

Bible Study # 12  
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Old Testament Series—Genesis 37—50

This section of material is the final portion of the book of Genesis—the book of beginnings. Genesis 37-50 is the story of Joseph and the entrance into Egypt. This final section of Genesis explains to us why we find the things that we do at the beginning of Exodus. The Bible does not start at Mount Sinai when God gave the Ten Commandments. Genesis has shown that God is the Creator, and it shows the family through which God is working: Abraham, a man of faith, coming on through Isaac and Jacob. Now we come to the spreading out. We see twelve men, the ancestors of the children of Israel, particularly, focusing in on Joseph. It was through Joseph the birthright was to come. We see how the promises were expanded out, becoming more and more specific.

We pick up the story: Joseph came into Egypt as a slave in 1704 B.C., and in 1691 B.C., he was made second in the kingdom because of the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream. In 1682 B.C., the second year of the famine, his family joined Joseph in Egypt. He rose to prominence in the time of the Hyksos Dynasty. This was a dynasty that had its origin outside of Egypt. They controlled only around the Nile area.

One of the things about Egypt, when we think Upper and Lower Egypt: if you were to hear about Upper Egypt, you would be looking at the area further south, and Lower Egypt is the part that is up at the top of the map. Why do they have it backwards in Egypt? It is very simple. They base that terminology on the way the Nile River flows. The Nile River is an unusual river in that it flows from the south to the north. It flows downhill and comes out at sea level in the Delta area at the mouth of the Nile, where it flows into the Mediterranean. It makes a little shape almost like a little triangle where it comes out. That little triangle is the Greek shape of the letter "delta." It looks like a triangle. It spreads out at its mouth, and because it looked like that letter in the Greek alphabet, it came to be applied to any river that flowed out that rich soil. Lower Egypt is that part of the river; Upper Egypt is up the Nile. When Joseph came in, it was called Lower Egypt.

During the time of the famine and immediately thereafter, the fifteenth Dynasty (the Hyksos), expanded their control over the entire nation.

The seven years of famine set the stage for a total change of rulership of Egypt. God was preparing a place for the nation of Israel to be safely nurtured and grow—to grow from a family into a nation. As a result of the famine, Egypt was the only one that had anything. During the time of plenty they saved up and, in the aftermath, were able to use that as leverage. They expanded out their control into much of the surrounding area.

The Israelites were given the land of Goshen as an inheritance. Joseph came into Egypt in 1704 B.C. In 1691 B.C., he was made second in the kingdom. The second year of the famine was 1682 B.C., and in 1611 B.C., Joseph died. There had been a period of time of over seventy years, and in that period of time, the family had greatly multiplied. We see this mushrooming out into a nation that began to take place in a period of a little over seventy years.

The most significant single chapter is Genesis 49. It is prophetic. It deals with every tribe of Israel in the last days. This shows that they were to remain separate, identifiable nations even into the end time—right on down to the specific promise that Ephraim would become a great company of nations and Manasseh a great nation.

Genesis 37:1-4, "Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. This is the genealogy of Jacob. Joseph being seventeen years old was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his fathers. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all of his children because he was the son of his old age. He made him a coat of many colors."

We notice, right here, a mistake of Jacob's that led to resentment from his brethren—the open favoritism. This was a carry over of him being from Rachel, the wife that he loved. Here was a situation where the children in the family were not all full brothers; they were half brothers. Unfortunately, sometimes when children don't have the same parents, some are singled out for favoritism. What is the result? The result is that it creates resentment among others in the family—resentments that lead to problems that last generations.

Verses 5-8, "Now Joseph dreamed a dream, and told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. So he said to them, 'Please hear this dream, which I have dreamed: There we were binding sheaves in the field. Then behold my

sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.’ And his brothers said to him, ‘Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?’ So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.” Joseph didn’t help matters any.

Verses 9-11, “Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, ‘Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time the sun, the moon and the eleven stars bowed to me.’ So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, ‘What is this dream? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?’ And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.”

Joseph was always the favorite and he was rubbing it in.

The result, vv. 12-14, “Then his brothers went to feed their father’s flock in Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, ‘Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.’ So he said to him, ‘Here I am.’ Then he said to him, ‘Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me.’ So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.” Jacob sent him down to check on them. Jacob had a lot of confidence in him. Joseph had obviously shown that he could be trusted. He did not have the same degree of confidence in the others.

Verse 18, “Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.”

Verses 19-20, “Then they said to one another, ‘Look, this dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, “some wild beast has devoured him.” We shall see what will become of his dreams!’” They had really gotten bitter over the situation.

Verse 21, “But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, ‘Let us not kill him.’” Reuben heard what they said.

Verse 22, “And Reuben said to them, ‘Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him’—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.” He delivered him out of their hands. He was the oldest and felt a certain responsibility. Reuben had the idea of releasing him himself. He lacked the confidence he needed to speak up and set his brothers

straight. He knew they shouldn’t do what they were going to do.

Verses 26-27, “So Judah said to his brothers, ‘what profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh.’ And his brothers listened.” Judah is the father of the Jews. ‘What profit are we going to make? Let us turn a buck on this deal.’ He is the father of the Jews. Sometimes you see characteristics that tend to run in families. Some of his descendants had the same tendency. “...let us sell him...” So the brothers were content; they listened.

Verse 28, “Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.” They took Joseph out of the pit and sold him. They brought him to Egypt.

Verse 29, “Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes.”

Verses 31-33, “So they took Joseph’s tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, ‘We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son’s tunic or not?’ And he recognized it and said, ‘It is my son’s tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.’” They said, ‘This is what we found. We don’t know what happened to your son.’

Verse 34, “Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.” Jacob leaped to the conclusion that Joseph had been killed. He was very grieved and upset.

Verse 36, “Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.”

Genesis 38, skip Joseph for a moment and go to Judah. Judah had two sons.

Genesis 38:6, “Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar.”

Verse 7, “But Er... was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord killed him.” After God killed him, Onan had the responsibility of raising up seed to his brother. Onan was not willing to fulfill his obligation because the inheritance of his brother would have passed to his brother’s children, and he wanted it for himself.

So Onan himself died (vv. 8-10). God got rid of both of them. They were individuals of such character and nature that God didn’t want to use them to develop the tribe of Judah. In the process

of time, Judah's wife died (v. 12) and he had not fulfilled what he had promised Tamar. She dressed herself as a harlot (v. 14).

Verses 15-18, "When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face. Then he turned to her by the way, and said, 'Please let me come in to you'; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, 'What will you give me, that you may come in to me?' And he said, 'I will send you a young goat from the flock.' And she said, 'Will you give me a pledge till you send it?' Then he said, 'What pledge shall I give you?' So she said, 'Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand.' Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him."

She asked what he would give her. She asked for a pledge. He gave her certain things. After all of this had taken place, Judah sought to send the kid goat back to her. Word came to him that Tamar had played the harlot. She was pregnant and not married. Judah said, 'Let her be burned' (v. 24). Judah had a double standard.

Verse 25, "When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, 'By the man to whom these belong, I am with child.' And she said, 'Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff.'" She said, 'Don't you think you should do something to the man? It was the man who these things belonged to.'

Tamar brought forth twins (v. 27). One of these twins put forth his hand and the midwife put a scarlet thread on it (v. 28). It was to have been born first. This was important because the firstborn would receive the scepter promise. It took its hand back in, and the other was born first. This was a breach. His name was called Pherez (v. 29), and the other was named Zerah (v. 30). There was a breach, but eventually they were united. One of Zedekiah's daughters (a Pherez) would marry the son of the High King of Ireland (a Zerah), and that healed the breach. This breach had to be healed. (For more information read, What's Ahead for America and Britain?)

In Genesis 39, Joseph was brought into Egypt. The Lord was with Joseph (vv. 1-2). He worked hard. He was dependable. He had great favor. He left all that he had in Joseph's hand (vv. 3-6).

Genesis 39:7-9, "Now it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, 'Lie with me.' But he refused and said to his master's wife, 'Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. There is no one greater in this house

than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"

Potiphar's wife began to cast eyes on Joseph. Joseph refused. It was known and understood what sin was before God spoke on Mount Sinai.

Romans 4:15, "...where there is no law there is no sin."

Romans 5:13, "...sin is not imputed when there is no law." You cannot have sin if there is no law against it. Something is not wrong unless there is a law against—by God or man. Joseph knew that adultery was a sin; the law of adultery was known and understood. Potiphar's wife took advantage of every opportunity, and Joseph ignored it (v. 10).

Genesis 39:12, "that she caught him by his garment, saying, 'Lie with me.' But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside." One day she grabbed him. He took off, and she ripped off his outward garment.

Verses 13-20, "And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, 'See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside.' So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, 'The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside.' So it was, when his master heard the words, which his wife spoke to him, saying, 'Your servant did to me after this manner,' that his anger was aroused. Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison."

She said, 'See what he tried to do. He tried to rape me.' So Joseph was arrested and Potiphar put him in jail. Potiphar must have had some doubt because he didn't have him killed. He just put him in jail. He was soon the head trustee.

Verses 21-23, "But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's hand, because the Lord

was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.”

Genesis 40:1-3, “It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined.”

The baker and the butler had dreams and Joseph explained what they meant.

Verse 5, “Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, dreamed a dream, both of them, each man’s dream in one night and each man’s dream with its own interpretation.”

Verses 8-15, “And they said to him, ‘We each have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.’ And Joseph said to them, ‘Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please.’ Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, ‘Behold, in my dream a vine was before me, and in the vine were three branches; it was as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. Then Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh’s cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand.’ And Joseph said to him, ‘This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days. Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh’s cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler. But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon.’”

Verses 16-19, “When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, ‘I also was in my dream, and there I had three white baskets on my head. In the uppermost basket there were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head.’ So Joseph answered and said, ‘This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you.’”

The baker was going to be executed; the butler was going to be set loose.

Verses 20-22, “Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand. But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.”

The only two accounts of anyone celebrating birthdays: Herod and Pharaoh, two wicked kings. We note this by way of passing by example.

He had told them, ‘When you get out, remember me, and tell him about me’ (v. 14).

Verse 23, “Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.” He was so happy to be out he forgot about Joseph.

Genesis 41:1-4, “Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river. And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cow. So Pharaoh awoke.” The seven lean cows ate the seven fat cows.

Verses 5-7, “He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream.” The lean grain ate the fat grain

Verses 8-9, “Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh. Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: ‘I remember my faults this day.’”

Verse 12, “Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream.” He said, ‘I remember a guy. We had these dreams, and there was this guy who was able to tell us about our dreams.’

Verse 14, “Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.” Joseph was concerned about showing proper respect. He cleaned up and shaved to show proper respect to the office of Pharaoh.

Verse 16, “So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, ‘It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.’”

Pharaoh told Joseph his dream (vv. 17-24). Joseph told Pharaoh what it meant.

Verses 25-30, “Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, ‘The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one. And the seven thin and ugly cows, which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land.’”

There would be seven good years followed by seven years of famine. Then he went on to explain what Pharaoh needed to do.

Verses 33-36, “‘Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt that the land may not perish during the famine.’”

He said, ‘Choose a man who can be trusted and set him over Egypt. Let him get organized and store twenty percent of the produce year by year. Then during the years of famine, there would be all this extra that was stored.’

Verses 39-41, “Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.’ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.’” Joseph was over all of his affairs. He was given a wife (v. 45).

Joseph was in the area of the Dynasty of the Hyksos, people kindred to the Hebrews. After the expulsion of the Hyksos, then arose a dynasty that was against the Israelites.

Verses 50-57, “And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine...Joseph called

the name of the firstborn Manasseh [forgetting]: ‘For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father’s house.’ And the name of the second he called Ephraim [fruitfulness]: ‘For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.’ Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, ‘Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do.’ The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.”

The famine was all over the land. It is through Joseph that Egypt became the breadbasket of the world. It is interesting as you come down to our time. Who has been responsible for feeding the world? The grain-exporting nations of the world are Joseph’s: the United States, England and Australia. There are many parallels in prophecy. The famine was also in the land of Canaan.

Genesis 42:1-3, “When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, ‘Why do you look at one another?’ And he said, ‘Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die.’ So Joseph’s ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.” Jacob sent his sons to buy food in Egypt.

Verse 7, “Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, ‘Where do you come from?’ And they said, ‘From the land of Canaan to buy food.’” He saw his brothers and knew them. He began to quiz them; where did they come from?

Verse 9, “Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, ‘You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!’” He remembered the dreams that he had. Here they were bowing down to a ruler of Egypt.

Verses 10-14, “And they said to him, ‘No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. We are all one man’s sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies.’ But he said to them, ‘No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land.’ And they said, ‘Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our

father today, and one is no more.’ But Joseph said to them, ‘It is as I spoke to you, saying, “You are spies!”’ He said, ‘I don’t believe that you are brothers.’

Verse 15, “In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.” He said, ‘I believe that you are spies. If you don’t bring back your younger brother, you won’t leave this place.’

Verse 17, “So he put them all together in prison three days.” For general principle, he put them in jail for three days.

Verses 19-20, “If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you go and carry grain for the famine of your house. And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die.’ And they did so.” He said, ‘Bring your youngest brother to me.’

Verse 22, “And Reuben answered them, saying, ‘Did I not speak to you, saying, “Do not sin against the boy”; and you would not listen? Therefore behold his blood is now required of us.’” See what Reuben told them, ‘I knew we would get into trouble.’

Verse 24, “...Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.” Simeon was the one Joseph put in jail. Simeon was probably the one out to really kill Joseph, the most “hotheaded” one.

The Simeonites were scattered. They were not allowed to have a separate country. They might have ganged up and conquered the world. Their descendants are in Scotland, the highlands of Scotland. We see all the wars that took place among the clans. When the British took Ireland, they took some of the highland Scots and settled them in the Ulster plantation. The others settled in the United States in the Appalachians area: West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, down into the Ozarks of Arkansas—all those mountain people.

Remember the feuds between the Hatfield’s and the McCoy’s? —A group of people that have tended to have that proclivity today. Today in Ireland, they are still at it. A great deal of the controversy was that these Scots settled in Northern Ireland to keep Ireland loyal to the Crown. When Britain wanted to get rid of Ireland, they couldn’t because of these Ulster men—Scotch-Irish. You read the story of Simeon and that tendency to violence, not wanting to back down.

Verse 24, Simeon was the one Joseph left to stay in jail so he could assess some of the things he had done in life.

Verse 25, “Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man’s money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them.” He put their money back.

Verse 28, “So he said to his brothers, ‘My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!’ Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, ‘What is this that God has done to us?’” They said, ‘Now we are really going to be in trouble.’

Verse 34, “And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. And I will deliver your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.”

Genesis 43:1, “Now the famine was severe in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, ‘Go back, buy us a little food.’” They had to go back or starve.

Verse 3, “But Judah spoke to him, saying, ‘The man solemnly warned us, saying, “You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.”’” He’s going to throw us in jail again.

Verse 8, “Then Judah said to Israel his father, ‘Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our children.’” He said, ‘Let him go with me. I will be responsible for him.’ So finally he let him go back.

Verses 12-14, “Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved.” They took double money and they came down.

Verse 16, Joseph saw Benjamin with them.

Verse 30, “Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep...”

Joseph feeds his brothers.

Verse 33, “And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another.” He had them seated from the firstborn to the youngest. They marveled that he knew the order they were born.

Genesis 44:1-2, “...‘Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the mouth of his sack. Also put

my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money....” He said, ‘Put my cup in the sack of the youngest.’ They found it in Benjamin’s sack. Joseph was testing them.

To what extent had they changed their character? There was no doubt that Benjamin was the favorite. He had the cup planted in Benjamin’s sack. He wanted to see their attitude and how they would respond. He wanted to see if they would treat Benjamin the way they had treated him.

Verses 30-34, “Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad’s life, it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.’” Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?”

Judah said, ‘I will take responsibility. I said that I would do it. Our father just won’t be able to take it. I will stay here instead of the lad. If you want to punish somebody, I will be the slave in his stead.’ You think maybe Judah had learned over the years? There was a change. He had put them to the test.

Genesis 45:1-4, “Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, ‘Make everyone go out from me!’ So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it. Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am Joseph; does my father still live?’ But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. And Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Please come near to me.’ And they came near. And he said, ‘I am Joseph your brother whom you sold into Egypt.’”

Joseph could no longer restrain himself as he saw the attitude displayed. He told them he was Joseph whom they sold into Egypt.

Verses 5-8, “But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor

harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.” He said, ‘God has blessed me.’

Verse 9, “Hasten and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph: God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry.’” ‘Go to my father and tell him God has made him lord of Egypt and come down. Tell my father what you see.’

Verse 11, “There I will provide for you....”

Verse 13, “So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hasten and bring my father down here.”

Verses 16-19, Pharaoh was happy because Joseph’s brothers were there.

They went back to tell Jacob.

Verse 26, “And they told him saying, ‘Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.’ And Jacob’s heart stood still because he did not believe them.”

Verses 27-28, “But when they told him all the words Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. Then Israel said, ‘It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.’”

Genesis 46:2, “Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night and said, ‘Jacob, Jacob!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’” God spoke to Jacob that night.

Verses 3-4, “And He said, ‘I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. I will go down with you into Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes.’”

Verses 5-25 list all the children and the grandchildren who went to Egypt.

Verse 26, “All the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob’s sons’ wives, were sixty-six persons in all.” Sixty-six descendants of Jacob came into Egypt.

Verse 27, “And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.” Sixty-six plus Jacob, Joseph and two sons made seventy.

Acts 7:14, “Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-

five people.” Some have thought this was a contradiction.

Let me call it to your attention.

Acts 7:14, “...Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people.” Yet in Genesis 46:26, all the souls were sixty-six. What is the difference? The seventy-five persons mentioned in Acts 7:14 include the sixty-six in Genesis 46:26, plus nine wives of Jacob’s eleven sons who were coming into Egypt. Commentaries agree that the wives of Judah and Simeon died prior to this. So, only nine of the remaining sons—excluding Joseph, who was already in Egypt—had their wives. The difference is it says in Acts 7:14, “...all his relatives...” which would include the daughters-in-law. In Genesis 46:26, they “...came from his body...”—sons, grandsons and great grandsons. The Bible does not contradict itself. Sometimes the story is told from a different standpoint. The details all fit together. It is just a matter of getting the story together.

Genesis 46:32-34, ““And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock”...So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, “What is your occupation?” that you shall say, “Your servants’ occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,” that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.”” Joseph told Jacob when he came before Pharaoh to tell him they were shepherds. The Hyksos were shepherd kings. The Egyptians despised shepherds. They disdained that as an occupation.

Genesis 47:6, ““The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.”” Pharaoh gave them an area away from the Egyptian proper—a bountiful place for their crops, the best of the land, but away from the people.

Verse 9, Jacob was one hundred-thirty years old at this time, the second year of the famine (Genesis 45:6). We are able to date it from this.

Verse 28, “And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred forty seven years.”

In Genesis 48:1, toward the end of Jacob’s life, Joseph took Ephraim and Manasseh and brought them before Jacob.

Genesis 48:5, ““And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be

mine.”” ‘I want them to be my sons. They are going to inherit right along with the others.’ Joseph was given the birthright and a double portion.

I Chronicles 5:1, “...Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was indeed the first born, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright.” Each of the two sons was to inherit as a full tribe.

Verses 10-14, “Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. And Israel said to Joseph, ‘I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!’ So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near him. Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn.” —“...guiding his hands knowingly.” His father crossed his hands. He knew what he was doing.

Verses 17-18, “Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. And Joseph said to his father, ‘Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn: put your right hand on his head.’” He said, ‘Dad, you have it the wrong way. You have your hands on the wrong one.’

Verse 19, “But his father refused and said, ‘I know my son, I know, [He refused and said, ‘I know it. I am doing so knowingly.’] He [Manasseh] also shall become a people, and he also shall be great, but truly his younger brother [Ephraim] shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.’” The younger brother was going to be greater of the two. His seed shall become a multitude of nations.

Verses 15-16, “And he blessed Joseph, and said: ‘God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has fed me all my life long to this day, the Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a

multitude in the midst of the earth.” The name Israel refers in a very special way in prophecy. Verse 19 says Manasseh was to be a great nation, and Ephraim “...shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.”

Genesis 49:1, “And Jacob called his sons and said, ‘Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you **in the last days**.’” Notice the setting of these words. Not what is going to happen in a few years but in the last days. It is very clear that the prophecy in Genesis 49 is for our time, not something that related back at that time.

As I said at the beginning, Genesis 49 is the most significant single chapter. It is prophetic. It deals with every tribe of Israel in the last days. This shows that they were to remain separate, identifiable nations even into the end time and right on down to the specific promise that Ephraim would become a great company of nations and Manasseh a great nation. The tribes of Israel were going to exist as separate, identical units all the way to the end; a different fate was to befall every one of the tribes. They were clearly not going to be all the same people, in a sense of what happened to the Jews.

### Questions

1. What mistake on Jacob’s part led to some of the resentment that Joseph’s brothers showed toward him?

Open favoritism.

2. What did Joseph himself do that aggravated the problem?

He dreamed dreams, and he told it to his brothers that they would bow down to him.

3. Was Judah a believer in the double standard?

Prove.

Yes. Genesis 38:15-18, “When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot because she had covered her face. Then he turned to her by the way and said, ‘Please let me come in to you’; for he knew not that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, ‘What will you give me, that you may come in to me?’ And he said, ‘I will send you a young goat from the flock.’ And she said, ‘Will you give me a pledge, till you send it?’ Then he said, ‘What pledge shall I give you?’ So she said ‘Your signet and cord and your staff that is in your hand.’ Then he gave it to her and came in to her and she conceived by him.”

Verses 24-26, “And it came to pass, about three months later, that Judah was told, saying, ‘Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry.’ So Judah said, ‘Bring her out and let her be burned!’ When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, ‘By the man to whom these belong, I am with child.’ And she said, ‘Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff.’ So Judah acknowledged them and said, ‘She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son.’ And he never knew her again.”

4. What was the significance of the “scarlet thread”?

This was important because the firstborn would receive the scepter promise.

5. What happened to Joseph in the twenty years that elapsed between his sale into Egypt and the next time that they saw him?

After being sold into Egypt, he was sold to Potiphar and ended up in jail. He interpreted dreams and was given great position and rulership.

6. What was the significance of Pharaoh’s dream?

It showed there was to be seven years of plenty and seven years of drought to immediately follow. He had two dreams to emphasize.

7. What did Joseph recommend doing in preparation for the famine?

He recommended storing up twenty percent of the harvest for seven years and selling it during the years of famine.

8. How did Joseph get his brothers to bring Benjamin back to Egypt?

He told them he suspected them of being spies and would not sell them grain until they brought back his younger brother.

9. In what way did Joseph test his brothers to see how they had changed over the years since they had callously sold him into slavery?

He told them he suspected them after they were ready to leave. He told his steward to put his personal cup in Benjamin’s sack. He wanted to see if they were willing to sacrifice for Benjamin and to see if they had learned their lesson. There was a change. He had put them to the test.

10. How old was Jacob when he came into Egypt?

Jacob was one hundred thirty years old (Genesis 47:9).

11. What land was given Jacob and his family when they entered Egypt?

It was the land of Goshen (Genesis 47:6), the area in which the Suez Canal was constructed by the birthright nations. France had a first opportunity, but it belonged to the British.

12. What was the significance of Jacob crossing his hands on the heads of Ephraim and Manasseh when he blessed them?

His right hand, with the greater blessing, was given to Ephraim. Manasseh, the firstborn, became a great single and powerful nation. But Ephraim became the greatest empire the world has ever seen. In a period of, basically, over a century, one-fourth of the land's surface and one-fourth of the people were British subjects. They controlled all the strategic sea gates except Panama, and we (U.S.) controlled that. Now it is a chaotic mess. Israel, as a whole, does not appreciate what God gave them. Israel was intended to be used as a blessing to other nations.

13. Who, according to Scripture, would the name of Israel primarily apply to in prophecy?

Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:16).

14. To what time period do the prophecies of Genesis 49 apply?

It applies to the end time (Genesis 49:1).

**Reuben:** Genesis 49:3-4, “Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch.” ‘Reuben, you are the beginning; you are the starter.’ France has been known for culture, protocol and etiquette. No one can hold up to the reputation that France has had in terms of culture, dignity and protocol—a pride in excellence and in power.

One of the unstable things is the government of France. It is called the fifth republic. At a time when we are celebrating the first constitution, France has had about ten: the first and second republic, Napoleon the third, the fourth and DeGaulle the fifth republic—basically ten constitutions in all. They are unstable. There is a certain instability that has been there that has

tended to be characteristic. They were the starting point.

There is a certain rivalry between Reuben and Judah—between France and Britain. The French were in Panama first. Somehow, it just went through their hands. There has been that quality of going first class, but a certain instability that has been reflected is there. There are problems that have reflected themselves, in terms of morality of the family. They have under-minded what they could have had. Reuben is to be one of the great outstanding nations of Tomorrow's World. They have this greatness; they have all the makings of greatness. They couldn't quite get it together. They did not receive the birthright blessings. It has gone through their hands.

**Simeon and Levi:** vv. 5-7, “Simeon and Levi are brothers; instruments of cruelty are in their habitation. Let not my soul enter their council; let not my honor be united to their assembly; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.” They were instruments of cruelty. They were scattered through the inheritance. They were not to be given a separate nation.

**Judah:** vv. 8-12, “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down; he lies down as a lion; and as a lion, who shall rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people. Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.”

He was to receive the scepter promise. The royal line in Europe is the descendant of Judah. The major promise given to Judah was the scepter promise. Judah has received the scepter.

**Zebulun:** v. 13, “Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall adjoin Sidon.” As you look in northwest Europe, where the tribes settle the area of the Netherlands (the very word “nether” refers to “that brought back from the sea”), you see Rotterdam and Amsterdam, the greatest seaports in the world—a haven for ships.

**Issachar:** vv. 14-15, “Issachar is a strong donkey, lying down between two burdens; he

saw that rest was good, and that the land was pleasant; he bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, and became a band of slaves [KJV, “tribute”].” This describes Finland, crouching between Russia and the West—Russia breathing down their necks and the West putting pressure. They have been willing to pay tribute rather than fight, which are certain family characteristics. You would never imagine the Irish doing that.

**Dan:** vv. 16-18: “Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider shall fall backward. I have waited for your salvation, O Lord!” “I wait for Your salvation, O Lord!” He was excluded from the one hundred forty-four thousand (Revelation 17), so he waits. Dan is like a serpent by the way. A serpent, when it goes, leaves its mark, a writhing, wiggling pattern. When they migrated, they named places after their ancestor Dan, all the way from up in the area of the Black Sea to, ultimately, Ireland. They went through Dan’s mark (Denmark), the Danube River and all the way up into Ireland. They have had certain proclivities in judging the people. They have been politicians and policemen, especially along the East Coast. When you think of the Irishmen, you think law and politics. “A serpent by the way”—that’s the way they have been toward Britain. The IRA and the situation come right down to today.

**Gad:** v. 19, “Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, but he shall triumph at last.” Deuteronomy gives us more prophecies about the tribes.

Deuteronomy 33:21, “He provided the first part for himself, because a lawgiver’s portion was reserved there. He came with the heads of the people; he administered the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel.” He executed justice and judgment. Switzerland is the nation of the troop. It has been said that it is a nation that does not have an army; it is an army. “Gad” means “troop.” On a per capita basis, it is the most heavily armed nation in the world and not entangling themselves with others.

**Asher:** v. 20, “Bread from Asher shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties.” —The area of Belgium. It describes everything from Belgium lace, chocolate and porcelains. It is also known for diamonds (Antwerp became the diamond capital) and trade. Deuteronomy 33 gives some parallels.

Deuteronomy 33:24, “And of Asher he said: ‘Let Asher be blessed of sons; let him be favored by his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil. Your

sandals shall be iron and bronze; as your days so shall your strength be.’”

**Naphtali:** v. 21, “Naphtali is a deer let loose; he gives goodly words.” Naphtali is a female deer with promiscuous behavior. What is Sweden noted for? Goodly words—the Nobel Prize.

**Joseph:** vv. 22-26, “Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; his branches run over the wall. The archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him. But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), by the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.” —Growing up and spreading out, a colonizing people. It describes what is going to occur with Joseph. It was to be a colonizing nation.

**Benjamin:** v. 27, “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.” The Vikings sailed under the wolf insignia—Norway and Denmark.

15. What major promise was given to Judah? The scepter promise was given to Judah.

16. What is the significance of Genesis 49:22? They would be growing and spreading out—a colonizing people.

Genesis 49:33, Jacob died.

Genesis 50:5-9, ““My father made me swear, saying, ‘Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.’ Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father and I will come back.” And Pharaoh said, ‘Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.’ So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers and his father’s house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.”

Verses 13-14, “For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of

the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. And after they buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.”

Verse 15, “When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, ‘Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.’” They figured Joseph was going to get even with them now that their father was dead.

Verses 19-21, “Joseph said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about, as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.’ And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.” Joseph said, ‘I will take care of you.’

Verse 22, “So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father’s household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years.”

Verses 24-26, “And Joseph said to his brethren, ‘I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.’ Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.’ So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.” Joseph died in faith and said, ‘I want to go into the Promised Land when you go.’ In Exodus they brought Joseph’s remains when the children of Israel left Egypt (Exodus 13:19).

We have gone through a major section as a survey. I would refer you back to some material. Go through the study questions and the Bible Story Book, a running commentary on the material, and the booklet, What’s Ahead for America and Britain?

We have had, in the book of Genesis, some things that lay a foundation in understanding prophecy, and all of the things that come after. Without a foundation—the book of Genesis—you can’t understand prophecy. We also have, in the context of this kind of material, things they did, the good things and the bad. And from that we also might learn lessons and recognize that there are child-rearing principles and examples that were inspired to be written down.