

Joseph the Dream Interpreter



**Lectio
Divina**

Gn 40-41



Structure I

- Introduction 40, 1-8
- Dream 1 (cupbearer) 40, 9-15
- Dream 2 (chief baker) 40, 16-19
- Conclusion 40, 20-23

Structure II

- **Dreams (1-7) two dreams reported**
- **Interpretation**
 - **(8-13) interpreters fail to explain dreams**
 - **(14-46) Joseph and Pharaoh (Joseph summoned; explains the dreams; is appointed);**
- **Fulfillment**
 - **(47-52) Joseph's work in years of plenty**
 - **(53-57) Joseph's work in famine**

Setting – in the prison

- **“the LORD remained with Joseph; he showed him kindness by making the chief jailer well-disposed toward him”
(39,21)**
- **“he took a liking to Joseph and made him his personal attendant; he put him in charge of his household and entrusted to him all his possessions”
(39,4)**

Interpretation of dreams

- **It is not I but God who will give Pharaoh the right answer” (41,16**

Joseph's plea

- **“So if you will still remember, when all is well with you, that I was here with you, please do me the favor of mentioning me to Pharaoh, to get me out of this place”.**
- **God remembers: “God remembered Noah and all the animals, with him in the ark.” (8,1);**
- **Isaac prays to God: “LORD, God of my master Abraham, let it turn out favorably for me today” (24,12);**
- **God brings out: I, the LORD, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery” (Ex 20,2).**

Fulfillment

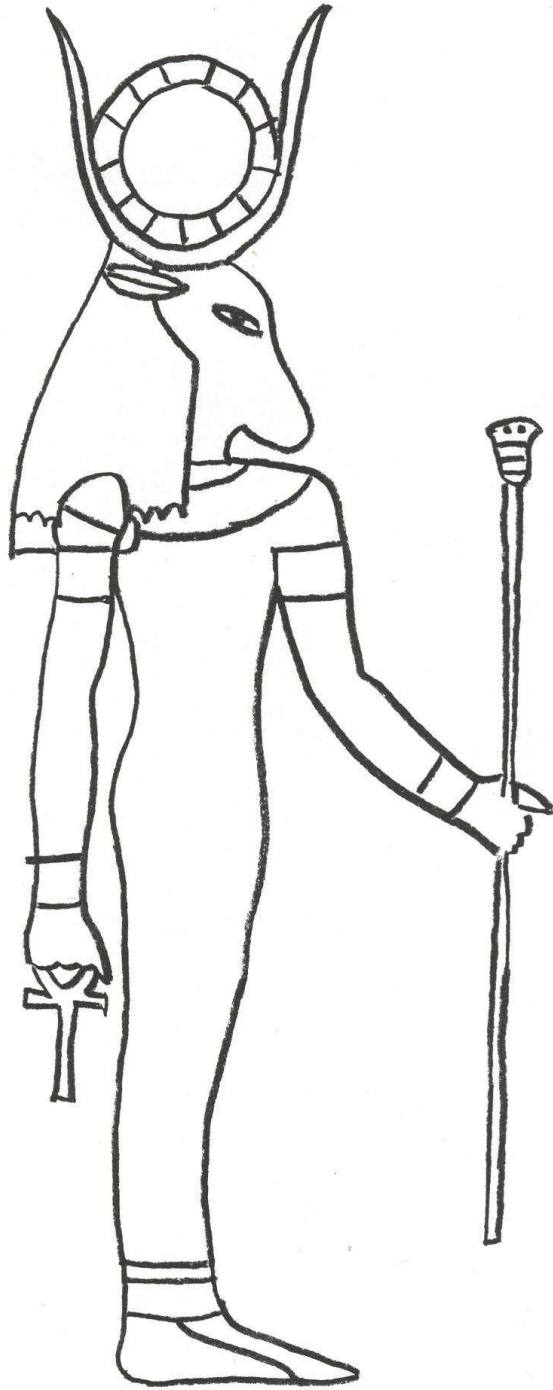
- **(v. 13) “within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your post. You will be handing Pharaoh his cup”; “within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and have you impaled on a stake” → “on the third day... he lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and chief baker. 21 He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, so that he again handed the cup to Pharaoh”.**



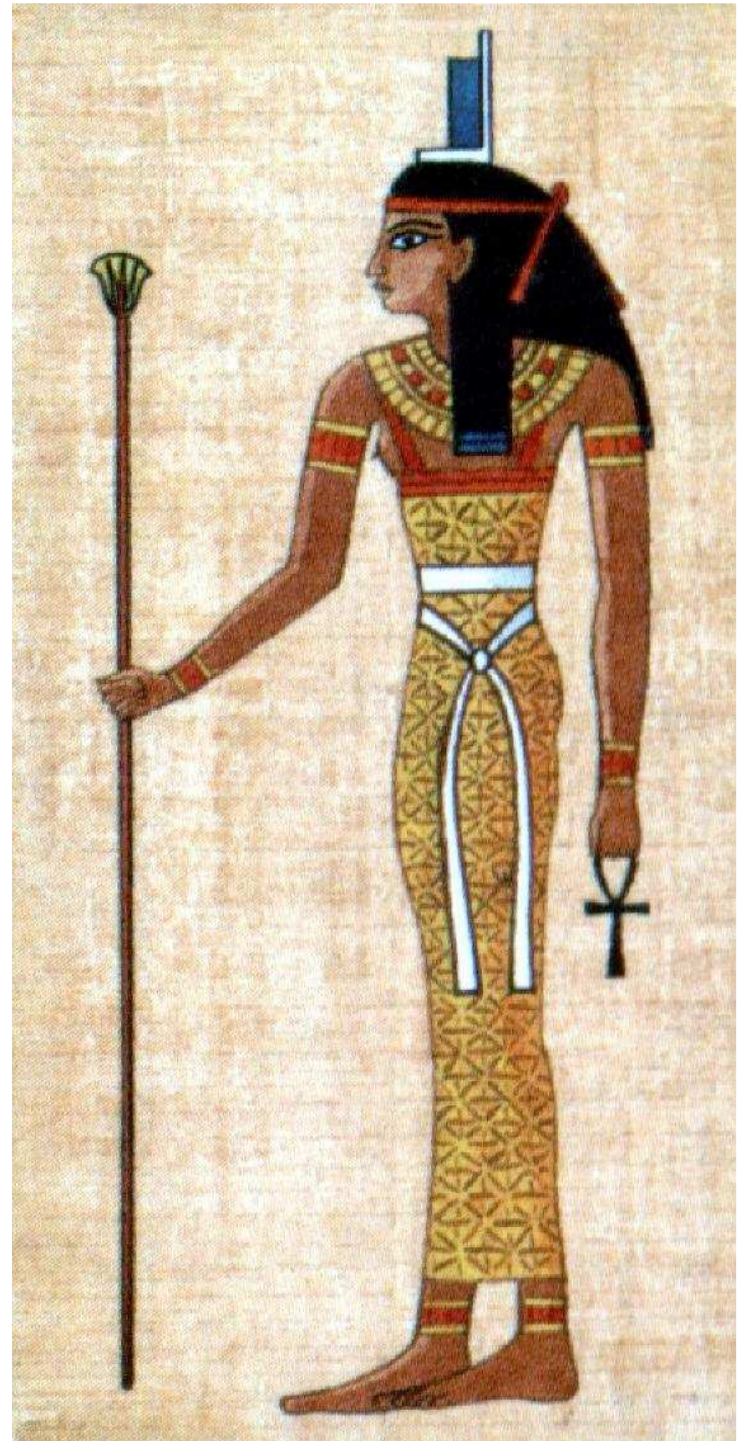
Contrast between desert and Nile River Valley



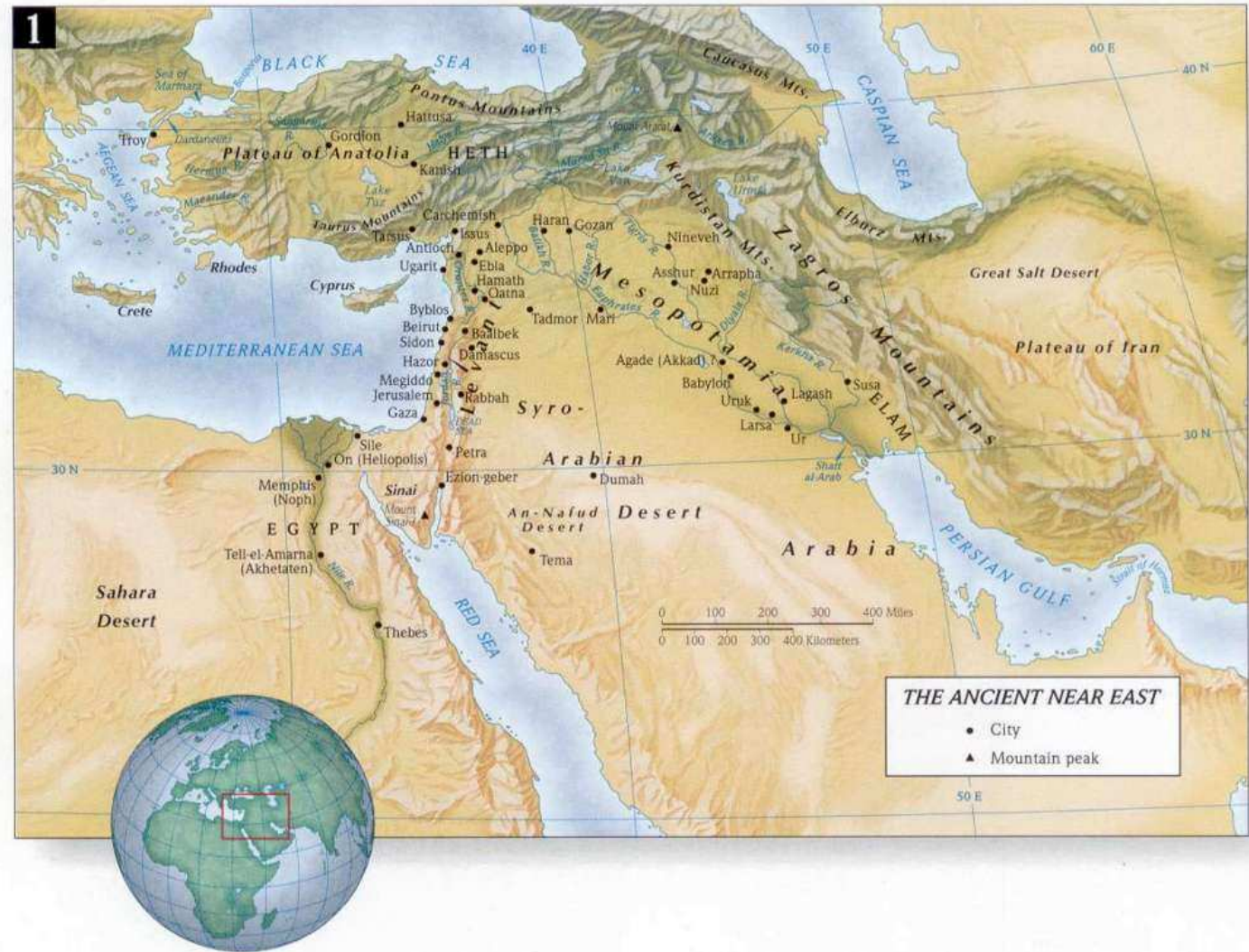
Nile River island beach near Aswan



Hathor and Isis



East wind



- “God sent a burning east wind; and the sun beat upon Jonah's head till he became faint” (Jon 4,8).

Joseph's answer

- the interpretation proper (25-32)
- actions to be taken for the future (33-36).
- common points in the dreams:
 - both dreams announce the same thing (25-26)
 - there will be periods of seven years (26-27)
 - the years of famine will follow after the years of plenty (29-31)
 - the duplication of the dream shows the certainty (32).

7-years famine

- **text from Siheil in southern Egypt (2nd century b.c.) reports about the of Djoser (c. 2600 b.c.)**
- **The Gilgamesh epic threatens “seven years of empty husks”**
- **Ugaritic epic of Aqht**
- **Aramaic treaty from Sefire**
- **David’s prophet, Gad - 3 years famine (2 Sam 24:13)**

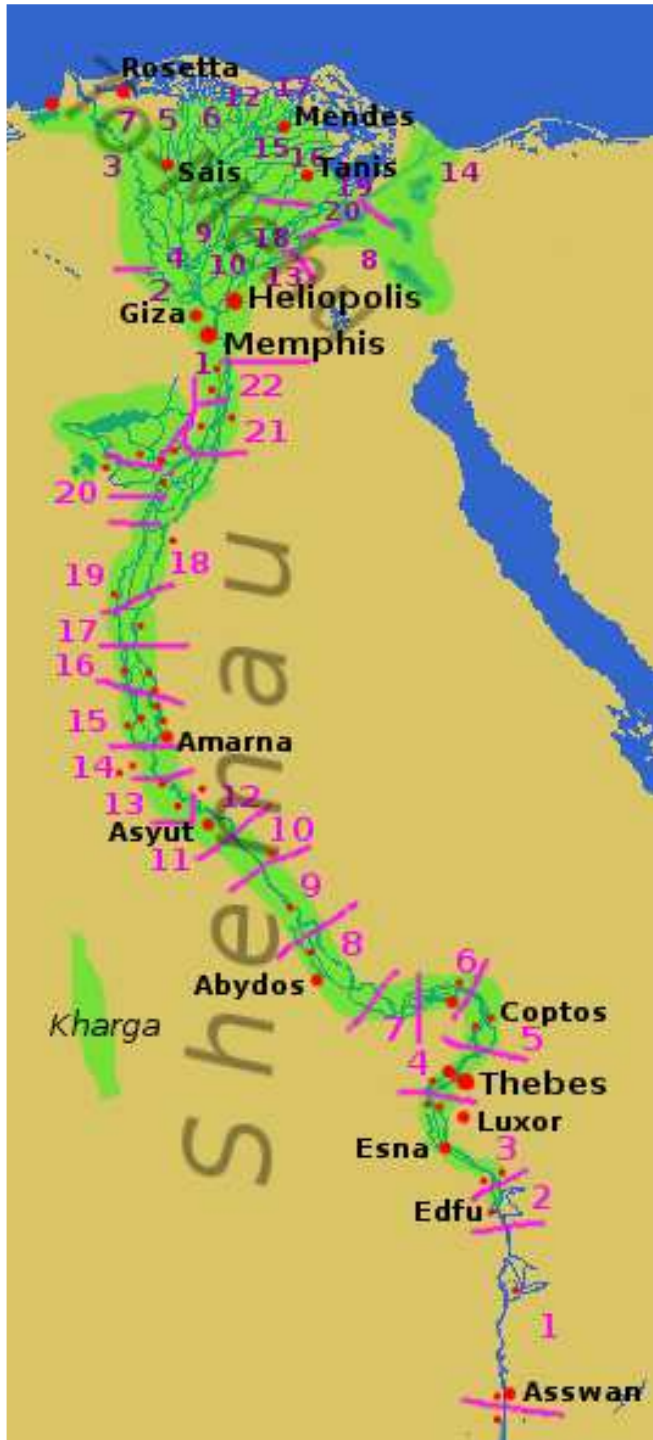
Patriarchs as prophets

- **“Behold, seven years of great abundance are now coming”**
- **Abraham in Egypt: “as a spokesman he will intercede for you” (20,7).**

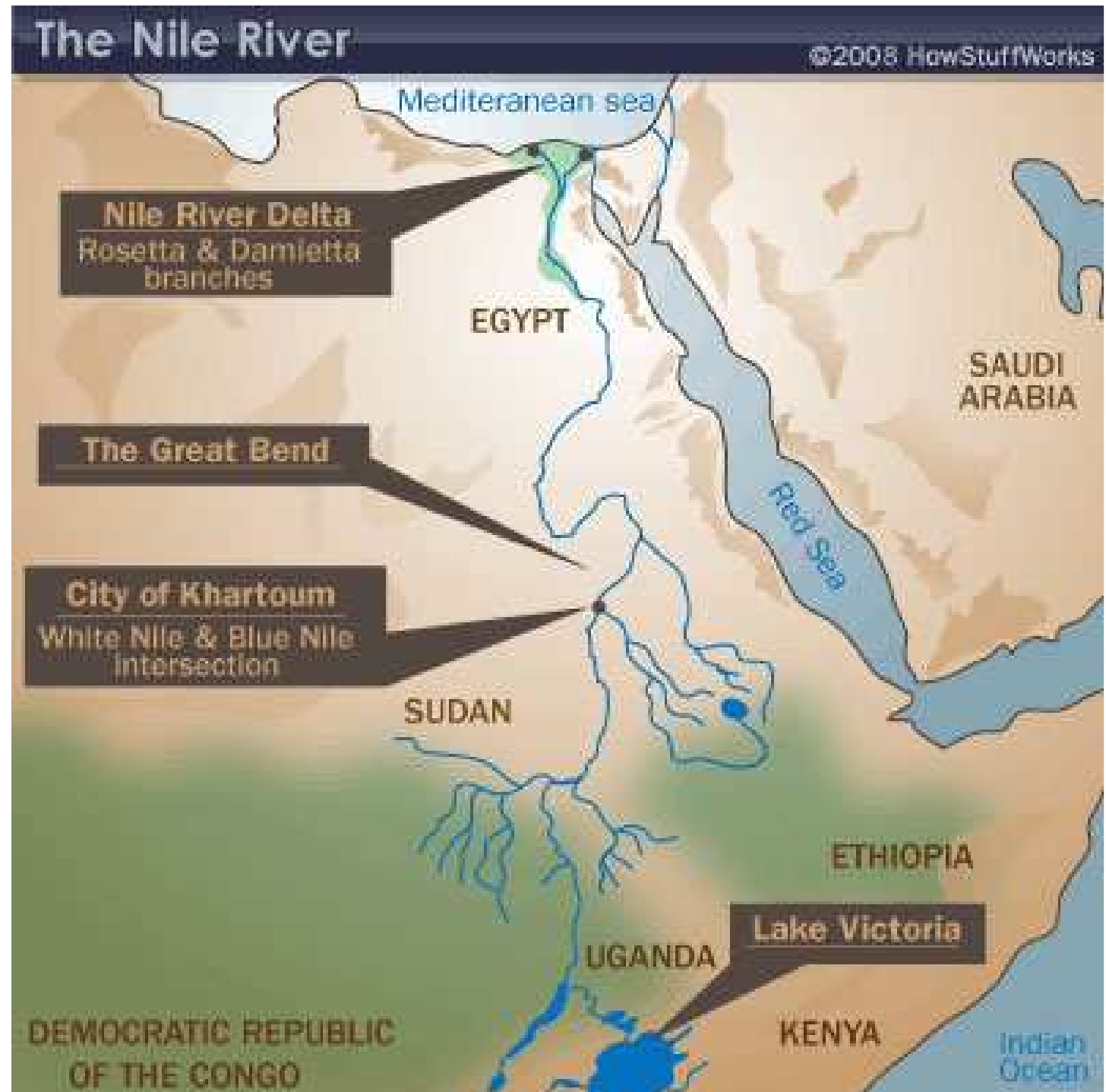
The Spirit of the Lord

- **“The spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will join them in their prophetic state and will be changed into another man” (1Sam 10,6)**
- **“I have heard that the spirit of God is in you, that you possess brilliant knowledge and extraordinary wisdom” (Dan 5,14)**

State's function - Tutu



Nile River



Suffering leads to redemption

- **Job “If I cry out "Injustice!" I am not heard. I cry for help, but there is no redress” (19,7)**
- **Jesus: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27,46)**
- **Paul “the affliction that came to us in the province of Asia; we were utterly weighed down beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Indeed, we had accepted within ourselves the sentence of death, that we might trust not in ourselves but in God who raises the dead. 10 He rescued us from such great danger of death, and he will continue to rescue us; in him we have put our hope (that) he will also rescue us again” (2Cor 1,8-10).**
- **“My son, when you come to serve the LORD, prepare yourself for trials” (Sir 2,1)**

Larger prospective



- **“Even though you meant harm to me, God meant it for good, to achieve his present end, the survival of many people” (50,20)**
- **“all the families of the earth will find blessing in you” (12,3)**

Human involvement

- **“In his mind a man plans his course, but the LORD directs his steps”
(Prov 16:9)**



- “at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow” (Phil 2,10)
- “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you” (1 Pet 5,6)

Humiliation and exaltation



2009-2010

- X Introduction to Genesis*
- XI Abraham's call and migration (Gn 12)*
- XII The Covenant with Abraham (Gn 15)*
 - I The testing of Abraham (Gn 22)*
 - II Jacob's fight with Laban (Gn 30,25-32,1)*
 - III Jacob's struggle with the Angel (Gn 32,23-33)*
 - IV Joseph sold into Egypt (Gn 37)*
 - V Joseph – the Dreams Interpreter (Gn 40-41)*
 - VI Joseph and his brothers (Gn 44-45)**



Our next meeting

Tuesday, June 15

Saturday, June 19

Joseph and his Brothers

Gn 44-45