

GENESIS

JACOB REMAINS IN CANAAN

EXEGESIS VERSE 1:

וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִגְרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:1

^{NAS} **Genesis 37:1** Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. (וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בְּאֶרֶץ מִגְרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yashab; "and he lived/dwelted"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + prep: bet + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets; "in the land of"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: magor; "the sojourns of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"; + prep: bet + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets; "in the land of"; + proper n: "Canaan"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 1:

1. Vs.1 chronologically resumes where Gen.35:27 left off, “And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre of Keriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned”.
2. In addition it is to be contrasted with Esau’s abandonment of the promised land in Gen.36:6-8.
3. Whereas Esau rejected the POG for his life, **Jacob** chose to live “**in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan**/bet ‘erets magor ‘ab be ‘erets Canaan”.
4. The geographical differences between the twins are indicative of their spiritual disparities.
5. Ultimate orientation to God’s geographical will or failure otherwise evidences the positive and negative volition between the two brothers.
6. The verb “**lived/dwelted/yashab**” harks to Jacob’s experiential residence as manifestation of his +V as a believer.
7. For the church age believer, that manifestation is designated under the terms of coming “*to the light*” or not. Cp.Joh.3:20,21
8. The geographical will for the CA believer is the location of their local church and right P-T teaching the light of sound doctrine.
9. The volitional contrast between the twins was stark as **Jacob** was not only a believer, but a Ph₂ positive believer while his brother remained in unbelief.
10. Both men had equal opportunities to make the 3 adjustments to God, but only one was willing with the other in complete denial even as to saving faith Ph₁.
11. While both had sin issues in their lives, God loved the one and hated the other. Cp.Rom.9:13
12. The difference was **Jacob** came to saving faith (cf.Heb.11:9), confessed his sins (e.g., Gen.31:31); rode out any DD he faced (e.g., Gen.32:25, 31-32) and made maturity (Gen.32:28) i.e., the SAJG, R_BAJG and MAJG.
13. In addition, **Jacob** held to the end (cf.Heb.11:21).
14. We have thus documented all 3 patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and **Jacob**) as Covenant heirs possessing +V both Ph₁ and 2.
15. For Esau, in spite of all of his human accomplishments, successes and wealth, his only eternal destiny is reservation in the Lake of Fire.

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16. The twins are a picture perfect example of the neutrality of volition among the human race having no advantage or disadvantage as to manifesting +V or -V.
17. That which determines whether one is +V or -V is self-governed as to one's disposition with respect to the truth of BD in acceptance or rejection and willingness to align or not.
18. In the big picture between **Jacob** and Esau Moses finds foundation in differentiating between +V and -V as believers versus unbelievers (Ph₁).
19. In the continued generations of **Jacob** in vs.2 to the end of Genesis he will further example the differences of +V and -V among believers Ph₂.
20. The chronology picks up c1678 BC when Isaac was about 168 years old a year or so after God told **Jacob** to return to Bethel after the Shechem affair (Gen.35:1).
21. He lived otherwise to observe the loss of Joseph as recorded in this chapter (cf.Gen.35:28).
22. This would age **Jacob** to be about 107 years old:
 - A. Isaac was 60 years old when the twins were born c1786 BC (Gen.25:26).
 - B. **Jacob** lived at home until age 77 c1709 BC.
 - C. He left Laban 20 years later at age 97 c1689 BC (cf.Gen.31:38).
 - D. This would age Joseph to be about 6 years old when he met Uncle Esau.
 - E. **Jacob** met Esau, stayed an undetermined amount of time at Succoth and Shechem returning to Hebron (~10 years c.1679 BC).
 - F. Add another year for Esau to pack up and move making Joseph 17 years of age or c.1678 BC.
 - G. $77 + 20 + 10 = 107$ years for **Jacob**.

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JOSEPH'S BROTHERS HATRED OF HIM VSS.2-11

JOSEPH'S FAVORED STATUS

EXEGESIS VERSES 2 – 4:

וְעֵקֶב הַתּוֹלְדוֹת אֱלֹהִים וְיֹסֵף בֶּן־שֶׁבַע־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה
 הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת־אֶחָיו בְּצֹאן וְהוּא נֹעַר אֶת־בְּנֵי בִלְהָה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי
 זִלְפָּה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת־דִּבְרֹתָם רָעָה אֶל־אָבִיהֶם:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:2 **These are the records of the generations of Jacob.** (וְעֵקֶב הַתּוֹלְדוֹת אֱלֹהִים) [adj/b/pl: 'elleh; "these"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: toledoth; "are the generations of/records of"; + proper n: "Jacob"])

Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was still a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. (יֹסֵף

בִּלְהָה בֶּן אֶת נֹעַר הוּא ו צֹאן ה ב אַח אֶת רֹעֵה הִיָּה שָׁנָה עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁבַע בֶּן
 ו זִלְפָּה בְּנֵי אֶת אִשָּׁה זִלְפָּה בֶּן אֶת ו אָב אִשָּׁה זִלְפָּה בֶּן אֶת ו
 [proper n: "Joseph"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "a son of"; +
 adj/f/s/constr: sheba-; "seven"; + adj/f/s/abs: -esereh; "ten"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "years";
 + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "he came to be"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: ra-ah; "pasturing/tending"; +
 prep: 'eth; "with"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + prep: bet + d.a. +
 n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "among the flock/sheep"; + waw conj. + pro/3ms: hu'; "and he himself"; +
 n/com/m/s/abs: na-ar; "a youth/lad"; + prep: 'eth; "with"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: ben; "the sons
 of"; + proper n: "Bilhah"; + waw conj. + prep: 'eth + n/com/m/pl/constr: ben; "and with the
 sons of"; + proper n: "Zilpah"; + n/com/f/pl/constr: 'ishshah + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff:
 'ab; "the wives of his father"])

And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father. (אֶת יוֹסֵף בּוֹא ו

אֶל רֹעֵה דִבְרָה אָב אֶל רֹעֵה דִבְרָה [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: bo'; "and he caused to bring"; +
 proper n: "Joseph"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3mpl: dibbah; "a bad report" {used 9x;
 in a sinful way means "slander" e.g., Pro.10:18}; + adj/f/s/abs: ra-ah; "a distressful one"; +
 prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: 'ab; "to their father"])

וְיִשְׂרָאֵל אָהַב אֶת־יוֹסֵף מִכָּל־בָּנָיו כִּי־בֶן־זִקְנִים
 הוּא לוֹ וְעָשָׂה לוֹ כְּתֹנֶת פְּסִים:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:3 **Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic.** (כָּל מִן יוֹסֵף אֶת אָהַב יִשְׂרָאֵל ו

פֶּס כְּתֹנֶת ל עָשָׂה ו ל הוּא זִקְנִים בֶּן כִּי בֶּן [waw conj. + proper n: "Now Israel";

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+ v/qal/PF/3ms: 'ahab; "he loved"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; + prep: min; "from/more than"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "all of his sons"; + conj: kiy; "because"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "a son of"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: zequniym; "old age/advanced in years" {same as 21:2,7; 44:20; used 4x}; + pro/3ms: hu'; "he himself" {ref. Joseph}; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3ms: -asah; "and he made"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "for him"; + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth; "a garment of/tunic of" {same as 3:21}; + n/com/m/pl/abs: pas {lit. flat of hand or foot; indicates a long-sleeved garment cf.2Sam.13:18,19; the source meaning of the word is unclear; the LXX translates pas as ποικίλος - poikilos or "varied colored"; the main idea is that this garment was outstanding from his brothers' clothing}})

וַיִּרְאוּ אָחָיו כִּי־אָהַב אֲבִיהֶם מִכָּל־אָחָיו^{WTT} Genesis 37:4
וַיִּשְׁנְאוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:4 **And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers;** (וַיִּרְאוּ אָחָיו כִּי אָהַב אֲבִיהֶם מִכָּל אָחָיו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: ra'ah; "and they saw"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: forward for emphasis; "him"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'ahab; "he loved"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: 'ab; "their father"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "more than all of his brothers"])

and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms. (וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַבְּרוֹ לְשָׁלוֹם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: sana'; "and they hated/held in contempt" {antonym to "love"}; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + waw conj. + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/PF/3mpl: yakal; "and they were not able"; + v/Piel/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: dabar; "to speak to him"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: shalom {lit. peace}; "on friendly terms/to civility"}))

ANALYSIS VERSES 2 – 4:

1. Vs.2 introduces the 13th and final use of the Hebrew noun *toledoth* in the book of Genesis, “**These are the generations of Jacob/’**elleh toledoth Jacob”.
2. This marks the final division of historical records partitioning the book categorically.
3. While it completes the life of **Jacob**, it is his **son Joseph** that takes center stage.
4. As will be revealed, **Joseph** epitomizes the adjusted Ph₂ +V believer.
5. So while the contrast of Esau and **Jacob** exemplified the difference between –V and +V volition as unbeliever and believer, **Joseph** will contrast with his maladjusted **brothers** exemplifying the adjusted +V among believers.
6. For what it is worth to the astute student of the Scriptures, **Joseph** is the only son of **Jacob** mentioned in the Hebrews chapter 11 spiritual “hall of fame”. Cf.Heb.11:21,22

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7. This mention is to not deny the prize to any of Joseph's **brothers** otherwise, only to report to whom the Bible gives accolade.
8. This reality suggests that the prize is not automatic for believers but reserved for the very few that do it right Ph₂. Cp.1Cor.9:24-27
9. Moses gives insight for the reader to see the spiritual qualities associated with **Joseph** in the remainder of vs.2.
10. The stage is set: "**Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was a youth**/Joseph ben sheba- -esereh shanah hayah ra-ah 'eth 'ach bet ha tso'n hu' na-ar".
11. Moses places emphasis on his 17 **years of age** considered to still be "**a youth/young**".
12. This will have bearing on the interpretation of vs.3 and Jacob's "**old age**".
13. The narrative reflects the fact that Jacob's flocks are quite extensive and must be moved from place to place for pasture.
14. On this particular occasion, he was "**with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives**/'eth ben Bilhah waw 'eth ben Zilpah, 'ishshah 'ab".
15. That would mean he was with Dan and Naphtali (**Bilhah**) and Gad and Asher (**Zilpah**). Cf.Gen.35:25-26
16. **Bilhah and Zilpah** were the maids of Rachel and Leah respectively.
17. The mention of the two maids resonates with the competitive spirit between the two sisters during the baby wars in chapter 30.
18. That there was a highly competitive environment in Jacob's household divided maternally can easily be assumed.
19. So infighting and aggressiveness among Jacob's **sons** would be a part of a dysfunctional family.
20. This gives impetus to what occurred later, "**And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father**/waw bo' Joseph dibbah ra-ah 'el 'ab".
21. What specifically occurred to cause **Joseph** to tell on his **brothers** is not stated, only implied via their maternal relationships (some type of altercation/conflict).
22. Whatever it was, it was considered very distressful upon Jacob.
23. The English phrase "**a bad report**" literally in the Hebrew is "*dibbah ra-ah*" meaning a **report** unfavorable to the listener containing malicious intentions by those being reported (*dibbah*: cf.Num.13:32; Psa.31: *evil slander*) that would potentially bring harm upon others (*ra-ah* cf.Gen.31:52).
24. Whatever the **report** contained, it indicates amoral and/or unethical behavior.
25. While the reader is ultimately left to guess the situation, Moses bypasses a direct mention for the reader to instead focus on Joseph's reactions.
26. He was appalled and thought his brothers' actions deserving to be related to the head of the house for his own well-being.
27. In contrast to his brothers, **Joseph** is viewed as holding the high moral grounds among them.
28. This sets the foundation for the spiritual disparity between him and his **brothers** and ultimately the rift of hatred and jealousy towards him.
29. **Joseph** arrested his STA and applied doctrine in the face of siblings that most often let their STA's run amuck.
30. Simeon and Levi are the two most recent prime examples in operation Shechem though all the brothers did their fair share in chapter 34 (cf.vss.27ff).

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31. We can probably and safely assume that **Joseph** at that time was too **young** to have participated (8-14 years old?).
32. **Joseph** at the **young age** of 17 was already showing the doctrinal qualities that personify the adjusted +V believer (good moral and ethical conduct).
33. Vs.2 then gives purpose and reason for vs.3, “**Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age**/waw Israel ‘ahab Joseph min kol ben kiy ben zequniym hu’ lamed”.
34. The author uses Jacob’s name of maturity “**Israel**” to marquee his actions of **love** for **Joseph**.
35. There are interpreters that want to denigrate Jacob’s **love** as sin favoritism.
36. However, as we have seen between Esau and **Jacob**, there are spiritual qualities that righteously invite higher affection towards certain others i.e., “*Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated*” (Rom.9:13).
37. This underwrites the contrast now of the mention of Israel’s “**old age**” with Joseph’s “**youth**” in vs.2.
38. In spite of the chronological **age** difference between **father** and son, there was spiritual rapport that only generates through like-minded +V believers.
39. This is the “**cause/because**” of the attraction from **Israel** to **Joseph**.
40. The spiritual affinity between the two established a love set apart from **all of** Jacob’s other **sons**.
41. **Israel** in the discernment of his spiritual maturity saw the qualities associated with a +V Ph₂ believer in his next to youngest son.
42. The irony can’t be missed in that **Joseph** was the firstborn of Jacob’s favored wife Rachel whom was ultimately a spiritual disappointment to the matured **Israel**.
43. Those commentaries that insist that Israel’s love was simply because of Joseph’s mom miss the spiritual realities of these verses.
44. Again, we see that volition has no partiality to predecessors or others as to what makes one +V or -V.
45. To show his appreciation for Joseph’s spiritual orientation, **Israel** “**made him a varicolored tunic**/-asah lamed cuttoneth pas”.
46. As our parsing showed, the Hebrew makes clear that this garment was a long sleeved robe and the LXX indicates it was multicolored.
47. Isagogically clothing of this type indicated one of royalty or rulership contrasted to shorter sleeves for the common laborer. Cf.2Sam.13:18
48. In essence, **Israel** portrayed **Joseph** as worthy of royalty among the family.
49. It implies that **Israel** is setting **Joseph** forth to receive exceptional blessing as a Covenant heir.
50. All of Jacob’s sons are heirs to the Covenant (they were all believers).
51. It is Judah that is handed the rights of primogenitor inheriting the line of sovereignty through the Davidic and Messianic line (Gen.49:8-11).
52. Moses has already clued his readers in that Reuben, the first-born, had lost that right per the **Bilhah** affair (25:22).
53. While one might think that these are the limits of Covenant blessing, there is even a higher blessing to be bestowed.
54. It will be **Joseph** who will receive a double blessing through his sons based on spiritual integrity Ph₂ (Gen.48:15-22 esp.vs.22; 49:22-26).

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55. Under the real estate clause of the inheritance, he will receive twice his share.
56. This portrays his blessing as maximum blessing honored both Ph₂ and Ph₃.
57. **Israel** is manifesting his spiritual clarity that blessing by God under the Covenant was to be based on spiritual realities (+V), not physical lineage, a fact lost upon the Jews in Jesus time. Mat.3:8-9
58. This interpretation gives depth then to Joseph's brothers' reactions to their father's discriminatory love in vs.4.
59. Due to their spiritual dullness, they reject the spiritual realities behind Israel's preference for **Joseph** (as has many interpreters).
60. Instead, all they can relate to is a sense of physical favoritism.
61. It appears to them that **Israel** was showing partiality based on physical circumstances as they "saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers/ra'ah 'ach kiy 'ahab 'ab min kol 'ach".
62. To feed any animosity that might have existed already due to Joseph's doctrinal integrity exposing them for what they were, now even more so "**they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms/sana' 'eth waw lo' yakal dabar lame shalom**".
63. Their doctrinal and moral maladjustment grew to hold **Joseph** in contempt so that they couldn't even verbally be civil to him.
64. Their STA hatred is the antithesis to the doctrinal **love** otherwise being expressed by **Israel**.
65. The STA rationale of the **brothers** is pathetic as they would hold him to be a "goody two-shoes" and that it was only because of whom his mother was.
66. Obviously their last rationale doesn't hold water because of the birth of Joseph's youngest brother, Benjamin (probably exempt from this occasion via his **young age**).
67. The **brothers** loaded up on mental attitude sins (MAS) producing hatred that would not be kept hidden verbally and eventually is shown overtly.
68. The **brothers** will example that MAS's not dealt with will eventually manifest itself in an overt way.
69. Moses offers no criticism on **Joseph** or suggests otherwise that any of their animosity was deserved.
70. **Joseph** does not let his siblings bring him down and cause him to retaliate.
71. He does not allow the worst of circumstances keep him back spiritually.
72. The believer has to learn to let people do what they want to do and not let it affect you.
73. Hatred, vindictiveness, animosity, MAS, verbal gossip, maligning, etc., does not have to drag you down.
74. It only drags you down to the extent that you do not faith-rest and commit them to the Lord and pray about it.
75. People that engage in this sort of MAS and verbal behavior are miserable and you do not have to allow them to make you miserable.
76. *Doctrine of Mental Attitude Sins.*
77. *Doctrine of Verbal Sins.*

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JOSEPH'S FIRST DREAM

EXEGESIS VERSES 5 – 8:

וַיַּחְלֵם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיַּגִּד לְאָחָיו וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שְׂנֹא אֹתוֹ: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:5

^{NAS} Genesis 37:5 **Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more.** (*waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: chalam; "and he dreamed"; + proper n: "Joseph"; + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "a dream"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: nagad; "and he caused to tell it"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: yasaph; "and they caused to increase"; + adv: -od; "again"; + v/qal/inf/constr: sana'; "hating"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"]*)

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמְעוּ־נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חֲלַמְתִּי: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:6

^{NAS} Genesis 37:6 **And he said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; (** *waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3mpl suff: 'el; "and he said to them"; + v/qal/imp/m/pl: shama-; "hear/listen to"; + interj.part: na'; "now/please"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "the dream"; + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: zeh; "this one"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: chalam; "I have dreamed"]*)

וְהִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ מְאַלְמִים אֲלֵמִים בְּתוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה קָמָה אֲלֵמְתִי וְגַם־נִצְבָּה וְהִנֵּה תֹסֵבִינָה אֲלֵמְתֵיכֶם וְתִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּן לְאֵלֵמְתִי: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:7

^{NAS} Genesis 37:7 **for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect;** (*waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold"; + pro/1cpl: 'anachenu; "we ourselves" {emphatic}; + v/Piel/ptc/m/pl/abs: 'alam; "we were binding/tying together"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: 'alummah; "sheaves/stalks of grain" { used 5x, 4x in our verse, 1x Psa.126:6}; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: tawek; "in the midst/middle of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: sadeh; "the field"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold"; + v/qal/pf/3fs: qum; "it stood/it arose"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'alummah; "my sheaf"; + waw conj. + conj: gam; "and also"; + v/Niphal/PF/3fs: natsab; "was upright/stood erect"]*)

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and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." (**סבב דִּנְהָהּ וְ** **אֶלְמָה לְ חוּהָהּ וְ אֶלְמָה** [waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold"; + v/qal/IPF/3fpl: sabab; "they encircled/surrounded/gathered around"; + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/2mpl suff: 'alummah; "your sheaves"; + waw consec. + v/Hithpael/3fpl {reflexive}: chawah fr. shachah: 'שָׁחָה'; "they bowed themselves"; + prep: lamed + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'alummah; "to my sheaf"])

וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אָחִיו הַמְּלֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ עָלֵינוּ אִם-מִשׁוֹל
תִּמְשָׁל בָּנוּ וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שְׁנָא אֹתוֹ עַל-חֲלֹמֹתָיו וְעַל-דְּבָרָיו: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:8

^{NAS} Genesis 37:8 **Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us?** (**וְ אָמַר לְ אָחִיו הַ מְלֶכֶת הַ מְלֶכֶת הַ אֶחָה לְ אָמַר וְ** [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'amar; "and they said"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + interr.part: ha; "what?" {indicates questions are rhetorical}; + v/qal/inf/abs: malak; "reigning"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms; "malak; "you will reign"; + prep. w/1cpl suff: -al; "upon/over us" {prep. indicates superiority}}])

Or are you really going to rule over us?" (**בְּ מִשָּׁל מִשָּׁל אִם** [conj: 'im {lit. "if"; conditional; indicates disbelief of the condition stated in a rhetorical manner} "so"; + v/qal/inf/abs: mashal; "ruling"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: mashal; "you will rule"; + prep. w/1cpl suff: bet; "over/on us" {prep. indicates position as to sphere or dominion of rulership}}])

So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. (**וְ אֵת שְׁנָא עוֹד יִסַּף וְ** **עַל חֲלֹמֹתָיו וְ עַל דְּבָרָיו** [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: yasaph; "and they caused to increase"; + adv: -od; "again/more"; + v/qal/inf/constr: sana; "hating"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + prep: -al; "for" {prep. looks to the perceived superiority suggested by Joseph}; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: chalom; "his dreams"; + waw conj. + prep: -al + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: dabar; "and for his words"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 5 – 8:

1. Moses has informed his readers that Joseph's relationship with his brothers is far less than harmonious.
2. Why the rift exists between them, as viewed by the fleshly eyes versus spiritual realities, is starkly different.
3. On the brothers' part, **Joseph** is construed as a mister goody two-shoes and a daddy's boy enjoying favoritism from their father (vss.2-4)
4. In reality, it was a spiritual gap that created the sibling animosity between the brothers.
5. That which initially vibrated the brother's fleshly sensibilities was first and foremost Joseph's moral and ethical character (vs.2).
6. He was a constant reminder to the brothers' lack of STA self-restraint in their own lives.

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7. Their lack of restraint was evidence of their spiritual malfeasance.
8. That which sent their STA's over the edge into hatred and verbal spite was their father's approval and recognition of Joseph's behavior and spiritual orientation.
9. It irked them to no end to watch **Joseph** receive special attention from their father evidenced in the special garment given **Joseph** (vss.3,4).
10. In spite of drastic age differences between father and son, Israel's spiritual maturity finds a level of fellowship, rapport and affection in Joseph void with his other sons.
11. In other words, the +V of Israel was attracted to the +V of **Joseph** in like-mindedness.
12. As the blessings will show regarding Jacob's sons in Gen.49, the reader is hard pressed to find spiritual accolades given Joseph's brothers in contrast to Joseph's blessing.
13. That spiritual conflict is truly the real issue behind our verses is exposed in the fact that "**Joseph had a dream(s)**/joseph chalam chalom [lit. dreamed a **dream(s)**]"
14. **Dreams** specifically recorded in the Bible were a conduit for divine revelation.
15. The Hebrew noun *chalom* is used 65x in the OT with the verb *chalam* used 29x (the Aramaic in Dan.2:1,3 means exactly as the Hebrew).
16. There are 14 people(s) in the Bible credited with specific **dreams**, 11 in the OT, 3 in the NT: *Ref. Stanmurrell.files.wordpress.com/*
 - A. Abimelech; Gen.20,3,6.
 - B. Jacob; Gen.28:12; 31:10,11.
 - C. Laban; Gen.31:24.
 - D. **Joseph**; Gen.37:5-10.
 - E. Pharaoh's butler; Gen.40:5.
 - F. Pharaoh's baker; Gen.40:5.
 - G. A man from Midian; Jdg.7:13
 - H. Solomon; 1Kgs.3:5,15
 - I. Nebuchadnezzar; Dan.2:3; 4:5-9.
 - J. Daniel; Dan.7:1.
 - K. Joseph (NT); Mat.1:20; 2:13-22.
 - L. Magi; Mat.2:12
 - M. Pilate's wife; Mat.27:19.
17. They are prophetic in nature. Cf.Num.12:6; Deu.13:1,3,5; Joe.2:28; Act.2:17 cp.2Pet.1:20,21
18. The absence of **dreams** could be considered a form of DD. 1Sam.28:6,15
19. We've already seen examples of **dreams** in Genesis as to Abimelech, Jacob and Laban.
20. As the previous examples (and others) make clear, God is not limited as to whom He may inspire as to **dreams** as Abimelech was an unbeliever (the **dream** was used to evangelize him), Laban a reversionist believer and Jacob an immature +V believer.
21. God is free to even cause inanimate objects to proclaim doctrine if necessary. Cp.Luk.19:40
22. No matter the doctrinal significance, in all cases the **dreams** are designed to advance the POG in some measure.
23. Whether God is specifically mentioned or not in these **dreams** as has been recorded in the Bible is moot in determining their source of inspiration as it is all divine revelation.
24. And so it is with Joseph's **dreams** i.e., they are prophetic.
25. This does not mean that he understood their execution of fulfillment at the time...only that doctrine was at stake.

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26. The evidence of his understanding as to the doctrinal importance of his **dreams** is strongly suggested in his insistence to relate them to his family and his manner of presentation.
27. The first **dream** more than adequately reveals the spiritual conflict between **Joseph** and his **brothers** that eventually fueled their hatred of him to the point of no return.
28. This is the emphasis of the clause, “**and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more**”/waw nagad lamed ‘ach waw yasaph –od sana’ ‘eth”.
29. The Hebrew phrase *waw yasaph –od sana’ ‘eth* (**so they hated him even more**) brackets Joseph’s presenting the **dream** (introduces vs.6-7) and the brothers’ response (closes vs.8a,b).
30. The two phrases illustrate the intensity of antagonism the listeners had towards the communicator over the doctrine presented.
31. The phrase “**even more**” employs the Hiphil form of the verb *yasaph* literally meaning “**caused to increase**” indicating their hatred was based on their own determination/choice.
32. This pits their –V against Joseph’s +V.
33. Joseph’s +V is illustrated in the Hebrew verb *nagad* (**he told**) also in the Hiphil form and is causative.
34. In other words, **Joseph** determined for himself to relate the prophecy to others.
35. His +V determined to share the POG with his siblings.
36. Volitional conflict between him and his **brothers** spiritually is evidenced in their rejection of the doctrine illustrating –V.
37. It is Joseph’s manner of teaching that then grates the STA nerves of his siblings that will culminate in their cynical response in vs.8a,b.
38. Joseph’s call to doctrine is recorded in vs.6, “**And he said to them, ‘Please listen to this dream which I have had**”/waw ‘amar ‘el shama- na’ ha chalom ha zeh ‘asher chalom”.
39. The interjectory verbal phrase “**Please listen**” employs an imperatival verb (a command) and should be translated “**Listen, Now!**”
40. With the imperative, **Joseph** displays authority over the listeners in his manner of speaking.
41. In the body of the **dream** itself in vs.7, he then utilizes the Hebrew interjectory particle *hinneh* (**Behold/lo!**) three times that literally means “**Pay attention!!**”
42. So he not only initiates doctrine with authority, but maintains his presence of authority throughout the teaching...traits common to all adjusted doctrinal teachers. Cp.Mat.7:28-29
43. With the imperative and interjectory particles the reader is given a sense of tension mounting.
44. The content of the **dream** uses agricultural symbolism to depict the prophecy.
45. In this case it has to do with harvesting grain “**we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect**”/anachanu ‘alam ‘alummah bet tawek ha sadeh waw hinneh qum ‘alummah waw gam natsab”.
46. So **Joseph** and his **brothers** were harvesting wheat bundling the stalks and heads of grain into **sheaves**.
47. Then the **sheaf Joseph** bundled arose and **stood up**.
48. This indicates that the **sheaves** have a dual role as not only a food source but **also** symbolic of those **binding** them.
49. The remainder of the **dream**, “**your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf**”/sabab ‘alummah waw chawah lamed ‘aluumah” makes clear that **Joseph** and his **brothers** are the symbolic subjects associated with the **sheaves**.

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50. The prophecy is most clearly suggesting that at some point in the future, Joseph's **brothers** will bow down to him.
51. And this is all that the **brothers** hear as made clear in their incredulous responses in vs.8.
52. Their response is in the form of two rhetorical questions (the force of the interrogative *ha*):
 - A. "Are you actually going to reign over us/malak malak –al?"
 - B. "Are you really going to rule over us/mashal mashal bet?"
53. The questions on their part are in disbelief (Hebrew conditional conjunction *'im* inserted between the two questions) expecting a no answer.
54. However, the prophetic reality expects a yes answer.
55. The questions use two different verbs for rulership employing the double use of verb with the infinitive followed by the imperfect form as we have seen before in Genesis.
56. The literal Hebrew would be translated "**reigning you will reign?** (*malak*)" and "**ruling you will rule?** (*mashal*).
57. *Malak* suggest sovereignty or superiority of rulership while *mashal* has the nuance of dominion of one's **rule**.
58. As we have documented on each occasion of the use of this particular Hebraism, there are two ideas in mind and so again here.
59. **Joseph** will ultimately literally **reign** in time over his family as they relocate to his domain of rulership in Egypt.
60. Spiritually **Joseph** will **reign** superior as to the Abrahamic Covenant possessing a double portion of blessing under the real estate clause (cp.Gen.48-49).
61. However, all the **brothers** extract from the **dream** is that **Joseph** is claiming that one day they will all be subservient to him.
62. Subservient to the next to youngest of the family...the goody two shoes brat that thinks he knows it all!!
63. The **brothers** care less that there is more to the **dream** than power and subordination.
64. The grain symbolism is key as it points to the situation that will bring the prophecy to fruition.
65. Joseph's **dream** foretold his future career looking forward to his **brothers** coming to Egypt to buy grain (41:57; 42:1-5) and bowing down before him recorded in Gen.42:6.
66. God will exalt **Joseph** to second in command to Pharaoh and he will be in charge of the food dispensary to address a great famine destined for all the land as recorded in Gen.41.
67. Obviously, **Joseph** nor his **brothers** understood the full significance of the **dream**.
68. But the point remains that it was inspired doctrine to be believed with or without full understanding at the time.
69. It was prophecy that if the **brothers** had accepted they could have relished in recognizing its fulfillment when the time came. Cp.Gen.42:9
70. God was using **Joseph** as his mouth piece to prepare for a major test in the future providing ammunition to faith-rest that somehow their brother would be instrumental in overseeing their dilemma.
71. Joseph's **brothers** serve as examples that if the believer fields the communication of BD under STA influence (e.g., hatred), the believer will react in a negative way to that which chafes the STA and cut short any further understanding to the doctrine at hand.

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72. The final phrase “**for his dreams and for his words**/-al chalom waw –al dabar” exemplify that it was the doctrinal content (**dreams**) and manner of speech (**words**) that further incited the aforementioned hatred.
73. The plural of the noun “**dreams**” anticipates the next dream in vss.8-11.

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JOSEPH'S SECOND DREAM

EXEGESIS VERSES 9 – 11:

וַיִּחְלֶם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אֲחֵר וַיִּסְפֹּר אֵת לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר
 הִנֵּה חֲלֹמֹתַי חֲלוֹם עוֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְאַחַד עָשָׂר
 כּוֹכָבִים מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לִי:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:9 Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, (וַיִּחְלֶם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אֲחֵר וַיִּסְפֹּר אֵת לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: chalam; "and he dreamed"; + adv: -od; "again"; + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "a dream"; + adj/m/s/abj: 'acher; "another"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: saphar; "and he recounted/related"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "it" {ref. dream}; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"])

"Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." (וַיִּחְלֶם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אֲחֵר וַיִּסְפֹּר אֵת לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה חֲלֹמֹתַי חֲלוֹם עוֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְאַחַד עָשָׂר כּוֹכָבִים מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לִי) [interj.part: hinneh; "Behold!/Lo!"; + v/qal/PF/1cs; chalam + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "I have dreamed a dream"; + adv: -od; "again"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and Behold!"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: shemesh; "the sun"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yarecha; "and the moon"; + waw conj. + adj/m/s/constr: 'echad; "and one"; + adj/m/s/abs: -asar; "ten"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: kokab; "stars"; + v/Hithpael/ptc/m/pl/abs: chawah; "were bowing down"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"])

וַיִּסְפֹּר אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אָחָיו וַיִּגְעַר-בּוֹ אָבִיו
 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלַמְתָּ הַבּוֹא נְבוֹא אֲנִי
 וְאִמְנָה וְאִחֵיךָ לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךָ אֶרְצָה:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:10 And he related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? (וַיִּסְפֹּר אֶל-אָבִיו וְאֶל-אָחָיו וַיִּגְעַר-בּוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חָלַמְתָּ הַבּוֹא נְבוֹא אֲנִי וְאִמְנָה וְאִחֵיךָ לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךָ אֶרְצָה) [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: saphar; "and he related/recounted"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "to his father"; + waw conj. + prep: 'el + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "and to his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ga-ar; {lit. to check/curb/restrain a process; used 14x} "and he rebuked"; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "at him"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep: w/3ms suff: lamed; "and he said to him"; + interr.part: mah {indicates rhetorical question}; "what?"; + d.a. +

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n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "is the dream"; + d.a. + adj.m/s: zeh; "this one"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "that"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: chalam; "you have had"])

Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?" (**הֲאֵנִי וְאִמִּי וְאֶחָיוּ וְאֶחָיוּ לְחַוּוֹת לְפָנֶיךָ עַד אֶרֶץ** [interr.part: *ha; {{expects negative answer}; "shall?" + v/qal/inf/abs: bo' + v/qal/IPF/1cp: bo'; "coming we shall come"; + pro/1cs: 'aniy; "I/myself"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: 'em; "and your mother"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ach; "and your brothers"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Hithpael/inf/constr: hawah; "to bow down"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed; "before you"; + n/com/f/s/abs: 'erets: "to the ground"])*

וַיִּקְנְאוּ-בּוֹ אֶחָיוּ וְאִבּוֹ שָׁמַר אֶת-הַדְּבָר׃ ^{WTT} Genesis 37:11

^{NAS} Genesis 37:11 **And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.** (**וַיִּקְנְאוּ בְּאָבִיו וְאֶת שְׁמֵר אָבִיו אֶת דְּבָרֵי הַ** [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3mpl: qana'; "and they were jealous/envious" {same as 26:14; 30:1}; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "by him"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + waw conj: "but"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: shamar; "kept/guarded/gave heed to"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar; "the words/saying"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 9 – 11:

1. Joseph's first **dream** is followed by “**still another dream**/-od chalom”.
2. One **dream** after **another** suggests the importance of the doctrine as it pertains to the family.
3. That is fulfillment of the prophecies will lead to deliverance for the family to ensure the future destiny of their progeny under the Covenant promises. Cf.Gen.15:13-14
4. This **dream** also uses symbolism to teach the doctrine though its interpretation of obeisance to Joseph is direct.
5. In the first **dream** it was the brothers' sheaves that bowed down to Joseph's sheaf (vs.7).
6. Here astronomical symbolism is used “**the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me**/ha shemesh waw ha yarecha waw 'echad –asar kokab chawah lamed” where Joseph is the clear object of tribute.
7. Furthermore, whereas the agricultural imagery of the first **dream** could have been written off as hubristic (a **dream** of excessive ambition), the astral imagery in this **dream** has all the ingredients of divine revelation (spiritual information) prophetic in nature. Cp. in a negative way Deu.4:19; Cf.Joe.3:15; Mat.24:29; Luk.21:25; 1Cor.15:41; Rev.12:1
8. In other words, it “kicks it up a notch” in clarity as to its doctrinal significance challenging Joseph's brothers with a higher state of culpability.
9. The doctrine of paying homage to Joseph is now obvious removing any previous rationalizations otherwise.
10. The test before the **brothers** then gives purpose as to why Moses says that Joseph recounted the **dream** twice: Vs.9, he “**related it to his brothers/saphar** ‘eth lamed ‘ach” and vs.10, “**he related it to his father and to his brothers/saphar** ‘el ‘ab waw ‘el ‘ach”.

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11. The clearest read is that Joseph first **related** the **dream** to **his brothers** who on this occasion have no response (cp.vs.8) and defer to their **father** for interpretation.
12. The Hebrew employs the preposition *'el* before both nouns **father and brothers** in vs.10 to indicate the second account was a face-to-face family encounter.
13. This in contrast to the softer force of the preposition *lamed* in the first address to **his brothers** that implies Joseph's original intention was just to pass the **dream** along and move on.
14. In the face of his brothers' sarcasm from the first **dream**, Joseph tactfully tries to communicate the doctrine hoping the response is only a little more derisive and that's that.
15. However his recounting of the **dream** retains its voice of authority as the interjectory particle *hinneh* (**Behold!, Lo!**) is used twice in the presentation.
16. The **brothers** look pass any diplomacy otherwise and instead react to the doctrinal challenge by challenging Joseph to tell their **father** the **dream**.
17. By all appearances he does so without hesitation.
18. While he may have tried to use tact to begin with, he did not forfeit doctrinal courage otherwise.
19. In addition, the imagery is extended to others beyond the **eleven brothers** to obviously include their parents via the symbols **sun and moon**.
20. In their thinking, surely Joseph wouldn't challenge their father's authority as the **dream** asserts!
21. The **brothers** reflect the type of believers that don't want to accept the doctrine communicated.
22. They defer to another authority other than the communicator to garner support in refutation.
23. After all, the **dream** is suggesting that the Covenant heir (Jacob = **the sun**) will be subservient in the future to Joseph.
24. It is not uncommon to find interpreters that want to lay blame, at least in part, on Joseph's shoulders for relating these **dreams** that appear self-serving.
25. However, as self-serving they may be does not give excuse for silence otherwise.
26. With the faithful communicator of doctrine, how the doctrine falls on behalf of or against the communicator, obligation before God to proclaim the truth in its entirety remains.
27. The brothers' reasoning that the Covenant heir would not stand for such a self-serving proclamation, even from his most loved son, appears on the surface correct as "**his father rebuked him**/*ga-ar bet 'ab*".
28. The Hebrew verb *ga-ar* (**rebuked**) literally means to check, curb or restrain an activity. E.g., Psa.106:9; Isa.17:13; Nah.1:4; Mal.3:11
29. So the idea is that Jacob dresses Joseph down in such a way that he makes it clear he is to stop with suggesting subservience from the family to himself, even if it is just a **dream**.
30. Both questions from Jacob are rhetorical.
31. The first introduces with the interrogative particle *mah*, "**What is this dream that you have had?**/*mah chalom ha zeh 'asher chalam*" and expects no response.
32. It is designed to address the turmoil that Joseph's actions are causing is his **dream**.
33. The second is introduced with the interrogative particle *ha* that expects a negative answer, "**Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground**/*ha bo' bo' 'aniy waw 'em waw 'ach lamed hawah lamed 'erets*".

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34. This question reveals doubt in Jacob's mind that God would ever make him subservient to Joseph along with the remaining family.
35. This is implied with the emphatic use of the personal pronoun '*aniy* (lit. "**I, myself**).
36. Obviously Jacob interprets the astral symbols as being the **father, mother and** all of Joseph's 11 **brothers**.
37. This would mean Leah, as Rachel has already died, and would include Benjamin as the youngest of the **brothers**.
38. The idea behind the second question is "Surely Joseph you don't think God is going to exalt you above the entire family and especially the Covenant heir?"
39. The reality is that this is exactly what will occur that in time Jacob will ultimately come to realize.
40. This is the implication behind the once again use of the Hebraism double verb infinitive followed by the imperfect *bo'* (lit. **coming we will come**).
41. With the physical fulfillment of the prophecy and presence of the family bowing before Joseph, a spiritual presence of its prophetic reality will dawn upon Jacob.
42. The very fact that Jacob correctly interprets the **dream** (as did the **brothers** previously) suggests that in spite of disbelief, the intent of the **dream** was clear.
43. This realization then sets up the contrast between Jacob and Joseph's **brothers** in vs.11, "**And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying/waw qana' bet 'ach waw 'ab shamar ha dabar**".
44. Whereas Jacob could not foresee any doctrinal reason for the prophecy to come to pass, he doesn't totally reject it.
45. In spite of lack of understanding leading to doubt, he does not write off its possibility.
46. In fact, it impressed him so doctrinally he "**guarded the words**" (*shamar ha dabar*).
47. This is a mark of +V when confronted with the challenge of not completely understanding a doctrine initially; they don't throw it out the window, but put it on the back burner.
48. Jacob would not deny the fact that no matter how unbelievable the **dream** might be, it still possessed all the ingredients of divine revelation.
49. This mitigating circumstance suggests that Jacob's rebuke was not so much as denying the doctrine but an emotional response trying to curb the dissension among the **brothers**.
50. His rebuke was his best human viewpoint effort to do so.
51. The **brothers** on the other hand are not so willing to concede to the doctrinally obvious.
52. They despise the doctrine that Joseph will ever rule over them.
53. In fact, their previous hatred (vs.8c) now turns to jealousy.
54. The question begs, "If they rejected the doctrine, why would they become **jealous**?"
55. The answer lies in the fact that the power of the truth unsettled their STA nerves and though they disbelieved the doctrine they further doubted themselves in their decisions.
56. Because of disbelief they vacillate as the unstable believers they are. Cp.Jam.1:6
57. Part of their thinking contemplates that God may really be saying he is going to exalt Joseph in such manner.
58. He is the recipient of dreams and possibly finds favor from God.
59. So they are torn between hate and jealousy as self-deserved suffering for their lack of faith.
60. Joseph on the other hand as the object of hate and envy as well as enduring reproach from his **father** has done nothing but relate the truth.
61. This is a clear start of undeserved suffering that will follow Joseph into the future.

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JOSEPH IS SENT TO CHECK ON HIS BROTHERS

EXEGESIS VERSES 12 – 17:

וַיֵּלְכוּ אָחִיו לְרֵעוֹת אֲתֵּ-צֹאן אֲבֵיהֶם בְּשֶׁכֶם: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:12

^{NAS} Genesis 37:12 Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem. (7

וַיֵּלְכוּ אָחִיו לְרֵעוֹת אֲתֵּ-צֹאן אֲבֵיהֶם בְּשֶׁכֶם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: halak; "and they went/walked"; n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + prep. lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: ra-ah; "to pasture"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/s/constr: tso'n; "the flock of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: 'ab; "their father"; + prep. bet w/ proper n: "in Shechem"])

וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אַחֶיךָ רֹעִים בְּשֶׁכֶם לְכָה וְאֶשְׁלַחְךָ אֲלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲנָנִי: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:13

^{NAS} Genesis 37:13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock in

Shechem? (וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אַחֶיךָ רֹעִים בְּשֶׁכֶם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Israel"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Joseph"; + interr.part: ha + neg.part: lo'; "are not?"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ach; "your brothers"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: ra-ah; "pasturing"; + prep: bet w/ proper n: "in Shechem"])

Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "I will go." (אֶל שְׁלַח וְהֵלַךְ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲנָנִי [v/qal/imp/m/s: halak {lit. walk}; "come/prepare to travel"; + waw conj. +

v/qal/IPF/1cs/cohort. w/2ms suff: shalach; "and let me send you"; + prep. w/3mpl suff: 'el; "to them"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + interj.part. w/1cs suff: hinneh; "Behold me!/Here I am!"])

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לְךָ-נָא רְאֵה אֶת-שְׁלוֹם אַחֶיךָ וְאֶת-שְׁלוֹם הַצֹּאן וְהַשְּׂבִי דְבַר וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ מֵעֵמֶק חֲבֹרֹן וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂכֵמָה: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:14

^{NAS} Genesis 37:14 Then he said to him, "Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock; (וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לְךָ-נָא רְאֵה אֶת שְׁלוֹם אֲחֵיךָ וְאֶת שְׁלוֹם הַצֹּאן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "and he said to him"; + v/qal/imp/m/s: halak; "go/walk"; + interj.part: na'; "now!"; + v/qal/imp/m/s: ra'ah; "see to"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: shalom; "the peace/welfare of"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ach; "your brothers"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: shalom; "and the welfare of"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the flock"])

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and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. (וְהָיָה כִּשְׁכֵם בּוֹא וְחֶבְרוֹן עִמְקָן מִן שְׁלַח וְדָבָר שׁוֹב ו) [waw conj. + v/Hiphil/imp/m/s. w/1cs suff: shub; "and cause to return to me"; + n/com/m/s/abs: dabar; "word/the matter"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms w/3ms suff: shalach; "so he sent him"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: 'emeq; "from the valley of"; + proper n: "Hebron"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo' + proper n: "and he came to Shechem"])

וַיִּמְצְאוּ אִישׁ וְהָיָה תֵּעָה בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ הָאִישׁ
לְאֹמֶר מַה־תִּבְקֶשׁ׃^{WTT} Genesis 37:15

^{NAS} Genesis 37:15 And a man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, "What are you looking for?" (וְהָיָה כִּשְׁכֵם בּוֹא וְחֶבְרוֹן עִמְקָן מִן שְׁלַח וְדָבָר שׁוֹב ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms w/3ms suff: matsa'; "and he found him"; + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ish; "a man"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: tha-ah; "he was wandering" {same as 20:13; 21:14}; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: sadeh; "in the field"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms w/3ms suff: sha'al; "and he inquired of him"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ish; "the man"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar; "while saying"; + interr.part: mah; "What?"; + v/Piel/IPF/2ms: baqash; "are you seeking"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־אָחֵי אֲנֹכִי מִבְּקֶשׁ הַגִּידֶה־נָא לִי אֵיפֹה
הֵם רְעִים׃^{WTT} Genesis 37:16

^{NAS} Genesis 37:16 And he said, "I am looking for my brothers; please tell me where they are pasturing the flock." (וְהָיָה כִּשְׁכֵם בּוֹא וְחֶבְרוֹן עִמְקָן מִן שְׁלַח וְדָבָר שׁוֹב ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ach; "my brothers"; + pro/1cs: 'anoki; "I myself"; + v/Piel/ptc/m/s/abs: baqash; "I am seeking"; + v/Hiphil/imp/m/s: nagad; "tell/make known"; + interj.part: na'; "please"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + interr.part: 'eyphoh; "Where?"; + pro/3mpl: hem; "they themselves are"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: ra-ah; "pasturing"])

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ נִסְעוּ מִזֶּה כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי אֹמְרִים
נִלְכָּה דֹתָנָה וַיֵּלֶךְ יוֹסֵף אַחֵר אָחֵיו וַיִּמְצְאוּם בְּדוּחַן׃^{WTT} Genesis 37:17

^{NAS} Genesis 37:17 Then the man said, "They have moved from here; for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" (וְהָיָה כִּשְׁכֵם בּוֹא וְחֶבְרוֹן עִמְקָן מִן שְׁלַח וְדָבָר שׁוֹב ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ish; "the man";

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+ v/qal/PF/3cpl: *nasa-*; "they departed"; + prep: *min* + adj/m/s/: *zeh*; "from this one/place"; + conj: *kiy*; "for"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: *shamah*; "I heard"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: 'amar; "them saying"; + v/qal/IPF/1cpl/cohort: *halak*; "let us walk"; + proper n: *dothan*; "to Dothan"])

So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. (וַיֵּלֶךְ יוֹסֵף אַחֲרֵי אֶחָיו וַיִּמְצֵא אֹתָם בְּדוֹחַן) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: *halak*; "so he walked"; + proper n: "Joseph"; + adv: 'achar; "after"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms w/3mpl suff: *matsa*'; "and he found them"; + prep: *bet w/ proper n*: "at Dothan"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 12 – 17:

1. In spite of the brothers' intense jealousy towards Joseph (vs.11), it appears business as usual "Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem/waw *halak* 'ach lamed ra-ah tso'n 'ab bet Shechem".
2. The reader might conclude Jacob's rebuke of **Joseph** (vs.10) disarmed the brothers' intense hostility leaving them only to wallow in their self-induced misery (jealousy).
3. Clues that all is not as it seems laces the scenes of pasturing and Israel's sending of **Joseph** to check on his **brothers**.
4. The first impression of an undercurrent scheme behind all that transpires is the fact that all of Joseph's **brothers** (excepting Benjamin) are joined together on the occasion.
5. They unanimously agreed to get together as a group on their own to shepherd **their father's flock** apart from any given instructions otherwise.
6. The qal infinitive construct form of the verb *ra-ah* (**to pasture/shepherd**) suggests they purposed to collectively take care of the **flock** without outside influence.
7. This in contrast to the opening scenario of chapter 37 that implied the brothers originally divided up their resources to take care of the vast flocks of animals (cf.vs.2).
8. Otherwise conspicuously absent is Joseph whom himself is old enough to shepherd.
9. It has been suggested that **Israel** no longer required **Joseph** to participate in menial family affairs as symbolically suggested in the multi-colored tunic.
10. Yet he is willing to send his favorite son out in dangerous wilderness lands alone to recon the whereabouts and conditions of Jacob's sons and livestock?
11. With the advantage of knowing what the **brothers** are ultimately planning and the immediate context suggests a more nefarious reason that **Joseph** remained home.
12. That is the **brothers** wanted to ensure no distrusted eyes or ears would interfere with any future discussions on how they should handle their "pompous" brother.
13. **Joseph** was being ostracized in retaliation for his doctrinal stance.
14. Suspicion as to the otherwise "normal" intentions of the **brothers** is further expressed by **Israel** himself in vs.13.
15. Moses utilizes Jacob's name for maturity (**Israel**) to again defer to discernment on Jacob's part in this matter (cp.vs.3).
16. The rhetorical question "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock in Shechem/ha lo' 'ach ra-ah bet Shechem" expects an affirmative answer.
17. It is their chosen location for **pasturing** that arouses suspicion on Jacob's part.
18. It is a reminder to him of what his other sons are capable of doing when so motivated by their STA's (cp.Gen.34).

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19. On the brothers' side of thinking, to go to **Shechem** should seem normal enough as they owned land in that location (cp.33:19).
20. No matter excuses given as to why **Shechem**, Israel's not buying it.
21. He then voices his concern to **Joseph** in vs.13b, "**Come, and I will send you to them.**' **And he said to him, 'I will go'**/halak waw shalack 'el 'waw 'amar lamed hinneh".
22. While Israel's words employ an imperative "**come/prepare to travel**" (*halak*) he further employs the lesser command of the cohortative "**let me send you**" (*shalach*) to indicate the assignment as ultimately voluntary on Joseph's part.
23. This interpretation explains the two part instructions given **Joseph** in vss.13,14.
24. Further it fills in the idea of distrust so obvious on Israel's part towards his sons.
25. Distrust is the repercussion for those that abandon application of BD for their own STA agendas.
26. **Joseph** does not hesitate and confirms he will follow his father's wishes.
27. It is naïve for the reader to think that both **Israel and Joseph** are not fully aware of the animosity held by sons and **brothers**.
28. That **Joseph** is not reticent to carry out the details again marquee's Joseph's spiritual courage and ability to faith-rest in the face of potential hostility/danger (cf.33:7, etc.).
29. In vs.14, **Israel** gives specific instruction on how **Joseph** was to handle the situation, "**Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock; and bring word back to me**/halak na' ra'ah shalom 'ach waw shalom ha tso'n; waw shub dabar".
30. The instructions employ 3 imperatives for **Joseph** to follow as tactical advice by his father:
 - A. "**Go**"; travel to where his **brothers** are supposed to be.
 - B. "**See**"; observe the situation at hand.
 - C. "**Bring back**"; return with a report.
31. The English "**welfare**" is the Hebrew *shalom* (*peace*) and is used here to indicate a hopeful absence of strife or conflict.
32. It is interesting to note Jacob's concern for the well-being of the animals considering Simeon and Levi's past history (cf.Gen.49:6).
33. **Israel** distrusts his sons and he can only imagine what trouble they might stir up on this occasion.
34. They have already established a history towards revenge!!
35. He forbids **Joseph** for taking any action on his part as to the status or behavior of his brothers, only to return with a report.
36. Again, these instructions smack of a father that is very aware of dissension among the ranks and the distrust of his sons while seeking to protect the son of his unequivocal trust.
37. Joseph's point of departure was "**was from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem**/min 'emeq Hebron waw bo' Shechem".
38. It is about 50 miles one way through very wild country (lions, bears, etc.).
39. So a hard two day trip packing through mountainous terrain was Joseph's itinerary.
40. However, upon his arrival, the plot of land where he was expecting to find his **brothers** was almost completely deserted.
41. He was studying the signs to see if he could figure out which direction to go when he received some outside help, "**And a man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, 'What are you looking for?'**/waw matsa' 'ish waw hinneh that-ah bet sadeh waw sha'al ha 'ish lamed 'amar mah baqash".

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42. The uniqueness of this **man** finding **Joseph** is emphasized with the interjectory particle “**behold!**”.
43. In the Hebrew language this individual goes from being “**a man**” (without the d.a.) to “**the man**” (with the d.a.) to further exemplify his importance.
44. **Joseph** answers his direct question with a request for assistance in vs.16, “**I am looking for my brothers; please tell me where they are pasturing the flock**”/ach ‘anokiy baqash nagad na’ lamed ‘eyphoh hem ra-ah”.
45. The man’s response in vs.17, “**They have moved from here; for I heard them say, ‘Let us go to Dothan**”/nasa- zeh kiy shamah ‘amar halak Dothan” further reveals him important to the situation.
46. If he “**heard them say**” as he claims, then he was obviously in the midst of the **brothers** when they were in **Shechem** (or spying on them).
47. The mystery **man** is best explained as an unintended participant to the brothers’ plot.
48. That they moved on it becomes clear that they wanted even more distance between the father’s household and themselves.
49. They rightly anticipated that it was a good possibility that Jacob would **send Joseph** to check up on them.
50. They left previous instructions to this unnamed **man** that if any one came looking for them to guide them on to **Dothan**.
51. How complicit this **man** was beyond the obvious is left to the reader’s imagination.
52. Its inclusion is designed to give the reader the sense that the brothers’ future scheme of murder was not just an impetuous idea at the last minute (cf.vs.18), but a result of much longer discussions and planning along the way.
53. **Joseph** had no reason to distrust “**the man**” and sure enough he **found his brothers at Dothan** just as instructed.
54. **Dothan** would have been about another 13 miles further than **Shechem**.
55. This geographical location is only mentioned in our passage and in 2Kgs.6:13.
56. Its meaning is “two cisterns/wells”.
57. The psychology of the brothers’ STA’s reaching fever pitch by the time of Joseph’s arrival is further underscored with their initial destination of **Shechem**.
58. The reminder of the past event at **Shechem** would pump them up to the kind of emotionalism and courage they would need to take care of their troublesome brother (work themselves into a frenzy recalling their brand of justice in operation **Shechem**).
59. After the fact they would remove themselves to a more secluded spot to carry out whatever dastardly deed they might conjure up.
60. Once they see him coming, their STA’s are ready to take the step of no return as necessary.

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THE BROTHERS' MURDEROUS PLOT EXPOSED

EXEGESIS VERSES 18 – 20:

וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתוֹ מֵרָחֵק וּבְטֶרֶם יִקְרַב אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ
אֹתוֹ לְהַמִּיתוֹ: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:18

^{NAS} Genesis 37:18 **When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death.** (ו קרב טרם ב ו רחוק מן את ראה ו) *[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: ra'ah; "and they saw"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + prep: min; "from"; + adj/m/s/abs: rachoq; "afar/remote/a distance"; + waw conj. + prep: bet + adv. of time: therem; "and when before"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qarab; "he might approach/come near"; + prep. w/3mpl suff: 'el; "to them"; + waw consec. + v/Hithpael/IPF/3mpl: nakal; "and they plotted/deceitfully crafted a plan"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "against him"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Hiphil/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: muth; "to put him to death"])*

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו הֲנֵה בֹעֵל הַחֲלֹמוֹת הַלְזָה
בָּא: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:19

^{NAS} Genesis 37:19 (Revised) **And they said to one another, "Here comes the lord of the dreams, this dreamer!** (ו בוא הלזה חלום ה בעל הנה אה אל איש אמר ו) *[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'amar; "and they said"; + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ish + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "a man to his brother/to one another"; + interj.part: hinneh; "Behold!"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ba-al; "the owner of/lord of" {same as 14:13; 20:3}; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: chalom; "the dreams"; + adj/m/s: hallazeh; {demonstrative intensifies the designation} "this dreamer"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: bo'; "he is coming"])*

וְעַתָּה | לְכוּ וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ וְנִשְׁלַכְהוּ בְּאֶחָד הַבְּרוֹת
וְאִמְרְנוּ חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכַלְתֶּהוּ וְנִרְאָה מִהֲיָהוּ חֲלֹמוֹתָיו: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:20

^{NAS} Genesis 37:20 **"Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits;** (ו הלך עתה ו) *[waw conj. + adv: -attah; "and now"; + v/qal/imp/m/pl; halak {lit. walk}; "proceed"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cpl/cohort. w/3ms suff: harag; "and let us destroy him/slay/murder"; + waw conj. + v/Hiphil/IPF/1cpl/cohort. w/3ms suff: shalak; "and let us cause to cast him/throw him"; + prep: bet + adj/m/s/constr: 'echad; "into one of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: bor; "the cisterns/pits/wells"])*

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and we will say, 'A wild beast devoured him.' Then let us see what will become of his dreams!" (וַאֲמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר וְנֹאמַר [waw consec. + v/qal/PF/1cpl: 'amar; "and we will say"; + n/com/f/s/abs: chayyah; "a living beast"; + adj/f/s/abs: ra-ah; "a bad one/evil/wild one"; + v/qal/PF/3fs w/3ms suff: 'akal; "devoured him/consumed him/ate him"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cpl: ra'ah; "then let us see"; + interr.part: mah; "what?"; + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: hayah; "will become"; + n/com/mpl/constr. w/3ms suff: chalom; "of his dreams"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 18 – 20:

1. Having identified the mystery man of vss.15-17 at the least being an unwitting participant in this ordeal now adds sense to vs.18.
2. In other words, the brothers' anticipated the potential of Joseph's arrival.
3. This would give reason to therefore post a lookout and **"When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death/waw ra'ah 'eth min rachoq waw bet therem qarab 'el waw nakal 'eth lamed muth"**.
4. The Hebrew makes it clear that they initiate their **death** plot as soon as Joseph would have appeared on the horizon.
5. Obviously his multi-colored tunic gave him away but their expectancy was not of any immediate surprise.
6. His distance of travel before arriving at the camp was just enough time for the brothers to now set in motion what had been alluded to in discussion before.
7. What had been reckless conversation now finds opportunity to vent.
8. Their MA hatred and jealousy now goes overt.
9. The reflexive form of the Hithpael verb **"they plotted"** (*nakal*) means amongst themselves they devised some method to trick Joseph (cp.Num.25:18; Psa.105:25) to put himself in their hands at which point they would **put him to death**.
10. This in reality means that they would need to act normal so no suspicion by Joseph would come upon them.
11. The language clearly insinuates that their plan was premeditated and during his time of arrival the particulars were agreed upon and put into play.
12. To put their own flesh and blood to **death** meant that they would collectively all have to be on the same page and hence their mocking nature of words in vs.19, **"Here comes the lord of the dreams, this dreamer!/hinneh ba-al ha chalom hallazeh bo"**.
13. They use verbal derision towards Joseph to feed each other's STA's heightening their preconceived perception that Joseph deserved **death**.
14. The NAS English (as well as the KJV and American Standard Version) leaves out the Hebrew noun *ba-al* preceding the noun **"dreams"**.
15. This is designed to be a derogatory slam against Joseph using a play on words for the pagan god Baal insinuating Joseph was making himself out to be a god or **"the lord of the dreams"**.
16. The International Standard Version translates the phrase "the Dream Master!".
17. The reality was Joseph was God's spokesman through his **dreams**.

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18. The STA driven brothers exemplify those who reject the doctrine accusing the communicator of self-righteousness as ammunition for rejecting the truth.
19. Their mocking is designed to self-inflict a sting to their own pride revving up their hatred/jealousy that they are really doing the world a favor.
20. Vs.20 then gives the particulars of their plan with a “forward march” mentality, “**Come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, ‘A wild beast devoured him/halak waw harag waw shalak bet ‘echad ha bor waw ‘amar chayyah ra-ah ‘akal’**”.
21. Their 3 actions are clear: They would murder (*harag*) him, hide the body and then lie about what happened.
22. Their intent was to hide the body in **one** of the cisterns and then claim that a **wild** animal had eaten him.
23. Their solution to their STA dilemma was to eradicate the opposition, provide a cover up and be rid of their STA problem once and for all.
24. This is the sense of their final words, “**Then let us see what will become of his dreams!**/waw ra’ah mah hayah chalom”.
25. “His **dreams** can’t truly be prophetic and come to fruition if he’s dead”, is the idea.
26. And this begins the irony behind the situation with God using the STA’s of others as agents for Joseph’s defense.
27. That is, the prophecy of the **dreams** means that Joseph can’t die before his family bows down to him.
28. His brothers personify the antagonism of –V seeking to undo God’s plan otherwise.
29. In spite of concerted efforts, God will throw the needed “monkey wrenches” into their plans to deter their intentions.
30. Principle: There is nothing that can or will thwart the POG in its fulfillment.

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REUBEN'S SCHEME

EXEGESIS VERSES 21 – 24:

וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיִּצְלֵהוּ מִיָּדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נִכְנֹה נַפְשׁ: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:21

^{NAS} Genesis 37:21 But Reuben heard *this* and rescued him out of their hands and said, "Let us not take his life." (וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיִּצְלֵהוּ מִיָּדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נִכְנֹה נַפְשׁ: [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "and he heard"; + proper n: "Reuben"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms w/3ms suff: natsal; "and he caused to deliver/rescue"; + prep: min + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: yad; "from their hands"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + neg.part: lo' + v/Hiphil/IPF/1cpl/cohort. w/3ms suff: nakah; "do not let us cause to strike/smite his"; + n/com/f/s/abs: nephesh; "soul/life"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים רְאוּבֵן אֶל-תִּשְׁפְּכוּ-דָם הַשְּׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל-הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּמִדְבַּר וְיָד אֶל-תִּשְׁלַחְוּבוּ לְמַעַן הֲצִיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לְהַשִּׁיבוֹ אֶל-אָבִיו: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:22

^{NAS} Genesis 37:22 Reuben further said to them, "Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him" (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים רְאוּבֵן אֶל-תִּשְׁפְּכוּ-דָם הַשְּׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל-הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּמִדְבַּר וְיָד אֶל-תִּשְׁלַחְוּבוּ לְמַעַן הֲצִיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לְהַשִּׁיבוֹ אֶל-אָבִיו: [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + prep. w/3mpl suff: 'el; "to them"; + proper n: "Reuben"; + adv: 'al; + v/qal/IPF/2mpl/jussive; shaphak; {lit. pour} "let not you all shed"; + n/com/m/s/abs: dam; "blood"; + v/Hiphil/imp/m/pl: shalak; "cause to cast/throw"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + prep: 'el + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "into the cistern/pit"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "the one"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which is"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: midebbar; "in the wilderness"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/abs: yad; "but a hand"; + neg: 'al + v/qal/IPF/2mpl/jussive"; shalach; "you all do not let go" i.e., keep it under control; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "on him"])

-- that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father. (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים רְאוּבֵן אֶל-תִּשְׁפְּכוּ-דָם הַשְּׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל-הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּמִדְבַּר וְיָד אֶל-תִּשְׁלַחְוּבוּ לְמַעַן הֲצִיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לְהַשִּׁיבוֹ אֶל-אָבִיו: [prep: lema-an; "in order that"; + v/Hiphil/inf/constr: natsal; "he might cause to rescue"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + prep: min + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: yad; "from their hands"; + prep: lamed + v/Hiphil/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: shub; "to cause to return him"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "to his father"])

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וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל-אֶחָיו וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף
אֶת-כְּתָנֹתָיו אֶת-כְּתָנֵת הַפָּסִים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:23

^{NAS} Genesis 37:23 So it came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the varicolored tunic that was on him; (וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל אֶחָיו וַיַּפְשִׁיטוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף אֶת כְּתָנֵת אֶת כְּתָנֵת הַפָּסִים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "and it came about"; + prep: kaph + rel.pro: 'asher; "after which"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: bo'; "he came"; + proper n: "Joseph"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: phashath; "and they caused to strip/take off"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3ms suff: cuttoneth; "his garment"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: pas; "the hand-lengthed garment/varicolored"; + rel.pro: 'asher + prep. w/3ms suff: -al; "which was upon him"])

וַיִּקְחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלֹכֵהוּ אֶתוֹ הַבֶּרֶה וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ
מַיִם: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:24

^{NAS} Genesis 37:24 and they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty, without any water in it. (וַיִּקְחֵהוּ וַיִּשְׁלֹכֵהוּ אֶתוֹ הַבֶּרֶה וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ מַיִם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl w/3ms suff: laqach; "and they took him"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: shalak; "and caused to throw/cast"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "into the cistern/pit"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "now the pit/cistern"; + adj/m/s/abs: reyq; "was empty"; + adv: 'ayin; "nor"; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "in it"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 21 – 24:

1. As throughout this passage, things are not as they may appear with a superficial reading.
2. On the surface, our verses seems to indicate that one of the brothers does what is right and is against murder and intercedes on Joseph's behalf.
3. By all indication, the brothers have unanimously agreed to murder **Joseph** (vss.18-20).
4. However a lone dissenter raises objection after the fact i.e., **Reuben**.
5. But all is not as it seems.
6. **Reuben** has already exposed himself as being an opportunist with a power trend (cp.35:22).
7. He now sees opportunity to gain the approbation of Jacob over the rest of the clan.
8. The opening phrase "**But Reuben heard**/waw shama- Reuben" means that he was party to the discussions by the **brothers** beforehand.
9. His response now is as a result of the brothers all coming to agreement to kill **Joseph**.
10. With the collaborative mindset **Reuben** sees an open door to initiate a plan of his own.

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11. Using his status as the eldest of the **brothers** he insists on a better plan than outright murder by the **hands** of all concerned.
12. As the firstborn he should have been the one that stood up for **Joseph** and made it clear that no harm was to come to him.
13. He should have placed his well-being between the **brothers** and **Joseph**.
14. He should have told them that any move to kill **Joseph** on their part would have to go through him.
15. Instead he leverages the opportunity to benefit himself suggesting a better solution than incriminating the lot of them for homicide.
16. While his actions may have “**rescued him out of their hands/natsal min yad**”, closer examination shows his intentions falls way short of righteousness on his part.
17. Still, as the author recognizes, it fits the POG for the present as it immediately forestalls the planned murder of **Joseph** buying him precious time.
18. Reuben’s deliverance for **Joseph** is an example of God using a useful idiot to advance his plan.
19. **Reuben** addresses his **brothers** asserting his authority, “**Let us not take his life/lo’ nakah nephesh**”.
20. He uses the strong adversative *lo’* (**not**) suggesting that as the eldest he knows better what to do in this situation (he is speaking for all).
21. Further, the cohortative force of the first common plural of the verbal phrase “**let us not take**” (*nakah/smite*) is **Reuben** pretending he was initially in agreement with the rest.
22. He feigns that he is all for disposing of **Joseph**, just not in the mob mentality that is present.
23. His recourse is outlined in the 3 commands that follow:
 - A. “**Shed no blood/’al shaphak dam**”.
 - B. “**Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness/shalak ‘eth ‘el bor ha zeh ‘asher bet ha midebbar**”.
 - C. “**And do not lay hands on him/waw yad ‘al shalach bet**”.
24. The two negative commands, “**shed no blood...do not lay hands**” employs the softer adversative *’al* as an attempt for diplomacy selling his idea.
25. He is trying to draw the brothers into participating in his scheme.
26. That idea is further implied in the jussive force “**let no/not**” of the two verbs **shed and lay**.
27. The nuance of “**shed no blood**” is to be understood to “**shed no blood for the moment**”.
28. I.e., “While the matter is in your hands...” is the inferred idea here.
29. The Hebrew language translated “**do not lay hands on him**” is literally “**do not send/let go a hand on him**”.
30. This is exhortation for the brothers to control their emotions (i.e., their actions) and to not do anything rash that they might regret later.
31. I.e., “Reconsider why opportunity exists...” is the implied idea.
32. Reuben’s exhortation has psychological leverage.
33. By setting himself apart from the rest pretending a higher moral ground compared to a mob style lynching provides the power of suggestion concerning additional guilt.
34. **Reuben** inserts an unsettling thought of higher culpability.
35. I.e., there is a way to meet their goal and avoid actual murder on their part.
36. Reuben’s method for killing **Joseph** is to **throw him into** a particular **pit** (*bor ha zeh*) that is located away from their camp out **in the wilderness**.

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37. What he is implying is to constrain **Joseph** somewhere out of sight and mind that no one could hear his pleas for help and let nature or beast do their dirty work (as the brothers' lie would claim vs.20).
38. That **Reuben** has a specific (the Hebrew demonstrative adjective *ha zeh*) "**pit/cistern**" in mind suggests that he has been giving this idea some thought and is not just off the cuff.
39. He claims to know the perfect spot.
40. What **Reuben** deceitfully orders is even a more cruel fate than the outright killing of **Joseph**.
41. Moses then discloses Reuben's true motives in vs.22b, "**—that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father**/lema-an natsal 'eth min yad lamed shub 'el 'ab".
42. What he told his **brothers** and what he intended to accomplish were polar opposites, or else the **brothers** would not have listened to him.
43. He wanted to **rescue Joseph** later when he could slip away without the others' knowledge.
44. He wanted to ingratiate himself with his **father** and have the approbation as the hero that saved Jacob's favorite son from death.
45. The first "**rescued**" in vs.21 looks to God's hand in overruling the situation under His permissive will while the second "**rescue**" in vs.22 looks to Reuben's true intentions.
46. God uses the STA driven intentions of a maladjusted believer to advance his plan for a +V adjusted believer.
47. The Hebrew preposition *lema-an* (**in order that**) designates one looking to be vindicated i.e., established as right.
48. We saw the preposition used earlier with Abraham trying to pawn Sarah as his sister **in order that** (*lema-an*) he might deceive others for his own advantage. Cp.Gen.12:13
49. This deflates any notion that **Reuben** may just be scheming in fear for his own life and truly has Joseph's best interest at heart.
50. Reuben's scheming points to the fact that Jacob and his firstborn were not on good terms.
51. Further, it suggests **Reuben** understood that rights of primogenitor were not automatic (duuhh, his uncle Esau vs. Jacob!!).
52. So he came up with a plan to advance his standing in the eyes of the head of the family.
53. His maneuvering did not arise from any righteousness in him.
54. He had a perfect chance to show that he was not only the legal heir, but more importantly the holder of the moral high ground among his siblings (in reality, his façade).
55. But that would have involved courage and risk on his part.
56. As we will see, his plan blows up in his face.
57. In fact, it doesn't even really get off the ground, "**So it came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the varicolored tunic that was on him; and they took him and threw him into the pit**/waw hayah kaph 'asher bo' Joseph 'el 'ach waw phashath Joseph cuttoneth cuttoneth ha pas 'asher -al waw laqach waw shalak 'eth ha bor" (vss.23,24a).
58. It is here that Moses expects the readers to fill in certain facts to correctly analyze what actually happened.
59. First, it is clear from the subsequent narrative (vss.29ff) that **Reuben** exited the presence of his **brothers** at some point.
60. In other words, he was not present during the scene where **Joseph** was sold to the caravan heading for Egypt (vss.25-28).

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61. The next consideration is that the **brothers** did not cast **Joseph** in “**this pit...in the wilderness**” of Reuben’s choice (vs.22), but “**the pit**” of the brothers’ choice after Joseph’s arrival (vs.24a).
62. A second difference between the two cisterns is that the one suggested by **Reuben** had water in it to attract wild life needed for killing **Joseph** according to plan.
63. The immediate cistern that **Joseph** was actually cast into “**was empty, without any water in it**/reyq ‘ayin bet mayim” (vs.24b).
64. So the actual well that was used only had the asset to detain **Joseph** after he arrived being dry and closer in vicinity to where the shepherds were camped.
65. Further, we can deduce that **Reuben** was present when **Joseph** was thrown **into the pit** as he later returns to it to investigate Joseph’s status (vs.29).
66. That **Reuben** was not aware of Joseph’s final disposition when he came back to the well indicates his absence filled in all of the time between our verses and vss.29ff.
67. With these notations, we can construct a reliable facsimile to what happened.
68. Having been challenged by **Reuben**, the brothers then needed to come to a decision with **Joseph** fast approaching the camp.
69. They remain agitated and now indecisive with this new “chink in the armor” of their plan.
70. After the plan suggested by **Reuben** in vs.22a, vs.23a,b would best be translated “***But what happened after that was Joseph came to his brothers and they caused to strip Joseph of his tunic...***”
71. The idea should reflect a different reaction than what **Reuben** proposed.
72. Reuben’s exhortations to get their emotions under control and keep their **hands** off **Joseph** went out the window.
73. The sight of **the varicolored tunic** up close that symbolized Joseph’s preeminence in the household was enough to reignite their anger and they immediately assaulted him.
74. The Hiphil form of the verb *phashath* (**stripped**) means the attack was violent and heartless.
75. That they forcefully removed the garment pictures **Joseph** struggling to defend himself.
76. Their pent up hatred and jealousy finds a vent for physical expression.
77. However, the weight of Reuben’s words still remained on their minds.
78. So they stop short of murder and instead decide that they will temporarily contain **Joseph** until they had further opportunity to consider Reuben’s proposal.
79. A nearby dry **pit** was the solution to keep an eye on him while they thought things through.
80. **Reuben** was privy to all this and sees his plan has been stymied.
81. He knows where **Joseph** is and comes up with one quick alternative with any hope to salvage his plan.
82. He uses the commotion and chaos to disappear for the present time.
83. The brothers knew what he preferred and they wouldn’t think twice that he might have gone off in a huff.
84. He could always use the excuse that he went to check on the flocks if questions came later.
85. We know he went away far enough that he was unaware of the caravan.
86. The distance suggests attempt to avoid being found by any inquisitive brother otherwise.
87. His hope is that he can return later unawares and still **rescue Joseph** and **restore him to his father**.
88. With a late afternoon/evening meal following in sequence (vs.25), the timing fits into the suggestion of Reuben’s secondary plan.

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JOSEPHS SOLD INTO SLAVERY

EXEGESIS VERSES 25 – 28:

WTT Genesis 37:25
 וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לֵאכֹל-לֶחֶם וַיִּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה
 אֲרֶחֶת יִשְׁמַעֵאלִים בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמַלֵיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נִכְאֹת וְצָרִי
 וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרַיִם:

NAS Genesis 37:25 **Then they sat down to eat a meal.** (וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לֵאכֹל לֶחֶם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: yashab; "and they sat down"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: 'akal; "to eat/consume"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; {lit. bread} "a meal"])

And as they raised their eyes and looked, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, (וַיִּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה בֹא יִשְׁמַעֵאלִי אֲרֶחֶת הַגִּלְעָד וְהִנֵּה רֹאשׁוֹ וְעֵינֵיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נִכְאֹת וְצָרִי וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרַיִם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: nasa'; "and they lifted/raised"; + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/3mpl suff: -ayin; "their eyes"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: ra'ah; "and they saw/look"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + n/com/f/s/constr: 'orechah; "a caravan of/a traveling company of" {used 8x}; + proper n: yisheme-e'liy; "Ishmaelites" {used 8x; cf.Jdg.8:24}; + v/qal/ptc/f/s/abs: bo'; "was coming"; + prep: min + proper n: "from Gilead"])

with their camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh, on their way to bring them down to Egypt. (וְצָרִי וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרַיִם יְרֵד לְהוֹלִיךְ לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרַיִם [waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3mpl suff: gamal; "and their camels"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: nasa'; "bearing/carrying"; + n/com/f/s/abs: neko'th {lit. spice; used 4x}; "aromatic gum"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: tsariy; "and balm/balsam"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: loth; "and myrrh"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: halak; "walking/traveling"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Hiphil/inf/constr: yarad; "to cause to bring down/descending to"; + proper n: "Egypt"])

WTT Genesis 37:26
 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל-אָחָיו מַה-בְּצַע כִּי נַהַרְגֶנּוּ
 אֶת-אָחֵינוּ וְכִסִּינוּ אֶת-דָּמּוֹ:

NAS Genesis 37:26 **And Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood?"** (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל-אָחָיו מַה-בְּצַע כִּי נַהַרְגֶנּוּ אֶת-אָחֵינוּ וְכִסִּינוּ אֶת-דָּמּוֹ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Judah"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his brothers"; + interr.pro: mah; "What?"; + n/com/m/s/abs: betsa-; "profit/gain"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + v/qal/IPF/1cpl: harag; "we will kill/murder"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ach; "our brother"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/PF/1cpl: kasah; "and we will cover up/conceal"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: dam; "his blood"])

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לְכוּ וְנִמְכְּרֵנוּ לְיִשְׁמָעֵאלִים וְיָדְנוּ אֶל-תְּהֵי-בּוֹ WTT Genesis 37:27
כִּי-אָחִינוּ בְּשָׂרְנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אָחָיו:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:27 "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; (הָלַךְ וּ מְכַר לְ יִשְׁמָעֵאלִים הָ ל מְכַר וּ הָלַךְ) [v/qal/imp/m/pl: halak; {lit. walk} "come/go"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cpl/cohort. w/3ms suff; makar; "and let us sell him"; + prep: lamed + d.a. + proper n: "to the Ishmaelites"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: yad; "and our hand"; + neg.adv: 'al + v/qal/IPF/3fs/juss; hayah; "let us not lay/become/happen"; + prep. w/3ms suff: bet; "on him"])

for he is our brother, our own flesh. And his brothers listened to him. (כִּי אָחֵנוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אָחָיו) [conj: kiy; "because/for"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ach; "our brother of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: basar; "our flesh"; + pro/3ms: hu'; "is he"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: shama-; "and they listened to him"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers"])

וַיַּעֲבְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי מִדְיָנִים סַחְרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ WTT Genesis 37:28
אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִן-הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף לְיִשְׁמָעֵאלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים
כֶּסֶף וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִצְרַיִם:

^{NAS} Genesis 37:28 Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, (וַיַּעֲבְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי מִדְיָנִים סַחְרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: -abar; "and they passed by"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'ish; "men"; proper n: mideyaniy; "Midianite"; + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: sachar; "going about in trade/traders"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: mashak; "and they dragged"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: -alah; "and caused to bring up/lifted"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; + prep: min + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "from the cistern/pit"])

and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt. (וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף לְיִשְׁמָעֵאלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִצְרַיִם) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: makar; "and they sold"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; + prep: lamed + d.a. + proper n: "to the Ishmaelites"; + prep: bet + adj/b/pl/abs: -eseriyim; "at twenty" {prep. indicates bidding went on}; + n/com/m/s/abs: keseph; "pieces of silver"; waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: bo'; "and they caused to bring into"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; proper n: "Egypt"])

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ANALYSIS VERSES 25 – 28:

1. The immediate scene change from assaulting **Joseph** (vss.23-24) to eating (vs.25) images the **brothers** working up an appetite, “**Then they sat down to eat a meal**/waw yashab lamed ‘akal lechem”.
2. The author does not want the reader to overlook both the animalistic and callous nature of the attack.
3. The **meal** consumption mirrors the behavior of the STA in its base form instinctively responding to its natural appetites.
4. The brothers’ hatred showed **Joseph** no mercy as they stripped him of his tunic.
5. Gen.42:21 specifically highlights the turmoil and stress experienced by **Joseph** what our verses only imply.
6. In addition, eating bread suggests the time of day as later afternoon to evening.
7. After satiating their hunger, “**they raised their eyes and looked, and behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead**/nasa’ –ayin waw ra’ah waw hinneh ‘orechah yisheme-e’liy bo min gilead”.
8. The phrase “**they raised their eyes**” means that while they were eating they were completely preoccupied with the food.
9. It pictures them eating like ravenous animals having brought down their prey imitated in the previous assault.
10. Afterwards, without any indication of remorse or real conscience, they were sitting back after eating viewing the landscape when **behold, a caravan** catches their eyes.
11. The force of the interjectory particle *hinneh* (**behold!**) here is designed to correlate the timing of seeing the **caravan** with sparking the following idea **Judah** outlines in his new plan.
12. That is “**behold!, A caravan...behold!** A new idea comes to **Judah**”.
13. Further it emphasizes the timing by God providing the ultimate deliverance for **Joseph** from his brothers’ hands supplying the vehicle to charter him to his prophetic destiny.
14. This particular convoy was owned and operated by **Ishamaelites**, descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar (Gen.16:15; 25:12).
15. These would probably have contacts in **Egypt**, their destination (vs.28b), as their pre-descendant matriarch was Egyptian.
16. They are arriving from **Gilead**, which is east of the Sea of Galilee, eastward geographically where the Lord said Ishmael (and sons) would live. Cp.Gen.16:12
17. The merchant **caravan** also pictures the nomadic lifestyle of the descendants of this “wild donkey” of a man.
18. The location of the **brothers** in Dothan would put them close to a main trade route through Palestine from the Sea of Galilee to the coastal plain to **Egypt**.
19. The train of merchants were bearing loads of spices on the backs of “**camels/gamal**” described here as “**aromatic gum and balm and myrrh**/neko’th waw tsariy waw loth”.
20. Their destination for delivery being **Egypt** was the very place that Joseph’s dreams would be fulfilled.
21. The particular spices listed are derived from sap/resin in the form of **gum** more specifically:
 - A. “*Neko’th*” is tragacanth **gum** that was produced by making incisions in Astragalus shrubs collecting the juice and letting it dry out. It was used in medicine, industry and manufacture of confections.

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- B. “*Tsariy*” is a **balm** made from the sap of the Storax tree that contains balsamic acids. It had medicinal purpose.
- C. “*Loth*” or **myrrh** is laudanum. It is made from *Cistus* (roserock) plants, has a pleasant fragrance and was used in making perfume. It was used in embalming (Joh.19:39,40) and as a pain killer (Mar.15:23).
22. In vs.26, **Judah** then presents his idea using a sales-pitch approach, “**What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood**/mah betsa- kiy harag ‘ach waw kasha dam”.
 23. He appeals to the brothers’ STA monetary grid as leverage to sell his idea.
 24. His question is rhetorical and in other words, “**What** is the return on our risky venture of murder?...Nothing!”
 25. So **Judah** steers one part of their STA in hatred to another part in greed.
 26. The idea of economic gain is just that needed to soothe the angry soul.
 27. His statement reveals that the brothers were still contemplating outright murder of **Joseph** in light of Reuben’s proposal otherwise.
 28. Judah’s logic is that instead “**Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him**/halak waw makar lamed ha Ishmaelites waw yad ‘al hayah bet”.
 29. The reasoning is that **Joseph** could be a means of **profit** and in addition they could avoid outright murder rationalizing any supposed remaining conscience.
 30. A murdered man’s **blood** cries to heaven for vengeance. Cf. Gen.4:10
 31. That they could avoid direct homicide sells to their consternation prompted by Reuben’s proposal.
 32. This is implied in his final statement, “**for he is our brother, our flesh**/kiy ‘ach basar hu”.
 33. To murder is one thing; to murder one’s own family member is another.
 34. His idea proposes they could have the best of both worlds: **Profit** from selling **Joseph** into slavery removing him permanently from their lives and not have to live with the added burden of killing their *own*.
 35. Judah’s idea appeals to the monetary grid of his **brothers** while giving them an out from maximum condemnation (in their minds) “**And his brothers listened**/waw shama- ‘ach”.
 36. Judah’s intervention, like Reuben’s, is not the product of a righteous soul.
 37. Both are motivated by the STA and there is no evidence that **Judah** really wanted to rescue his brother or had good intentions otherwise.
 38. In fact, kidnapping and selling humans into slavery is a crime considered a capital offense. Cp.Exo.21:16; Deu.24:7
 39. Yet he exhibits leadership skills and an air of authority that qualified him to be in the line of kings and Christ. Gen.49:10; 1Chr.5:2
 40. Still, he, along with Reuben, forfeits to qualify for the Covenant birthright.
 41. The patent opportunity arises that seals the deal, “**Then some Midianite traders passed by**/waw –abar ‘ish mideyaniy sachar”.
 42. Having opportunity in hand “**they pulled up and lifted Joseph out of the pit**/mashak waw –alah Joseph min ha bor”.
 43. The English “**pulled up**” is the Hebrew *mashak* that literally means to draw, drag or seize.
 44. It pictures the **brothers** having to forcefully pry **Joseph** from his spot to lift him out of the cistern.
 45. Again, **Joseph** didn’t go down without fight.

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46. Here commentaries lump together the references to **Ishmaelites and Midianite** as simply two names for the same people or used interchangeably.
47. The Midianites were descendants of Midian from Abraham's wife Keturah after Sarah's death. Gen.25:1,2,4
48. They are here clearly stated as *sachar* or "**traders/those going about in trade**".
49. The most straightforward interpretation here is that the Midianites were slave **traders** that were subsidiary to the Ishmaelite merchants.
50. The close family ties would be cause for doing business together.
51. They specialized in the slave trade and attached themselves to the large merchant train for security, partnership and opportunity derived from being a part of a large enterprise.
52. Slave trading was a common practice of the era.
53. That slave **traders** were on hand, to **sell Joseph** was a no brainer to the brothers.
54. Some may say how convenient to Judah's plan; others...God's hands in it!!
55. Even though they did direct business with the Midianites, the legal transaction was still through the merchant owners of the **caravan**.
56. Hence, they "**sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty weight of silver**/makar lamed ha Ishmaelites bet –eseriyim keseph".
57. The Hebrew phraseology for selling *bet –eseriyim keseph* (i.e., "**sold him...at twenty silver pieces**") literally indicates that bidding for **Joseph** was part of the process ending "**at**" the designated amount.
58. The amount seemed a standard price for a slave during the era. Cp.Lev.27:5
59. The final transaction included the business owners having the final word as to purchase price as they oversaw the partnership with the Midianites.
60. Reuben's scheme left the **Joseph** problem in the air.
61. Judah's scheme seems to clear the air as to the problem.
62. The **brothers** vainly imagined that they had disposed of **Joseph** for good with some pocket money in change.
63. In reality they unwittingly helped to fulfill the dreams they so hated as the convoy "**brought Joseph into Egypt**/bo' Joseph Egypt".
64. God continues to use useful idiots to bring about the fulfillment of His plan for the +V adjusted believer of the brotherhood.
65. His providence shows He is in control of events at all times and synchronizes the timing of the **caravan** and the **brothers** united agreement for His intents and purposes.

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REUBEN FREAKS OUT

EXEGESIS VERSES 29 – 30:

וַיָּשָׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל-הַבּוֹר וְהִנֵּה אֵין-יוֹסֵף בַּבּוֹר
וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדָיו:

WTT Genesis 37:29

NAS Genesis 37:29 Now Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; so he tore his garments. (ו בור ה ב יוסף אין הנה ו בור ה אל ראובן שוב ו) ויקרע את בגדיו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shub; "and he returned"; + proper n: "Reuben"; + prep: 'el + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "to the pit/cistern"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + neg.adv: 'ayin; "nowhere"; + proper n: "was Joseph"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: bor; "in the pit/cistern"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara-; "he tore/rended"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: beged; "his garments"])

וַיָּשָׁב אֶל-אָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הַיֶּלֶד אֵינְנוּ וְאֲנִי אָנֹכִי

WTT Genesis 37:30

NAS Genesis 37:30 And he returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is not there; as for me, where am I to go?" (ו בוא אני אן אני ו אין ילד ה אמר ו את אל שוב ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shub; "and he returned"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his brothers"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yeled; "the youth/boy"; + adv. w/3ms suff: 'ayin; "he is nowhere/he is gone/not there"; + waw conj. + pro/1cs: 'aniy; "and I myself"; + interr.pro: 'an; "where?"; + pro/1cs: 'aniy; "am I myself"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: bo'; "to go"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 29 – 30:

1. As the text now reveals, **Reuben** had vacated the premises and is ignorant of the recent **Joseph** transaction.
2. It seems most probable that he saw only one other alternative to salvage his original plan to act as hero and save **Joseph** and ingratiate himself to Jacob.
3. Knowing where **Joseph** was being held, he would disappear and wait for an advantageous time he could return and sneak him away back home.
4. The most logical time would be under the cover of late dusk or darkness i.e., a time corresponding with the **brothers** having supper and allowing for the slave sell afterwards.
5. He makes his move and “**returned to the pit**/shub ‘el ha bor” (vs.29).
6. That he later “**returned to his brothers**/shub ‘el ‘ach” (vs.30) indicates that upon arrival to the **pit** and probably much in delightful hope, he saw that it was left unguarded.
7. But “**behold!**/hinneh” and much to his chagrin, “**Joseph was not in the pit**/'ayin Joseph bet ha bor”.

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8. He was nowhere to be found.
9. The phrase “**so he tore his garments**/waw qara- beged” was a customary way to express the grief of soul during OT times. Cf.2Sam.3:31 cp. Lev.10:1-6
10. His grief is not due to Joseph’s absence, but due to his own consternation.
11. He is starting to realize that he has lost all control over the situation and thus opportunity to gain advantage before Jacob.
12. He realizes that all hope of his plans are gone and has an emotional breakdown.
13. He probably assumed the worst that **Joseph** had been taken away and killed.
14. The only way he could know was to return to the main camp.
15. Upon arrival, there is no sign of **Joseph** or other evidence of what might have happened to him and then **Reuben** freaks out.
16. All that he can discern is that **Joseph** has disappeared and his **brothers** were responsible.
17. It sinks into him that his conniving plan to appear as one worthy of being firstborn has now come to reality revealing just how unqualified he was (his real character is exposed).
18. In other words, he knows he will be held at the highest in responsibility as the eldest before Jacob for Joseph’s welfare.
19. This thought underwrites his words as he emotionally unloads on the **brothers**, “**The boy is not there; where am I to go?**”/ha yeled ‘ayin waw ‘aniy ‘an ‘aniy bo”.
20. He is still trying to play the “big brother” card with his **brothers** insinuating that Joseph’s disappearance without Reuben’s knowledge was completely unacceptable.
21. The idea of Reuben’s role as the firstborn ultimately responsible for Joseph’s welfare is insinuated in his word of choice for his little brother as “**the boy/youth**”.
22. The rhetorical question “**where am I to go**” is euphemistic meaning “What am **I** supposed to do in light of your disregard for my position?” or “Who can **I** turn to for respect to my authority?”
23. The contextual silence of the **brothers** speaks loudly that they simply ignore Reuben’s outburst.
24. It leaves the impression that **Reuben** had a habit of throwing his weight around as the firstborn.
25. He’ll later try to play this same condescending card when they all find conscience for their actions when they later are before **Joseph** in Gen.42:21,22
26. Two times in Reuben’s question the emphatic use of the Hebrew pronoun ‘*aniy* (**I myself**) is used to grammatically illustrate just how self-centered this man was.
27. He appears narcissistic and maybe another reason the brothers originally denied him his way in the whole affair.
28. His emotional outburst was just another façade to hide his real fear i.e., the opportunity to reinstate himself before Jacob had vanished.

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JACOB IS DECEIVED

EXEGESIS VERSES 31 – 33:

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כִּתְנֵת יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׂעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ
 אֶת־הַכִּתְנֵת בַּדָּם: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:31

^{NAS} Genesis 37:31 **So they took Joseph's tunic, and slaughtered a male goat, and dipped the tunic in the blood;** הַ אֶת טַבַּל ו עִז שְׂעִיר שַׁחַט ו יוֹסֵף כְּתָנֶת אֶת לָקַח ו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: laqach; "and the took"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth; "the garment of/tunic"; + proper n: "Joseph"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: shachath; "and they killed/slaughtered"; + n/com/m/s/constr: sa-iyir; "a male goat of"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: -eth; "a nanny/doe/female goat"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: thabal; "and dipped/plunged"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/abs: cuttoneth; "the garment/tunic"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: dam; "in the blood"])

וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ וַיְבִיאוּ אֶל־אֲבִיהֶם
 וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֹאת מִצְאָנוּ הַכֶּרֶן נָא הַכִּתְנֵת בְּנֵךְ הוּא אִם־לֹא: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:32

^{NAS} Genesis 37:32 (Corrected) **and they sent the varicolored tunic and had it brought to their father and said,** אָמַר ו אָב אֶל בּוֹא ו פָּס הַ כְּתָנֶת אֶת שְׁלַח ו [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3mpl: shalach; "and they sent off"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth; "the garment/tunic"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: pas {lit. flat of hand}; "the long-sleeved/varicolored one"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl: bo'; "and they caused it to go"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: 'ab + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'amar; "to their father and said"])

"We found this; please examine it to see whether it is your son's tunic or not." מִצָּא זֹאת) לֹא אִם הוּא בֵּן כְּתָנֶת הַ נָא נִכַּר [adj/f/s: zo'th; "this" {ref. tunic}; + v/qal/PF/1cpl: matsa'; "we found"; + v/Hiphil/imp/m/s: nakar; "cause to discern/examine"; + interj.part: na'; "now/please"; + interr.part: ha; "whether?"; + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth; "the garment of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: ben; "your son"; + pro/3fs: hiy'; "it itself"; + cond.conj: 'im; "if {maybe}"; + neg. part: lo'; "{or} not"])

וַיִּכְרְהָ וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתָנֶת בְּנֵי חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכַלְתָּהּ
 טָרַף טָרַף יוֹסֵף: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:33

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^{NAS} Genesis 37:33 Then he examined it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him; Joseph has surely been torn to pieces!" (וַיִּבְחַן בֶּן כְּתָנֶת אָמַר וְנָכַר וְ) *וַיִּבְחַן בֶּן כְּתָנֶת אָמַר וְנָכַר וְ* [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms w/3fs suff: nakar; "then he examined it"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + n/com/f/s/constr: cuttoneth; "it is the garment"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "of my son"; + n/com/f/s/abs: chayyah; "a living"; + adj/f/s/abs: ra-ah; "evil thing/beast"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: 'akal; "it consumed/devoured him"; + v/qal/inf/abs: tharaph; "tearing"; + v/qal/pass/PF/3ms: tharaph; "he was torn {to pieces}; + proper n: "Joseph"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 31 – 33:

1. The author assumes his readers will recall Jacob's rejection of the interpretation of Joseph's dream (vs.10) to siphon the spiritual lesson from the next sequence of events.
2. That is, Israel, a mature believer, failed to embrace the literal interpretation symbolically represented of himself and family bowing down to Joseph.
3. In spite of the dream's obvious meaning he refused to accept it.
4. The consequences of rejecting the doctrine translates into failure to address and pass the test now set before him in application.
5. Israel becomes an example of the repercussion(s) attached to the rejection of doctrine no matter one's spiritual level.
6. As will be obvious, when confronted with the possibility of Joseph's death he finds only emotionalism and a miscalculating response.
7. In other words, the vacuum created in his rejection of the doctrine left only his emotions and ill-conceived reasoning in handling the situation.
8. The scene picks up in vs.31 revealing the brothers' next step to cover-up for selling Joseph into slavery (vs.28).
9. In spite of Reuben's dissenting remarks to his brothers earlier for implementing their plan without him, it becomes obvious that he has been updated as to Joseph's disposition.
10. His knowledge of knowing what truly happened was imperative for all of the brothers to be on the same page in agreement fielding future inquiry as to Joseph's whereabouts.
11. It may be in part that the brother's actions were to help solve Reuben's expressed dilemma of having to face his father as the first-born primarily responsible for Joseph.
12. However, weighing the brothers' previous disregard of Reuben's tantrum, it's more probable that their actions are simply from the need to cover for themselves all together (the brothers don't appear that concerned towards Reuben's personal problems).
13. Reuben made no serious attempt to protect Joseph so he has incriminated himself forcing him to go along with the rest.
14. Their strategy is simple enough...to appear ignorant of what happened to Joseph apart from possible evidence of some harm.
15. The first thing they did was **“they took Joseph's tunic, and slaughtered a male goat, and dipped the tunic in the blood/laqach cuttoneth Joseph waw shachath sa-iy-r –eth waw thabal cuttoneth bet ha dam”**.
16. They slaughter **a male goat** and saturate **Joseph's tunic in the blood**.

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17. A forensic analysis of their actions provides a clue that has bearing on Jacob's critique in vs.33 i.e., the garment is still in one piece.
18. The brothers then show cowardice and have others do their dirty work.
19. They do not want to be put into the position of having to be immediately interrogated by their father, "**and they sent the varicolored tunic and had it brought to their father**/waw shalach ha cuttoneth ha pas waw bo' 'el 'ab".
20. They keep their distance until they see how Jacob is going to react.
21. Moses reemphasizes that the garment is still whole using the more complete descriptive phrase "**varicolored tunic**" as that which was **sent**.
22. The NAS translation "**and brought it...**" is misleading implying the brothers possibly accompanied the garment.
23. The Hiphil form of the Hebrew *bo'* (**brought it**) is literally "**caused it to go**" indicating strict instruction to the carrier to ensure it went directly "**to their father**".
24. This along with a terse message, "**We found this; please examine it to see whether it is your son's tunic or not**/zo'th matsa' nakar na' ha cuttoneth ben hiy' 'im lo'".
25. Their message insinuates that they stumbled across the garment and were otherwise ignorant of Joseph's whereabouts.
26. This to psychologically distance themselves in Jacob's mind.
27. They even avoid using Joseph's name in their calloused approach.
28. Their forensic request to Jacob insinuates that while it appeared possible in their eyes that it was Joseph's, they still needed confirmation.
29. This again implies supposedly not knowing Joseph's physical condition otherwise (i.e., thwarting any suspicion of premeditated actions on their part).
30. They are playing the ignorance card as their major defense.
31. The repercussion for disbelieving Joseph's dreams on Jacob's part is revealed in his response in vs.33.
32. "**Then he examined it and said, 'It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him; Joseph has surely been torn to pieces**/waw nakar waw 'amar cuttoneth ben charrah ra-ah 'akal tharaph tharaph Joseph" revealing a complete disorientation to the situation.
33. If Jacob had believed the dreams, he would know that Joseph is still alive.
34. A thorough examination of the garment still in one piece would conclude that his **tunic** had been confiscated by others or ruined in some other fashion.
35. This in turn would have made the message immediately suspect.
36. Instead, it becomes clear that Jacob's emotions now rule shading any clarity of rational thinking and concludes that **a wild beast** had attacked and ate him dismembering his body.
37. He rejected the best/truth (failure to believe and thus apply BD) and now assumes the worst/is deceived (discernment made possible with BD was "out the window").
38. His misapplication steers him down a path of morose grief and self-induced misery.
39. Because Jacob was blind to the truth, his sons didn't even have to suggest their lie of vs.20; Jacob came up with the same falsehood on his own.
40. How ironic is that.
41. Just about as ironic as the sons using a **goat** to deceive their **father** (vs.31) and that goats were involved with Rebekah and Jacob deceiving Isaac (27:16).
42. Dismissiveness of one doctrine instigated a murder plot and kidnapping blinding any real discernment to the situation and will fail in providing the comfort it was to ultimately bring.

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JACOB WALLOWS IN SELF-MISERY

EXEGESIS VERSES 34 – 36:

וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב שְׂמֹלֶתוֹ וַיִּשֶׂם שָׁק בְּמַתְּנָיו וַיִּתְאַבֵּל
עַל־בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים: ^{WTT} Genesis 37:34

^{NAS} Genesis 37:34 **So Jacob tore his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days.** (וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב שְׂמֹלֶתוֹ וַיִּשֶׂם שָׁק בְּמַתְּנָיו וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל־בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara-; "and he tore" {same as 37:29}; + proper n: "Jacob"; + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: simelah; "his clothes/outer wear" {same as 9:23; 35:2}; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: siym; "and he put"; + n/com/m/s/abs: saq; "a thick course cloth/sackcloth"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/dual/constr. w/3ms suff: mathenayim; "on his loins/hips"; + waw consec. + v/Hithpael/IPF/3ms: 'abal; "and he mourned/lamented" {same as 27:41}; + prep: -al + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "over his son"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: yom; "days"; + adj/m/pl/abs: rab; "many"])

וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי־יָרַד אֶל־בְּנֵי אָבִל שְׂאֹלָה וַיִּבְכֶּה אֹתוֹ אָבִיו:
וַיִּקְמוּ כָּל־בְּנָיו וְכָל־בְּנֹתָיו לְנַחֲמוֹ וַיִּמָּאן לְהַתְנַחֵם ^{WTT} Genesis 37:35

^{NAS} Genesis 37:35 **Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted.** (וַיִּקְמוּ כָּל־בְּנָיו וְכָל־בְּנֹתָיו לְנַחֲמוֹ וַיִּמָּאן לְהַתְנַחֵם [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: qum; "and they arose"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "all of his sons"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: bath; "and all of his daughters"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Piel/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: nacham; "to comfort him/console him"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: ma'en; "but he refused {as in rejecting; cf.39:8} "; + prep: lamed w/ v/Hithpael/inf/constr: nacham; {lit. to comfort himself} "to be comforted"])

And he said, "Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son." So his father wept for him. (וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי אֶת־בְּנִי אָבִל שְׂאֹלָה וַיִּבְכֶּה אֹתוֹ אָבִיו [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + conj: kiy; "surely/certainly"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: yarad; "I will descend/go down"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "to my son"; + adj/m/s/abs: 'abel; "mourning"; + n/com/b/s/abs: she'ol; "in Sheol"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bakah; "and he wept"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "for him"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"])

וְהַמְדָּנִים מָכְרוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל־מִצְרַיִם לְפֹשִׁיף סָרִיס
פְּרָעָה שָׂר הַטְּבָחִים: פ ^{WTT} Genesis 37:36

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^{NAS} Genesis 37:36 **Meanwhile, the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh's officer, the captain of the bodyguard.** (וּמְצָרִים אֶל אֶת מֶכַר מִדְיָנֵי הָ הָ שָׂר פְּרֻעָה סָרִיס פּוֹטִיפָר לְ מִצְרַיִם אֶל אֶת מֶכַר מִדְיָנֵי הָ הָ שָׂר פְּרֻעָה סָרִיס [waw conj. + d.a. + proper n: "and the Midianites"; + v/qal/PF/3cpl: makar; "they sold"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth + prep: 'el + proper n: "him to Egypt"; + prep: lamed + proper n: potihyphar; "to Potiphar" {used 2x; Gen.39:1}; + n/com/m/s/constr: sariys; "an official/officer of"; + proper n: par--oh; "Pharaoh"; + n/com/m/s/constr: sar; "chief/captain of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: tabbah; "the guardsmen/the bodyguards"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 34 – 36:

1. Negative repercussions for Jacob's failure to embrace the doctrine of Joseph's dreams continue.
2. Already he has misinterpreted the situation of Joseph's death (vs.36).
3. His emotions then get the best of him sending him into a tail-spin of self-induced misery.
4. He has dismissed the one doctrine that would bring him **comfort** and encouragement.
5. He first engages in an act of outward grief and "**tore his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days**/wara- simelah waw siym saq bet mathenayim waw 'abal –al ben yom rab".
6. His tearing of his **clothes** mimics Reuben's actions upon not finding Joseph in the pit indicating bitter or deep disappointment, loss of hope in grief (cf.Gen.37:29).
7. Here it emphasizes Jacob's abandonment of hope as to Joseph.
8. To put "**sackcloth on his loins**" is symbolic as an act of contrition, guilt or remorse looking for forgiveness. Cp.1Kgs.20:31,32; Jer.48:37; Amo.8:10
9. Here it would underscore Jacob's feeling of guilt sending Joseph out earlier on the recon mission.
10. He's sorry he did so and contrives a sense of self-guilt even though Joseph went voluntarily and Jacob otherwise had a legitimate reason for checking on his other sons.
11. Jacob enters into a path of legalistic self-blame because he forfeited the doctrine that would set him free from that yoke.
12. This then sent him deeper into the vacuum of mourning for **many days**.
13. We are not told exactly how long the "**many days**" are.
14. The indefinite number implies more **days** than emotionally healthy and normal.
15. Joseph mourns for **Jacob 7 days** at his burial. Gen.50:10
16. Based on Joseph's position in **Egypt**, a period of national mourning (lying in state) for **Jacob** was observed for 70 days by the Egyptians. Gen.50:3
17. There were 30 days of mourning for Aaron (Num.20:29) and 40 days for Moses (Deu.34:8).
18. These were periods for the purpose of reflecting upon the deceased in memory and do not necessarily reflect uncontrolled grieving.
19. The uncontrollable approach in the event of a believer's life passing is what grieved Jesus upon the death of His friend Lazarus. Cf.Joh.11:33-35

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20. The period for Abraham grieving over the death of Sarah is implied as relatively short (Gen.23:2).
21. Jacob's grief over Joseph's supposed death was intense and unnaturally long.
22. He became steeped in self-pity and so emotionally distraught that he shut out any attempts to be **comforted**.
23. The emotional and STA stranglehold on him was so tight that "**all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted**/qum kol ben waw kol bath lamed nacham waw ma'en lamed nacham".
24. The "arising" of **sons and daughters** looks to family intervention seeking to provide emotional support.
25. That Jacob had "**daughters**" (plural) would include daughter-in-laws along with Dinah and her any other unnamed sisters, if any.
26. The verb "**refused**" (*ma'en*) means he rejected all efforts.
27. The piel form of *ma'en* means "**utterly refused**".
28. He blocked all entreaties to focus on thoughts that would elevate his emotions in a comforting way (he wouldn't listen).
29. Obviously what is not to be overlooked is the hypocrisy of his **sons** feigning any real concern.
30. Jacob's words "**Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son**/kiy yarad 'el ben 'abel she'ol" portends his intent in length of **mourning**.
31. It is his mindset that he will not ever get over Joseph's death in this life.
32. In OT times individuals who died were said to "**go down**" to the underworld of the departed spirits. 1Kgs.2:6; Job 17:16; 21:13
33. **Sheol** was the habitation for all souls that died (Psa.49:15; Hos.13:14) having two compartments; one for believers called Paradise and one for unbelievers called Hades (a 3rd special compartment called Tartarus cf. Jud.6 cp. Gen.6; 1Pet.3:19,20; 2Pet.2:4 translation "hell" is the Greek ταρταρώσας - tartarosas).
34. The account of Lazarus and the rich man in Luk.16:19-31 contrasts the two compartments for believers and unbelievers fixed by a great chasm where paradise is a.k.a. "Abraham's bosom".
35. Jesus' soul went to **Sheol**-Paradise at His death. Luk.23:43
36. He returned to **Sheol** after His resurrection and "led captivity captive". Eph.4:8-10; 1Pet.3:18-20
37. Paradise is now in the 3rd heaven above (2Cor.12:4) but will be relocated in the New Jerusalem on the new earth (Rev.2:7).
38. The final clause of vs.35 "**So his father wept for him**/waw bakah 'eth 'ab" suggests that Jacob persistently cried whenever he thought of Joseph.
39. The Hebrew grammar *waw bakah* ("**so he wept**") utilizes the waw consecutive with the qal imperfect of the verb to indicate past action in an incomplete way and could be translated "**so he wept on**" (durative past action).
40. So no **comfort** and no doctrine to lift him out of this emotional quagmire.
41. This went on presumably off and on for the next 13 years until Joseph was revealed alive to Jacob (Joseph now 17, vs.2 and 30 when he ruled with Pharaoh, 41:46).
42. All this over rejection of only **one doctrine**.

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43. There are those believers and pastors that play down the importance of differences in doctrinal beliefs as if they have no real bearing in life.
44. No matter one's attitude, the rejection of doctrine necessary to application in life will lead to ramifications that do not glorify God.
45. Worse it can have repercussions that not only rob us of +H and inner peace but feed emotional distress/instability.
46. Even a mature believer such as Jacob can fall into this trap.
47. God provides each and every one of us the doctrine to **comfort** us in time of distress and loss, but we must put BD before us and take solace from the promises contained therein.
48. Vss.35 and 36 are connected by a simple conjunction *waw* (**meanwhile**) having the effect of showing that at the very time of Jacob's unrequited grief, his living son was fulfilling prophesy.
49. Believers' failures do not preempt the POG.
50. Again we see mention of the **Midianites** in their role as slave traders as they "**sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh's officer, the captain of the bodyguard**/makar 'el Egypt lamed pothiyphar sariys par-oh sar tabbah".
51. The Egyptian name **Potiphar** is suggested as meaning "belonging to the sun" indicating this **officer** was a worshipper of the sun god, Ra, or at the least his parents were.
52. The Hebrew noun *sariys* (**officer/official**) can be translated "eunuch", but not necessarily.
53. As we will later see, this man was married and plays an important role in Joseph's climb to success in fulfillment of the prophecy.
54. Following God's will in life places us with the right people at the right time to advance us spiritually, test us, and provide means of blessing in time.
55. It just so happens that this guy is the chief of the palace security force for Pharaoh.
56. He represents the idea for the adjusted believer that no matter how far away from blessing we may seem in our own eyes, in God's eyes we are as close as **Potiphar** was to Pharaoh.
57. *Review the Doctrine of Comfort.*
58. *Review the Doctrine of the Importance of Bible Doctrine.*