

## 9. Israel in Egypt

Joseph's Children in Egypt; Joseph Tests his Brothers; Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh; Jacob's Blesses his other Descendents. Genesis 42:1–50:26

## Looking forward to Exam 1

- Format
  - 20 identifications (4 points each)
  - 4 passages for scripture commentary (10 points each)
  - 4 short essays
- Study the review sheets, review slides as necessary, and complete the notable passages in the packet!
  - For scripture commentary, remember that the literary portion addresses both what kind of writing the passage is **and** how it fits into the larger work (this can usually be done by stating what comes before and after or setting it in the context of one of the book's major parts)
  - For short essays, write a complete paragraph, or maybe two, that addresses all aspects of the question. However, do not overwrite! (treat it like a fuller short answer and not a full-length essay)

## Conclusion of the Joseph Story

- Joseph's Rise to Power (41:37–57)
  - Joseph's Children in Egypt (41:46–57)
- Joseph's Brothers in Egypt (42:1–45:27)
  - First Visit of the Ten Brothers (42:1–25)
  - The Brothers Return to Canaan (42:26–38)
  - The Brother's Second Visit, with Benjamin (43:1–34)
  - Joseph Detains Benjamin (44:1–17)
  - Judah Pleads for Benjamin's Release (44:18–34)
  - Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers (45:1–27)
- Jacob Settles in Goshen (45:28–47:12)
- Famine in Egypt (47:13–26)
- The Last Days of Jacob (47:27–31)
- Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons (48:1–22)
- Jacob's Last Words to His Sons (49:1–28)
- Jacob's Death and Burial (49:29–50:14)
- Joseph Forgives His Brothers (50:15–21)
- Joseph's Last Days and Death (50:22–26)

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

3

## Joseph's Children in Egypt (41:46–57)

- "And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him." (41:46)
  - Remember that the rulers of Egypt were a Semitic people, the Hyksos, so perhaps Joseph was not marrying outside of the extended family.
    - But this doesn't change the fact Asenath is the daughter of a Pagan priest!
- **Manasseh (forget)** and **Ephraim (fruitful)**
  - Both were born in the years of plenty
  - Later when Israel is blessing his sons at the end of his life he adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his own, so there can be no doubt about their lineage

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

4

## Joseph and His Brothers Revisited (42:1–28)

- Jacob sends his sons, save Benjamin, to Egypt to buy grain
- And Joseph was the governor over the land, *and he it was* that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and **bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.** (42:6)
  - The fulfillment of Joseph's prophetic dream
  - Joseph recognizes his brothers, but hides himself from them; he even uses an interpreter, although he knows what his brothers are saying (see 42:23)
- Joseph decides to test his brothers to see how they've changed
  - He accuses them of being spies, throws them into prison for a time, then demands they bring Benjamin to see him.
  - Joseph keeps Simeon but sends the other brothers with grain to go fetch Benjamin.
  - "And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required." (42:22)
  - Joseph also restores their money, foreshadowing what he will do to test his brethren later...

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

5

## Jacob and Benjamin (42:29–43:14)

- Jacob is understandably reluctant to let Benjamin go with his brothers to Egypt, in fact he leaves Simeon in prison until the food is gone.
- "And **Judah** said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, *and* also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (Gen 43:8-9)
  - Perhaps a way for Judah to redeem himself?
  - This is an illustration of how **people can learn**, change and take responsibility for their actions. Remember **Genesis is illustrating people in real life situations.**
- Jacob instructs them to take double money and the best fruits of the land as gifts
  - "Fruits" is more like products, such as balm, and honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds (43:11)

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

6

## Joseph Tests his Brothers (43:15–44:34)

- When Benjamin arrives Joseph is overcome and retreats to his rooms: “for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought *where* to weep; and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there.” (Gen 43:30)
- Joseph invites his brothers to dine with him: “And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.”
  - Joseph gives signs that he knows them, such as giving Benjamin five times the food as the others
- Joseph has one more test in store for his brothers: the Silver cup
  - “*Is* not this *it* in which my lord drinketh, and **whereby indeed he divineth?** ye have done evil in so doing... And Joseph said unto them, What deed *is* this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?” (Gen 44:5, 15)
    - While we might balk at Joseph using a cup for divination remember that Lehi had the Liahona, Joseph Smith and other prophets had the Urim and Thumin – there is nothing wrong with sacred object
- The brothers, especially Judah, beg Joseph not to punish Benjamin for their father’s sake.

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

7

## Israel in Egypt (45:1–46:34)

- Joseph joyfully reveals himself to his brothers and forgives them.
  - Joseph sees that the Lord’s purposes can be accomplished in worldly ways: “Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: **for God did send me before you to preserve life.**” (Gen 45:5)
  - Joseph is seen as a Savior figure here, he preserves the life of his family through his own suffering
  - These are the perils of mortality – trials have a purpose and reason.
- Jacob is brought to Egypt
  - On the way he stops and offers sacrifice at **Beer-sheba**, a location important to later Israelites
  - Gen 46:7-27 is a genealogy list of Jacob’s immediate family – 70 souls
- Pharaoh gives the Israelites the land of Goshen for their flocks
  - As the famine continues, the Egyptians run out of money so Joseph begins to take cattle, land and eventually people as payment
    - This is an Israelite Etiological myth explaining how the Egyptians and Hebrews were enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

8

## Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh (47:1–48:22)

- Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manasseh so there can be no doubt about their lineage.
- Compare this to Isaac and Jacob – Jacob’s eyes are dimmed but he **knowingly** switches his hands so that the right hand (and presumably greater blessing) is on **Ephraim**
  - Jacob reaffirms the blessings of Abraham and Isaac on their heads
- “Moreover I have given to thee **one portion above** thy brethren” (48:22)
  - This implies the **birthright**, in the Law the birthright son receives an extra portion to take care of the family
  - This is also a play on words – “one portion” is literally “shoulder height” which is a play on Shekem
  - Shekem is the place of the Dinah incident - implicitly Manasseh and Ephraim are replacing Simeon and Levi

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

9

## Jacob’s Blesses his other Descendents (49:1–50:26)

- These blessings are examples of the poetry genre in Genesis
    - Poetry is a conscious **use of language for effect**; different cultures use different schemes to define poetry such as meter, rhythm, repetition, sound, word choice, and parallelism
    - The language of poetry is crafted to evoke emotions and even the Spirit – it is also crafted so that it is easier to remember and pass on
    - Poetry and poetic passages especially in the context of blessings can be seen as a sign of divine inspiration
  - Blessing and warning to Rueben 49:3-4 – firstborn is historically the first group removed from Canaan
  - Blessing and warning to Simeon and Levi 49:5-7
    - Note that although they are not blessed as much now, the Levites earn the right to be priests!
- Blessing to Joseph 49:22-26  
 •Note the symbolism of hills and mountains – the sacred mountain is the temple  
 •The last word of Genesis looks forward to Exodus: Egypt...

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise:  
 thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies;  
 thy father’s children shall bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion’s whelp:

from the prey, my son, thou art gone up:  
 he stooped down, he couched as a lion,  
 and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

**The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,**  
 nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
 until **Shiloh** come;  
 and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Binding his foal unto the vine,  
 and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine;  
 he washed his garments in wine,  
 and his **clothes in the blood of grapes**:  
 His eyes shall be red with wine,  
 and his teeth white with milk. (Genesis 49:8–12)

9/30/2009

9. Israel in Egypt

10