

The higher critics made another attempt to make the story of Joseph come from two different sources. In his “synopsis of the principal differences between the two narratives, ‘E’ and ‘J’, according to J...Judah offers to be surety to his father for Benjamin's return...According to E...Reuben offers to be surety for Benjamin's return” - Driver, in Westminster Commentaries - The Book of Genesis, p. 332.

As with the other items in his list, a careful reading of the Scripture narrative shows there is no real difference in the passages - first Reuben made what he must have thought was a generous offer, “Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him [Benjamin] in my hands, and I will bring him back to you” - Genesis 42:37, which Jacob refused, doubtless based on Reuben’s past unreliable performance - 35:22.

Later, “Judah said to Israel his father, Send the lad [Benjamin] with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. 9 I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever” - 43:8.

To this Jacob agreed, having seen the early waywardness of Judah change to what he declared in the blessing of his sons before his death, “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise” - 49:8.

And so we find that these passages, concerning the offers of Reuben and Judah to take personal responsibility for Benjamin’s safety, are in complete harmony. Reuben’s offer was refused, and this was so for a good reason. Judah’s offer was accepted, we can understand why. There is no need for any imaginary “E” and “J” sources.

Finally, it was claimed by the higher critics that there had to be two different sources, which they called “E” and “J”, because - “according to J...Goshen is named as the district allotted to Jacob and his sons....According to E...there is no mention of Goshen” - Driver, p. 332.

Reading the two passages, we first have Joseph telling his brothers after he had revealed his identity to them, “You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. 11 There I will provide for you...” - 45:10.

Further down the chapter we have Pharaoh speaking to Joseph, “Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, ‘Joseph's brothers have come.’ So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. 17 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, Say to your brothers, Do this: Load your beasts and depart; go to the land of Canaan. 18 Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land” - 45:16-18.

The sediments deposited in river deltas have produced extremely agriculturally productive land. In the case of Egypt the land of Goshen was in the Nile delta and was truly “the best of the land of Egypt.” Pharaoh was talking about the same district as Joseph, without naming it. And so every item which has been brought forward by the higher critics to make the story of Joseph the product of two differing hypothetical sources has failed to support their claim.

This process can be repeated in the other Scriptures with similar results: this is the word of God.