

How many members of the house of Jacob came to Egypt?

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- (a) Seventy souls (Genesis 46:27)
- (b) Seventy-five souls (Acts 7:14)

Shabir Ally asks, “How many members of the house of Jacob came to Egypt?”¹ He cites Genesis 46:27 and Acts 7:14, implying that these scriptures somehow form a “clear contradiction” that should lead us to doubt the integrity of our English bible. For the benefit of our readers, we will quote the authorized text of these two passages below:

Genesis 46:27

(27) And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, *were* two souls: **all the souls of the house of Jacob**, which came into Egypt, *were* threescore and ten.

Acts 7:14

(14) Then sent **Joseph**, and called **his father Jacob** to *him*, **and all his kindred**, threescore and fifteen souls.

Our Short Answer

Since our skeptic asks only concerning “**the house of Jacob**” (instead of **Joseph’s kindred**) the answer is easy. The answer is “threescore and ten” or “**seventy**” as indicated in his proposed answer “**(a)**” as cited from Genesis 46:27.

Our Long Answer

Although the specific question was not difficult, our opponent implies that these two verses contradict. Among “scholars” and “bible commentaries” there seems to be some controversy over these verses, based on certain flawed assumptions:

- 1) An assumption that the “seventy” of Genesis 46:27 represents a literal count of people who walked into Egypt.
- 2) An assumption that the “seventy five” of Acts 7:14 represents a literal count of people who walked into Egypt.
- 3) An assumption that these counts were meant to refer to the same set of people, thus representing an “error” or at least a “discrepancy.”
- 4) An assumption that Stephen misquoted the book of Genesis, instead citing from a flawed translation of the Hebrew scripture called the Greek Septuagint (sometimes designated as “the LXX.”)

¹, “101 Clear Contradictions in the Bible”, Shabir Ally, Al-Attique Int’l Islamic Publications, <http://www.islamway.com/english/images/library/contradictions.htm>

Although these were not stated within his short question, it seems that at least one or more of these assumptions fueled his claim of a “clear contradiction.” Thus, our answer would not be complete without answering these assumptions. We shall see why each of these assumptions are flawed, and prevent any further confusion on this topic.

These verses do not represent a literal head count

It seems to be sometimes misunderstood that Genesis 46:27 (and thus Acts 7:14) is meant to represent a literal head-count of living people that entered Egypt, as if this were written by border patrol officials issuing passports or evaluating immigration policy. However, these counts were not intended to count every person:

Genesis 46:26

(26) All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, **besides Jacob's sons' wives**, all the souls *were* threescore and six;

Jacob, Joseph, and the two immediate sons of Joseph combine with the previously defined “sixty-six” of Genesis 46:26 to form the familiar “seventy” of verse 27. Because these counts specifically excluded wives, it is reasonable to interpret these verses within the normal context of recording lineage through the male parent.

These sons came out of his loins

Genesis 46:26

(26) All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, **which came out of his loins**, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six;

Genesis 46:26 defines its context with the phrase “which came out of his loins.” This is important to note, because this genealogical count of “seventy” includes children that, at that specific time, had not yet been born. However, the verse describes all of these children as entering Egypt, within the context of including those “which came out of his loins.”

For example, the seventy of Genesis includes ten sons of Benjamin, who was youngest son of Jacob, who would have been but a small child when Joseph was sold into slavery.

Genesis 46:21

(21) And the sons of Benjamin *were* **Belah**, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and **Naaman**, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and **Ard**.

Even if Benjamin took multiple wives at a very young age, it is unlikely that he physically fathered ten children before he physically crossed the Egyptian border. To demonstrate, **Naaman** and **Ard** are only sons of Benjamin in the Hebrew genealogical sense. Technically, they are his grandsons, being sired by Benjamin's son **Belah**.

Numbers 26:40

(40) And the sons of **Bela** were **Ard** and **Naaman**: *of Ard*, the family of the Ardites: *and* of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

Without drawing family trees and pinpointing relative ages between the sons of Jacob, this example should suffice to demonstrate that the numbers of the Genesis account was never intended to be a literal "head count" as we tend to favor today. Wives were not counted, but when recorded after the fact, sons and grandsons were [intentionally] included that had not yet been born.

Hebrews 7:9-10

(9) And as I may so say, **Levi also**, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham.

(10) **For he was yet in the loins of his father**, when Melchisedec met him.

Paul demonstrates that **this idiom** was not only used in the time of Moses, but also expected to be understood by his audience within the writings of the New Testament. Although this idiom may seem unusual to us today, Levi is spoken of as existing in the "loins of his father" before Isaac (his grandfather) or Jacob (his literal father) was conceived!

Clearly, Genesis never intended to tell us how many Israelites physically traveled across the Egyptian border. The numbers of "three score and six" and "threescore and ten" must be interpreted within the self-defined biblical context of genealogy, using an idiom that was well known to Moses and Paul alike.

Who are the "three score and ten" of Genesis 46:27?

The previous verses specifically name "**all the souls of the house of Jacob**" (see Gen 46:6-27). The number of "three score and ten" is formed by combining the "**three score and six**" of verse 26, **plus four**. These four include Jacob himself, his recently discovered son Joseph, and also Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Who are the "three score and fifteen" of Acts 7:14?

Stephen refers to "**Joseph, and his father Jacob, and all his kindred**" with wording that is similar to the Genesis account. The Genesis account added **sixty-six** and **four** to get **seventy**, and likewise Stephen has taken this **seventy** and **added five**.

In context, Stephen spoke concerning **Joseph** and **Joseph's kindred**, so it should not surprise us that Stephen would include the rest of Joseph's kindred that were excluded from the seventy of Genesis 46:27.

Acts 7:13-14

(13) And at the second *time* **Joseph** was made known to his brethren; **and Joseph's kindred** was made known unto Pharaoh.

(14) **Then sent Joseph**, and called **his father Jacob** to *him*, **and all his kindred**, threescore and fifteen souls.

Stephen counts Joseph, and all his kindred. Although Moses counts Jacob's seventy, including Benjamin, and Benjamin's children, and two of Benjamin's grandchildren, Joseph and his two children seem to be added almost as an afterthought.

Yet in his speech to the council, Stephen specifically names the **kindred of Joseph**. Thus, it is a reasonable deduction that he included **Joseph's grandchildren** (see 1 Chronicles 7:14-21):

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. the son of Manasseh, | ... Ashriel |
| 2. the son of Manasseh, | ... Machir |
| 3. the daughter of Manasseh, | ... Hammoleketh |
| 4. the son of Manasseh, | ... Shemida |
| 5. the son of Ephraim, | ... Shuthelah |

These **five immediate children** of Ephraim and Manasseh would certainly be counted among **the kindred of Joseph**, and their descendants formed strong families that are elsewhere called "sons of Joseph" (see Numbers 26:28-37.)²

Joseph's kindred = **house of Jacob** + **house of Joseph**

$$75 = 70 + 5$$

Thus, we see how it was possible for Stephen to reference the genealogy of Genesis 46, and adapt the number of the "**house of Jacob**" for his purposes to include "**Joseph's kindred**." The math is not difficult, nor does it argue against the text or the context of Stephen's speech in Acts.

² Hephher is listed as a son of Manasseh in Numbers 26:32. He is properly identified as the great-grandson of Manasseh within a few verses at Numbers 27:1. Since there are no other names listed among Manasseh's sons in Numbers 26, it is reasonable to conclude that Hammoleketh married the man Shechem, who was then counted among Manasseh's sons through marriage. Thus, the Shechemites would also include the descendants of Hammoleketh's children: Ishod; Abiezer; and Mahalah (see 1 Chronicles 7:18).

If we were to make any assumptions concerning this passage, we might conclude that Stephen and the Jewish council were more familiar with their own history and genealogy than most modern day skeptics, scholars, and bible commentators.

The Context of Acts 7

Why did Stephen focus on **Joseph** instead of **Jacob**? Joseph is the hero who in spite of the patriarchs who were “moved with envy” helped save all of Israel, for “**God was with him.**”

Acts 7:9

(9) And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold **Joseph** into Egypt: **but God was with him,**

Additionally, when Joseph was separated from Jacob and his sons, the biblical account left Jacob behind and followed Joseph. It is not unusual that Stephen’s abbreviated account followed the birthright, specifically **Joseph and all his kindred.**

1 Chronicles 5:1

(1) Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he *was* the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, **his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph** the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

The Text of Acts 7

Now that we have established that the context of Stephen’s speech in Acts focused specifically on Joseph, we will remind the reader that **the exact words of the text** specify Joseph, and Jacob, and Joseph’s kindred.

Acts 7:13-14

(13) And at the second *time* **Joseph** was made known to his brethren; **and Joseph's kindred** was made known unto Pharaoh.

(14) **Then sent Joseph**, and called **his father Jacob** to *him*, **and all his kindred**, threescore and fifteen souls.

Thus, if verse 14 is read in context beside verse 13, it becomes clear that “**and all his kindred**” means “*Joseph’s kindred*” rather than “*Jacob’s kindred.*” Because his speech put added emphasis on Joseph, we can understand why it would include the chief sons of Ephraim and Manasseh.

I think that this much confusion has been caused by misreading this simple phrase, and presuming that that Stephen *really* meant “*Jacob’s kindred.*” Since **Jacob’s seventy** was already well-established, not only from Genesis 46:27, but also Exodus 1:5 and Deuteronomy 10:22, some *doubt* **Joseph’s seventy-five.**

Exodus 1:5

(5) **And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls:** for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.

Deuteronomy 10:22

(22) **Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons;** and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Was Stephen quoting from the Septuagint?

There seems to be a popular alternative theory, perpetuated by some bible commentators, either that:

1. Stephen misquoted the Hebrew text because of reliance upon a corrupted Greek translation which they call the “Septuagint,” or
2. Luke, the author of Acts who recorded Stephen’s speech, inserted the count of “seventy-five” for “seventy” by reliance on this document.

Both of these theories rely on several assumptions, including:

1. The Greek Septuagint preceded the New Testament,
2. That it was likewise available for Luke or Stephen to use, and
3. That Stephen would use this translation before the Jewish Council, or alternatively, that Luke would alter Stephen’s speech after the fact.

As evidence, those who support the “LXX theory” will point out that the Greek LXX differs from the Hebrew text in Genesis 46, having increased the number from seventy to seventy-five, and having added an additional five more names.

Although the LXX likewise reads “seventy-five” in Exodus 1:5, it still remains “seventy” in Deuteronomy 10:22. If we were to assume that the LXX translation was legitimate, we would then have to ask why it would refer to “threescore and ten persons” in Deuteronomy?

Obviously, the Hebrew Masoretic text was the original, which was altered by its Greek translators to read “seventy five” – and although the Greek LXX is widely acknowledged as a corrupt translation, most scholars do not fully consider the implications of this data.

The similarity between Acts 7 and Genesis 46 does not prove that the LXX preceded the New Testament, but rather demonstrates that in this instance that the LXX revised the Hebrew text in an attempt to “fix” the “perceived discrepancy” in Acts! This type of behavior can still be seen today by some modern day bible translators who deviate from the text to fix perceived “errors” they do not understand.

An Early Witness to the Septuagint

As a means of evidence concerning our question above, I will cite this short chapter from “Dialogue with Trypho” and then demonstrate how this relates to our topic:

Chapter LXXI. The Jews reject the interpretation of the LXX., from which, moreover, they have taken away some passages.

"But I am far from putting reliance in your teachers, **who refuse to admit that the interpretation made by the seventy elders who were with Ptolemy [king] of the Egyptians is a correct one;** and they attempt to frame another. And I wish you to observe, that they have altogether taken away many Scriptures from the translations effected by those seventy elders who were with Ptolemy, and by which this very man who was crucified is proved to have been set forth expressly as God, and man, and as being crucified, and as dying; but since I am aware that this is denied by all of your nation, I do not address myself to these points, **but I proceed to carry on my discussions by means of those passages which are still admitted by you.** For you assent to those which I have brought before your attention, except that you contradict the statement, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and say it ought to be read, "Behold, the young woman shall conceive. And I promised to prove that the prophecy referred, not, as you were taught, to Hezekiah, but to this Christ of mine: and now I shall go to the proof."

Here Trypho remarked, "We ask you first of all to tell us some of the Scriptures which you allege have been completely cancelled."

From Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, 158 A.D.

As concerning our question of antiquity, this passage at least establishes that the LXX (whether this was actually produced by King Ptolemy or not) existed in a form that was available to Justin Martyr in 158 A.D. This date precedes the oldest manuscripts used to support it, including Alexandrinus, Sinaiticus, Codes Ephraemi, and Vaticanus.

Additionally, although Justin limited his argument with Trypho only to the traditional Old Testament text, he favors the LXX, so he cannot be considered as a hostile witness against it. **Yet, Justin clearly acknowledges that the Jewish people did not acknowledge the Greek Septuagint as legitimate!**

Even putting aside our other considerations, and even assuming that the Greek LXX existed in a form that could be read and quoted before the Jewish council in Acts 7, considering his audience, **why would Stephen quote from a**

corrupted text that would weaken his argument with those Jewish leaders?

Did the Holy Ghost teach the Septuagint to Stephen?

Our Christian “philosopher” Justin saw the wisdom in sticking to the accepted Hebrew scripture as he spoke to persuade Trypho the Jew. Stephen was on trial before the Jewish council. Even assuming that he had a Greek LXX translation, would it not make sense for him to show similar discretion?

Luke 12:11-12

(11) And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

(12) For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

In the case of Stephen, we are specifically told that he was “full of faith and of the Holy Ghost” and this should add some weight to our argument that Stephen would have been able to quote the Hebrew scripture accurately.

Acts 6:5

(5) And the saying pleased the whole multitude: **and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost**, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

The book of Acts gives us little room to question the inspiration of Stephen, either in word or deed. Luke records that he was “full of the Holy Ghost,” “full of faith and power,” “did great wonders and miracles among the people,” and that even his adversaries saw “his face as it had been the face of an angel.”

Acts 6:8

(8) And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

Acts 6:15

(15) And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Acts 7:55

(55) But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

Thus, even if we assume that Stephen had seen a similarly corrupted passage of Genesis at this time, do you think that he would have had the common sense not to cite an erroneous text (containing spurious books) when he was before the

council? Or if you believe that the Holy Spirit guided Stephen's words, would it not make sense that it would provide the right words?

A Bible Commentary Witness of the Septuagint

Although my actual analysis differed from the commentary by John Gill, I think he approached this question with the right attitude, and I appreciate this conclusion:

“the Jew has no reason to charge Stephen with an error, as he does; **nor was there any need to alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of [Gen 45:27](#)** to make it agree with Stephen's account...”

Albert Barnes assumes that the LXX account of Genesis preceded Stephen's speech in Acts. As we might expect, **he is unable to guess why** this was done:

“Why the Septuagint inserted these, it may not be easy to see. But such was evidently the fact; and the fact accords accurately with the historic record, though Moses did not insert their names.”

Stephen may have been at liberty to describe their history from a different angle in front of the council, but the translators of the LXX should never have tampered with the words of the Hebrew scripture. This same attitude of “correcting the text” is responsible for some of the modern textual corruptions that we can see in the NIV, the NASB, and the NLT.

Three of my commentaries listed specific names from the LXX version of Genesis 45:27:

- John Gill: Machir, Galaad, Sutalaam, Taam, and Edom
- Adam Clarke: Machir, Gilead, Sutelaam, Taham, and Edem
- Albert Barnes: Ashriel, Machir, Zelophehad, Peresh, and Shuthelah

I am not sure why Albert Barnes has different names than those cited by John Gill and Adam Clarke. I do not read enough Greek to translate my E-sword copy of the LXX, and neither do I have an English translation of the LXX to compare. Regardless, these lists make little sense.

Although John Gill did provide this list of these names from the Septuagint, he also says the addition of these five names serves to “...alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of Gen 45:27.” Thus, he rejected this listing as a spurious addition that was inserted to attempt to match Stephen's “seventy five” of Acts 7:14. **This also was my conclusion.**

Will the Real LXX Please Stand Up?

Adam Clarke seems to have a similar version of the Septuagint than was referenced by John Gill, the difference being a couple minor spelling differences, and that Clark seems to think that Stephen would have mistaken these passages for genuine scripture. There are some problems with this first list:

- Gilead is the son of Machir (see Numbers 26:29 & 1 Chronicles 7:14.) Why would it list both the son and grandson of Manasseh in this context?
- Ashriel, the son of Manasseh, has been omitted. Why would a grandson of Joseph be omitted when a great-grandson (Gilead) was included?
- Shuthelah, the son of Ephraim, also has been omitted. **There are no sons of Ephraim in this list.**
- The names Sutelaam and Taham (or Taam) cannot be found within the authorized text.
- The name Edem also does not occur within the authorized text. However, if we use John Gill's alternate spelling, Edom is the brother of Jacob (see Genesis 25:30.)

Adam Clarke presumes not only that the LXX version of Genesis existed during the time of Stephen, but also that he would have preferred its reading to the Hebrew text. Yet this list that he presents seems to have been formed without rhyme or reason. I am unable to detect a consistent pattern within these five names, let alone why they would be specifically chosen as representing "souls of the house of Jacob."

Albert Barnes has a different list, presumably from a different version of the Septuagint. They both include Machir, the son of Manasseh, but this is their only similarity. It includes Ashriel, the brother of Machir, and remembers Shuthelah, the son of Ephraim. However,

- Peresh, the son of Machir, is included in this list, but his brother Sheresh has been omitted.
- Zelophehad is the great-great-grandson of Manasseh (see Numbers 27:1.) But if he was included, why would it exclude his ancestors Hephher and Gilead?

At least all the names that Albert Barnes lists from the Septuagint can be verified as being actual descendants from the line of Jacob. Yet, these do not make sense within the context of "all the souls of the house of Jacob" when Joseph called them down to Egypt. Why would it list his great-great-great-great-grandson Zelophehad?

Perhaps there are more versions of the Septuagint that have different readings, even from these. However, I think that this exercise has been sufficient to demonstrate that the LXX is not only corrupt, but it seems to have been edited by incompetent theologians who were not very familiar with the Hebrew genealogy!

Conclusions: Stephen vs. the Greek LXX

In conclusion, Stephen's reckoning of seventy-five souls, including Joseph, and his kindred, and his father Jacob, can be justified by combining the seventy of Genesis 46:27 with the primary "sons of Joseph" in 1 Chronicles 7 and Numbers 26. By adding the five immediate children of Ephraim and Manasseh that were recorded as founding strong peoples, the account makes sense in context. These numbers are supported by the Hebrew text.

The Greek LXX was obviously altered (at some point) from the original Hebrew reading of "seventy" in Genesis and Exodus to read "seventy-five" – but the names it supposes (even if we could agree on which LXX is the "right" one) make little sense. **The evidence indicates** that someone added these names to Genesis 46 to justify changing the "seventy" to "seventy five" – but that it was someone who was not familiar with the Hebrew genealogy!

In other words, Stephen's "seventy five" came first, and later a Greek scholar was unable to explain an alleged "clear contradiction" between Genesis and Acts, and decided to retranslate Genesis to "fix" the perceived problem! Rather than serving as a testimony for the antiquity of the LXX, this is strong evidence that this was edited after Luke recorded Stephen's testimony.

Considering our original question, there is no "clear contradiction" in these scriptures. Stephen, or at least the Holy Spirit that taught him in that hour, knew the Old Testament well enough to be familiar with Joseph's seed and combine two numbers without a calculator.

The whole "Septuagint theory" posed by many "bible commentators" is a red herring, and tends to cast much confusion on the subject. Unfortunately, it has become so intertwined with this question that it could not be ignored, because it has been used to "support the "Christ and the apostles used the Septuagint" myth, which I think is can be classified as a modern-day **fable**.

1 Timothy 1:4

(4) Neither give heed to **fables and endless genealogies**, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do*.

Appendix A: Excerpts from Selected Commentaries

I have included quotations from five of the most commonly available commentaries that chose to comment on this supposed “discrepancy” between the seventy recorded by Moses in Genesis 46:27 and the Stephen’s seventy-five that Luke recorded in Acts 7:14.

I do not list them here because I recommend their answers on this question, but rather to demonstrate the variety of conflicting “solutions” that are offered, one of the most popular being that “Stephen quoted the Septuagint.”

From Matthew Henry

Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible
Matthew Henry (1662 - 1714)

And the *second time* that they went, Joseph, who at first made himself strange to them, made himself known to them, and it was notified to Pharaoh that they were Joseph's kindred and had a dependence upon him ([Act 7:13](#)), whereupon, with Pharaoh's leave, *Joseph sent for his father Jacob to him into Egypt, with all his kindred and family, to the number of seventy-five souls, to be subsisted there, [Act 7:13](#)*. In Genesis they are said to be *seventy souls*, [Gen 46:27](#). But the Septuagint there makes them seventy-five, and Stephen or Luke follows that version, as [Luk 3:36](#), where Cainan is inserted, which is not in the Hebrew text, but in the Septuagint. Some, by excluding Joseph and his sons, who were in Egypt before (which reduces the number to sixty-four), and adding the sons of the eleven patriarch, make the number seventy-five.

Please note that it is not safe to assume that Luke modified Christ’s genealogy from a reading from the Greek Septuagint. This claim depends upon Genesis already having been corrupted before Luke’s gospel, and even then presumes that Luke would use such a flawed document as his source.

From John Gill

The next commentary, by John Gill, seems to disagree with Matthew Henry concerning the translation date of the book of Genesis into the Greek LXX. Note that he says “nor was there any need to alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of Genesis 45:28 to make it agree with Stephen’s account.” Thus, it is clear that John Gill considers Luke to have written the book of Acts before their spurious addition to the Greek translation.

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible
Dr. John Gill (1690-1771)

But there is no contradiction; Moses and Stephen are speaking of different things; Moses speaks of the seed of Jacob, which came out of his loins, who came into Egypt, and so excludes his sons' wives; Stephen speaks of Jacob and all his kindred, among whom his sons' wives must be reckoned, whom Joseph called to him: according to Moses's account, the persons that came with Jacob into Egypt, who came out of his loins, and so exclusive of his sons' wives, were threescore and six; to which if we add Jacob himself, and Joseph who was before in Egypt, and who might be truly said to come into it, and his two sons that were born there, who came thither in his loins, as others in the account may be said to do, who were not yet born, when Jacob went down, the total number is threescore and ten, [Gen 46:26](#) out of which take the six following persons, Jacob, who was called by Joseph into Egypt, besides the threescore and fifteen souls, and Joseph and his two sons then in Egypt, who could not be said to be called by him, and Hezron and Hamul, the sons of Pharez not yet born, and this will reduce Moses's number to sixty four; to which sixty four, if you add the eleven wives of Jacob's sons, who were certainly part of the kindred called and invited into Egypt, [Gen 45:10](#) it will make up completely threescore and fifteen persons: or the persons called by Joseph maybe reckoned thus; his eleven brethren and sister Dinah, fifty two brother's children, to which add his brethren's eleven wives, and the amount is threescore and fifteen: so that the Jew (w) has no reason to charge Stephen with an error, as he does; **nor was there any need to alter and corrupt the Septuagint version of [Gen 45:27](#) to make it agree with Stephen's account; or to add five names in it, in [Act 7:20](#) as **Machir, Galaad, Sutalaam, Taam, and Edom**, to make up the number seventy five:** and it may be observed, that the number is not altered in the version of [Deu 10:22](#) which agrees with the Hebrew for seventy persons.

(w) R. Isaac Chizzuk Emuna, par. 2. c. 63. p. 450.

When I tested the specific solutions suggested by John Gill, I was not satisfied with them, for reasons including:

- I could not think of any reason why Stephen would exclude Hezron and Hamul while they were unborn, because they were listed among the seventy,
- Additionally, there was no information concerning the number of surviving wives or concubines, other than Simeon begat Shaul by a Canaanitish woman (see [Gen 46:10](#)). However, this would tend to imply that Simeon had a living wife, or that she was the living wife!

From Adam Clarke

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible

Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., (1715-1832)

Act 7:14 -

Threescore and fifteen souls - There are several difficulties here, which it is hoped the reader will find satisfactorily removed in the note on [Gen 46:20](#) (note). It is well known that in [Gen 46:27](#), and in [Deu 10:22](#), their number is said to be threescore and ten; but Stephen quotes from the Septuagint, which adds five persons to the account which are not in the Hebrew text, **Machir, Gilead, Sutelaam, Taham, and Edem**; but see the note referred to above.

Note that Adam Clarke assumes that Stephen was quoting the Septuagint, and does not stop to consider the possibility that perhaps the Revisionist-driven Septuagint was quoting Stephen? With an error-ridden LXX on one side, and the Holy Spirit inspired Stephen on the other, Clarke supposes that the Holy Spirit quoted the LXX.

Interestingly enough, in his commentary on Genesis 46:20, he concludes with a Dr. Hale that the seventy-five are really 66 + 9, that is, Jacob's children and grandchildren, and nine wives, but excluding Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's seed. However, this theory supposes that Simeon's wife had died without mention, and that Judah, Er, and Pharez married at age 14.

James 1:8

(8) A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

The strangest part about his conclusion is that in adopting this theory, his New Testament commentary contradicts what he has said on the Old. In one place he says that Stephen named 75 souls to include 9 wives (to be added to 66 souls) and in another he says that Stephen was quoting the Septuagint which inserted Machir, Gilead, Sutelaam, Taham, and Edem.

From Albert Barnes

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible,
Albert Barnes (1798-1870)

Threescore and fifteen souls - Seventy-five persons. There has been much perplexity felt in the explanation of this passage. In [Gen 46:26](#), [Exo 1:5](#), and [Deu 10:22](#), it is expressly said that the number which went down to Egypt consisted of 70 persons. The question is, in what way these accounts can be reconciled? It is evident that Stephen has followed the account which is given by the Septuagint. In [Gen 46:27](#), that version reads, "But the sons of Joseph who were with him in Egypt were nine souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob which came with Jacob into Egypt were seventy-five souls." This number is made out by adding these nine souls to the 66 mentioned in [Gen 46:26](#).

The difference between the Septuagint and Moses is, that the former mentions five descendants of Joseph who are not recorded by the latter. The "names" of the

sons of Ephraim and Manasseh are recorded in [1Ch 7:14-21](#). Their names were **Ashriel, Machir, Zelophehad, Peresh**, sons of Manasseh; and **Shuthelah**, son of Ephraim. **Why the Septuagint inserted these, it may not be easy to see.** But such was evidently the fact; and the fact accords accurately with the historic record, though Moses did not insert their names. The solution of difficulties in regard to chronology is always difficult; and what might be entirely apparent to a Jew in the time of Stephen, may be wholly inexplicable to us.

It may be noted that Albert Barnes has a very different list of names taken from his Septuagint than either John Gill or Adam Clarke. He does not consider that perhaps Stephen may have been considering additional data from the Hebrew books of Numbers and 1 Chronicles.

As for why the LXX inserted these names, I think it was to try to “fix” an alleged “discrepancy” between Moses and Stephen “in favor” of the New Testament!

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown

A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments
by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown

Gen 46:8-27 -

all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten — Strictly speaking, there were only sixty-six went to Egypt; but to these add Joseph and his two sons, and Jacob the head of the clan, and the whole number amounts to seventy. In the speech of Stephen ([Act 7:14](#)) the number is stated to be seventy-five; **but as that estimate includes five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh ([1Ch 7:14-20](#)), born in Egypt, the two accounts coincide.**

Act 7:14 -

threescore and fifteen souls — according to the *Septuagint* version of [Gen 46:27](#), which Stephen follows, **including the five children and grandchildren of Joseph’s two sons.**

It seems that Adam Clarke is not the only commentary that states two contradictory opinions at the same time. Stephen can not be both counting the children of Ephraim and Manasseh in 1 Chronicles and following the LXX version of Genesis 46:27 *at the same time!*

It does not seem as if the same man commented on both passages. Interestingly enough, the commentator for Genesis 46 thought to compare Stephen’s speech to the Old Testament to resolve these two numbers. **I agree with the first conclusion.** Yet, the New Testament commentator jumped on the “Stephen quoted the revised LXX” bandwagon, although the LXX does not list five sons from 1 Ch 7:14-20. I think this guy should have read his own commentary first!

Appendix B1: the “thirty and three souls” of Genesis 46:15

	Patriarch	Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Gen 46, verse...
1	Jacob				8
2		Reuben			8
3			Hanoch		9
4			Phallu		9
5			Hezron		9
6			Carmi		9
7		Simeon			10
8			Jemuel		10
9			Jamin		10
10			Ohad		10
11			Jachin		10
12			Zohar		10
13			Shaul		10
14		Levi			11
15			Gershon		11
16			Kohath		11
17			Merari		11
18		Judah			12
19			Shelah		12
20			Pharez		12
21				Hezron	12
22				Hamul	12
23			Zerah		12
24		Issachar			13
25			Tola		13
26			Phuvah		13
27			Job		13
28			Shimron		13
29		Zebulun			14
30			Sered		14
31			Elon		14
32			Jahleel		14
33		Dinah			15

Genesis 46:8-15

- (8) And these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn.
- (9) And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.
- (10) And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.
- (11) And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.
- (12) And the sons of Judah; **Er, and Onan**, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zerah: **but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan**. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.
- (13) And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.
- (14) And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.
- (15) These *be* the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters *were* **thirty and three**.

Appendix B2: the “sixteen souls” of Genesis 46:18

	Patriarch	Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Gen 46, verse...
1		Gad			16
2			Ziphion		16
3			Haggi		16
4			Shuni		16
5			Ezbon		16
6			Eri		16
7			Arodi		16
8			Areli		16
9		Asher			17
10			Jimnah		17
11			Ishuah		17
12			Isui		17
13			Beriah		17
14				Heber	17
15				Malchiel	17
16			Serah		17

- Please note that because these numbers serve as running subtotals, Jacob was only counted once, along with the sons and daughters from his first wife, Leah. If he was counted a second time with his children from Zilpah, and in each additional listing of his children from Rachel and Bilhah, the numerical counts would get very confusing.

Genesis 46:16-18

- (16) And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.
- (17) And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.
- (18) These *are* the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, **even sixteen souls.**

Appendix B3: the “fourteen souls” of Genesis 46:22

	Patriarch	Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Gen 46, verse...
1		Jospeh			19
2			Manasseh		20
3			Ephraim		20
4		Benjamin			19
5			Belah		21
6				Ard	21
7				Naaman	21
8				Gera	21
9			Becher		21
10			Ashbel		21
11			Ehi		21
12			Rosh		21
13			Muppm		21
14			Huppm		21

- Grandsons are sometimes called “sons” within Hebrew genealogies. For example, Genesis 46:21 lists three sons of Belah as “sons of Benjamin” including: Ard (see Numbers 26:40); Naaman (see Numbers 26:40, 1 Chronicles 8:3); and Gera (see 1 Chronicles 8:3).

Genesis 46:19-22

- (19) The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.
 (20) And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.
 (21) And the sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppm, and Huppm, and Ard.
 (22) These *are* the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: **all the souls were fourteen.**

* * *

Appendix B4: the “seven souls” of Genesis 46:25

	Patriarch	Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Gen 46, verse...
1		Dan			23
2			Hushim		23
3		Naphtali			24
4			Jahzeel		24
5			Guni		24
6			Jezer		24
7			Shillem		24

Genesis 46:23-25

- (23) And the sons of Dan; Hushim.
 (24) And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.
 (25) These *are* the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: **all the souls were seven.**

Appendix B5: the “threescore and ten” of Genesis 46:27

The previous counts of Jacob’s house were organized by Jacob’s wives: primarily by his first wife, Leah; then the children of Zilpah; then Rachel; and finally the children of Bilhah. These subtotals make the addition an easy task:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 33 & + & 16 & + & 14 & + & 7 & = & 70 \\ \text{(Gen 46:15)} & & \text{(Gen 46:18)} & & \text{(Gen 46:22)} & & \text{(Gen 46:25)} & & \text{(Gen 46:27)} \end{array}$$

Genesis 46:26-27

(26) All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six;

(27) And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, *were* two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, ***were threescore and ten.***

* * *

Appendix B6: the “threescore and six” of Genesis 46:26

The running subtotals of Jacob’s house were obviously intended to help explain what Genesis 46 means with the numbers “66” and “70”, please note that the “threescore and six” is a separate tally that included only the souls that:

- “came with Jacob into Egypt”
- “which came out of his loins”

Thus, the “threescore and six” is simply a variation of the “threescore and ten” with the following exceptions:

- Jacob cannot be said to have “come out of his own loins”
- Joseph did not come with Jacob into Egypt, because he was there first
- Joseph’s two sons were already with Joseph, being “born in Egypt”

If there are only **sixty-six** souls that 1) came *with* Jacob and 2) that came out of *his* loins, Moses gave us one more method of remembering the **seventy**:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 66 & + & \text{Jacob} & + & \text{Joseph} & + & \text{two sons of Joseph} & = & 70 \\ \text{(Gen 46:26)} & & & & & & & & \text{(Gen 46:27)} \end{array}$$

Genesis 46:26-27

(26) All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls ***were threescore and six;***

(27) **And the sons of Joseph**, which were born him in Egypt, ***were two souls:*** all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, *were* threescore and ten.

Appendix C1: A related comparison of 1 Chronicles 7 with Numbers 26

When 1 Chronicles is read with a clear head without any confusion from the Septuagint nonsense, it is easy to identify the four children of Manasseh and the single son of Ephraim. Although there is additional genealogical information of their sons, these can be easily separated from their parents by the wording of the authorized text.

1 Chronicles 7:14-21

- (14) **The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel**, whom she bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramitess bare **Machir** the father of Gilead:
- (15) And Machir took to wife *the sister* of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah;) and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters.
- (16) And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem.
- (17) And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.
- (18) **And his sister Hammoleketh** bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah.
- (19) **And the sons of Shemida** were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.
- (20) **And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah**, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son,
- (21) And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.

Zabad would not become a family within the genealogical sense, because his sons were slain by the men of Gath. Beriah was born after this tragedy, and does not seem to be included as a significant heir, other than his descendants are listed to account for the lineage of Joshua, the son of Nun (1 Chronicles 7:27)

Numbers has a similar account of the families of Manasseh and Ephraim.

Numbers 26:28-37

- (28) The sons of Joseph after their families *were* **Manasseh and Ephraim.**
- (29) **Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir**, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead *come* the family of the Gileadites.
- (30) These *are* the sons of Gilead: *of* Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites:
- (31) **And of Asriel**, the family of the Asrielites: **and of Shechem**, the family of the Shechemites:
- (32) **And of Shemida**, the family of the Shemidaites: **and of Hopher**, the family of the Hopherites.

- (33) And Zelophehad the son of Hopher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad *were* Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.
- (34) **These are the families of Manasseh**, and those that were numbered of them, fifty and two thousand and seven hundred.
- (35) **These are the sons of Ephraim** after their families: **of Shuthelah**, the family of the Shuthalhites: of Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.
- (36) And these *are* the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.
- (37) These *are* the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those that were numbered of them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These *are* the sons of Joseph after their families.

To prevent any charges of discrepancy between these two accounts, I would bring the reader's attention to two points:

1. Manasseh's daughter **Hammoleketh** does not appear in the genealogy of Numbers. But if **Hammoleketh** married the man **Shechem**, he would then become the son-in-law of Manasseh, and would be properly listed as a son. Their descendants would then be the family of **the Shechemites**, and their ancestry traced to the name of their father.

Since 1 Chronicles 7:18 tells us that **Hammoleketh** bare three sons, **Ishod**, and **Abiezer**, and **Mahalah**, it is a safe assumption that she married (and that her husband was *not* named Hammoleketh!) It does not say why she received special note under her own name in 1 Chronicles, but it would not be unreasonable (or unusual) for her descendants to be called after her husband's name in Numbers.

2. **Hopher** (Numbers 26:32) is properly the son of Gilead (see Numbers 27:1.) Numbers does not limit itself to only the direct sons, but also describes descendants as being "sons."

Numbers 27:1

- (1) Then came the daughters of **Zelophehad**, the son of **Hopher**, the son of **Gilead**, **the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh**, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these *are* the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.

Appendix C1: Five sons (or son-in-laws) of Ephraim and Manasseh

	Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	1 Chronicles 7, verse...	Numbers 14, verse...
1	Jospeh				
2		Manasseh			
	+1		Ashriel	14	31
	+1		Machir	14	29
	+1		Hammoleketh = Shechem	18	31
	+1		Shemida	19	32
3		Ephraim			
	+1		Shuthelah	20	35
4	Benjamin				
5		Belah			
6			Ard		
7			Naaman		
8			Gera		
9		Becher			
10		Ashbel			
11		Ehi			
12		Rosh			
13		Muppim			
14		Huppim			
	+5				

- The sons are coloured **blue**.
- The daughter is coloured **pink**.

Here, I have taken the chart from Genesis 46:22 with its “fourteen souls” and expanded it, to show how it would look if the “all Joseph’s kindred” were included in a similar manner. Remember, the **seventy** already included Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh, so these are not to be counted twice.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 70 & + \text{ five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh} & = 75 \\
 \text{(Genesis 46:27)} & \text{(1 Chronicles 7:14-20, Numbers 14:29-35)} & \text{(Acts 7:14)}
 \end{array}$$