanhedrin who have already crucified Christ and/or possibly save his own life by quoting to them from a verse that added five names to the Scriptures which they used in the synagogue every Sabbath? No small wonder they killed him! They would have looked upon him as a perverter of Scripture. Such an act is not that which is recorded in the account.

They slew Stephen for confronting them with the person of the Lord Jesus – that He was Christ indeed and, rather than receive Him as such, they had murdered Him as their fathers had done to His predecessors, the prophets (Acts 7:51-53)! They were further enraged by Stephen's call to repentance and his accusation that they had broken the Law. *Never* is there any suggestion whatever that their rage in any way resulted from consternation over Stephen's having perverted the Scriptures.

Acts 7:14 and Genesis 46:27 are not referring to the same entity. Stephen is speaking of something else – a different entity, a different total. Actually, three totals (66, 70, & 75) are given in the scriptures under investigation. Genesis 46:26-27 (cp. Exo.1:5 & Deu.10:22) records two, 66 and 70.

First, Genesis 46:26 states that 66 souls came "*with*" Jacob to Egypt. Furthermore, these 66 are said to have come "out of his loins." Beginning at Genesis 46:9 and going through verse 25, we find 66 males listed of which two (Er and Onan, vs. 12) have already died leaving a total of 64 males. If we now add the two girls from verses 15 (Dinah, a daughter) and 17 (Serah, a granddaughter), we account for the 66 souls "from Jacob's loins" who came *with* him to Egypt (Gen.46:26). These facts are reflected in the following simplified chart.

Jacob's 11 sons & one daughter	12	Genesis 5:22
Reuben's sons	4	Genesis 46:9
Simeon's sons	6	Genesis 46:10
Levi's sons	3	Genesis 46:11
Judah's 3 sons & 2 grandsons	5	Genesis 46:12
Issachar's sons	4	Genesis 46:13
Zebulun's sons	3	Genesis 46:14
Gad's sons	7	Genesis 46:16
Asher's 4 sons, 1 daughter & 2 grandsons	7	Genesis 46:17
Dan's son	1	Genesis 46:23
Naphtali's sons	4	Genesis 46:24
Benjamin's sons	10	Genesis 46:21
	66 total	Genesis 46:26

Next, Genesis 46:27 adds Joseph and his two sons (Manasseh & Ephraim, vs. 20), all 3 of whom were already down in Egypt. This brings our running total to $66 + 3 = 69$. As the "66" are said to have been those who came *with* Jacob, he has not yet been included. Now we so do and obtain the 70 souls included in the term, "the house of Jacob" (vs. 27). Indeed, the biblical definition for "the house of Jacob" is clearly stated as being Jacob and "all his seed" which would include Joseph and his two sons (vs. 27, cp. vs. 6). This total may also be obtained by merely adding the 33¹ of verse 15, the 16 (vs. 18), the 14 (vs. 22), and the 7 (vs. 25). That is: $33 + 16 + 14 + 7 = 70$.

Stephen is neither mistaken nor is he citing from the LXX² when he gives the number as "75". He is speaking of a different entity which he calls Jacob's "*kindred*." The terms "house of Jacob" and "kindred," though similar, are not synonymous. As we have shown, the "house of Jacob" numbered 70, and it consisted of only Jacob as well as "his seed" – those who were said to have "come out of his loins."

However, Jacob's "kindred" that Joseph "sent" for to come "to him" (Acts 7:14) are the 66³ already cited plus *the wives*⁴ of his sons that came down to Egypt with their father. Moreover, it is back in Genesis 46:26 where we are given the clue that these wives are the key to differentiating between the "70" and the "75". There we read that 66 souls came with Jacob down to Egypt: "besides Jacob's sons' wives." These daughters-in-law were not included as having to do with the "house of Jacob"

¹ This "33" actually includes Jacob himself. Beginning at vs. 8, Reuben and his sons number 5, Simeon and his sons = 7, Levi and sons = 4, Judah and his "sons" total 8, Issachar and sons = 5, and Zebulun and his sons number 4. These sum to 33 ($5 + 7 + 4 + 8 + 5 + 4 = 33$), but as Er and Onan (two of Judah's sons, vs. 12) died in Canaan, they must be subtracted. This leaves 31. We now add Jacob's daughter, Dinah, bringing the total to 32. We have already established above that Jacob must be included in order to obtain the 70 of verse 27; hence, we go back to verse 8 and now include him and establish the 33 of vs. 15. Keil & Delitzsch concur: *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 370.

It should be noted that as Gen.46:15 reads "daughters" (plural) the temptation is to conclude that the 33rd person must surely refer to an un-named 2nd daughter rather than Jacob. But the temptation must be resisted as this reasonable solution immediately fails upon further analysis. As already stated in the text of the main body, Genesis 46:9 through verse 25 lists a total of 66 males, and when we subtract Er and Onan (vs. 12) we arrive at 64. Dinah (vs. 15) and Serah (vs. 17) bring the total back to the 66 souls "from Jacob's loins" who came *with* him to Egypt (Gen.46:26; see chart above).

Obviously, then, adding another daughter at vs. 15 would yield 67 and exceed our stated limit; thus it must be incorrect (it would also bring the final total to 71 rather than 70). Accordingly, vs. 15 is seen as a cumulative running statement, i.e., total sons = 31, total daughters = one, and therefore we must now include Jacob to obtain 33.

² Many commentaries reason that as Stephen was a Hellenistic Jew, he would naturally use the Septuagint.

³ Obviously, neither Joseph and his sons (Gen.46:27) nor Jacob are included in Acts 7:14 (note: "to him").

⁴ Scripture records Jacob as having only one biological daughter (Dinah, Gen.46:15; 30:21); thus, Genesis 46:7 which mentions his "daughters" - plural - must refer to Jacob's daughters-in-law (cp.46:5 & 26).

(Gen.46:26) which numbered only those "who came out of his loins," but they are part of Jacob's "kindred"⁵ that Joseph sent for.

Now Jacob had twelve sons (Gen.35:22). To determine how many of their wives went down to Egypt, we simply take the 75 "kindred," subtract the 66 who came from Jacob's loins (as they are included in the "kindred") and obtain only nine rather than twelve. That is, 9 of the 75 "kindred" that came to Egypt *with* Jacob did not come from his loins, and Gen.46:26 has alerted us to the fact that they are the son's wives. Therefore, 3 of the 12 son's wives ($12 - 9 = 3$) were not numbered in the "kindred."

Of course, we must immediately exclude Joseph's wife for she was already in Egypt and thus was not "sent" for (Acts 7:14). This accounts for one of the three. A second is found earlier at Genesis 38:12 where we learn that Judah's wife had died previously.⁶ Thus, one of the other son's must also have become a widower. We may deduce that it was almost certainly Simeon as special attention is called to the fact that Shaul, his youngest son, was by a Canaanitess (Gen.46:10).

The three differing totals – 66, 70, and 75 – have now all been established and explained. Yet more to the point, the real issue is still the "5 missing names" which are "preserved" in the LXX. What of these five names? They are man's forgery, not the words of God!

The proof is straightforward and undeniable. Joseph wed at age 30 (Gen.41:45-46). His father, Jacob, and kindred joined him in Egypt nine years later (Gen.41:53; cp. 45:6; after the seven years of plenty and near the end of the second year of the famine that followed). Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph *during* the seven years of plenty (41:50-53). Further, the context of Acts 7:14 is unmistakable – it refers to Joseph's family that joined him in Egypt at the end of these nine years. Manasseh, the elder son, could, therefore, be no more than eight years of age at that time!

Manifestly, the LXX that is today extant has been proven spurious for Manasseh and Ephraim are far too young to be fathers when Joseph's "kindred" went down to him in Egypt – much less grandfathers!⁷ The reading in the LXX is grossly untenable.

Thus, the "5 missing names" in the Hebrew text at Genesis 46:20 (Machir, the son of Manasseh, Machir's son Gilead, Ephraim's two son's Tahan and Shuthelah along with his son Eran) are seen to have been interpolated by conjecture from Genesis 50:23 and Numbers 26:29, 35-36 (vv. 33, 39 and 40 in LXX). The author of the LXX has tried to force Genesis 46:20 to conform to Acts 7:14. The painfully obvious conclusion before us is that – by not grasping the true explanation of the 66, 70, and 75 – the translator of the Septuagint tried to "correct" what he perceived as a "scribal error" in the Hebrew text. In so doing, he *created* one.

⁵ It should not be thought that this author is the first to realize this truth. To my knowledge, Dr. William Hales was the first [A *New Analysis of Chronology*, 2nd ed., Vol. 2 of 4, (London: 1830 – 1st ed. 1809), p. 159]. However, he wrongly adopted the LXX's longer chronology in Genesis 5 with the stated intent of lowering the "superstitious veneration of the Hebrew Verity or supposed immaculate purity of the Masoretic editions of the Hebrew Text to the proper level of rational respect." He professed that his chronology was based upon the Septuagint, rectified by the aid of Josephus. His 3 volume 1809-12 first edition was later extended to four. Hales largely agreed with many of the earlier erroneous conclusions of John Jackson [*Chronological Antiquities*, (London: 1752); Jackson was the first English chronologer of the "modern" school to break away from the true foundation of the Hebrew text]. Dr. Hales wrongly set the Creation at BC 5411 (rather than around 4000) and concluded that the period of 480 years as given in I Kings 6:1 in the Hebrew text was a forgery "foisted into the text."

⁶ As a passing interest, Jacob's wives (Rachel, Gen.36:19 and Leah 49:31; context etc.) are also dead.

⁷ Having uncritically accepted the LXX's reading of Genesis 46:20 where Machir the son of Manasseh, Machir's son Gilead, Ephraim's two son's Tahan and Shuthelah as well as his son Eran have been added, Dr. Hales failed to detect this fatal flaw in his beloved LXX. The reader will note from this brief paragraph that the most modest investigation would have exposed the error of recording these five names here. Indeed, all commentaries, Bible encyclopedias, biblical footnotes, seminarians, pastors, scholars etc., that likewise promote this flaw stand equally guilty of failing to trust God's infallible preserved Word as found in the Hebrew Masoretic Text and are to be further blamed for not having done their basic homework. Shame!