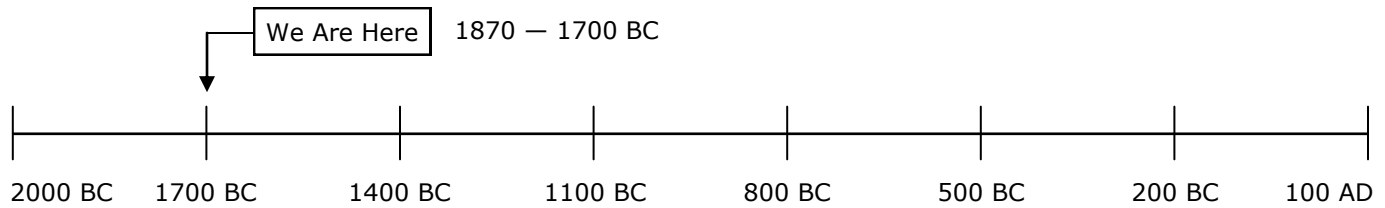


The Hidden Hand

BiAY.org | Weekly Reviews

Week 3: January 15-21 — *Genesis 40-50; Job 1-11*

5.7% Complete — 344 Days to Go



Helpful Resources

Providence (p.135), The Hidden Hand (p.137), Christ in the Life of Joseph (p.55)
Overview of Bible History (p.37)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

The book of *Genesis* has described the creation account, the fall of man, the great flood, the origin of nations, and the dispersion of those nations at the Tower of Babel. However, though man is now fallen and sinful, God has already revealed His plan to redeem him, by making a covenant with Abraham to bring forth a Messiah, or "Chosen One," who will save people from their sins. That covenant was passed down from Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob, who later became Israel. Each of Israel's sons, who had their own families, was expected to carry on the covenant of his father. Thus, a nation was born that will be used by God to glorify Him on the earth and to produce a Promised Seed that will redeem mankind.

- Joseph's Survival

Although Joseph was sold into slavery and forgotten for a time, God positioned him in a strategic place to care for his family. After his father, Jacob, passed on, Joseph protected and cared for his brothers and their children in Egypt; there these families became a nation.

- Prophetic Passages

1. **Joseph's Dreams** (*Gen. 37:5-11*) told of his rise to power and rule over the family.
2. **Dreams of the Baker/Cupbearer** (*40*) predicted the results of Pharaoh's investigation.
3. **Pharaoh's Dream** (*41*) foretold of the 7 years of abundance and the impending famine.
4. **Prophecy of Jacob in Egypt** (*46:3, 4*) predicted his safety and return to Canaan.
5. **Adoption of Ephraim/Manasseh** (*48:3-6*) explained including Joseph's sons in Israel.
6. **Prophecy of Ephraim/Manasseh** (*48:12-20*) set the younger son above the older.
7. **Prophecy of Joseph's Inheritance** (*48:21, 22*) allotted him a double portion of land.
8. **Prophecy of Israel's Sons** (*Gen. 49:1-28*) described the future of each tribe (see chart). Because of foolish decisions, Israel's three oldest boys — Reuben, Simeon, Levi — were stripped of their place as heads of the family; leadership, then, fell to Judah.

- Pictures of Christ
 1. **Judah & Tamar** (*Gen. 38*): Wedged in the middle of the story of Joseph is this strange account. Moses does this intentionally so that the reader will not miss the seed line of the Messiah. It is Judah, not Joseph, who will be in the line of Christ (*Matt. 1:3*).
 2. **Judah** (*Gen. 43:1-9; 44:11-33*): Of all the sons of Jacob (Israel), Judah was the only one who was willing to put his life on the line for Benjamin's safety and return. In fact, when Joseph tested his brothers in Egypt (by arresting Benjamin), it was Judah who begged Joseph to take his life instead. Isn't it interesting that Jesus came from the tribe of Judah and laid down His life for others?
 3. **Joseph's Life** (*37-50*) is a foreshadowing of the ministry of Christ (see the chart).
- Personal Application
 1. **The Success of Man**: Though Joseph's name literally meant "prosperous" and he experienced success wherever he was, it is clear that his prosperity was a result of God's blessing (*Gen. 39:2-6, 19-23*). Likewise, we should always remember that it is God who has the power to make wealth (*Deut. 8:17, 18*). Favor and success do not come by the works of our hands alone, but by the gracious generosity of His.
 2. **The Suffering of Man**: It is clear from the stories of both Joseph and Job, that those who love God are not exempt from trouble. We too will experience hardship in our life-time. Hardship may be caused by various reasons, such as the fallen world in which we live, consequences of our sinful deeds, testing by God to refine our faith, or, as in Job's case, flagrant attack from our spiritual enemy. Although we may not be able to understand the pain we experience, it can lead us to deeper faith in God.

Note: We will discuss the story of Job in detail in next week's review.

3. **The Sovereignty of God**: Though we may suffer at times, like Joseph and Job, we must trust in the truth that God is sovereign over all things, that He is in control, and that He has allowed and will use our suffering for His ultimate good and glory (*Gen. 45:4-8; 50:19-21; Romans 8:28, 29*). Therefore, no matter what happens, we can rest in knowing that our heavenly Father knows what He is doing and that it will all come together and make sense in His timing. Let us be found faithful along the way (*Job 1:20-22*). Take a minute to read the poem entitled, "The Hidden Hand" (next page).

The Bottom Line

God *works* all things together for our *good* and His *glory*.

Questions to Consider

1. What are some ways that you can demonstrate your acknowledgment of God's hand in the successes of your life? If you have children, how can you help them to see it?
2. Is it our responsibility to know why bad things happen to us? What is our responsibility?
3. What is the most difficult time of suffering in your life? How did God use it for good?
4. Most Christians know and believe that God is sovereign; so then, why is it so difficult to trust Him when the going gets tough or when we are in the midst of suffering?

The Hidden Hand

BiAY.org | Written by Arthur T. Pierson

Back of all that foes have plotted,
Back of all that saints have planned,
Back of schemes by men or demons
Moves a higher, hidden Hand.

Warp and woof are heaven's making,
All the pattern good and wise;
Though on earth's side oft' perplexing,
Clear and right to heavenly eyes.

All earth's agents act with freedom,
Choosing whether love or hate,
Faith in God or bold defiance;
None are shackled slaves of fate.

Yet the Hand that guides is hidden,
Moving secret and unseen,
Firmly guiding life's great drama,
Every act and shifting scene.

Even human wrath, unknowing,
Serves that all-controlling will.
Man proposes; God disposes.
All things His design fulfill.

To that goal of all the ages
All of history's windings tend;
And, despite all foes or factions,
God proves victor in the end.

Mysteries which hurt and baffle,
Past our power to understand,
In the end are turned to blessing
By that sovereign Hidden Hand.

"We see men planning and working with only their own more immediate and material interests in view, yet a power behind them is noiselessly and effectually, though possibly for generations unobserved, overruling their actions to the furtherance of higher, more widely extended and more permanent purposes."

Reverend S.W. Foljambe
1876



“Remember the things I have done in the past, for I alone am God; there is no other. Only I can tell the future before it even happens. Everything that I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish.” *Isaiah 46:9-11*

