

# The Domino Effect

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I have an interesting story to tell and I've been looking forward to this. You know that we have the spring Holy Days coming up, creeping up slowly, but they'll be here before we know it. We will, once again, begin to take a look at what the Holy Days mean. We will look at the symbolism involved of Egypt and Pharaoh and the Red Sea and the journey to the mountain of Yehovah to enter into a covenant with Him. What I want to look at today are all the steps that led up to that. The children of Israel had to get into Egypt to begin with, in order to even have an Exodus. When we look at this story, what we will see unfolding is a very complex, multi-level plan with thousands of steps and nuances involved. That's what I'm going to be talking about.

Whenever we look at a story in the Bible, such as today where we are going to be looking at the story of Joseph, we can look at the stories and can be entertained by them. We can also say the stories have good lessons. These are the consequences of doing good, the consequences of doing bad and we can learn from these stories. But if we take a step back, we can also see how every story is really a step in a much, much bigger plan. You can see how all of this "hooks together". We're going to do a deep dive into the story of Joseph and see, how and what all of that led up to". We could start at the Garden of Eden but we don't have time to do that, so we're going to fast forward up to Joseph.

To understand Joseph, we have to set the scene. In the first scene, you would say Joseph is born. But we have to back up a little bit before that, so we're going to go back to when Jacob was young. Jacob ran away from his brother Esau, after tricking Isaac into giving him the birthright. Esau was a little upset and he wanted to kill Jacob, so Jacob split and went to his uncle's place where his mother was from. There he met and fell in love with the lovely Rachel. He bargained with Uncle Laban to get Rachel as his wife. All he had to do was work seven years to make that happen. Seven years went by so fast, that at the end of seven years the wedding was set. They had the wedding party. But on the wedding night, perhaps after a little too much to drink, Leah was substituted for Rachel and Jacob didn't know or notice. The next morning Jacob discovered the ruse. Uncle Laban's excuse was the older sister should marry first. But Rachel is described as beautiful in both form and appearance. And Leah is described as having "weak eyes". There's speculation of what is meant by "weak eyes or tender eyes", but in the context, it means Leah was not as attractive as Rachel. So, Uncle Laban used deception to get Leah married off. Then Uncle Laban bargained again with Jacob. Jacob wanted Rachel as his wife. He loved her and he wanted to marry her, he wanted to have a family with her. That's what the seven years was for and now here's Leah. Uncle Laban says, that there are two conditions to you getting Rachel. First, you have to complete the wedding week, then at the end of the wedding week, you agree to another seven years of work and then you can have Rachel too. It's only a week out and then you get her.

Jacob really wanted to marry Rachel and have a family with Rachel, so he agreed to it. He was at the mercy of Uncle Laban. Completing the wedding week meant he had to follow through with the marriage. He had to accept Leah as his wife. If he had said no, and he had the opportunity to say “No you tricked me and it’s fraud”. He could have done that—but then he wouldn’t get Rachel. When we consider this, Jacob was not only tricked, he was then bribed and coerced and manipulated. What did he want? He just wanted to marry the woman he loved.

The Bible said that Leah was unloved. Why was Leah unloved? You have to understand that Leah was complicit in this whole thing. She was part of the ruse. Jacob wasn’t happy about getting tricked. If you had worked for seven years for something and then it got substituted and you still wanted it really badly and now you get stuck with the older, less attractive sister, would you be very happy? Of course not. So, Leah was unloved and wasn’t treated very well. She was treated like the older, less attractive sister who tricked me into marrying her. To seal the marriage even more, as the story reads, because Leah was unloved, Yehovah opened her womb and she had a son. So now the deal is sealed. Then, she was still unloved so God continued blessing Leah and she had another son and then another son and then another son. The woman that Jacob loved, Rachel—zero kids. But Leah, the unloved wife, was just having one child after another. In Genesis 30:1 you see this scene.

**Genesis 30:1** *Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, “Give me children, or else I die!”*

*2) And Jacob’s anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?”*

*3) So she said, “Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her.”*

*4) Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her.*

*5) And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. (NKJV)*

So why did Jacob go along with Rachel’s plan to use a surrogate? This wasn’t unheard of. That’s exactly what Sarah did when she was unable to produce an heir for Abraham. She said, take Hagar, I’ll have a child through Hagar. So, this was not unheard of, especially in the family. What Jacob wanted all along was to have a family with the woman he loved. To do that through a surrogate, if no other way was possible, as his wife Rachel was saying, “If I don’t have a child I’m going to die.” he went along with it. You know, because of that, there was a lot of work involved. If you remember, Sarah and Abraham waited so long to have Isaac, the thing with Hagar didn’t work out and they finally had their own baby. But because they had to wait so long, Isaac was a joy. He was named “Laughter”. He was special, he was the miracle baby. Here, we see the scene playing out. When Isaac and Rebecca also had problems getting pregnant and the twins—Jacob and Esau—were born, they too were the miracle babies and they were special because the parents had to wait so long for these children to be born.

When Bilhah had a baby:

6) *Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. (NKJV)*

Which means "Judge".

7) *And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.*

8) *Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali. (NKJV)*

Some people think that Jacob was just like this eager teenager who wanted as many women and as many wives that he could possibly have. But, that's not really the case. If you just look at the narrative, he did not want Leah. She was forced on him and then he took Bilhah, only because Rachel talked him into it. She was so vexed not being able to compete with her older sister. This was all Rachel's idea; Jacob was just going along with it. It may not have been the wisest thing to do, but you can understand that this is the woman he loved, this is the woman he wanted to marry, this is the woman he wanted to have a family with. This is the woman that couldn't get pregnant so they went along with that. Now in verse 9.

9) *When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. (NKJV)*

Jacob had already done this for Rachel so he couldn't very well refuse Leah. So then, Zilpah, Leah's maid, had two sons and then after that, Leah had two more sons. So, Zilpah had two and Leah had two more. Then verse 22.

22) *Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.*

23) *And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach."*

24) *So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son." (NKJV)*

So, the birth of the son that Rachel and Jacob thought would never, ever happen, finally happened. Joseph was special, he was the eleventh son, but he was the firstborn of Rachel. He was the miracle baby. That's why he was treated as special. The other boys noticed. It was not just inside Jacob's mind that he was treated as special, but in Rachel's mind he was treated special. They really treated him as special. For years he was the obvious favorite. Then, when Rachel died, giving birth to Benjamin, that changed it. Joseph was the firstborn of Rachel; the first one, fulfilling the dreams of having a family with Rachel. Then Benjamin was born, but Benjamin was a son of sorrow because Rachel had died in childbirth. That was not a happy time. Benjamin was still the son of Rachel and later on in the story, we see that he was special in a way but he wasn't like Joseph. Joseph maybe, and probably even, resembled Rachel. She was his mom. Probably he reminded Jacob of Rachel and of that love he had for her.

To understand the story of Joseph, you have to understand why Joseph was so special. It was that connection with Rachel—the love of Jacob’s life. So now let’s go to Genesis 37 and we’re going to start reading about Joseph. There’s a lot of this I’m going to read because the Bible tells it better than I possibly could. Some of it I’m going to skip but there is a lot of reading because the story is so fascinating.

**Genesis 37:1** *Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.*

*2) his is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding [this actually means shepherding] the flock with his brothers. (NKJV)*

The implication some commentaries say, is that he may have been the Head Shepherd.

*2 continued) ... And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, [that would be Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher] his father’s wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.*

*3) Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age [also could be translated “as a son of his old age”]. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. (NKJV)*

There were probably a lot of other gifts he gave him, but the tunic plays into the story, so it’s mentioned here.

*4) But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.*

*5) Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more.*

*6) So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:*

*7) 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.”*

*8) 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.*

*9) 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 down to me.” (NKJV)*

This did not endear him to his brothers, it made them hate him even more. Let’s go to verse 13.

*13) 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.”*

*14) 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. (NKJV)*

Verse 18.

- 18) Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.
- 19) Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming!
- 20) 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!'"
- 21) But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him."
- 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.
- 23) So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him.
- 24) Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it.
- 25) And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt.
- 26) So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?
- 27) 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.
- 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.
- 29) Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. (NKJV)

Reuben was upset because he was gone. But how do you think Joseph was feeling? Do you think he went along with this and said, a vacation in Egypt? That sounds cool. No, he was fighting the whole way, kicking and screaming and suffered some physical abuse while being subdued—he was not happy; this was not a happy time for Joseph.

- 31) So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.
- 32) 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?"
- 33) 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."
- 34) Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.

35) *And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.*

36) *Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard. (NKJV)*

This enters a new chapter in the story. It's interrupted with a story about Judah and Tamar so we're just going to fast forward that and go to Genesis 39:3, where it picks up the story.

**Genesis 39:3** *And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand.*

6) *Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.*

7) *And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."*

8) *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. (NKJV)*

Verse 11.

11) *But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside,*

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. (NKJV)*

You know how some people have a problem with rejection. Potiphar's wife had a little problem with rejection.

13) *And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside,*

14) *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.*

15) *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."*

16) *So she kept his garment with her until his master came home.*

17) *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; (NKJV)*

What does it mean to *mock me*? It's an interesting term. The word for *mock* is *tsachaq*, and it is [Strong's #6711](#). In Genesis 26:8, where here it is talking about Isaac.

**Genesis 26:8** *Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife. (NKJV)*

This term, “showing endearment” that is *tsachaq*, the same word that is translated as *mock*.

9) *Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘Lest I die on account of her.’” (NKJV)*

Another instance where the word is translated as *mock* but you have to wonder what was going on is Genesis 21:9.

**Genesis 21:9** *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. (NKJV)*

That’s the word *tsachaq*. It could be the equivalent to our words “fooling around” so “fooling around” could mean you were playing, juggling or it could have some sexual connotation. Whatever it was, it made Sarah want to get Ishmael and Hagar out of there, pronto. Let’s go back to Joseph now. Potiphar put Joseph in prison and in no time, Joseph found favor with the keeper of the prison and he was put in charge and whatever Joseph did, Yehovah blessed it. Then we have the story of the butler and baker who upset Pharaoh and were put in prison. The butler and baker both have dreams, Joseph sees they are sad and they both explain that they had very disturbing dreams. Joseph asked to hear the dreams and he gave them the interpretation. In three days, the butler will be returned to service and then in three days the baker will be executed. Genesis 40:14.

**Genesis 40:14** *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. 15) 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.” (NKJV)*

Verse 20.

20) *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.*

21) *Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand.*

22) *But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.*

23) *Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him. (NKJV)*

**Genesis 41:1** *Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. (NKJV)*

Then he goes on to explain the dream in verse 8.

8) *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.*

9) *Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day.*

10) *When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker,*

11) *we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream.*

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.*

13) *And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."*

14) *Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.*

15) *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it."*

16) *So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."*

17) *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, in my dream I stood on the bank of the river.*

18) *Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow.*

19) *Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt.*

20) *And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows.*

21) *When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke.*

22) *Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven heads came up on one stalk, full and good.*

23) *Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them.*

24) *And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So I told this to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."*

25) *Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do:*

26) *The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one.*

27) *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.*



28) *This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.*

29) *Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt;*

30) *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.*

31) *So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe.*

32) *And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*

33) *Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt.*

34) *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.*

35) *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.*

36) *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.”*

37) *So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants.*

38) *And Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?”*

39) *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you.*

40) *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.”*

41) *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.”*

42) *Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.*

43) *And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, “Bow the knee!” So he set him over all the land of Egypt.*

44) *Pharaoh also said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.”*

45) *And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.*

46) *Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. (NKJV)*

On was a town that was famous; it was a big religious center. It wasn't a little town. At one time it was the capital of Egypt. It's on the edge of the land of Goshen, so right where the Nile Delta starts. That comes in handy later on.

Continuing in verse 48)

48) *So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them.*

49) *Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.*

50) *And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.*

51) *Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house."*

52) *And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."*

53) *Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended ...*  
(NKJV)

This is where the plot thickens.

**Genesis 42:1** *When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?"*

2) *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."*

3) *So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.*

4) *But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "Lest some calamity befall him." (NKJV)*

So, Benjamin is now the favorite.

5) *And the sons of Israel went to buy grain among those who journeyed, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.*

6) *Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth.*

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."*

8) *So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. (NKJV)*

The last time they had seen Joseph, he was seventeen years old. Now he was thirty-eight or thirty-nine years old. If he was made up like other Egyptian aristocrats, then he would be in full make up—mascara and all that the Egyptians did.

9) *Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them ... (NKJV)*

He's connecting—he remembered the dreams but there's ten brothers in his mind—there was supposed to be eleven.

*9 continued) ... "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!"*

*10) And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.*

*11) We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."*

*12) But he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."*

*13) 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."*

*14) But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!'*

*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.*

*16) Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!"*

*17) So he put them all together in prison three days. (NKJV)*

He gives them three days to think about it.

*18) Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God:*

*19) 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 houses.*

*20) And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so.*

*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. (NKJV)*

You would think that was a favor.

*26) So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there.*

*27) But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack.*

*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?"*

*29) Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: (NKJV)*

Continuing in verse 33)

33) *Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone.*

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

35) *Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man’s bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.*

36) *And Jacob their father said to them, “You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me.”*

37) *Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, “Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you.”*

38) *But he said, “My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.” (NKJV)*

**Genesis 43:2** *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.”*

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.’ (NKJV)*

Verse 6.

6) *And Israel said, “Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?” (NKJV)*

Verse 15.

15) *So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph.*

16) *When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon.”*

17) *Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house.*

18) *Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph’s house; and they said, “It is because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys.” (NKJV)*

He’s just trying to steal our donkey’s.

24) *So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed.*

25) *Then they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there.*

26) *And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the earth.*

27) *Then he asked them about their well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"*

28) *And they answered, "Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves. (NKJV)*

Sounds like the stars and the sheaves, doesn't it?

29) *Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son."*

30) *Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there.*

31) *Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the bread."*

32) *So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.*

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. (NKJV)*

How do they know our ages?

34) *Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him. (NKJV)*

**Genesis 44:1** *And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, "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.*

2) *Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. (NKJV)*

I know we're all familiar with this story but at the end I'm going to wrap it up and when you look at all the coincidences that happened, it's pretty amazing.

3) *As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys.*

- 4) *When they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good?'"*
- 5) *Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing. "*
- 6) *So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words.*
- 7) *And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing.*
- 8) *Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house?*
- 9) *With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."*
- 10) *And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless."*
- 11) *Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack.*
- 12) *So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.*
- 13) *Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.*
- 14) *So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground.*
- 15) *And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"*
- 16) *Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found."*
- 17) *But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father."*
- 18) *Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh. (NKJV)*

**Genesis 45:1** *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.*

- 2) *And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.*
- 3) *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.*
- 4) *And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. (NKJV)*

Up to this point, Joseph was speaking through an interpreter. He was speaking Egyptian to the interpreter and the interpreter was translating to the boys. It was going back and forth, but now the scene changes. Now he is talking to his brothers and not using an interpreter, he's speaking their language.

5) *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.*

6) *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.*

7) *And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*

8) *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.*

9) *"Hurry 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.*

10) *You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have.*

11) *There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine. ' "*

12) *And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you.*

13) *So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here."*

14) *Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.*

15) *Moreover he kissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.*

16) *Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Joseph's brothers have come." So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.*

17) *And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan.*

18) *Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.*

19) *Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come.*

20) *Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours. ' "*

21) *Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey.*

22) *He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments.*

23) *And he sent to his father these things: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey.*

24) So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, "See that you do not become troubled along the way."

25) Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father.

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.

27) But when they told him all the words which 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.

28) Then Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die." (NKJV)

**Genesis 46:1** So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

2) Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am."

3) So 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.

4) I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes."

5) Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6) So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him.

7) His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

8) Now these were the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. (NKJV)

Verse 28.

28) Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen.

29) So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

30) And Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive."

31) Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

32) And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'

33) So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?'



34) *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.'* (NKJV)

In Egypt you have the Nile River and around the Nile there is fertile land as far out as they can irrigate. After that, it's all desert. When you get up into the Nile, it spreads out into the Delta of all these little rivers. It's cool to look at on a map. That's the land of Goshen, this delta of the Nile.

**Genesis 47:1** *Then Joseph went and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they are in the land of Goshen."*

2) *And he took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.*

3) *Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers."*

5) *Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you."*

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.* (NKJV)

So Pharaoh was very grateful to Joseph for saving the day. Verse 11.

11) *And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.* (NKJV)

Ramses referred to the whole land of Goshen.

12) *Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in their families.*

13) *Now there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.*

14) *And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.* (NKJV)

When they ran out of money, they said "We're going to starve, we don't have any money." Joseph told them to give him their animals. So he bought all their livestock; all the herds, all the horses, all the donkeys—everything. Verse 17.

17) *So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year.* (NKJV)

The next year, when they said they didn't have any money or animals Joseph said, he would buy their land. So he bought all the land and all the people became indentured servants of Pharaoh. That's in verse 20.

*20) Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's.*

*21) And as for the people, he moved them into the cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt to the other end.*

*23) Then Joseph said to the people, "Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land.*

*24) And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones." (NKJV)*

Think about that, they were now owned by Pharaoh. Pharaoh owned all the land, but they only had to pay 20% tax. I wish I only had to pay 20% tax. And they called that slavery; something to think about.

*27) So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.*

*28) And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years. (NKJV)*

**Genesis 48:1** *Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father is sick"; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.*

*2) And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. (NKJV)*

This is the story where Jacob reaches out to bless the boys and he crosses his hands and puts his right hand on the younger instead of the older. Joseph starts to move his hands but he corrects it and then begins to prophesy. Verse 19.

*19) But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations." (NKJV)*

It's interesting that Jacob was also the younger brother. Next, he gathers all the sons together and goes through and gives a prophecy for each one of them. It's pretty interesting stuff. I don't have the time to go through all of that. After this scene, Jacob died and the brothers said, "Joseph is going to take revenge". So, they present themselves and address their fears. Joseph said, "Don't worry, I'm just going to take care of you; live long and prosper." So, everything was good.

That's how they ended up in Egypt. Now that we have the story, let's look at how that played out.

- Joseph had to be Jacob's child. He had to be born of his favorite wife,
- so that Jacob could give Joseph a special tunic. He has the "I'm special" tunic,
- so that Joseph could receive special treatment his whole life and he would think he was better than his brothers.
- So that Joseph would be eager to share his dreams of dominating his brothers,
- so that he could wear his "I'm special" tunic to check on his brothers for dad.
- So that his brothers would want to kill him.
- So that Reuben could intervene,
- so that they could throw Joseph into a dry pit that happened to be nearby,
- so that the brothers could eat lunch and contemplate their next move and
- so they would notice a caravan of Ishmaelites heading to Egypt.
- So that Judah could recognize an opportunity to get rid of Joseph and make a profit.
- So that they could sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites, and could fake Joseph's death by covering his "I'm special" tunic with blood, giving it to Jacob.
- So that Jacob would come to the conclusion on his own that Joseph was dead.
- So that Joseph could get to Egypt and be bought by Potiphar and
- so that Joseph could learn to speak fluent, high-level Egyptian in a wealthy household with a cheating wife and a jealous husband who had enough authority to put people in jail.
- So that Joseph could develop some administrative skills.
- So that Potiphar's wife could try to seduce him.
- So that Potiphar's wife would resent being turn down and accuse Joseph of attempted rape.
- So that Potiphar would put Joseph in prison.
- so that Joseph could expand on his administrative skills in prison and end up running the place.
- So that Joseph would be in a position to meet the Butler and the Baker.
- So that he could interpret their dreams and so the forgetful butler could remember Joseph two years later when Pharaoh had his dream.
- So that Joseph could find favor with Pharaoh and take over the Egyptian government,
- so that Joseph could save Egypt and Canaan from starvation and make Pharaoh super wealthy
- so that Pharaoh would be happy to give Joseph's family the most fertile land in all of Egypt.
- So that Joseph's family could grow into millions of people where their numbers would make them a threat to a future Pharaoh
- so that Pharaoh could try to control the Israelite birthrate and enslave the people.
- So that Yehovah could save Israel, bring them out of the most powerful empire with the biggest army of all time, using amazing miracles,

- so that He could demonstrate His mighty power and show that the gods of Egypt were fake and no gods at all,
- so that He could humble Israel and enter into a covenant with them, so that we could have the story in the examples and
- so that we could learn about His plan for our salvation.
- So that then we could be called and chosen to enter into a New Covenant with Him based on better promises.
- So that we could learn about Jesus and the sacrifices that were necessary to cover our sins and we could appreciate the seriousness of sin, we could repent, and
- so that we could be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, be forgiven and begin the process of overcoming.
- So that we could develop a close relationship with Yehovah and learn to live by faith depending on Yehovah no matter what.
- So that we could grow in grace and knowledge and serve as a light set on a hill as an example to others.
- So that we could be born into God's family and have eternal life.

In the military, they have this process to plan out a battle. It's called "the backwards planning model". Here's the objective works:

*Now what does it look like right before that objective?*

*What does it look like right before that?*

*Then what does it look like right before that?*

If you run this whole "sawtooth" thing backwards, you would never come up with this story. But it's clear that God had it planned. In our time right now, there's some things to be concerned about. There are some funny things going on with the media and governments around the world and we are at a time where there is a lot of concern. We need to remember that Yehovah is not surprised by anything that is going on. He's using everything that is going on to bring about His plan. He called Nebuchadnezzar His servant. In Job He called Satan His servant; leads him around like a pet to bring about His plan. At this time, we're looking at all this stuff, but this is not the time for us to be super concerned and to worry. This is the time for us to practice our faith. Part of the lessons that we are here to learn is to trust God. You read all the stories in the Old Testament and what God was wanting people to do was to trust Him—

*"I'll take care of it, you just do what you're supposed to do, I'll take care of it, you don't have to worry about anything, I'll take care of it, all you have to do is obey Me and follow the rules."*

We have the opportunity, in the face of threats that we don't really comprehend at this time, to practice our faith. To know God is in control, God is working everything out for our benefit. We might have to go through some "stuff" that is uncomfortable. Jacob went through a lot of "stuff" that was uncomfortable. When you really look at the story, Jacob lived a life of one disappointment after the other. When he was talking to Pharaoh, he

said *My years have been long and difficult*—one disappointment after another. Sure, there were a lot of blessings. Laban messed with his wages but he was blessed over and over again. He had to take his wives and run because he was afraid of Laban. He was afraid of Esau. There was just one frustration after another—Rachel couldn't have a baby—it was a life of one disappointment after another. We, too might have to experience some things that are uncomfortable, some things that don't make us happy, some things that we don't want them to be the way they are. But Yehovah is working out and orchestrating things in such minute detail for our benefit. Even the trials we experience are for our benefit and there are limits on every one of them.

So that's what I wanted to do, was just take a look at this story of Joseph and look at all the crazy steps that had to be coordinated for that to happen. When Jacob was in the middle of it, he couldn't see it. When Joseph was in the middle of it, he couldn't see it. We can't see it either, we're too close to the forest to be able to see the trees. This last Feast, Vivian Blank shared with me a documentary on all the miracles that have happened to Israel for that country to come into existence and win and fight the wars that it has. It's on YouTube, but I would recommend everybody go and watch it. It's called "*Against All Odds, Israel Survives*". When you start looking at all the miracles—I'm talking about the war of Independence, the Yom Kippur war—all the things that happened, it's not just one. I have a list here of eighteen stories of miracle after miracle after miracle that happened from 1948 up to now on how God has created this little nation and has protected this nation. He brought back the Hebrew language that had been lost as a conversational language; if you look at all the things God is doing, God is in control. He is not surprised by any of this. He wasn't surprised when Hitler was building the death camps, brick by brick. He knew they were being built. He is not surprised that internment facilities are being staffed in our country—He's not surprised. What's it for? We don't know, but what we do know is our Father, our God, is in control. He loves us and He is going to take care of us, no matter what.