

Genesis

The Book of Beginnings

19. Joseph and his dreams

An outline of the Book of Genesis *

* Approximate chapter divisions only

Genesis 1 to 11

Creation

Genesis 1 to 2

The Fall

Genesis 3

Before the Flood

Genesis 4 to 5

The Flood

Genesis 6 to 8

After the Flood

Genesis 9 to 11

Genesis 12 to 50

Abraham

Genesis 12 to 23

Isaac

Genesis 24 to 27

Jacob

Genesis 28 to 36

Joseph

Genesis 37 to 50



The 10th and final *toledot* in Genesis

(Genesis 37:2 to 50:26)

Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings,
in the land of Canaan.

These are the generations of **Jacob**.

Joseph, being 17 years old,...

(Genesis 37:1-2)



The main characters in our story

Jacob

The deceiver who was chosen and blessed by God – now called Israel.

Reuben

The firstborn son of Jacob, who sinned against his father and God.

Judah

The one through whom the kings of Israel and the Messiah would come.

Joseph

The firstborn of Rachel, the favourite of his father, chosen “to preserve life”.

Simeon, Levi and the other brothers

The brothers who, in revenge, attacked and looted the city of Shechem.

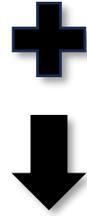
Setting the scene

- ① Joseph, being 17 years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And **Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.**
- ② Now **Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons**, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colours.
- ③ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, **they hated him** and could not speak peacefully to him. 

(Genesis 37:2-4)

Setting the scene

Joseph gave a **bad report**
of his brothers to Jacob



Joseph was openly
Jacob's **favourite son**

His brothers hated him

QUESTION:

What sort of person is Joseph as a young man?

- a) A spoiled brat?
- b) A foolish but good lad?
- c) A righteous young man?
- d) Something else?

Joseph's dreams (Genesis 37:5-11)

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

(Genesis 37:5)

Out in the field,
his brothers' sheaves
bow down to his sheaf

**Joseph's
dreams**

The sun, the moon
and the 11 stars
bow down to him

Joseph's dreams (Genesis 37:5-11)

Out in the field,
his brothers' sheaves
bow down to his sheaf



His brothers said to him,
“**Are you indeed to reign over us?**
Or are you indeed to rule over us?”
So they **hated** him even more...

Joseph's dreams

The sun, the moon
and the 11 stars
bow down to him



His father rebuked him...
“Shall I and your mother and
your brothers indeed come **to bow
ourselves to the ground before you?**”

His brothers were **jealous** of him, but his father **kept the saying in mind**.

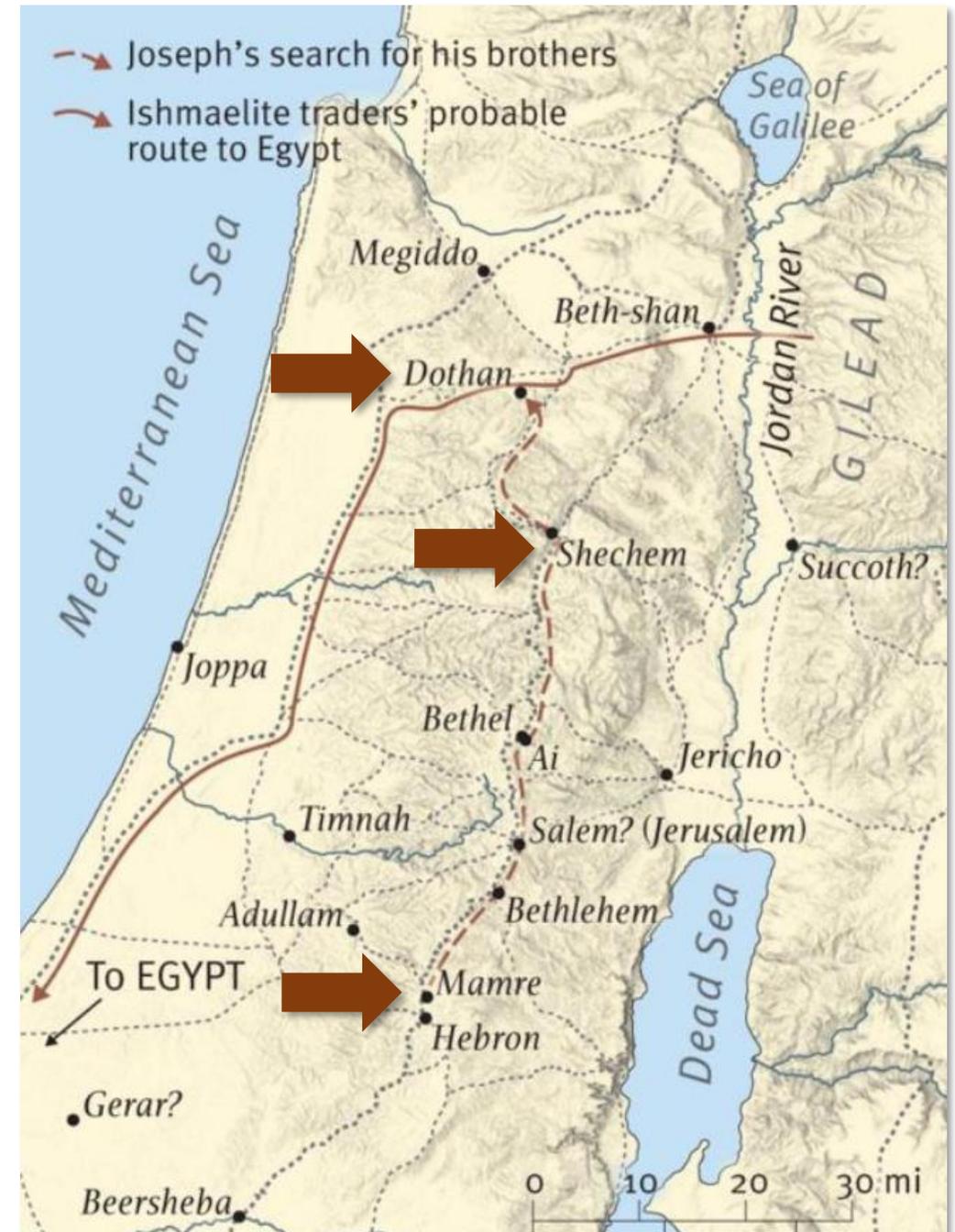
Scene Two (Genesis 37:12-17)

Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near **Shechem**.

And Israel said to Joseph...

“Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word.”

(See Genesis 37:12-14)



This Dreamer (Genesis 37:18-20)

They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them **they conspired against him to kill him.**

They said to one another, “**Here comes this dreamer.**”

“Come now, **let us kill him** and throw him into one of the pits.

Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, **and we will see what will become of his dreams.**”

(Genesis 37:18-20)

This Dreamer (Genesis 37:21-25)

And **Reuben** said to them,
“**Shed no blood**;
throw him into this pit here in the wilderness,
but do not lay a hand on him”
—that he might **rescue** him out of their hand
to restore him to his father.

So when Joseph came to his brothers,
they stripped him of his robe...
and threw him into a pit.

Then they sat down to eat.

(Genesis 37:23-25)

This Dreamer (Genesis 37:25-28)

And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites....

Then **Judah** said to his brothers,

“What **profit** is it if we kill our brother
and conceal his blood?

“Come, let us **sell** him to the Ishmaelites,
and let not our hand be upon him,
for **he is our brother**, our own flesh.”

And his brothers listened to him....

And they drew Joseph up ... and **sold him**
to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver.

(Genesis 37:25-28)



This Dreamer (Genesis 37:29-35)

When **Reuben** returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes...

“The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?”

Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in **the blood**.

And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said,

“This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.”...

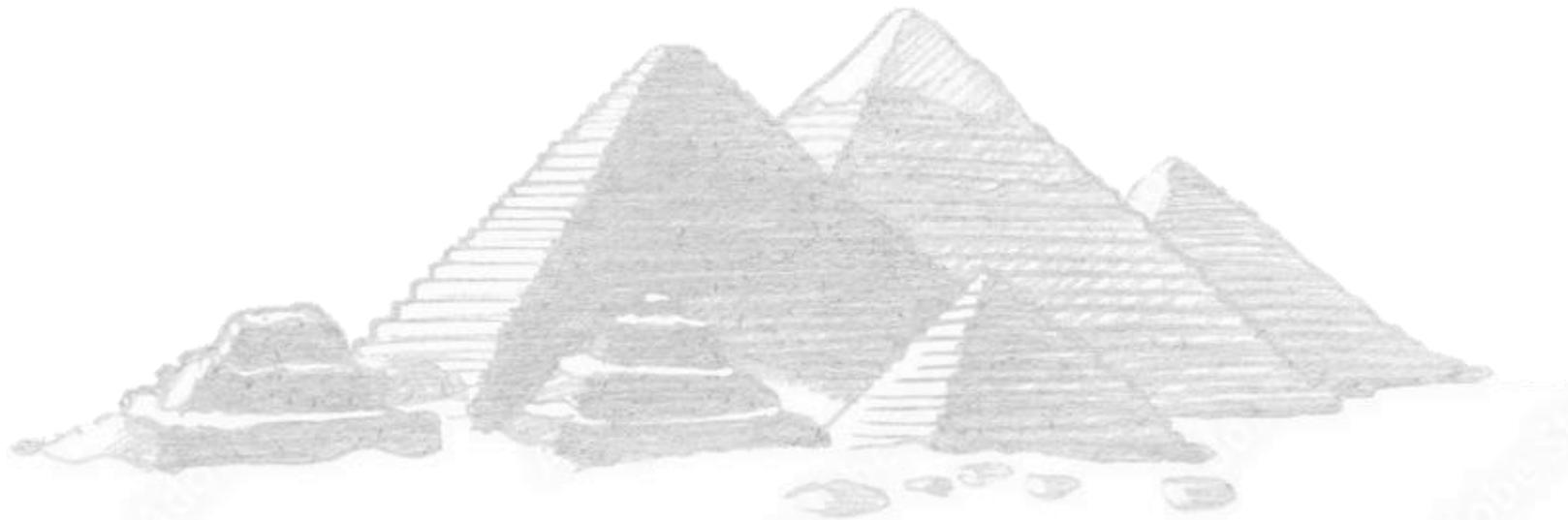
“I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.”

Thus his father wept for him.

(Genesis 37:29-35)

Joseph disappears into Egypt

Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt
to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh,
the captain of the guard.
(Genesis 37:36)



Joseph gave a **bad report**
of his brothers to Jacob



Joseph was openly
Jacob's **favourite son**



Joseph tells his family
about **his dreams**



His brothers now hated him enough to kill him

QUESTION:

What sort of person is Joseph?

- a) A spoiled brat?
- b) A foolish but good lad?
- c) A righteous young man?
- d) Something else?

This Dreamer - Three perspectives

Building the Nation

God's purpose was that Jacob's family become a **great nation**. This nation was to grow in "the womb of Egypt". God spoke to Abraham of this over 180 years before Joseph's dreams (see Genesis 15:13-16).

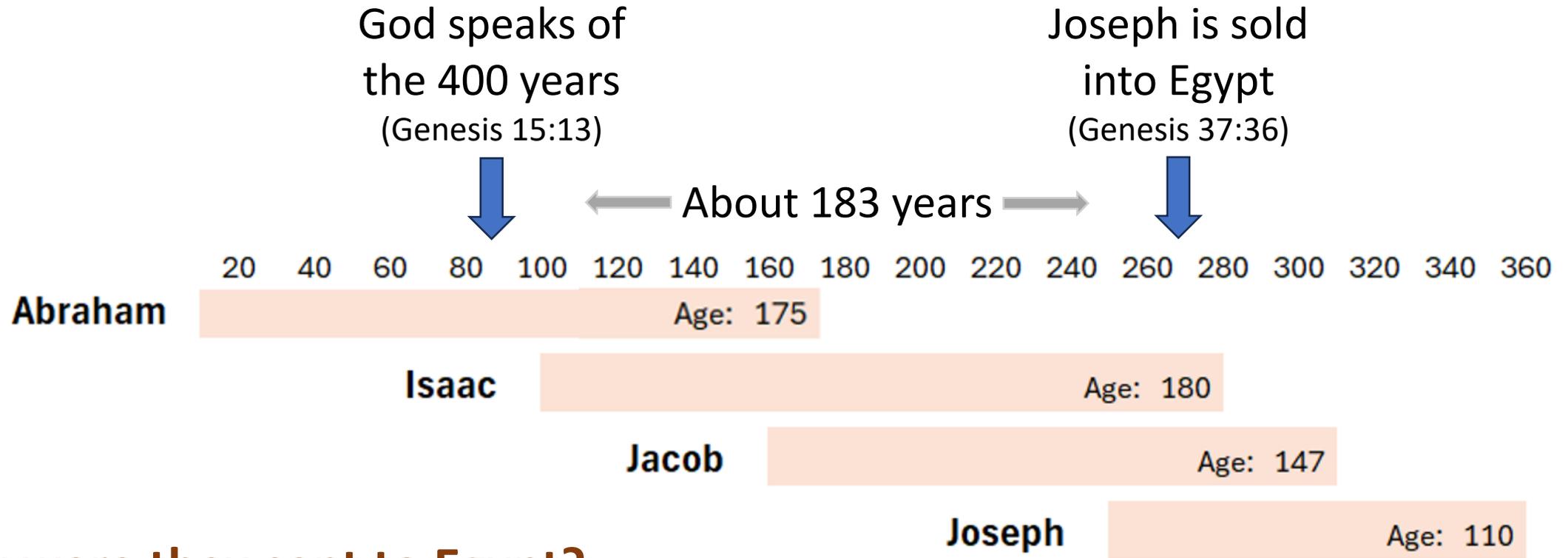
The Coming One

The promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world, would be **despised and rejected** by His own people in their blindness. He would suffer at their hands, but they would, in the end, bow before Him as their Lord.

Walking with God

Joseph's dreams were revelation from God, and he believed the **"impossible" promises**. He was then trained by God to fulfill this calling. Joseph's brothers were enemies of God but still were used by Him.

Building the nation



Why were they sent to Egypt?

- **Intermarriage** danger in Canaan (Genesis 38).
- The time for **judgement** had not yet come.

Jacob moves
to Egypt
(Genesis 46)

The Coming One

- Joseph inherited the right of the firstborn (1 Chronicles 5:1-2) and a double portion through his two sons.
- The line of Christ is through Judah, not Joseph.
- Joseph is not spoken of as a type of Christ in the Scripture.

Walking with God

- Joseph's dreams show us that Joseph was moved by God's Word revealed to him.
- God's children are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and He is their teacher (1 John 2:27).
- God leads His children through hard experiences at times to prepare them for what is to come. We have much to learn from Joseph.

Genesis

The Book of Beginnings

When He summoned a famine on the land
and broke all supply of bread,

**He had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.**

His feet were hurt with fetters;
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
until what **He had said** came to pass,
the word of the LORD tested him.

(Psalms 105:16-19)