

Taking another swipe at the record of Joseph's life, Driver, in Westminster Commentaries - The Book of Genesis, p. 354, footnote 1 tries to make the story come from two different sources,

•“In 42:13-24, 33-37 the detention of Simeon is an essential feature in the narrative ; but in 42:38 - 43:10, and again in 44:18-34, there is entire silence respecting him; his release is not one of the objects for which the brethren return to Egypt. Had the whole narrative been by one hand, the non-mention of Simeon in the parts of chs. 42-44 just referred to, would have been hardly possible.”

•“It is inferred that the writer of 42:38 - 43:10, and of 44:18-34 (i.e. J), in his account of the first visit of the brethren to Egypt, made no mention of the detention of Simeon ; and that the notices of Simeon in 43:14, 23b, are harmonizing passages, introduced into it from the parallel narrative of E.”

But when we subject the Scripture text to the light of a straightforward reading, such foggy suggestions disappear - “If you are honest men [said Joseph], let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. 20 And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified...” - (Genesis 42:19-20).

All we need to do in this case, to learn the name of that brother, is to keep on reading for another five verses - “...Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes” - (42:24).

After the return of the brothers, and Jacob heard about what occurred, he complained, “You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin away...” - (42:36) - thus confirming that it was Simeon that Joseph held in detention.

The smooth transition between episodes in the narrative gives the clear impression of a story coming from one author. The suggestion of two sources in one episode, divided by only a few verses seems a rather desperate attempt to reject the obvious significance of the text.

The next attempt to find two sources, “J” and “E”, in the story of Joseph concerns the timing of when the brothers opened their grain sacks (Driver, p.351) -

•“An insertion from J, according to whom (as is expressly said in 43:21) the discovery of the money in all the sacks was made at the lodging-place, and not, as in E (42:35), - according to whom provision for the way was given separately (v. 25), - at the end of their journey.”

Reading the Scripture text, we pick up the story after the brothers are on their way home with their grain - “But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack” - (42:27).

Having arrived home in Canaan - “Then it happened as THEY emptied their sacks, that surprisingly EACH MAN'S bundle of money was in his sack; and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid” - (42:35).

Careful reading shows that different events occurred at each location - only one brother opened his sack at the encampment to discover his refund. Back at home “they”, “each man” emptied his sack to discover his money also - no contradiction or inconsistency here.