

Reading Genesis & Exodus as Christian Scripture for the Church Today
Diocese of Chichester Online Book Group for The Year of the Old Testament 2023:
Genesis 37-end - Joseph (19/7/23)

“The family history of Jacob” (37:2) – not Joseph, perhaps a bit surprisingly, but note e.g. chapter 38 on Judah and Tamar.

A bit like a short story. (See Robert Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, on these chapters)

Surprising reversals. What insight can we gain into the characters? Are there lessons to draw from this? E.g. does Joseph change?

Could you draw a diagram / chart of the Joseph story (his rise and fall and... - a death and resurrection shaped story)? Can you see this shape echoed in the future story of Israel?

From Wenham:

37:2-36	Joseph sold into Egypt	
38:1-30	Tamar and Judah	
39:1-20	Joseph and Potiphar	A
39:21-40:23	Joseph in Prison	B
41:1-57	Joseph in the Palace	C
42:1-38	1 st visit of Joseph’s family to Egypt	A’
43:1-45:28	2 nd visit of Joseph’s family to Egypt	B’
46:1-47:31	3 rd visit of Joseph’s family to Egypt	C’
48:1-50:26	The last days of Jacob and Joseph	

The gradual fulfilment of the promises to Abraham. God blesses the nations through Joseph, a descendant of Abraham.

37:2-36 - Joseph sold into Egypt

The stories behind the stories – typology, patterns (repetition / variation) – if we spot these things, what should we make of them?

Cf. chapters 25-27 (Jacob and Esau) with chapter 37 (Joseph and his brothers) – rivalry between brothers, parting, reuniting

V2 - “a bad report” / evil tales – cf. the spies “bad report” of the land of Canaan – Num 13:32; 14:36-37 – Was Joseph’s report true or not? Did it influence Jacob? (vv2-3?)

V3 - Jacob favouring Rachel’s children over Leah’s (25:28; 29:30) – cf. Leah hated (22:31, 33) – cf. Issac loving Esau more than Jacob; Rebekah loving Jacob more than Esau – Genesis often a tale of rivalry / preference / conflict (Cain and Abel onwards!)

V3 – it is unclear in what way this tunic is special – the term NIV “richly ornamented” only otherwise occurs in 2 Sam 13:18f as the robe of a princess. Hebrew: “1) flat (of the hand or foot), palm, sole; 1a) of the tunic reaching to palms and soles (fig.)”; “Many-coloured” comes from the LXX and Vulgate. A mark of special favour? A robe of office? Joseph being treated by his father as if he were the firstborn?

On pairs of dreams cf. 40:1-41:36. The doubling suggests a certain fulfilment, “the thing is established by God” (41:32). One dream is set on earth, one in the heavens.

V8 – Joseph will indeed “rule” (45:8, 28). He will be next in power to the king (41:38-44)

The theme of loyalty - Is Joseph a loyal son? – Loyalty (ultimately to God) will (eventually?) be Joseph’s defining characteristic

Is Jacob testing Joseph by sending him on this dangerous mission to his brothers who hate him?

Another son sacrificed story:

V13 – Lit. “Here I am” – the language that Abraham uses when he is tested by God (Genesis 22)

V18 - Seeing afar off (22:4)

V22 - Do not lay your hand on the lad (22:12)

V25 - Looking up and seeing an alternative (22:13)

Cf. Hagar and Ishmael (chapter 21) – similar language – v15, Joseph “wanders” like Hagar in 21:14 – the water in the skin is empty – being cast down – being at a distance – Ishmaelites – The casting out of a son to Egypt – Joseph has become like Ishmael - Israel is going to afflicted and oppressed as Hagar and Ishmael

V25 - Camels from Gilead – Laban’s pursuit of Jacob to Gilead – Rachel seated on a camel, death sentence – 31:32 (Genesis 30-31; ch. 35)

Cf. Rachel having her period (31v35) – a bloodied garment

v33 – “surely torn” sounds like teraphim (household gods) of Genesis 31

V12 - Shechem was the place of a blood bath where Jacob’s sons had massacred the sons of Hamor (34:24-30)

Apparent chance / luck – the plan of God, God’s providential purpose / care

Cast into a pit (37:20, 22, 24, 28-29) and later cast into a dungeon “pit” (40:15; 41:14)

v25- Jacob will later send the same gums as part of his present to the as yet unrecognised Joseph in 43:11

What story is this? Where have we seen this before? A goat, and a coat, and a father deceived about a favoured son – Isaac deceived by Jacob about Esau (27:9-17). V33 – “he identified it” cf. 27:23, Jacob could not identify the disguised Jacob – poetic justice?

The NT Joseph, the wife of Mary, is somewhat like the OT Joseph: Joseph the son of Jacob (Matthew 1:16) has dreams (Matthew 1:20; 2:13) and goes down to Egypt (Matthew 2:13)

Cf. OT Joseph & Christ – Jesus visits he brothers but is rejected by them because of envy, conspiracy and betrayal for silver, Judah / Judas, stripped of his robe, death and resurrection, exalted to rule over them, sits at the right hand of power, offers forgiveness and salvation - Joseph & Jesus - The despised and rejected Saviour

All believers must die to self to have peace with their neighbours (Wenham, p360)

Dt 21:15-17 – on how to treat the sons of an unloved wife

Cf. David in 1 Samuel 17 – David, like Joseph, a younger son sent off by his father to his brothers

The Joseph story and the plot line of the Pentateuch: How Israel ends up in Egypt, blessing on the family and to the nations

The power of God to fulfil his purposes even through evil (Romans 8:28)

38:1-30 - Tamar and Judah

37:36 and 39:1 – this passage an interlude – why is this here? (the story of the family of Jacob (37:2) not just of Joseph)

This interlude creates suspense and the sense of the passage of time.

In what ways is this chapter relevant to the broader themes of Genesis?

38:25-26 closely parallels 37:32-33 – the identification of items by Judah and by Jacob

Divine justice, the recognition of wrongdoing by the perpetrator – cf. 38:26 and 42:21.

Goats and items of dress / disguise used in deception of a father.

The preference for the younger son (Abel, Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, Shelah, Peres)

Cf. Jacob's grief for Joseph and Judah's lack of mourning for his two sons. But maybe there are signs of the beginning of repentance in this story, and Judah could be said to be a changed man by the end of the book (see 44:18-34). Cf. Character change in Abram / Abraham, Jacob / Israel, Joseph, Reuben

The central problem of childlessness in this chapter relates it to the promises to Abraham and themes in Genesis

Tamar the Canaanite Woman a faithful foreigner? Cf. Melchizedek (ch. 14) and Abimelech (ch. 26).

Marrying Canaanites objected to in 24:3 and 27:46-28:1. See also 46:10; 41:45.

V2 - Seeing and taking – illicit taking? a fall story? Cf. 3:6; 6:2; 12:15; 34:2; Judges 14:1-2

On marriage to the brother-in-law see Dt 25:6

V7 – Lit. "Er did evil". "Evil" is "Er" spelled backwards. Wenham suggests "Er erred" to capture the pun.

Judah had taken a leading part in getting rid of Joseph and has perhaps presumed that Jacob will get over it

Stories of descent / going down: Jacob will go down to his grave in mourning (37:35), the descent of Joseph to Egypt, the descent of Judah (v1)

Contrast Joseph rejecting the advances of Potiphar's wife (chapter 39) and Judah seeking out a prostitute

Items used as evidence

"please identify" tokens

Cf. Esau – despising his birthright (25:34), losing his status – Tamar caring very much for her rights / status as part of the family. Seal, cord and staff – signs of office / authority (cf. Num 17:7; Ps 110:2). Wenham calls these items "the legal surrogate of the bearer... a kind of Ancient Near Eastern equivalent of all a person's credit cards." (p367). Does Judah treat these items connected with his status too lightly?

Poetic justice – cf. Reuben will later say to his father: kill my sons if I do not bring Benjamin back to you – the death of two sons here

Dothan = two wells (37:17) and Enaim = two springs

40 years or so in the span of a few verses – Judah wasting his life?

Judah's name suggests confession

Judah gains two children back

Joseph's sons will be switched in order later

V29 - Breaking forth / breaking away

1 Samuel 25 – breaking away at the time of sheep sheering

2 Samuel 13 – Absalom presses (perez) David and Amnon to go to the sheep sheering to avenge his sister Tamar

Later in the story of Joseph: sons lost, collateral given to someone in disguise

Cf. Lot and his daughters (chapter 29) – and the line in danger failing

Women deceiving the serpent figure – Rachel, Jael, Esther, Rahab, Hebrew midwives etc. – a reversal of the pattern of the fall in which Eve was deceived by the serpent

Cf. Rahab the prostitute at Jericho, the city of Palms (Tamar = palm), burning with fire (v24), scarlet cord

Cf. Ruth – 2 dead sons, returning home, failure of the near kinsman, Tamar and Perez (Ruth 4:12; Matthew 1:6, 16). This story turns out not to be as marginal to God's saving purposes as it might at first seem! God uses strange and surprising means to save.

Day of Atonement themes – confession and restoration – goats

Cf. Judges 14-15 – Samson

39:1-20 - Joseph and Potiphar

Even through this dark episode, the LORD was with Joseph 39:2, 21

Joseph bringing blessing to the nations! (v5, this key word, "bless"; 1:22; 12:2-3)

See Wenham on the artistic storytelling: here and subsequently we have two similar stories which start promisingly and end in hopes dashed and then a third which surprises (p372)

Vv1-6, 20-23 similar patterns – down – with God – favour – entrusted with oversight so that the master can be unconcerned – prospered by God

V1 – are we invited to see a parallel between Joseph's slavery in Egypt and Israel's later slavery in Egypt? An apparent setback will lead to ultimate vindication. Joseph's disgrace leads to future glory.

V6 – Potiphar "left [everything] in his [Joseph's] hand", as the garment literally is in Potiphar's wife hand in vv12-13

V6 – Joseph has a lovely figure and a beautiful face, like his mother Rachel (29:17), the only other person given this double accolade in the Old Testament.

Cf. Chapter 37: a garment stripped from Joseph, Joseph cast down into a pit / prison, a garment presented as evidence

Cf. Jacob blessed in Laban's house despite servitude

A forbidden fruit story (one thing forbidden – her Potiphar's wife) – Joseph a new and better Adam who resists temptation

Potiphar's wife is an Eve figure who sees and wants to take sinfully

Joseph wise, shrewd, loyal, faithful cf. Prov 1:7; 3:3-4; 5:3; 6:26; 24:16

Joseph's innocent suffering - cf. Moses, Job, Jeremiah, The Suffering Servant (Is 53); 1 Peter 2:21; 5:6

Joseph suffers like Ishmael

Cf. ch. 16: Abraham, Sarah and Hagar (the afflicted stranger Egyptian) – sexual mistreatment of / by an Egyptian

Cf. Joseph and Ishmael - 21:9 – making sport / laughing / mocking (39:17) – blaming the husband (Abraham / Potiphar)

Listening to the wife

The other men of Potiphar's house like jealous brothers who are envious of Joseph's advance?

Does Potiphar favour Joseph by putting him in the king's prison over which he rules – 40:3? Maybe Potiphar doesn't take his wife's story at face value

Joseph might have expected to be promptly executed but...

39:21-40:23 - Joseph in Prison

Note the parallel between 39:2-20 and 39:21-40:23: blessing on Joseph, maltreatment of Joseph, Joseph left in prison

Two dreams of cupbearer and baker cf. Joseph's two dreams (37:5-10) and Pharaoh's two dreams (41:1-32)

Chapter 40

V1 – cup bearer – cf. Nehemiah (1:11-2:8 – Genesis 40:7, “looking glum” also echoed on Nehemiah 2:2)

The offence of the cup bearer and the chief baker - a crisis of food in Egypt (or at least looming)?
These figures major officials / senior civil servants / cabinet members / confidants of the king / responsible for wine and bread

Joseph is going to become the chief baker and cup-bearer of Egypt (on Joseph's cup see chapter 44)

Twos / pairs in the Joseph story and in Genesis more generally – compare and contrast these two figures and their fates.

Threes

V20 - Pharaoh's birthday a major state occasion – important cabinet roles to be filled

V15 - “pit” – 37:20 etc.

V13, v20 - Head-lifting up – positive and negative

V14 – “remember me” - Cf. God's remembering e.g. Noah – 8:1

Two criminals alongside Joseph – cf. Christ – The thief of the cross / Joseph: “remember me” when you come into your office / favourable situation – Christ remembers the penitent thief!

Raised up on the third day (v20)

Cf. Exodus 1:8 – a Pharaoh arises who does not remember Joseph

God will bring Israel out of the house of bondage in Egypt (Ex 20:2)

Joseph coming to maturity / perfection / completeness / being tested by suffering

Joseph conscious of living before God / looking to God for the interpretation of dreams etc. Implicitly looking to God for vindication even when he's in the pit

Cf. Joseph and Daniel – raised up to be high officials at the court of a foreign king (interpreting dreams which baffle the wise men of the court)

Mordechai – asked day after day (39:10, tempted by Potiphar's wife; Esther 3:4, asked to bow down to Haman) - two royal officials who conspire against the king

41:1-57- Joseph in the Palace

Two dreams, two witnesses to the same reality (implying certainty? – 41:32)

The failure of magicians / wise men – cf. Moses in Exodus, Daniel

Cf. a reversal of Joseph's situation – cf. chapter 37 - lifted up, garments, authority etc.

Esther 8:15 – Mordechai clothed in royal garments

Cf. Judah's fall, his signet, cord and staff (chapter 38) – Joseph's elevation, received a signet, a gold chain

Joseph receives a new name, a new family – Pharaoh a new father figure and Joseph like a first-born son – How far will Joseph be Egyptianized? Will he be loyal to Jacob, his father, and to his God? Will Joseph remember his true family?

Joseph wise, faithful – a new and better Adam

Vv37-46 – Joseph becomes the vizier / Prime minister of Egypt

V46 - 30 years old, the time of priestly ordination

13th – 14th year – Abraham

Isaac – 14 years – chapter 30 – Joseph's birth & release – Jacob working 7 years for beautiful Rachel and 7 years of Leah (similar language)

Joseph pasturing the sheep with his brothers / grazing in the reeds – Joseph’s situation is like the seven beautiful cows – Joseph is swallowed up by his brothers, but not completely swallowed up as Joseph will in the end feed his brothers

Joseph the 14th as sun, moon and eleven stars bow down to him (11+2=13; 13 + Joseph = 14)

42:1-38 - 1st visit of Joseph’s family to Egypt

Similar to some previous stories but with characters in different roles – cf. musical chairs – the tables have been turned – Joseph, Benjamin

V3 - Benjamin the only son of Rachel remaining – does Jacob keep him home because he fears the other brothers might harm him?

V5 – The famine in the land of Canaan echoes 12:10 and 26:1, recalling the famines which drove Abraham and Isaac towards Egypt for food

Fulfilment of Joseph’s dream – bowing down to him (v6, cf. 37:7, 9-10; 41:32)

Vv7-8 - Stories of disguise / recognising or not – Jacob and Esau – Tamar – “recognise” / “identify” also used on 37:32 as Jacob identifies Joseph’s coat

V7 - “pretended” also echoes “plotted” 37:18. The words only differ by one letter.

V9 - Joseph accuses them of being spies, whereas he was spy-like before, bringing back a bad report, acting like a spy for his father

V17 - The brothers imprisoned for three days – they share something of the fate that Joseph has been through – Joseph teaching them a lesson? Will they repent and learn humility as (arguably) Joseph has?

Is Joseph suspicious of them? Does Joseph wonder whether Benjamin is safe? Have they tried to cast him out or kill him already?

The brothers are forced to re-live their sending away of Joseph by leaving another brother in Egypt and returning to their father. Will they tell the truth this time? What will their father think as history repeats itself?

V22 - Reuben (29:32, the LORD has seen my misery / behold, a son) lived up to his name by seeing the affliction of Joseph and trying to help him

Simeon showed no care for the hated son. The second son of Leah is held back so that they might bring the second son of Rachel.

Will they value their left behind brother over the money? A replaying of the choice they had earlier: brother or money?

For Jacob, the loss of Simeon must bring back to mind the loss of Joseph.

Does Jacob wonder where they got the silver from, and what has happened to Simeon? Have they sold Simeon into slavery? (Could this be what has happened to Joseph too?)

Cf. Judah and Tamar: Judah loses two sons, not willing to “give up” a third in the hope of receiving sons in return

Jacob virtually seems to disown the other brothers except Benjamin alone

A test for Joseph too – will he behave mercifully and righteously or seek revenge?

V23 – the irony of what character in the story do or don’t know / what the reader knows

The brothers are experiencing a kind of justice – Mt 7:2; Gal 6:7

43:1-45:28 - 2nd visit of Joseph’s family to Egypt

A slowing down of the narrative pace as in chapters 17 and 18 – long extended speeches – extreme almost novelistic detail whereas sometimes things are passed over very briefly

V1 – “severe famine in the land”, the same wording as 12:10 and similar to 41:57

Cf. the roles of Reuben and Judah in the selling of Joseph and here

Another story of the sacrificing of the beloved son – Abraham has to let Lot go, Ishmael, Isaac – Jacob departs – Joseph departs – Simeon departs – now the one remaining son, Benjamin, has to be sacrificed

Cf. when Benjamin is sent the other sons will be restored

V8ff - Judah is willing to offer himself – he seems to have come to repentance etc. (cf. 9:5; Prov 6:1; 11:15)

Jacob sends a present (though on a smaller scale) as he did to Esau – 32:21

V11 - A replaying of the caravan of items in 37:25

The wheel has turned full circle – they got money for sending Joseph to Egypt and now they are sending money to Joseph in Egypt in the hope of rescuing their brother

V12 - Double money – the portion of the first born, restitution

V29 - Joseph lifting up eyes and seeing – Abraham seeing the place of sacrifice in chapter 22, the lamb in the thicket, Isaac and Rebecca seeing one another

V30 - Weeping – Esau weeps when he loses his birthright, Jacob weeps when he meets Rachel, and the two brothers weep together in chapter 33

Joseph once wept alone in the pit, again the brothers don't see it and eat at a distance

Joseph weeps again in 45:2

Joseph singles out Benjamin – are the brothers envious? How will they act towards the favoured brother?

Chapter 44

Cf. Laban pursuing Jacob and Rachel looking for the household gods

Genesis 37 – camels from Gilead take the son of Rachel down to captivity in Egypt

The death of Rachel, the seeming death of Joseph and now the death of Benjamin seems possible

Joseph sold in to Egypt for silver

V2 - A silver cup – Joseph's own cup – cf. cup for divination and household gods

Joseph was stolen, now his cup is stolen

Joseph has provided bread to Egypt. He is also a cup bearer!

Silver is given for the bread.

Vv7-9 – the brothers offer to suffer a fate which echoes their treatment of Joseph

V13 - The brothers are united in tearing their clothes in defence of the favoured younger brother.

Cf. the tearing of garments in chapter 37 (Joseph's and Jacob's - 37:34).

The brothers seem to have learnt a lesson!

Judah confesses and unites the brothers.

They are invited to save themselves but they stand in solidarity with their brother / father / family.

Favour should be used for the sake of others.

A reversal of chapter 37: rather than sending their brother into slavery in Egypt, they are willing to go down into slavery in Egypt.

Cf. Benjamin and Judah

V18ff – The longest and most impassioned speech in Genesis.

Judah was Judas-like in the previous story, but now he is redeemed: he is a type of Christ, offering himself for his brothers (v33).

Wenham compares Judah to the repentant prodigal son (Luke 15)

Chapter 45

Joseph has a profound sense of God's action despite the lack of obvious miracles or God appearing / speaking etc. – God's secret providence is obvious to Joseph. He trusts God and doesn't hold grudges. God is always sovereign. God redeems and restores, overcomes sin, renews, heals the broken, gives back the lost etc. (vv5-8)

The parallels / patterns / typology etc. show us God at work, God's hidden hand

V7 – Joseph is like a new Noah, used by God to preserve life

This chapter is reminiscent of the reconciliation / meeting of Jacob and Esau in chapter 33.

Now, unlike in chapter 37, the brothers can speak peaceably together.

V22 – Joseph's gifts of cloaks to them a gesture of reconciliation after their stealing of his ornamented tunic

V28 - Cf. the sons previous returns to Jacob – And Jacob's statement in chapter 37:33, 35 – he again speaks about going down to his son and death

Cf. the binding of Isaac – the return of a son as if from the dead

46:1-47:31 - 3rd visit of Joseph's family to Egypt

Jacob is given divine encouragement for the momentous move to Egypt. This move from the land of promise won't prevent God from keeping his promises.

V2 – cf. 31:11, "Jacob", "Here I am"; 22:11, "Abraham, Abraham", "Here I am"; cf. 1 Samuel 3:4-10; Ex 3:4, "Moses, Moses", "Here I am"

V3 - Cf. God appearing to Isaac at Beersheba in chapter 26 - "Fear not". Cf. Abraham's fearful entry into Egypt 12:10-13.

God is the God of the Father (vv1, 3), the one is faithful from generation to generation

Jacob is Israel, the representative of the nation

Cf. Genesis 22 – death and resurrection pattern

Why the genealogy here (rather than say in chapter 36-37)? The family of Jacob has been blocked, the family has to be saved / redeemed / reunited etc. This is a family of promise as if back from the dead. Now the promises to Abraham can go forward.

The number 7 – 7 named women – 70 individuals – Leah 7 x 7; Rachel 3x7 – cf. 70 nations in chapter 12. 70 suggests totality. Israel as a kind of microcosm.

Ex 15 – 12 springs and 70 palm trees – cf. the 12 disciples and 70 sent out in mission

Jacob is like a new Noah, bringing his family into a place of safety

Gad (numerical value 7) the 7th son had 7 sons

The wives and children are restored to their proper places, perhaps pushing back against the favouritism that has been evident in the family.

The wives have twice as many children as the concubines.

The people have a separate identity from the Egyptians as shepherds – cf. Abel (the shepherd) / Cain (and the land, building projects etc.). They are going into the land as a people and will come out as a people.

V32ff- Joseph's story began with the keeping of sheep.

V30 – Jacob ready to die - Nunc dimittis, Now let your servant depart in peace! (Luke 2:29)

Chapter 47

V2 - Five the number of strength, associated with the number of digits on a hand, military numbering

V10 - The nations being blessed through Abraham. A great ruler treats Jacob as a kind of father figure.

Jacob's suffering – lack of blessing, troubles with Laban, barren wives, family rivalries, Reuben's rebellion etc.

The people of Egypt become decapitalised and are dependent on Joseph and become slaves of Pharaoh. Egypt becomes a house of bondage even for the Egyptians, not just for Israel.

Israel being fruitful and multiplying and filling the land (recalling the creation mandate of Genesis 1:28, and the promises to Abraham)

The Patriarchal ages seem to follow a pattern: Abraham = 175, 7x5 squared; Isaac = 180, 5x6 squared; Jacob = 147, 3x7 squared.

Is Joseph thoroughly Egyptianized? Who is his true father? To whom is he ultimately loyal? Does he identify with the covenant people and the promise of the Land of Canaan?

Burial in the land of Canaan shows Egypt is not their ultimate home

17 years

48:1-50:26 - The last days of Jacob and Joseph

Hebrews 11v21 – Jacob blesses the sons of Joseph by faith

Recalls chapter 29 – a chain of blessing passed on. Isaac blessed for the sake of Abraham etc. Jacob blessed for the sake of the fear of Isaac.

Ephraim and Manasseh adopted as sons of Jacob, rather than being treated as grandchildren. Joseph is receiving the double portion of the first-born son so that each of his two sons can receive a full portion. 1 Chronicles 5.

Cf. Rachel dying on the way and Jacob also dying before reaching the promised land

Echoes of the blessing scene in Genesis 27 where Isaac blessed Jacob rather than Esau – dim eyes (v10, v14 etc.), who is this? (v17ff)

Cf. chapter 38 – the two sons of Judah switched order as they came out of the womb. Grandsons named as sons.

The blessing of the younger brother over the older brother

Jacob can look back and see the hand of God in his life

Joshua 24v32 on the burial of Joseph's bones

Chapter 49

Poetic prophetic judgements and blessings – cf. Moses and David; Judges 5; Noah, Genesis 9

The order of the blessings: Sons of Leah, handmaids, followed by Rachel.

Zebulun and Naphtali are switched in order.

1 Chronicles 2:2

Word play – uncertain / unusual words

A particular focus on Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Judah and Joseph

Names associated with the name of Yahweh Genesis 29 and 30

Judah (the dominant tribe in the south) and Joseph (the dominant tribe in the north) are singled out and juxtaposed – cf. chapters 37, 38, 39.

Three disqualified first-born sons, Reuben, Simeon and Levi.

Connections / correspondence between the sons / tribes in a bookended structure:

Royal Judah to Royal Benjamin, kings who tear prey

Judah and Joseph - Donkeys – v11, v22, possibly.

Zebulun and Naphtali correspond

Issachar and Asher

Dan and Gad – heels

Central statement: v18 – “I look for your deliverance, O LORD”

10 statements about Reuben

Genesis 35; 1 Chron 5 – shift from you to he, Reuben's crime revealed – cf. the judgement upon Ham. Although Reuben is the first born, no judges, kings or prophets will come from this tribe.

10 statements about Simeon and Levi

V6 – cf. 34v30 – sound play?

Simeon is scattered in judgement. The Levites are scattered to serve the tribes.
The Levites will show zeal later.
Numbers 25, 31.

V8 - Judah means praise
The triumphant lion, military victory, a king / leader
1 Chronicles 5

Judah will ultimately give his name to the whole nation
V11 – garment washed in the blood of the grape cf. the putting of blood on the garment of Joseph
V11 - Zech 9:9 – a donkey

Dt 33:18

V17 – serpents and heels - cf. Gen 3:15

V24 - Cf. Ishmael the archer – Joseph did not take vengeance

Chapter 50

A symmetry to Joseph's life: his 17 years with Jacob, years of separation, 17 years with Jacob again
Joseph is in a very powerful position, but he acknowledges himself as under God (v19)

50:20 a magnificent text! God's sovereign hand - Cf. chapter 45 – cf. the cross – evil intended for harm used for good – Acts 2:23f

A typical preparation for an Egyptian funeral / afterlife – but Joseph, the person raised up second only to Pharaoh himself, the saviour of the people, has a different hope!

Joseph has been a loyal servant of Egypt but his ultimate loyalty is not to Egypt!

Cf. Moses & Joseph as kind of sons of Pharaoh, but with a different loyalty.

Pharaoh is presented with a difficult request and this Pharaoh lets Joseph go!

Israel takes this route which anticipates the route of the Exodus

110 years – added squared numbers

Ex 13:19 – the bones of Joseph taken up

Cf. Joshua's death (also at 110 years) and burial mentions Joseph's bones at the end of the conquest (Joshua 24:32)

Hebrews 11:22 – Joseph's directions concerning his bone express his faith

Joseph – the story of a lost son, like Ishmael, like the Exodus

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Iain M. Duguid and Matthew P. Harmon, *Living in the Light of Inextinguishable Hope: The Gospel According to Joseph* The Gospel According to the Old Testament Series (P&R, 2013) – a Christ centred reading

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How would you sum up the message and applications of Genesis in a sentence or two?

How does it set up Exodus / the rest of the Bible?

NIV Proclamation Bible summary of Genesis (p5): The Creator God is faithful to his covenant promises and redeems humanity through the promised line, despite their sin and rebellion.

Next session: Wed 6th Sept either 1:30pm to 2:45pm or 7:45pm to 9pm – Introduction / Exodus (1) – Exodus 1-2 – do please invite others! We'll use the same Zoom details as for Genesis, but if you need them, please contact me: marc_lloyd@hotmail.com