

DID JOSEPH'S BROTHERS SELL HIM INTO SLAVERY IN EGYPT?
Acts 7:9-53

There are many complications and errors in the verses where Stephen gives his testimony.

He may have gotten his facts wrong because his mind was probably more focused on the fact that he was about to be stoned to death at any moment! There also are times when scriptures complement each other, clearing up discrepancies.

Let me give you a few of his factual errors as well as some of the unclear testimony:

"And the brothers, moved with envy against Joseph, gave him to the Egyptians for money: but God was with him." (Acts 7:9)

The brothers were not the ones who gave him to the Egyptians; they never went down to Egypt; and they never received money for selling him. Here is what actually happened:

"And some traders from Midian went by; so pulling Joseph up out of the hole, they gave him to the Ishmaelites for twenty bits of silver, and they took him to Egypt." (Genesis 37:28)

This verse states that the Midianites took Joseph out of the pit and sold him to the Ishmaelites, who sold Joseph to Egypt.

And look at this:

"And in Egypt the men of Midian gave him for a price to Potiphar, a captain of high position in Pharaoh's house." (Genesis 37:36)

Yet we see:

"Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar the Egyptian, a captain of high position in Pharaoh's house, got him for a price from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there." (Genesis 39:1)

So who was it? Joseph's brothers, the Midianites or the Ishmaelites who sold him to Potiphar?

We see the Midianites sold him to the Ishmaelites for one price and the Ishmaelites sold him to Potiphar for another price. The brothers are still accountable though as they did intend to sell Joseph, but they made no money because when they went back to the pit, he was already gone.

"Now when Reuben came back to the hole, Joseph was not there; and giving signs of grief, he went back to his brothers, and said, The child is gone; what am I to do?" (Genesis 37:29-30)

Some other confusion:

"Then Joseph sent for Jacob his father and all his family, seventy-five persons." (Acts 7:14)

"All the offspring of Jacob were seventy persons: and Joseph had come to Egypt before them." (Exodus 1:5)

"And Jacob went down to Egypt, and came to his end there, and so did our fathers; And they were taken over to Shechem, and put to rest in the place which Abraham got for a price in silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem." (Acts 7:15-16)

It wasn't Shechem: it was Hebron. Jacob is the one who paid Hamor for land in Shechem where Joseph is buried.

Abraham paid Ephron the Hittite for the cave in Hebron where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are buried. (Genesis 23)