

What was the land of Goshen in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/land-of-Goshen.html>

Goshen was a part of Egypt that bordered on the Promised Land that God had given to Abraham for his descendants (Genesis 12:7). The land of Goshen was located in the eastern part of the Nile Delta. Genesis 45:10 is the first mention of Goshen, when Joseph told his brothers to bring their father and settle there. Goshen was far enough from the center of Egyptian life that the influx of Hebrews would not affect daily affairs or Egyptian culture, yet it was still under Egypt's control. With Pharaoh's consent (Genesis 47:5), Joseph assigned his family a place near their God-given heritage, possibly so that they would never forget the land that would one day be theirs. Even in Goshen, the Lord prospered the children of Israel and grew their number (Genesis 47:27; Acts 7:17).

Centuries later, the Hebrews had so increased in population that they posed a potential threat to the ruler of Egypt. Goshen was taking on a life of its own, and the Pharaoh feared for his kingdom. It was in Goshen that the Hebrews were enslaved by the Egyptians and forced to make bricks and build cities (Exodus 1:8-11). Even though Goshen was near the Promised Land, it was still Egypt and not the place God wanted His people to establish a nation. He allowed the children of Israel to experience the misery of slavery to motivate them to move when the time came.

When it was time for the Israelites to leave their life of slavery, God raised up Moses to be their leader. Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let the people of Israel go, so God sent plagues upon the land. During the plagues, God differentiated between Goshen and Egypt. Concerning the fourth plague, for example, the Lord said, "On that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will

be there, so that you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land” (Exodus 8:22; cf. 9:26).

In the Bible, Egypt was an idolatrous nation in rebellion against God. Although populated by God’s people, Goshen was still part of Egypt. Spiritually, Goshen can represent those worldly places in our lives that we excuse because we are comfortable there and because those places are acceptable to the culture around us. Living in a spiritual Goshen may not be overt sin, but it represents an area of compromise. It’s not where God wants us to be; He has more for us than what’s available in Goshen, and staying there will keep us from becoming all God intends us to be. God often must allow us to experience defeat or pain in our Goshen in order to motivate us to leave. The Promised Land awaits. Wise people are willing to leave their spiritual Goshens and follow the Lord to His better place.