



*Joseph, surrounded by the unsuccessful Egyptian dream-interpretors, explains the meaning of Pharaoh's dream. The painter James Tissot shows Joseph as completely Egyptian-ised. No wonder Joseph's Hebrew brothers failed to recognise him.
Circa 1896*

In reviewing the documents below, it is not without reason that we see this Joseph operates out of fear -- and for the record, he comes by it naturally and he acts accordingly. It should then come as no surprise that when we meet Pharaoh of the Book of Exodus Chapter One -- he will do the same. He is the exact same typehe is one who purposely does not know Joseph . . .

Is it any wonder why the new Pharaoh out of fear, would seek genocide?

Contextually, let's just for now look back at Joseph through a lens we are not often given to: Joseph was of the Egyptian royal court, Joseph was of the Egyptian priesthood and Joseph was both a son and father of the Land of Egypt -- is this the Joseph **we** know and importantly, was he really forgettable.

No . . .

In the beginning it would appear that Joseph would attempt to alleviate his brother's guilt in selling him off to Egypt are we convinced? No. What was his objective in bringing his family to Egypt -- a family he couldn't trust, nor could they trust him.

We might even say, with brothers like Joseph, who needs enemies?

We know that Joseph begins to place distance between himself and brothers long before they will meet each other again in the *Land of Egypt*. We know that Joseph, even before he ventures down into Egypt, as he sits in his pit, penultimately awaiting either death or servitude in Egypt, wonders how he has gotten to this point.

And then again in Egypt, *first in the House of Potiphar* and then later in the infamous dungeon, Joseph will cease his dreaming and now begin to wonder, 'how did I get here?' 'Who has placed me here?' 'Who has shined so much light in my eyes that I no longer am able to see?' *Who am I (now)?*

Perhaps he thinks it was his father who had doted on him and brought the enmity of his brothers down upon him. It makes no difference, especially as he soon forgets both his father and his *patrimony*, and begins his rise to the top, quickly becoming either second to Pharaoh in all of Egypt -- or perhaps *becoming one-with-Egypt* -- i.e. *the people, the religion, the royalty all wrapped up into one*.



Joseph in Prison, Frans Francken the Younger, (Flemish, 1581–1642)

And all the while he struggles with his identity, essentially struggling in no small part with who he is. He will even vacillate, going back and forth, first as an Israelite and then ever more strongly as an Egyptian. We see this especially in the way he acts, the way he dresses, the way he speaks, who he marries, and then, both in the names and the descriptions of the names he gives his children. We see this in the way he represents himself upon reunification with his father and we especially see this upon his death when he, in keeping with Egyptian mourning practises, is embalmed according to the Egyptian custom. All this is true, and yet he insists by force of oath, that the Children of Israel, upon leaving Egypt, must take his 'bones' home with them and return his body to the very land -- a land whence he once originally came forth from and yet was never able to get back to during his lifetime

<p>כה וישבע יוסף, את-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר: פֶּקֶד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶתְכֶם, וְהֵעֵלְתֶם אֶת-עַצְמוֹתַי מִזֶּה.</p>	<p>Gen 50: 25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying: 'God will surely remember you, <u>and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.</u>'</p>
<p>כו וימת יוסף, בן-מאה ועשר שנים; ויחנטו אתו, ויישם בָּאָרוֹן בְּמִצְרַיִם. {ש}</p>	<p>26 So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old. <u>And they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. {P}</u></p>

Before he forces an 'oath' on the Israelites, we also see what he forces upon the Egyptian people as a whole; all this to the benefit both of Egyptian royalty and Egyptian Priesthood, two markers of Egyptian society that he comes to increasingly identify with. And yet, he remains in memory, an Israelite -- more than possibly due to the 'Oath' he forces upon the Israelites.

Here we'll see in Genesis 47 something which will help us understand the first chapter of Exodus a little more clearly . . . especially in reference to the increasing racism and hatred being espoused by the new Egyptian Pharaoh we will meet more intimately in **Exodus Chapter 1, verse 8**. First let's have a look at the way in which our rather-royal-religious-Joseph 'accommodates' Egypt during the very height of 'the famine.'

Genesis 47:11

First . . .

<p>יא וישב יוסף, את-אָבִיו וְאֶת-אָחָיו, וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אַחְזָה בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, בְּמִיטַב הָאָרֶץ בְּאֶרֶץ רַעַמְסֵס--כַּאֲשֶׁר, צִוָּה פַרְעֹה.</p>	<p>11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, <u>in the best of the land</u>, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.</p>
<p>יב ויכלכל יוסף את-אָבִיו וְאֶת-אָחָיו, וְאֶת כָּל-בֵּית אָבִיו--לֶחֶם, לְפִי הַטָּף.</p>	<p>12 And Joseph sustained his father, and his brethren, and <u>all his father's household</u>, with bread, according to the want of their little ones.</p> <p>then the soreness of the famine . . .</p>
<p>יג וְלֶחֶם אֵין בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ, כִּי-כָבֵד הָרָעָב מְאֹד; וַתִּלָּה אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, וְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, מִפְּנֵי הָרָעָב.</p>	<p>13 And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished by reason of the famine.</p>

<p>יד וַיִּלְקֹט יוֹסֵף, אֶת-כָּל-הַכֶּסֶף הַנִּמְצָא בְּאֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם וּבְאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, בְּשָׂבָר, אֲשֶׁר-הֵם שֹׁבְרִים; וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף, בֵּיתָה פְּרָעָה.</p>	<p>14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.</p> <p>and now his program begins to unfold . . .</p>
<p>טו וַיִּתֵּם הַכֶּסֶף, מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמֵאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן, וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל-מִצְרַיִם אֶל-יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר הֲבֵה-לָנוּ לֶחֶם, וְלָמָּה נָמוּת נִגְדָךְ: כִּי אָפְסָ, כֶּסֶף.</p>	<p>15 And when the money was all spent in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, <u>all the Egyptians came unto Joseph</u>, and said: 'Give us bread; for why should we die in thy presence? for our money faileth.'</p> <p>And then (please read the fine print . . .)</p>
<p>טז וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף הֵבוּ מִקְנֵיכֶם, וְאֶתְנָה לָכֶם בְּמִקְנֵיכֶם--אִם-אָפְסָ, כֶּסֶף.</p>	<p>16 And Joseph said: 'Give your cattle, and I will give you [bread] for your cattle, if money fail.'</p>
<p>יז וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-מִקְנֵיהֶם, אֶל-יוֹסֵף, וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם יוֹסֵף לֶחֶם בְּסוּסִים וּבַמְּקָנָה הַצֹּאן וּבַמְּקָנָה הַבָּקָר, וּבַחֲמֹרִים; וַיִּנְהַלֵּם בְּלֶחֶם בְּכָל-מִקְנֵיהֶם, בְּשָׁנָה הַהוּא.</p>	<p>17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph. And Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, and for the flocks, and for the herds, and for the asses; and he fed them with bread in exchange for all their cattle for that year.</p>
<p>יח וַתֵּתֶם, הַשָּׁנָה הַהוּא, וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו בְּשָׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיָּה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ לֹא-נִכְחַד מֵאֲדָנִי, כִּי אִם-תֵּם הַכֶּסֶף וּמִקְנֵה הַבְּהֵמָה אֶל-אֲדָנִי: לֹא נִשְׂאָר לִפְנֵי אֲדָנִי, בְּלִתֵּי אִם-גּוֹיֵתָנוּ וְאֲדָמָתָנוּ.</p>	<p>18 And when that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him: 'We will not hide from my lord, how that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my lord's; there is nought left in the sight of my lord, <u>but our bodies, and our lands.</u></p>
<p>יט לָמָּה נָמוּת לְעֵינֶיךָ, גַּם-אֲנַחְנוּ גַם אֲדָמָתָנוּ--קְנֵה-אֶתְנוּ וְאֶת-אֲדָמָתָנוּ, בְּלֶחֶם; וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְאֲדָמָתָנוּ, עֲבָדִים לַפְּרָעָה, וְתוֹ-זֶרַע וְנִחְיֶה וְלֹא נָמוּת, וְהָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִשָּׁם.</p>	<p>19 Wherefore should we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and <u>we and our land will be bondmen unto Pharaoh</u>; and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land be not desolate.'</p>
<p>כ וַיִּקֹּן יוֹסֵף אֶת-כָּל-אֲדָמַת מִצְרַיִם, לַפְּרָעָה, כִּי-מָכְרוּ מִצְרַיִם אִישׁ שָׂדֵהוּ, כִּי-חִזַּק עֲלֵהֶם הָרָעָב; וַתְּהִי הָאֶרֶץ, לַפְּרָעָה.</p>	<p>20 So Joseph bought <u>all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh</u>; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine was sore upon them; and <u>the land became Pharaoh's.</u></p>
<p>כא וְאֶת-הָעָם--הֵעֲבִיר אֹתוֹ, לְעָרִים: מִקְצֵה גְבוּל-מִצְרַיִם, וְעַד-קִצְהוֹ.</p>	<p>21 And as for the people, he removed them city by city, from one end of the border of Egypt even to the other end thereof.</p>
<p>כב רַק אֲדָמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים, לֹא קָנָה: כִּי חִק לַכֹּהֲנִים מֵאֵת פְּרָעָה, וְאָכְלוּ אֶת-חִקְסָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָהֶם פְּרָעָה--עַל-כֵּן, לֹא מָכְרוּ אֶת-אֲדָמָתָם.</p>	<p>22 <u>Only the land of the priests bought he not, for the priests had a portion from Pharaoh</u>, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their land.</p>



<p>כג וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-הָעָם, הֲלוֹ קִנִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם וְאֶת-אֲדָמַתְכֶם לְפָרְעָה; הֲאֵל-לָכֶם זֶרַע, וְזָרַעְתֶּם אֶת-הָאֲדָמָה.</p>	<p>23 Then Joseph said unto the people: 'Behold, I have bought you this day and your <u>land for Pharaoh</u>. Lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.</p>
<p>כד וְהָיָה, בְּתַבּוּאוֹת, וּנְתַתֶּם חֲמִישִׁית, לְפָרְעָה; וְאַרְבַּע הַיְדֹת יִהְיֶה לָכֶם לְזֶרַע הַשָּׂדֶה וְלֶאֱכֹלְכֶם, וְלֶאֱשֶׁר בְּבֵתֵיכֶם-- וְלֶאֱכֹל לְטַפְכֶם.</p>	<p>24 And it shall come to pass at the ingatherings, that ye shall give a fifth 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.'</p>
<p>כה וַיֹּאמְרוּ, הֲחִיתָנוּ; נִמְצָא-חֵן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנָי, וְהָיִינוּ עֲבָדִים לְפָרְעָה.</p>	<p>25 And they said: 'Thou hast saved our lives. Let us find favour in the sight of my lord, and <u>we will be Pharaoh's bondmen</u> (my note: <u>slaves to Pharaoh</u>).'</p>
<p>כו וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ יוֹסֵף לְחֹק עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַל-אֲדָמַת מִצְרַיִם, לְפָרְעָה--לְחֹמֶשׁ: וְרַק אֲדָמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים, לְבָדָם--לֹא הָיְתָה, לְפָרְעָה.</p>	<p>26 And Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; <u>only the land of the priests alone became not Pharaoh's</u>.</p>
<p>כז וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, בְּאֶרֶץ גֹּשֶׁן; וַיֵּאָחֲזוּ בָהּ, וַיִּכְרוּ וַיִּרְבוּ מְאֹד.</p>	<p>27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; and they got them possessions therein, <u>and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly</u>.</p>

And we now turn to the Book of Exodus, to the week's portion we currently find ourselves, both literally and figuratively . . .

Exodus Chapter 1, verse 7 thru 13 . . .

<p>ז ובני ישראל, פרו וישרצו וירבו ויעצמו-- במאד מאד; ותמלא הארץ, אתם. {פ}</p>	<p>Ex 1:7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and <u>increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty</u>; and the land was filled with them. {P}</p>
<p>ח ויקם מלך-חדש, על-מצרים, אשר לא-ידע, את-יוסף.</p>	<p>8 Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. (My note: he definitely knew Joseph)</p>
<p>ט ויאמר, אל-עמו: הנה, עם בני ישראל-- רב ועצום, ממנו.</p>	<p>9 And he said unto his people: 'Behold, the people of the children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us;</p>
<p>י הבה נתחכמה, לו: פן-ירבה, והיה כי-תקראנה מלחמה ונוסף גם-הוא על-שנאינו, ונלחם-בנו, ועלה מן-הארץ.</p>	<p>10 come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there befalleth us any war, <u>they also join themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and get them up out of the land.</u>'</p>
<p>יא וישמו עליו שרי מסים, למען ענתו בסבלתם; ויבן ערי מסכנות, לפרעה-- את-פתם, ואת-רעמסס.</p>	<p>11 Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store-cities, Pithom and Raamses.</p>
<p>יב וכאשר יענו אתו, כן ירבה וכן יפרץ; ויקצו, מפני בני ישראל.</p>	<p>12 <u>But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And they were adread because of the children of Israel.</u></p>
<p>יג ויעבדו מצרים את-בני ישראל, בפרך.</p>	<p>13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.</p>