

# Genesis 47:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

## Analysis

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**And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto J...** This passage is part of the Joseph narrative, a masterfully crafted account demonstrating God's sovereign providence working through human choices and circumstances to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The Joseph cycle shows how God transforms evil intentions into instruments of salvation.

Central themes include divine providence orchestrating events toward redemptive ends, the testing and refinement of character through suffering and success, forgiveness overcoming betrayal and injustice, and the preservation of God's covenant people through famine. Joseph's rise from slavery to second-in-command of Egypt illustrates how God exalts the humble and uses seeming disasters for ultimate good.

Theologically, these chapters reveal:

1. God's meticulous sovereignty over all events, even evil human actions
2. suffering as preparation for future service rather than punishment
3. forgiveness as reflecting divine character and enabling reconciliation
4. God's covenant faithfulness across generations ensuring the survival and blessing of His people

5. how present suffering gains meaning when viewed from the perspective of God's larger purposes.

Joseph's words "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20) epitomize biblical theodicy and providence.

## Historical Context

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The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen our understanding of God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?
3. How does understanding Christ as the ultimate fulfillment illuminate this passage's meaning?

## Interlinear Text

וַיַּחֲזַק מִצְבֵּחַ	וְמִן־אֶת־רַצְנָךְ	וְמִן־אֶת־מִצְבֵּחַ	וְמִן־אֶת־מִצְבֵּחַ	וְמִן־אֶת־מִצְבֵּחַ
<b>failed</b>	<b>And when money</b>	<b>and in the land</b>	<b>all the Egyptians</b>	<b>and in the land</b>
H8552	H3701	H776	H4714	H776
כִּנְעָן יָבָא כָּל מִצְבֵּחַ אֶל וַיֹּסֶךְ לִאמְרָה				
<b>of Canaan</b>	<b>came</b>	<b>all the Egyptians</b>	<b>unto Joseph</b>	<b>and said</b>
H3667	H935	H4714	H3130	H559
אָפֵס כִּי נִגְדֵּת נִמְוֹת לְנִמְמָה לְמִתְמַמָּה				
for why should we die		H4191	H5048	H3588
H0 us bread	H4100			faileth
H3899				H656

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