



FEED MY SHEEP

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Joseph, gold and the ancient Tennessee Valley Authority *The Story of Joseph, Part 30*

Joseph now has his father, brothers and all their households with him, under his care and living in the best land in Egypt. Yet the famine still persists. We now turn to Joseph's role as the Chief Administrator of Egypt during the seven-year famine. For continuity sake, we repeat this verse from last issue.

Genesis 47:15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

In this particular verse, the Hebrew word for "failed" is *tamam* {*taw-mam*'} which means to be finished or completed, or we could say "when the money was exhausted." Obviously, the people spent all the money they had on food, and so with what were they going to pay after that?

Genesis 47: 16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide *it* from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands:

19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give *us* seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people, he removed them to cities from *one* end of the borders of Egypt even to the *other* end thereof.

22 Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion *assigned them* of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, *here is* seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth *part* unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, *that* Pharaoh should have the fifth *part*; except the land of the priests only, *which* became not Pharaoh's.

I am confident that most readers in this audience would agree that these ancient Egyptian farmers were better off than most Americans today in terms of taxes. For others who might at first disagree, consider this. We are not talking about the standard of living, because obviously we have automobiles and air conditioning and other nice amenities like that, but simply from a tax rate standpoint, they were paying 20 percent in taxes.

I did a rough calculation for us in an audio lecture

many years ago—I cannot even remember which one it was—but when we factor in all levels of government, plus the hidden taxes all the way along the production cycle from the farmer’s fuel taxes and property taxes, to the loaf of bread in the supermarket, the actual portion of our income we pay in taxes, fees, etc. is utterly shocking. Back then it was somewhere in the 75 percent range! I am confident it has not gone down. Joseph only charged them 20 percent. They could keep 80 percent of the fruits of their labor. Can you imagine how productive our people could be today if we had a combined tax rate of all levels of government as low as 20 percent!

Genesis 47:27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

Once again we will turn to the account in the book of Jasher. There are some really eye-opening details found in this part of the story.

Jasher 55:29 And all Egypt ate bread during the days of the famine from the house of Joseph, for all the Egyptians sold all belonging to them on account of the famine.

30 And Joseph purchased all the lands and fields of Egypt for bread on the account of Pharaoh, and Joseph supplied all Egypt with bread all the days of the famine, and Joseph collected all the silver and gold that came unto him for the corn which they bought throughout the land, and he accumulated much gold and silver, besides an immense quantity of onyx stones, bdellium and valuable garments which they brought unto Joseph from every part of the land when their money was spent.

We are not informed in the Bible that Joseph had any more prophetic dreams, but one has to admit that such absence of a record of more dreams does not prove that he did not; it only proves that if he had any more, they were not recorded.

Speculate with me for a moment. First, we can almost surely assume that everything that Jacob knew of the plans of the Lord from his fathers Isaac and Abraham, plus his own revelations from Yahweh, that he would have shared these with Joseph and probably all the sons, and as we will see, with grandsons as well.

Thus, the promise that the land of Canaan would be for their posterity was known to all the sons. Also, the prediction from God that Egypt would afflict their posterity severely would have been known. Joseph therefore knew that all the wealth and possessions which his family was accumulating would one day be

taken from them by the Egyptians. So with that in mind, the very wise Joseph would have made sure that some of their wealth would be hidden away for a rainy day, shall we say?

Jasher 55:31 And Joseph took all the silver and gold that came into his hand, about seventy two talents of gold and silver, and also onyx stones and bdellium in great abundance, and Joseph went and concealed them in four parts, and he concealed one part in the wilderness near the Red sea, and one part by the river Perath, and the third and fourth part he concealed in the desert opposite to the wilderness of Persia and Media.

Oh...my...heavens! He concealed a treasure in the wilderness near the Red Sea. Was this perhaps part of the treasure that the children of Israel took with them into the wilderness after the crossing of the Red Sea some 200-plus years later? It says Joseph concealed another fourth of the treasure by the river Perath. Perath is another word for the Euphrates. And the other two fourths he concealed in the desert opposite the wilderness of Persia and Media. That is a very long distance from Egypt.

This is speculation of course, but is it possible that Joseph was informed in a dream what would befall the children of Israel 1,000 years later when they were conquered by Assyria? ...Did a dream from God inform Joseph that vast numbers of Israelites would be deported to the areas around Persia and Media? Did a dream from God inform Joseph that even a century and a half after the Assyrian Captivity that about 50,000 descendants of Jacob would be enslaved in the Babylonian Captivity, in the areas around the river Perath—the river Euphrates?

And that, therefore, in that dream, was Joseph directed by God to stash some great treasures for the benefit of His people in those yet far-off centuries? Is that possible?

Jasher 55:32 And he took part of the gold and silver that was left, and gave it unto all his brothers and unto all his father’s household, and unto all the women of his father’s household, and the rest he brought to the house of Pharaoh, about twenty talents of gold and silver.

If there were 72 talents of gold and silver in total that Joseph collected from the people of Egypt, and he ended up giving about 20 talents to Pharaoh for the national treasury, that means that 52 talents of gold and silver were either shared by his family or stashed in those four secret locations for future generations.

33 And Joseph gave all the gold and silver that was left unto Pharaoh, and Pharaoh placed it in the treasury, and the days of the famine ceased after that in the land, and they sowed and reaped in the whole land, and they obtained their usual quantity year by year; they lacked nothing.

The Egyptians sowed and reaped “in the whole land,” it says. When most of us picture ancient Egypt, we visualize this thin ribbon of fertile land extending a few miles on either side of the length of the Nile River. It was the land which benefited by the annual floods when the Nile overflowed its banks. We usually picture the rest of Egypt as barren desert.

In that regard, permit me to share some fascinating information with you now from a writing by John D. Keyser which is called *Joseph and the Engineering Wonders of Egypt*.

“When American engineer Francis Whitehouse was asked to come up with a scheme to irrigate large portions of 19th-century Egypt, his British employers little realized the astounding conclusion he would present them with!

“After surveying the Fayum Province of Egypt and discovering the remains of a huge flood control and irrigation project from the ancient past, Whitehouse soon realized this to be the work of a brilliant Hebrew administrator—none other than the biblical Joseph!

“A study of history and the Bible reveals the role YEHOUAH God played in the life of Joseph—from the time of his arrival in Egypt as a Midianite prisoner to his meteoric rise to become the second most powerful man in the country!

“History reveals that centuries later another man, called by YEHOUAH God to a special task would, like Joseph, also rise to become second in command in Egypt and rebuild the works of Joseph long since fallen into disrepair.”

That second man was, of course, Moses, raised in the court of Pharaoh. The writing I am quoting from is quite extensive—it would make a small book—so I am only going to hit a few of the highlights—things which pertain to our topic. The author goes on to discuss the Fayum area, describing how it differs from a typical oasis, which gets its water from underground springs.

“The cultivated land in the Fayum is formed of Nile mud which is brought down from the river in a huge canal called the Bahr Yusuf. Radiating out from this main feeder canal are many smaller irrigation canals that distribute the mud to the surrounding land. The Bahr Yusuf supplies the Fayum region with life-

giving mud and water through a gap in the encircling Libyan hills. Writes author Samuel Kurinsky:

“A visitor to Egypt today, if he would abjure the euphoria of viewing a mere mirage of Egypt from the deck of one of the floating hotels on the Nile, and would instead thread carefully through the countryside parallel to the Nile, could not but be impressed by the multiplicity of farms and orchards being watered by the web of canals drawn from the Bahr Yousef.

‘This elaborate network of waterways has converted more desolate desert into rich, arable farmland than does the Aswan Dam. No electricity is produced by the Bahr Yousef, but neither does it foster the ecological damage that the Aswan dam is inflicting upon Egypt as a byproduct of its function.’ [*The Eighth Day: The Hidden History of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization*. Jason Aronson, Inc. Northvale, NJ 1994, p. 90]

“The mother of Egypt is, of course, the River Nile. Without it there would be no Egypt! It is also true to say that Egypt as we know it would not have existed without the system of canals radiating out from the Bahr Yousef across fruitful fields that were once part of the great Libyan desert...[U]ntil the Bahr Yousef was constructed, Middle and Upper Egypt was almost entirely a desert with civilization centered mainly in the Delta region of the Nile....

“Whitehouse, a distinguished technician with a number of inventions to his name, was amazed when he started surveying the el Fayum province. He became intrigued by the existence of a small lake known as the Birkut el-Qarun or Lake Karoun—which was a freshwater lake in the midst of the great Libyan desert, yet had no visible source. According to author Samuel Kurinsky:

“The lake supported a fair-sized community, which was economically far better off than most of the rest of Egypt owing to the productivity of the rich agricultural lands still being served by the lake.’ Around the lake’s perimeter, as well as at a considerable distance from its shores, Whitehouse came across the ruins of ancient dams, ditches, aqueducts, and a variety of structures that mutely testified to the existence of a vast and sophisticated irrigation system.

“Ancient fish bones, shells, and other signs scattered about the sands surrounding the oasis unmistakably demonstrated that the lake had once been many times its current size; that yet another lake had existed that had since dried up, and that the canal system that fed into and out of the lakes had extended the arable land far beyond its contemporary boundaries.’

“His curiosity aroused by this extraordinary discovery, Whitehouse visited numerous libraries in the Cairo area and soon discovered that the medieval maps of the Fayum province showed two lakes in the basin. He was baffled by the fact that not only was the

Birkut el Qarun shown to be much larger but that the twin lake, named Lake Moeris in the aged and yellowed documents, far exceeded the dimensions of the Birkut el-Qarun at its erstwhile greatest dimensions.’ ...

“Whitehouse dug deeper into the Egyptian archives and discovered corroboration for the existence of artificially created lakes in the literary works of such ancient historians as Pliny, Strabo, Herodotus, Mutianus and Diodorus.

“These lakes were evidently quite ancient at the time of the Ptolemies (rulers of Egypt—323 to 30 B.C.), and the huge expanses of fresh water astounded the ancient writers no less than it did Whitehouse!

“By extensive surveying Whitehouse confirmed the fact that a vast network of canals flanking the Nile had existed long before the Ptolemaic era; they had been far more extensive, and further, a huge reservoir had been created consisting of two lakes which, if the canal system had not been debased by the Greeks and other succeeding rulers, would have continued to guarantee water to a vast area.

“The Greeks, ignorant of the hydrology of the system, in attempting to increase acreage by reducing the extent of the lakes, had instead caused large areas of rich soil to return to dusty sand. Once fertile fields had relapsed into an arid landscape of sand, dust and rock.”

He then goes on to quote those ancient historians who all make reference to someone in ancient Egypt who was responsible for those massive engineering projects.

“This canal, which incredibly still waters a third of Egypt, appears on modern maps of Egypt under its Arabic name—Bahr Yousef, or ‘**the Sea of Joseph**’.”

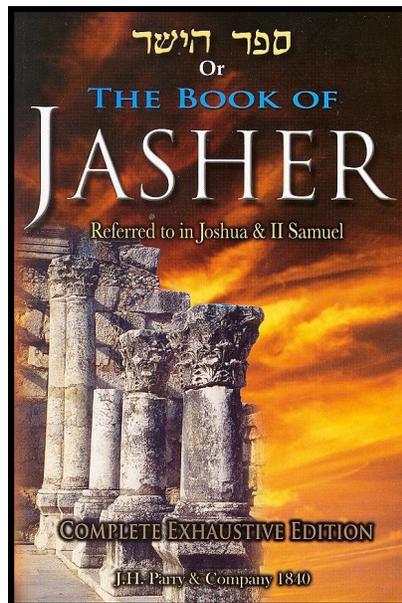
I can verify that because on my office wall I have maps of both ancient and modern Egypt produced by the National Geographical Society and, indeed, the Bahr Yousef is still noted. All of the preceding seems to me to be strong evidence that Joseph did indeed direct these huge engineering projects. Such enormous projects were not seen again until the construction projects in 20th century America by the Tennessee Valley Authority. For those of us who know our identity as Israel and of America’s connection to Joseph, all we can say is “how fitting, how appropriate” and “praise the Lord!” (To be continued.)

The Book of Jasher

One of the most thrilling books I have ever read—and re-read!” — JWB

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