

VAYIGASH (And He Approached)

GENESIS (B'RESHIYT 44:18 – 47:27)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Despite the fact that Judah's history is checkered with unwise decisions, he acts admirably.
 - a. Consider his choice of wife; his dealings with Tamar; his betrayal of Joseph.
 - b. He made himself surety for Benjamin and acts appropriately when needed.
2. As far as he was concerned, to act in such a way was putting his life on the line.
 - a. He still understands this man to be an Egyptian lord with life and death in his hand.
 - b. Offers himself as a slave not knowing the one he spoke to was his lost brother.
 - c. To offer himself as a slave in Benjamin's place reminds of Moses who said:

“Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. But now, if you will forgive their sin - but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.” – Exodus 32:31-32

3. In both cases, the picture is the one is willing to sacrifice themselves on behalf of Israel.
 - a. Reminiscent of something Paul, from tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1), said:

“I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Messiah for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” – Romans 9:2-3

4. Ultimate example of the one who willingly sacrifices himself for the sake of brother is Y'shua.
 - a. As tribe of Judah, He made Himself surety to the Father for all Israel (e.g. Benjamin).
 - b. Appears personally to Shaul (Paul) of tribe of Benjamin who is sent among nations.
 - c. He is the Prophet like unto Moses who died on behalf of wayward Israel.
5. Yet, He also typifies the one who is concealed from his brethren who despised Him.
 - a. Like Joseph, He will be revealed when they have repented of their transgression.
 - b. Judah will play a significant role in this as well.
 - c. What happened to the fathers is a portend for the children.
 - d. Joseph also typifies those of the body who are not regarded as Israel by Judah.
6. This is validated by the *haftarah* for this portion – Ezekiel 37:15-28.
 - a. This prophesies of the two “brothers” – two sticks [lit. *ṣṣ etz*] coming together as one.
 - b. These called “Joseph” and “Judah” – one looks like nations, the other looks Hebrew.
 - c. For this cause, Messiah lay his life down.

“No man takes it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

- John 10:18

“Greater love has no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

- John 15:13

“Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spoke not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Y’shua should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” – John 11:50-52

CHAPTER 44: JUDAH OFFERS HIMSELF AS SLAVE

1. V 18: “Then Judah came near (Heb. **וַיִּגַּשׁ** *vayigash*) unto him.”
 - a. The root term in plain sense means “to approach.”
 - b. Implies “close proximity” even used for closeness in sense of intimacy.
 - c. Point is, Judah makes a very bold move – he gets into Egyptians lord’s space.
 - d. Reminds me of what Creator permits when someone is of a repentant heart.

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Y’shua the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore **come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain **mercy**, and find grace to help in time of need.” – Hebrews 4:14-16**

2. Is this not what Judah did, except he was uncertain that he was approaching his deliverer.
3. V 18: “If you please, my lord, let your servant speak a word in your ears.”
 - a. That word involved his plight as surety for Benjamin, namely how it affects Jacob.
 - b. His love and respect of his father pushed him to do this.
4. V 18: “Let not your anger burn against me” – acknowledged something said might anger him.
 - a. Might it be that Judah implied in discourse, Joseph’s questions brought them to this?
 - b. His recounting events up to this point suggest as much.
 - c. Also suggests Judah suspects the silver cup affair was a conspiracy against them.
 - d. Why would an Egyptian lord want a thief as a servant?
5. V 19: Judah reminds Joseph his questions concerning a father and a brother.

“And we said to my lord, ‘We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. **His brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him’...We said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’” – Genesis 44:20, 22**

6. This is first time they speak of Joseph as being dead; perhaps that is what they believe.
 - a. Which is important because that is what Israel (the man and nation) believe.
 - b. Meaning his “resurrection” from the dead will bring life to Israel.
7. V 23: But because you said we couldn’t return unless we brought him.
 - a. Our father was very reluctant to comply with this demand.

“Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons. One left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces, and I have never seen him since. If you take this one also from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol.’” – Genesis 44:27-29

8. This is when Joseph learns of what Jacob believes happened to him.
 - a. This reveals the story given to his father by his brothers.
 - b. In Jacob's words, there is a hint of doubt that Joseph was indeed killed by beasts.
9. V 30-31: Judah argues that to return without Benjamin means Jacob's death.
 - a. "His soul is bound up with the lad's" – same phrase used of David and Jonathan.

"The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." – 1 Samuel 18:1

10. Here, Joseph would begin to see that Judah loves their father as much as he does.
 - a. He would also see that Judah is genuinely concerned about Benjamin's future.
 - b. Prophetically, Joseph will realize that Judah loves the Father as much as he does.

"For your servant became a pledge of safety for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father all my life.' Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers. For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would find my father." – Genesis 44:32-34

11. Should probably point out here that the "boy" is about 30 years old and has children.
 - a. Judah offers himself in the stead of Benjamin for fear of Jacob's death.
 - b. He would have to bear the shame and responsibility of his father's death.

CHAPTER 45: JOSEPH THE HEBREW IS REVEALED

"Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, 'Make everyone go out from me.' So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. And Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?' But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. So Joseph said to his brothers, 'Come near to me, please.' And they came near. And he said, 'I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.'" – Genesis 45:1-4

1. After seeing that his brothers:
 - Loved their father as he did.
 - Were devoted to Benjamin, Rachel's son.
 - Were remorseful over their treatment of Joseph.
2. Joseph's emotions come spilling out in a visible and audible way.
 - a. Sends the Egyptians from the room because he is their lord.
 - b. Perhaps also, he didn't want them to be there when he revealed himself.
 - c. It was a family moment.
3. In "making himself known," some commentators suggest he revealed his circumcision.
 - a. His words were now spoken in Hebrew because no interpreter was present.
 - b. "Ani Yosef" – left them dumbfounded – couldn't believe their eyes and ears.
 - c. He calls them to come to him – to convince themselves it was really him.

4. Joseph has just been “resurrected” before their eyes – he calls them to come near to him.
 - a. Compare to when Y’shua’s “brothers” saw the resurrected Messiah.

“On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Y’shua came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side....Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Y’shua came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.’ Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Y’shua came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.’ ”

– John 20:19-20, 25-27

5. At this point, Messiah’s disciples began to better understand God’s plan and purposes.
 - a. Likewise, when Joseph said, “I am Joseph” his brothers began to understand.
 - b. Only in a moment like this do past events, not perceived at the time, make sense.
6. Rabbis say, in the future, God will reveal Himself (through Messiah) and say, “I am YHWH.”
 - a. The veil will be lifted from men’s eyes and they will understand why things happened.

“And you shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezekiel 13:21

7. News of Joseph’s uncontrollable weeping spread to Pharaoh’s house.
 - a. Literally, “gave forth his voice in weeping.”
 - b. That Joseph is a picture of Messiah makes me wonder about His reaction in future.
8. He wished to confirm that his father was indeed alive – maybe they used that as a ploy.
 - a. That was the most important thing on his mind – the Father.
9. V 5: “Don’t be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me” – it was meant to be.
 - a. Abraham’s descendants were determined to descend into Egypt (Gen. 15:13).
 - b. “God sent me first in order to preserve life.”
 - c. We determine things to be “good” or “bad” based on our flesh and its desires.
 - d. These things, many times, are opposite of the way we perceive them.
10. At the time, they and Jacob thought that Joseph was “dead.”
 - a. From God’s perspective, Joseph had to “die” that Israel might live.
11. V 6: He reveals to them that that five more years of famine are yet to be.
 - a. Meaning this was two years into the famine; nine since Joseph became viceroy.
 - b. There is be neither plowing nor harvest.
 - c. Prophetically, harvests are suspended but restoration is coming to pass?

“And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God. He has made me a father [Heb. אב] to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.”

– Genesis 45:7-8

12. Perhaps up until this time Joseph had blamed them for his affliction.

- a. The famine and their descent into Egypt make clear to him God's purposes.
- b. Sometimes threats and tribulations serve to bring God's purposes to light.
- 13. It wasn't really them that sent him to Egypt – it was God and His purposes.
 - a. They may have been vessels but so was Joseph.
 - b. Demonstrating God uses "bad" things to bring about "good" purposes – life!
 - c. There must be willing vessels to submit to His will – "Not my will, but yours."
- 14. Joseph recognized his suffering was that there might be a "remnant" and "deliverance."
 - a. i.e. that Israel might be saved.
 - b. Likewise Y'shua's suffering served the same purpose.

"Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"
- Luke 24:26

"And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, 'The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob' and 'this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.'" – Romans 11:26-27

- 15. V 9: "Hurry and go to my father and say, 'Joseph says: God has made me ruler of Egypt.'"
 - a. i.e. Go get my father and bring him to me.
 - b. Informs them the entire family is to live in the "land of Goshen" with their flocks.
- 16. Word גֹּשֶׁן *goshen* is of uncertain origin – BDB defines as "drawing near."
 - a. Other lexicons are uncertain – some state it is probably of Egyptian origin.
 - b. Maybe related to or derived from גֶּשֶׁם *goshem/geshem* – "rain, shower."
 - c. This would explain why it is the "fattest place of the land."
 - d. Footnote: Gen. 46:28 & 29 spelled גֹּשֶׁן and pronounced *goshnah* – letters on dreidel.
 - e. Joseph's story is torah portion during Chanukkah.
- 17. "And you shall dwell [Heb. וַיֵּשְׁבוּ *y'ashavta*] – root word is יָשַׁב *yashav* – "to dwell."
 - a. Word שַׁבָּת "Shabbat" is present in this phrase – hint: "you shall Shabbat in Goshen."
 - b. God, through Joseph, prepared a place for the remnant where he would sustain them.
 - c. Likewise, Messiah prepares a place for the remnant during a time of tribulation.

"But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.... Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Y'shua." – Revelation 12:14, 17

- 18. Bringing them into Goshen also set them apart from the Egyptians – not to be contaminated.
 - a. There, they could also be shepherds, something abominable to the Egyptians.
 - b. Overall, this ensured that Israel would be "set apart" even while in midst of Egypt.
 - c. Thus, Israel's sojourn began as a "set apart" people – this would change.
 - d. They would have to be reminded years later that this is their mission.
- 19. V 12: "Your eyes see and the eyes of my brother Benjamin that my mouth speaks to you."
 - a. They are his witnesses that he is alive – go report to my father of my glory (v. 13).
 - b. He called attention to the fact that he was speaking to them in Hebrew.
- 20. Y'shua told His disciples that they are His witnesses and they were to report to world.

“Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them. After that his brothers talked with him.” – Genesis 45:14-15

21. This was a true reconciliation unlike when Esau fell upon Jacob's neck and wept.
- The two brothers did not reunite other than then and at Isaac's burial.
 - Only now do his brothers speak to him.
 - Stunned or waiting to see if he acted towards them the way he did Benjamin.
 - Tears are shed at the realization that the “dead” brother is alive and well.

“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.” - Zechariah 12:10

22. Reconciliation took place between Joseph and his brothers on their third meeting; this occurred on three different days, thus, it took place on the Third Day.

“Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.” – Hosea 6:1-2

23. According to Midrash there is another prophetic element to the weeping among brothers.
- Joseph and Benjamin wept over destruction over two Sanctuaries in their territory.
 - Benjamin's territory included Temple Mount; Joseph (Ephraim) contained Shiloh.
 - Also wept over brothers because of the future exile of the Ten Tribes.
24. V 16: The news of Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers reached Pharaoh.
- “It pleased Pharaoh well and his servants.”
25. V 17-20: Pharaoh instructs Joseph to supply brothers with wagons and provision and for them to fetch their family and belongings and come down to Egypt.
- They will “eat the fat of the land.”
 - “Don't regard your stuff for the good things of Egypt are yours.”
 - Meaning they would leave much property in land of Canaan – was there a long time.
 - It would seem that, even though living in Egypt, they were free to return anytime.
26. V 21-22: Joseph send his brothers to Canaan equipped for the journey; he gave them:
- Wagons
 - Provision
 - A change of clothes (they had rent their garments).
27. To Benjamin he gave five change of clothes and 300 shekels of silver (without jealousy).
- In fact, he admonishes them not to quarrel along the way.
 - To his father he sent 20 donkeys laden with treasure and food.
28. V 26: “They told Jacob, ‘Joseph is alive and is ruler over the land of Egypt.’”
- At this news, his heart “fainted” and he refused, at first, to believe them.
 - V 27: “When he saw the wagons Joseph sent, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.”
29. That his spirit “revived” at news of Joseph's “resurrection” reminds of Ezekiel's prophecy.

“And he said to me, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ And I answered, ‘O Lord GOD, you know.’ Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, **I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.** And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD’....Then he said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the **whole house of Israel.** Behold, they say, Our bones **are dried up, and our hope is lost;** we are indeed cut off. Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and **raise you from your graves,** O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. And **I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live,** and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.” – Ezekiel 37:3-6, 11-14

30. Jacob learns that his once “dead” son is alive; he was not lost to Egyptian influence.
 - a. He is been “raised” and is a true son of Jacob (Israel).
 - b. Thus, Jacob was “revived” – breath came into him.
 - c. Notice in next verse he is called the name, “Israel” – which represent the nation.

“And Israel said, ‘It is enough; Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.’” – Genesis 45:28

CHAPTER 46: JACOB GOES DOWN TO EGYPT

“So Israel took his journey **with all that he had** and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, ‘Jacob, Jacob.’ And he said, ‘Here am I.’ Then he said, ‘I am God, the God of your father. **Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation.** I myself **will go down with you** to Egypt, and **I will also bring you up again,** and Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes.” – Genesis 46:1-4

1. V 1: Before departing for Egypt, he goes to Beersheba and offer sacrifices to God.
 - a. This is where God appeared to Abraham.
 - b. Isaac had built an altar there and dwelt at Beersheva.
 - c. Isaac had intended to go to Egypt but was told not to do so.
 - d. Obviously, Jacob was troubled as to what to do.
2. Jacob had to know that going down to Egypt was equivalent to what Abraham had been told.
 - a. “Night visions” is said to imply impending darkness – there is gloom attached.
 - b. Yet, God tells him not to fear – this was all God’s plan.
 - c. In fact, it is there in Egypt that he will become a great nation.
 - d. Footnote: For this reason, rabbis say Jacob instituted the *ma’ariv* – evening prayer.
 - e. To teach: darkness is only prelude to light coming in the morning.

“Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” – Psalm 30:5

3. In the night vision, God told him not to fear - promised to go with him and to bring him out.

- a. Bring him out personally to be buried in Canaan.
 - b. Bring his descendants out in the Exodus.
4. “Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes” – the living Joseph would do this for Jacob when dead.

“Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, his sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters. All his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.”
– Genesis 46:5-7

5. Jacob (seed of Abraham) goes down into the womb (Mitzrayim) and grows – multiplies.
- a. Father’s seed impregnates egg in mother’s womb and grows – multiplies.
 - b. Womb serves purpose of baby’s development until time for birth.
 - c. “I will also bring you up again.”
 - d. When womb has served its purpose the baby must be born.

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.” – Hosea 11:1

- 6. V 8-15: Lists all those of Jacob who were born to him by Leah – thirty-three souls.
- 7. V 16-18: Lists the sons of Jacob born to him by Zilpah – sixteen souls.
- 8. V 19-22: Those born to Jacob by Rachel were fourteen souls.
- 9. V 23-25: Lists those born to Jacob by Bilhah – seven souls.

“All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob’s sons’ wives, were sixty-six persons in all. And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.” – Genesis 46:26-27

10. V 28: “He sent Judah before him to Joseph, to show the way for him to Goshen.”
- a. Judah always leads the way including going down into Egypt.
 - b. Plain meaning, to find out where in Goshen they were to live.
 - c. The Hebrew word “to show/direct” is להורות *l’horot* from root ירא (ירה) *yarah*.
 - d. The root word means “to direct, to point, to teach” – root of תורה *torah*.
11. Implying that Jacob sent Judah ahead into Goshen to establish a house of study.
- a. Reinforcing that, in Goshen, Israel would lead a set-apart lifestyle.
 - b. When Israel is studying and living according to God’s torah, they are set-apart.

“Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. Israel said to Joseph, ‘Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive.’”
– Genesis 46:29-30

12. We can only imagine the emotions on display at this reunion.
- a. “Let me die since I have seen your face” reminds of Y’shua appearance.

“Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Y'shua, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, ‘Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.’ – Luke 2:25-32

13. Did Jacob ever learn of what really happened between Joseph and his brothers?
 - a. Rabbinical commentary says no – it is not mentioned in Scripture.
 - b. If Joseph did not “uncover their nakedness” it is proof he forgave them.
 - c. It is proof that he understood his suffering was part of God’s plan.
 - d. He was sent to be “salvation...prepared in the presence of the nations (peoples).”
14. V 31-34: Joseph informs he will go to Pharaoh to solidify their situation in Goshen.
 - a. Instructs them to tell Pharaoh that, when asked, they were keepers of cattle from youth.
 - b. This was because “every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.”
15. This would further insure that Israel would be set apart from the Egyptians.
 - a. Would be spared the corrupt influence of Egypt without being dishonest.
 - b. Pharaoh would let them live in Goshen unmolested because of disdain for shepherds.

CHAPTER 47: JACOB STANDS BEFORE PHARAOH

1. V 1: “Joseph told Pharaoh, ‘My father and brothers and flocks are in the land of Goshen.’”
 - a. Once there, it would seem unsuitable to have them move elsewhere.
 - b. Joseph presents five of his brothers to Pharaoh
 - c. When asked, they respond they are “shepherds.”
 - d. Disqualified them from any other type of service to the Egyptians.
2. Joseph makes sure that his family is isolated from the rest of Egypt for their benefit.
 - a. This demonstrates his concern for all of his family.
3. V 4: “They said to Pharaoh, ‘There is no pasture in Canaan because of the famine; please allow us to sojourn in Goshen.’”
 - a. Which would imply that there was pasture land in Goshen – watered by Nile?
4. V 6: “Egypt is before you; in the best of the land – Goshen – is where your family will dwell.”
 - a. He adds that any qualified among them should oversee Pharaoh’s cattle.
5. V 7-10: Jacob is presented to Pharaoh and blesses him.
 - a. During conversation we learn that Jacob was, two years into the famine, 130 yrs. old.

“Then Joseph settled 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. And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their dependents.” – Genesis 47:11-12

6. Goshen also known as land of Rameses - seems to be name given it later during oppression.
 - a. Which hints at fact, later Pharaoh did not honor the wishes of his predecessor.

CHAPTER 47: EGYPTIANS SELL THEMSELVES TO PHARAOH

“Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished by reason of the famine.” – Genesis 47:13

1. V 13: Literally says, “all the earth” implying a future famine of this magnitude.

“When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come!’ And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!’” – Revelation 6:5-6

2. This describes a day when a measure of wheat suitable for one person per day or enough barley to feed three people for one day will cost a day’s wages.

- a. Hyper-inflation caused by intense food shortages.
- b. Oil and wine not to be harmed – is this literal?
- c. We are part of a cultivated olive tree (oil) and branches of the True Vine (wine).
- d. Joseph (Messiah) sustained his family with food in midst of famine.

3. V 14: “Joseph gathered the money found in Egypt and Canaan from the wheat they bought.”

- a. Joseph accumulated almost all wealth for Pharaoh.

“And when the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, ‘Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? For our money is gone.’” – Genesis 47:15

4. “Our money is gone” is alternately translated “failed” or “at an end.”

- a. Because of the famine, the money has now failed – also hinting at future events.

5. V 16: “Joseph said, ‘Give me your cattle if your money has failed.’”

- a. Which they did in exchange for food – they exchanged their property to gov’t for food.
- b. That lasted only for that year which.
- c. Which year of the famine was it? There are varying opinions; e.g. first, third, or sixth.

“And when that year was ended, they came to him the following year and said to him, ‘We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent. The herds of livestock are my lord’s. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our land. Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we with our land will be servants to Pharaoh. And give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate.’ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. The land became Pharaoh’s.” – Genesis 47:18-20

6. There are a couple of things to note here:

- Desperate people are willing to give away their property (birthright?) for sustenance.
- Desperate people will become slaves to the government in exchange for security.
- Joseph obliged them making them totally dependent upon Pharaoh – why?

7. All we can conclude is, in the end, it served God's purposes.
 - a. Also paints a picture of the world "at the end."
 - b. We can see the mindset of people today – willing to exchange liberty for security.
 - c. The Egyptians were willing to sell themselves to the government for food.
 - d. Esau sold his birthright for food.
8. In 1789, George Washington wrote that America would continue:

"until the people of America shall have lost all virtue; until they shall have become totally insensible to the difference between freedom and slavery; until they shall have been reduced to such poverty of spirit as to be willing to sell that pre-eminent blessing, the birthright of a freeman, for a mess of pottage. In short, until they have been found incapable of governing themselves and ripe for a master." - Geo. Washington, 1789

9. This seems to be the mindset, not only of Americans but, the world.
10. It does not say here that Joseph took possession of the people as they offered but the land.
 - a. However, verse 23 says: "I have bought you this day and your land."
 - b. Would seem to say that the Egyptians and their property became property of Pharaoh.
 - c. There were two exceptions to this rule – the priests (elites) of Egypt and the Hebrews.
11. The Hebrews – the seed of Abraham - were living set apart lives in Goshen.
 - a. This should speak volumes to His set-apart people today – don't rely on government.
 - b. In effect, the Egyptian people got a bail out but the Hebrews had no need of one.

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."

– Psalm 121:1-4

12. V 21: "And as for the people, he removed them city by city from one border to the other."
 - a. Because they had turned over their property they were relocated city by city.
 - b. To demonstrate they no longer had claim of ownership of their lands.
 - c. Forced to go where the government determined they must.
 - d. Would also seem that cities were food distribution points – went to where food was.
13. V 22: "Only the land of the priests he did not buy; they had a portion from Pharaoh."
 - a. On this note rabbinical commentary has this to say:

"By giving a privileged status to the clergy, Joseph established a precedent that made it possible for the tribe of Levi to be exempt from the servitude to which the Egyptians later subjected the other tribes, so that there would be a strong nucleus of people who kept alive the teachings of the Patriarchs."

14. Aaron (Levi) seemed to have freedom of movement during his stay in Egypt.
 - Meets Moses at Sinai (Ex. 4:27).
 - Goes with Moses to meet with Pharaoh (Ex. 5:1).
15. V 23-24: Joseph gives them the terms for serving Pharaoh: they would sow the land.
 - a. The land now belongs to Pharaoh – this is how they will earn livelihood.
 - b. They worked as sharecroppers and were provided seed by the government.

16. Actually, the terms he outlined were generous: keep 80% to live on, give 20% to Pharaoh.
a. Their response was “You have saved our lives...we will be Pharaoh’s bondsmen.”

“Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.” – Genesis 47:27

17. Not only did they have a place to live but acquired possessions (property) IN Egypt.
a. While Egyptians sold themselves, the Hebrews prospered in midst of famine.
b. Because they were living a set-apart life – an inherent blessing in doing so.
c. Also hints at future complications – blessings and prosperity would take hold of them.
d. At some point they began to assimilate into Egyptian culture and spread out.