

Jacob would teach his favorite son about the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And so Joseph would know that God informed Abraham how his family through Jacob would become a nation -

- “Your descendants will be strangers in a land [Egypt] that is not theirs, and will serve them [as slaves], and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve [the Egyptians] I will judge; afterward they shall come out [the Exodus] with great possessions.” 18 “On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: ‘To your offspring I have given this land [Canaan], from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates’” - Genesis 15:13-18.

So when Pharaoh promoted Joseph to the governorship of Egypt, we see God working with him, as He had worked with Jacob, to advance the purpose which He had declared to Abraham. Yes, Joseph gave his brothers a rough time to begin with, but it was doubtless his purpose to help them in their spiritual education.

After the heart-rending confessions of guilt by the brothers, Joseph revealed his identity to them and assured them of his love and care for them. His words are very telling -

- “Do not therefore be grieved nor angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life...7 And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8 So now IT WAS NOT YOU WHO SENT ME HERE, BUT GOD...” - Genesis 45:5-8.

With disregard for all such considerations, the practitioners of higher textual criticism approached the Scriptural text in an effort to verify their foregone conclusion, that it is the product of human imagination, and not divinely inspired.

We see in a continuation of remarks by S.R. Driver, an upholder of the Documentary Theory referred to previously Westminster Commentaries - The Book of Genesis, p. 353 - “Another indication (cf. xliv. 19) that J's version of their first interview with Joseph must have differed from that of E : in E (42:13, cf. 32) the information that they had a father and brother living was not given in reply to any question on Joseph's part, but volunteered by them to meet the charge of being spies.”

In response to that accusation, the brothers told Joseph, “Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest [Benjamin] is with our father today, and one [Joseph] is no more” - (42:13). The report here clearly does not include every detail, but summarizes the meeting*. After the brothers had returned home, they again were running low on food and Jacob asked them to bring some more from Egypt. But they said ‘Benjamin must come also!’ -

- “And Israel said, Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother? 7 But they said, The man *asked us pointedly about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words” - (43:6-7).

There is no inconsistency or contradiction here - it is only a figment of the critics' imagination.