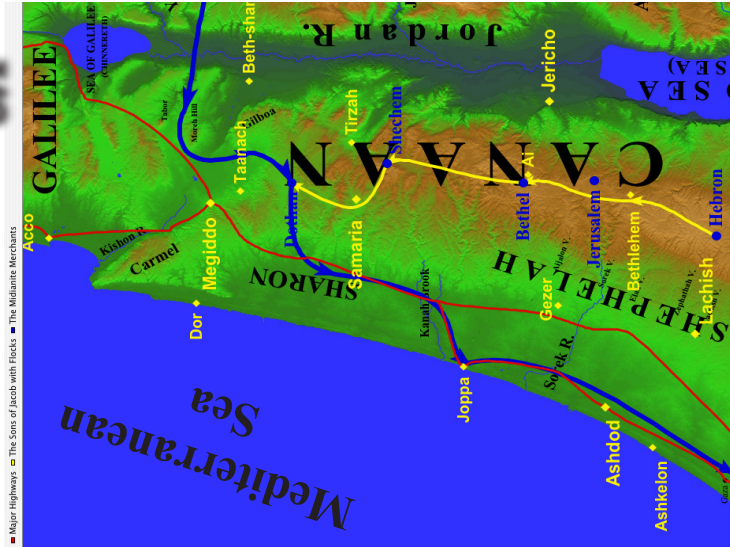
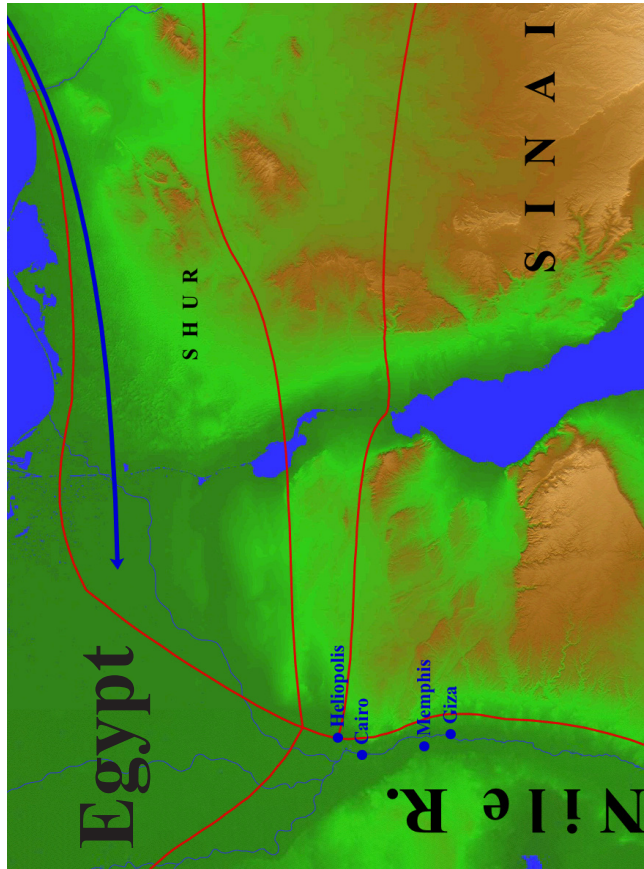


The Area Of Joseph & His Brothers' Travels Between Canaan & Egypt

These maps display the area from which Joseph was sold into slavery to where he was sold into Potiphar's household. When famine devastated the region, Joseph's brothers followed a similar route to secure food in Egypt, unwittingly from their betrayed brother, Joseph.



Cat-n-Mouse

Long Beach Alliance Church • October 29th, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

NOW, THEREFORE, IT WAS NOT YOU WHO SENT ME HERE, BUT GOD; AND HE HAS MADE ME A FATHER TO PHARAOH AND LORD OF ALL HIS HOUSEHOLD AND RULER OVER ALL THE LAND OF EGYPT.

~GENESIS 45:8 (NASB)

1) From Fruitfulness To Famine

- A) Before the famine (Genesis 41:50), there were seven years of abundant fruitfulness in Egypt (41:47-49). Then, as Joseph had predicted, the famine began* (41:53-54).

* Since Pharaoh's dream was related to the Nile River, the source of Egypt's agricultural abundance, the famine was no doubt also related to a dramatic change in the water level of the Nile River. Lower Egypt (the northern area of the country) is virtually rainless. Its entire economy, of which agriculture was the core in ancient times, has always depended upon the Nile floods caused by the river's periodic rise during three summer months. The swelling of the river results from the torrential rains in the Upper Nile Basin (to the south) being carried down to the Delta by the Blue Nile. In ancient times an elaborate series of artificially constructed irrigation works controlled the distribution and utilization of the flood waters. The measurements of the maximum levels of inundation, as recorded by the Nilometers placed at strategic points along the river, were noted in the royal annals. Normally, the floods come with remarkable regularity. But there are years when the rainfall in the southern Sudan provides an insufficient volume of water. A shortfall of only a few inches could deny irrigation to the arid areas of the north, deprive the arable land of its productivity, and bring famine to the inhabitants of Egypt. (Collected from various resources, especially *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary by Nahum M. Sarna, pg. 290).

B) As the famine became worse, the Egyptians ran out of food and came to Joseph for assistance (41:55). The famine was so devastating it spread to all of the known world (41:56).

C) News of Egypt's abundance traveled to foreign countries desperate for assistance. Joseph sold food to both Egypt and foreigners (41:57). This would have made Egypt the sole "super-power" of the known world.

2) A Forgotten Past & Fulfilled Dream

A) Jacob (Joseph's father) sends all of Joseph's brothers to Egypt to purchase grain (42:1-3). Jacob chooses to keep Benjamin (his youngest son and Joseph's little brother) at home to assure Benjamin's safety (42:4).

B) In an amazing turn of events, Joseph's brothers come to Joseph to purchase grain for the family (42:6). Not recognizing Joseph (around 38 years old), the brothers bow down, reminding Joseph of his old dreams (42:8-9).

C) The text sucks the air out of your lungs with the obvious tension asking, "What will Joseph do?" Initially it seems Joseph will throw his brothers into jail as revenge (42:9-12).

D) But Joseph learns his father is alive, and he has a brother (42:13). But what of his older brothers†? Are they still the

† Joseph now finds himself caught in a maelstrom of conflicting emotions. His sense of contentment is shaken by his unpleasant memories. The instinctive desire for revenge is tempered by the knowledge that his father and brother back in Canaan may be starving and are depending on the acquisition of provisions in Egypt. He is desperate for news of their welfare but dares not give himself away by overly anxious inquiry. Above all, he feels he must find out conclusively whether or not his brothers regret their actions and have truly reformed themselves. He decides upon a series of tests. (Collected from various resources, especially *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary by Nahum M. Sarna, pg. 293).

same evil group who "killed" him in cold blood? Had they changed? Joseph tests them to find out (42:14-17).

3) Let The Games Begin...

A) This begins an elaborate cat-n-mouse game between Joseph and his brothers with Joseph attempting to reconnect with the brother he never knew and the father he had forgotten.

B) Joseph, discovering that Reuben tried to save him, binds Simeon for jail (the oldest and "most" responsible brother), and sends his brothers back home for Benjamin (42:21-29).

C) The brothers return home and explain the bizarre events in Egypt to their father, who reluctantly sends Benjamin back with the brothers in order to free Simeon (42:29-43:15).

4) A Stunning Revelation

A) Joseph has a large meal prepared for he and his brothers, and begins to slowly reveal insights into the family, showing special preference for Benjamin (43:16-34).

B) In a final dramatic test, Joseph sends all his brothers home but conspires to keep Benjamin in Egypt (44:1-17). Judah steps up to save his brother, revealing changed hearts and a father's abiding love (44:18-34).

C) Joseph finally bursts with the news of his identity to his stunned brothers (45:1-5). In a profound testimony of forgiveness and trust in the Lord, Joseph credits God (not his brothers) for his past 21 years (45:6-8).