

Pronouncement of a Destiny (Genesis 37-50)

Joseph Dreams of Greatness

37 Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. ² This is the story of the family of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

⁵ Once Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. ⁶ He said to them, "Listen to this dream that I dreamed. ⁷ There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it, and bowed down to my sheaf." ⁸ His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more because of his dreams and his words.

⁹ He had another dream, and told it to his brothers, saying, "Look, I have had another dream: the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." ¹⁰ But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him, and said to him, "What kind of dream is this that you have had? Shall we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, and bow to the ground before you?" ¹¹ So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Joseph Is Sold by His Brothers

¹² Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³ And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." ¹⁴ So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, ¹⁵ and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" ¹⁶ "I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." ¹⁷ The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸ They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." ²¹ But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²² Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³ So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves^[b] that he wore; ²⁴ and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶ Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. ²⁸ When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹ When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes. ³⁰ He returned to his brothers, and said, "The boy is gone; and I, where can I turn?" ³¹ Then they took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood. ³² They had the long robe with sleeves^[c] taken to their father, and they said, "This we have found; see now whether it is your son's robe or not." ³³ He recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe! A wild animal has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." ³⁴ Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. ³⁵ All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father bewailed him. ³⁶ Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard.

Judah and Tamar

³⁸ It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and settled near a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. ² There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua; he married her and went in to her. ³ She conceived and bore a son; and he named him Er. ⁴ Again she conceived and bore a son whom she named Onan. ⁵ Yet again she bore a son, and she named him Shelah. She was in Chezib when she bore him. ⁶ Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn; her name was Tamar. ⁷ But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD put him to death. ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her; raise up offspring for your brother." ⁹ But since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his, he spilled his semen on the ground whenever he went in to his brother's wife, so that he would not give offspring to his brother. ¹⁰ What he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also. ¹¹ Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up"—for he feared that he too would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father's house.

¹² In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died; when Judah's time of mourning was over, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³ When Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," ¹⁴ she put off her widow's garments, put on a veil, wrapped herself up, and sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. She saw that Shelah was grown up, yet she had not been given to him in marriage. ¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a prostitute, for she had covered her face. ¹⁶ He went over to her at the roadside, and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" ¹⁷ He answered, "I will send you a kid from the flock." And she said, "Only if you give me a pledge, until you send it." ¹⁸ He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She

replied, "Your signet and your cord, and the staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him.¹⁹ Then she got up and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

²⁰ When Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite, to recover the pledge from the woman, he could not find her.²¹ He asked the townspeople, "Where is the temple prostitute who was at Enaim by the wayside?" But they said, "No prostitute has been here."²² So he returned to Judah, and said, "I have not found her; moreover the townspeople said, 'No prostitute has been here.'"²³ Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, otherwise we will be laughed at; you see, I sent this kid, and you could not find her."

²⁴ About three months later Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the whore; moreover she is pregnant as a result of whoredom." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned."²⁵ As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "It was the owner of these who made me pregnant." And she said, "Take note, please, whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff."²⁶ Then Judah acknowledged them and said, "She is more in the right than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not lie with her again.

²⁷ When the time of her delivery came, there were twins in her womb.²⁸ While she was in labor, one put out a hand; and the midwife took and bound on his hand a crimson thread, saying, "This one came out first."²⁹ But just then he drew back his hand, and out came his brother; and she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore he was named Perez.³⁰ Afterward his brother came out with the crimson thread on his hand; and he was named Zerah.

Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

39 Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there.² The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man; he was in the house of his Egyptian master.³ His master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hands.⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him; he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.⁵ From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field.⁶ So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge; and, with him there, he had no concern for anything but the food that he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome and good-looking.⁷ And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."⁸ But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, with me here, my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my hand.⁹ He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"¹⁰ And although she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not consent to lie beside her or to be with her.¹¹ One day, however, when he went into the house to do his work, and while no one else was in the house,¹² she caught hold of his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.¹³ When she saw that he had left his

garment in her hand and had fled outside,¹⁴ she called out to the members of her household and said to them, “See, my husband has brought among us a Hebrew to insult us! He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice;¹⁵ and when he heard me raise my voice and cry out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside.”¹⁶ Then she kept his garment by her until his master came home,¹⁷ and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to insult me;¹⁸ but as soon as I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside.”

¹⁹ When his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, saying, “This is the way your servant treated me,” he became enraged.²⁰ And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined; he remained there in prison.²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love; he gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer.²² The chief jailer committed to Joseph’s care all the prisoners who were in the prison, and whatever was done there, he was the one who did it.²³ The chief jailer paid no heed to anything that was in Joseph’s care, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

The Dreams of Two Prisoners

40 Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king of Egypt.² Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker,³ and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison where Joseph was confined.⁴ The captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he waited on them; and they continued for some time in custody.⁵ One night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own meaning.⁶ When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled.⁷ So he asked Pharaoh’s officers, who were with him in custody in his master’s house, “Why are your faces downcast today?”⁸ They said to him, “We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them.” And Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me.”

⁹ So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, “In my dream there was a vine before me,¹⁰ and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms came out and the clusters ripened into grapes.¹¹ Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh’s cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand.”¹² Then Joseph said to him, “This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days;¹³ within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you shall place Pharaoh’s cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer.¹⁴ But remember me when it is well with you; please do me the kindness to make mention of me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this place.¹⁵ For in fact I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon.”

¹⁶ When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, “I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head,¹⁷ and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head.”

¹⁸ And Joseph answered, “This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days;¹⁹ within

three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a pole; and the birds will eat the flesh from you.”

²⁰ On the third day, which was Pharaoh’s birthday, he made a feast for all his servants, and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. ²¹ He restored the chief cupbearer to his cupbearing, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh’s hand; ²² but the chief baker he hanged, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. ²³ Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh’s Dream

41 After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, ² and there came up out of the Nile seven sleek and fat cows, and they grazed in the reed grass. ³ Then seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. ⁴ The ugly and thin cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. And Pharaoh awoke. ⁵ Then he fell asleep and dreamed a second time; seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. ⁶ Then seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them. ⁷ The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Pharaoh awoke, and it was a dream. ⁸ In the morning his spirit was troubled; so he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

⁹ Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, “I remember my faults today. ¹⁰ Once Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard. ¹¹ We dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own meaning. ¹² A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each according to his dream. ¹³ As he interpreted to us, so it turned out; I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged.”

¹⁴ Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was hurriedly brought out of the dungeon. When he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. ¹⁵ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” ¹⁶ Joseph answered Pharaoh, “It is not I; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.” ¹⁷ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile; ¹⁸ and seven cows, fat and sleek, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass. ¹⁹ Then seven other cows came up after them, poor, very ugly, and thin. Never had I seen such ugly ones in all the land of Egypt. ²⁰ The thin and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows, ²¹ but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had done so, for they were still as ugly as before. Then I awoke. ²² I fell asleep a second time and I saw in my dream seven ears of grain, full and good, growing on one stalk, ²³ and seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouting after them; ²⁴ and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. But when I told it to the magicians, there was no one who could explain it to me.”

²⁵ Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “Pharaoh’s dreams are one and the same; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁶ The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. ²⁷ The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, as are the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind. They are seven years of famine. ²⁸ It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. ²⁹ There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. ³⁰ After them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; the famine will consume the land. ³¹ The plenty will no longer be known in the land because of the famine that will follow, for it will be very grievous. ³² And the doubling of Pharaoh’s dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about. ³³ Now therefore let Pharaoh select a man who is discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. ³⁴ Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land, and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plenteous years. ³⁵ Let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and lay up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. ³⁶ That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to befall the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine.”

Joseph’s Rise to Power

³⁷ The proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. ³⁸ Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find anyone else like this—one in whom is the spirit of God?” ³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has shown you all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. ⁴⁰ You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command; only with regard to the throne will I be greater than you.” ⁴¹ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” ⁴² Removing his signet ring from his hand, Pharaoh put it on Joseph’s hand; he arrayed him in garments of fine linen, and put a gold chain around his neck. ⁴³ He had him ride in the chariot of his second-in-command; and they cried out in front of him, “Bow the knee!” Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁴ Moreover Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” ⁴⁵ Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, as his wife. Thus Joseph gained authority over the land of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went through all the land of Egypt. ⁴⁷ During the seven plenteous years the earth produced abundantly. ⁴⁸ He gathered up all the food of the seven years when there was plenty in the land of Egypt, and stored up food in the cities; he stored up in every city the food from the fields around it. ⁴⁹ So Joseph stored up grain in such abundance—like the sand of the sea—that he stopped measuring it; it was beyond measure.

⁵⁰ Before the years of famine came, Joseph had two sons, whom Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, bore to him. ⁵¹ Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, “For,” he said, “God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father’s house.” ⁵² The second he named Ephraim, “For God has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortunes.”

⁵³ The seven years of plenty that prevailed in the land of Egypt came to an end; ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in every country, but

throughout the land of Egypt there was bread. ⁵⁵ When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do.” ⁵⁶ And since the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. ⁵⁷ Moreover, all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine became severe throughout the world.

Joseph’s Brothers Go to Egypt

42 When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you keep looking at one another? ² I have heard,” he said, “that there is grain in Egypt; go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die.” ³ So ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. ⁴ But Jacob did not send Joseph’s brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he feared that harm might come to him. ⁵ Thus the sons of Israel were among the other people who came to buy grain, for the famine had reached the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was governor over the land; it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph’s brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. ⁷ When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke harshly to them. “Where do you come from?” he said. They said, “From the land of Canaan, to buy food.” ⁸ Although Joseph had recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. ⁹ Joseph also remembered the dreams that he had dreamed about them. He said to them, “You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land!” ¹⁰ They said to him, “No, my lord; your servants have come to buy food. ¹¹ We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants have never been spies.” ¹² But he said to them, “No, you have come to see the nakedness of the land!” ¹³ They said, “We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of a certain man in the land of Canaan; the youngest, however, is now with our father, and one is no more.” ¹⁴ But Joseph said to them, “It is just as I have said to you; you are spies! ¹⁵ Here is how you shall be tested: as Pharaoh lives, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ Let one of you go and bring your brother, while the rest of you remain in prison, in order that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, as Pharaoh lives, surely you are spies.” ¹⁷ And he put them all together in prison for three days.

¹⁸ On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: ¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here where you are imprisoned. The rest of you shall go and carry grain for the famine of your households, ²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me. Thus your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they agreed to do so. ²¹ They said to one another, “Alas, we are paying the penalty for what we did to our brother; we saw his anguish when he pleaded with us, but we would not listen. That is why this anguish has come upon us.” ²² Then Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you not to wrong the boy? But you would not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.” ²³ They did not know that Joseph understood them, since he spoke with them through an interpreter. ²⁴ He turned away from them and wept; then he returned and spoke to them. And he picked out Simeon and had him bound before their eyes. ²⁵ Joseph then gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to return every man’s money to his sack, and to give them provisions for their journey. This was done for them.

Joseph's Brothers Return to Canaan

²⁶ They loaded their donkeys with their grain, and departed. ²⁷ When one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money at the top of the sack. ²⁸ He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back; here it is in my sack!" At this they lost heart and turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

²⁹ When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, ³⁰ "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly to us, and charged us with spying on the land. ³¹ But we said to him, 'We are honest men, we are not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in the land of Canaan.' ³³ Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way. ³⁴ Bring your youngest brother to me, and I shall know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will release your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'"

³⁵ As they were emptying their sacks, there in each one's sack was his bag of money. When they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed. ³⁶ And their father Jacob said to them, "I am the one you have bereaved of children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has happened to me!" ³⁷ Then Reuben said to his father, "You may kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." ³⁸ But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should come to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."

The Brothers Come Again, Bringing Benjamin

43 Now the famine was severe in the land. ² And when they had eaten up the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little more food." ³ But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' ⁴ If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food; ⁵ but if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.'" ⁶ Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?" ⁷ They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" ⁸ Then Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy with me, and let us be on our way, so that we may live and not die—you and we and also our little ones. ⁹ I myself will be surety for him; you can hold me accountable for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. ¹⁰ If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

¹¹ Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry them down as a present to the man—a little balm and a little honey, gum, resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds. ¹² Take double the money with you. Carry

back with you the money that was returned in the top of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight.¹³ Take your brother also, and be on your way again to the man; ¹⁴ may God Almighty^[o] grant you mercy before the man, so that he may send back your other brother and Benjamin. As for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.”¹⁵ So the men took the present, and they took double the money with them, as well as Benjamin. Then they went on their way down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon.”¹⁷ The man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph’s house. ¹⁸ Now the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph’s house, and they said, “It is because of the money, replaced in our sacks the first time, that we have been brought in, so that he may have an opportunity to fall upon us, to make slaves of us and take our donkeys.”¹⁹ So they went up to the steward of Joseph’s house and spoke with him at the entrance to the house. ²⁰ They said, “Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food; ²¹ and when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was each one’s money in the top of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it back with us. ²² Moreover we have brought down with us additional money to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”²³ He replied, “Rest assured, do not be afraid; your God and the God of your father must have put treasure in your sacks for you; I received your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them. ²⁴ When the steward^[p] had brought the men into Joseph’s house, and given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given their donkeys fodder,²⁵ they made the present ready for Joseph’s coming at noon, for they had heard that they would dine there.

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought him the present that they had carried into the house, and bowed to the ground before him. ²⁷ He inquired about their welfare, and said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”²⁸ They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” And they bowed their heads and did obeisance. ²⁹ Then he looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!”³⁰ With that, Joseph hurried out, because he was overcome with affection for his brother, and he was about to weep. So he went into a private room and wept there. ³¹ Then he washed his face and came out; and controlling himself he said, “Serve the meal.”³² They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. ³³ When they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, the men looked at one another in amazement. ³⁴ Portions were taken to them from Joseph’s table, but Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

Joseph Detains Benjamin

44 Then he commanded the steward of his house, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the top of his sack. ² Put my cup, the silver cup, in the top of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain.” And he did as Joseph told him. ³ As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their donkeys. ⁴ When they had gone only a short distance from the city, Joseph said to his steward, “Go, follow after the men;

and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you returned evil for good? Why have you stolen my silver cup?’⁵ Is it not from this that my lord drinks? Does he not indeed use it for divination? You have done wrong in doing this.’”

⁶ When he overtook them, he repeated these words to them. ⁷ They said to him, “Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants that they should do such a thing!

⁸ Look, the money that we found at the top of our sacks, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan; why then would we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? ⁹ Should it be found with any one of your servants, let him die; moreover the rest of us will become my lord’s slaves.” ¹⁰ He said, “Even so; in accordance with your words, let it be: he with whom it is found shall become my slave, but the rest of you shall go free.” ¹¹ Then each one quickly lowered his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. ¹² He searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack. ¹³ At this they tore their clothes. Then each one loaded his donkey, and they returned to the city.

¹⁴ Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house while he was still there; and they fell to the ground before him. ¹⁵ Joseph said to them, “What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that one such as I can practice divination?” ¹⁶ And Judah said, “What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? How can we clear ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; here we are then, my lord’s slaves, both we and also the one in whose possession the cup has been found.” ¹⁷ But he said, “Far be it from me that I should do so! Only the one in whose possession the cup was found shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father.”

Judah Pleads for Benjamin’s Release

¹⁸ Then Judah stepped up to him and said, “O my lord, let your servant please speak a word in my lord’s ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are like Pharaoh himself. ¹⁹ My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’ ²⁰ And we said to my lord, ‘We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. His brother is dead; he alone is left of his mother’s children, and his father loves him.’ ²¹ Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me, so that I may set my eyes on him.’ ²² We said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.’ ²³ Then you said to your servants, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.’ ²⁴ When we went back to your servant my father we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵ And when our father said, ‘Go again, buy us a little food,’ ²⁶ we said, ‘We cannot go down. Only if our youngest brother goes with us, will we go down; for we cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’ ²⁷ Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸ one left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces; and I have never seen him since. ²⁹ If you take this one also from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to Sheol.’ ³⁰ Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father and the boy is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the boy’s life, ³¹ when he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die; and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. ³² For your servant became surety for the boy to my father, saying, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, then I will bear the blame in the sight of my father all my life.’ ³³ Now therefore, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord in place of the boy;

and let the boy go back with his brothers. ³⁴ For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the suffering that would come upon my father.”

Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Send everyone away from me.” So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. ² And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. ³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’ ¹² And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. ¹³ You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.” ¹⁴ Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

¹⁶ When the report was heard in Pharaoh’s house, “Joseph’s brothers have come,” Pharaoh and his servants were pleased. ¹⁷ Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: load your animals and go back to the land of Canaan. ¹⁸ Take your father and your households and come to me, so that I may give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you may enjoy the fat of the land.’ ¹⁹ You are further charged to say, ‘Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. ²⁰ Give no thought to your possessions, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.’”

²¹ The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them wagons according to the instruction of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. ²² To each one of them he gave a set of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of garments. ²³ To his father he sent the following: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. ²⁴ Then he sent his brothers on their way, and as they were leaving he said to them, “Do not quarrel along the way.”

²⁵ So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. ²⁶ And they told him, “Joseph is still alive! He is even ruler over all the land of Egypt.” He was stunned; he

could not believe them. ²⁷ But when they told him all the words of Joseph that he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. ²⁸ Israel said, “Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I must go and see him before I die.”

Jacob Brings His Whole Family to Egypt

46 When Israel set out on his journey with all that he had and came to Beer-sheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. ² God spoke to Israel in visions of the night, and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.” ³ Then he said, “I am God, ^[s] the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. ⁴ I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again; and Joseph’s own hand shall close your eyes.”

⁵ Then Jacob set out from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. ⁶ They also took their livestock and the goods that they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, ⁷ his sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters; all his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

⁸ Now these are the names of the Israelites, Jacob and his offspring, who came to Egypt. Reuben, Jacob’s firstborn, ⁹ and the children of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ¹⁰ The children of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, ^[l] the son of a Canaanite woman. ¹¹ The children of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹² The children of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the children of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. ¹³ The children of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Jashub, ^[u] and Shimron. ¹⁴ The children of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel ¹⁵ (these are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; in all his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three). ¹⁶ The children of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. ¹⁷ The children of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. The children of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel ¹⁸ (these are the children of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons). ¹⁹ The children of Jacob’s wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰ To Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. ²¹ The children of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard ²² (these are the children of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all). ²³ The children of Dan: Hashum. ^[v] ²⁴ The children of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem ²⁵ (these are the children of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all). ²⁶ All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own offspring, not including the wives of his sons, were sixty-six persons in all. ²⁷ The children of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

Jacob Settles in Goshen

²⁸ Israel^[w] sent Judah ahead to Joseph to lead the way before him into Goshen. When they came to the land of Goshen, ²⁹ Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. He presented himself to him, fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, “I can die now, having seen for myself that you are still alive.” ³¹ Joseph said to his brothers and to his father’s household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, ‘My brothers and my father’s household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

³² The men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.’ ³³ When Pharaoh calls you, and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ ³⁴ you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our ancestors’—in order that you may settle in the land of Goshen, because all shepherds are abhorrent to the Egyptians.”

47 So Joseph went and told Pharaoh, “My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; they are now in the land of Goshen.” ² From among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. ³ Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, as our ancestors were.” ⁴ They said to Pharaoh, “We have come to reside as aliens in the land; for there is no pasture for your servants’ flocks because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, we ask you, let your servants settle in the land of Goshen.” ⁵ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land; let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know that there are capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock.”

⁷ Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob, and presented him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ⁸ Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How many are the years of your life?” ⁹ Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my earthly sojourn are one hundred thirty; few and hard have been the years of my life. They do not compare with the years of the life of my ancestors during their long sojourn.” ¹⁰ Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. ¹¹ Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and granted them a holding in the land of Egypt, in the best part of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had instructed. ¹² And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father’s household with food, according to the number of their dependents.

The Famine in Egypt

¹³ Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe. The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. ¹⁴ Joseph collected all the money to be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, in exchange for the grain that they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh’s house. ¹⁵ When the money from the land of Egypt and from the land of Canaan was spent, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, and said, “Give us food! Why should we die before your eyes? For our money is gone.” ¹⁶ And Joseph answered, “Give me your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, if your money is gone.” ¹⁷ So they brought their livestock to Joseph; and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the herds, and the donkeys. That year he supplied them with food in

exchange for all their livestock. ¹⁸ When that year was ended, they came to him the following year, and said to him, “We cannot hide from my lord that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my lord’s. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. ¹⁹ Shall we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for food. We with our land will become slaves to Pharaoh; just give us seed, so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate.”

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. All the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe upon them; and the land became Pharaoh’s. ²¹ As for the people, he made slaves of them^[x] from one end of Egypt to the other. ²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh, and lived on the allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land. ²³ Then Joseph said to the people, “Now that I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh, here is seed for you; sow the land. ²⁴ And at the harvests you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones.” ²⁵ They said, “You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be slaves to Pharaoh.” ²⁶ So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth. The land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh’s.

The Last Days of Jacob

²⁷ Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the region of Goshen; and they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly. ²⁸ Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were one hundred forty-seven years.

²⁹ When the time of Israel’s death drew near, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “If I have found favor with you, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal loyally and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt. ³⁰ When I lie down with my ancestors, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.” He answered, “I will do as you have said.” ³¹ And he said, “Swear to me”; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself on the head of his bed.

Jacob Blesses Joseph’s Sons

48 After this Joseph was told, “Your father is ill.” So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ² When Jacob was told, “Your son Joseph has come to you,” he summoned his strength and sat up in bed. ³ And Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me, ⁴ and said to me, ‘I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers; I will make of you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your offspring after you for a perpetual holding.’ ⁵ Therefore your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are now mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are. ⁶ As for the offspring born to you after them, they shall be yours. They shall be recorded under the names of their brothers with regard to their inheritance. ⁷ For when I came from Paddan, Rachel, alas, died in the land of Canaan on the way, while there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath” (that is, Bethlehem).

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" ⁹ Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." ¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, and he could not see well. So Joseph brought them near him; and he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹ Israel said to Joseph, "I did not expect to see your face; and here God has let me see your children also." ¹² Then Joseph removed them from his father's knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. ¹³ Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them near him. ¹⁴ But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands, for Manasseh was the firstborn. ¹⁵ He blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my ancestors Abraham and Isaac walked,
the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,
¹⁶ the angel who has redeemed me from all harm, bless the boys;
and in them let my name be perpetuated, and the name of my ancestors Abraham and Isaac;
and let them grow into a multitude on the earth."

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father! Since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." ¹⁹ But his father refused, and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations." ²⁰ So he blessed them that day, saying,

"By you^[ab] Israel will invoke blessings, saying,
'God make you^[ac] like Ephraim and like Manasseh.'"

So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. ²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your ancestors." ²² I now give to you one portion more than to your brothers, the portion that I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow."

Jacob's Last Words to His Sons

49 Then Jacob called his sons, and said: "Gather around, that I may tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

² Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob;
listen to Israel your father.

³ Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might and the first fruits of my vigor,
excelling in rank and excelling in power.

⁴ Unstable as water, you shall no longer excel
because you went up onto your father's bed;
then you defiled it—you went up onto my couch!

⁵ Simeon and Levi are brothers;
 weapons of violence are their swords.
⁶ May I never come into their council;
 may I not be joined to their company—
for in their anger they killed men,
 and at their whim they hamstrung oxen.
⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce,
 and their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob,
 and scatter them in Israel.
⁸ Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
 your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
 your father's sons shall bow down before you.
⁹ Judah is a lion's whelp;
 from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He crouches down, he stretches out like a lion,
 like a lioness—who dares rouse him up?
¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
 nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;
 and the obedience of the peoples is his.
¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine
 and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
he washes his garments in wine
 and his robe in the blood of grapes;
¹² his eyes are darker than wine,
 and his teeth whiter than milk.
¹³ Zebulun shall settle at the shore of the sea;
 he shall be a haven for ships,
 and his border shall be at Sidon.
¹⁴ Issachar is a strong donkey,
 lying down between the sheepfolds;
¹⁵ he saw that a resting place was good,
 and that the land was pleasant;
so he bowed his shoulder to the burden,
 and became a slave at forced labor.
¹⁶ Dan shall judge his people
 as one of the tribes of Israel.
¹⁷ Dan shall be a snake by the roadside,
 a viper along the path,
that bites the horse's heels
 so that its rider falls backward.
¹⁸ I wait for your salvation, O LORD.
¹⁹ Gad shall be raided by raiders,
 but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰ Asher's food shall be rich,
and he shall provide royal delicacies.
²¹ Naphtali is a doe let loose
that bears lovely fawns.
²² Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.
²³ The archers fiercely attacked him;
they shot at him and pressed him hard.
²⁴ Yet his bow remained taut,
and his arms were made agile
by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
²⁵ by the God of your father, who will help you,
by the Almighty who will bless you
with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
²⁶ The blessings of your father
are stronger than the blessings of the eternal mountains,
the bounties of the everlasting hills;
may they be on the head of Joseph,
on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.
²⁷ Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey,
and at evening dividing the spoil.”

²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, blessing each one of them with a suitable blessing.

Jacob's Death and Burial

²⁹ Then he charged them, saying to them, “I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my ancestors—in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave in the field at Machpelah, near Mamre, in the land of Canaan, in the field that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site. ³¹ There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried; there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried; and there I buried Leah— ³² the field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the Hittites.” ³³ When Jacob ended his charge to his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

50 Then Joseph threw himself on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. ² Joseph commanded the physicians in his service to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel; ³ they spent forty days in doing this, for that is the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

⁴ When the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph addressed the household of Pharaoh, “If now I have found favor with you, please speak to Pharaoh as follows: ⁵ My father made me swear an oath; he said, ‘I am about to die. In the tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.’ Now therefore let me go up, so that I may bury my father; then I will return.” ⁶ Pharaoh answered, “Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear to do.”

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father’s household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ Both chariots and charioteers went up with him. It was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they held there a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed a time of mourning for his father seven days. ¹¹ When the Canaanite inhabitants of the land saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning on the part of the Egyptians.” Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; it is beyond the Jordan. ¹² Thus his sons did for him as he had instructed them. ¹³ They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, the field near Mamre, which Abraham bought as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

Joseph Forgives His Brothers

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers said, “What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?” ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ ‘Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.’ Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Joseph’s Last Days and Death

²² So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father’s household; and Joseph lived one hundred ten years. ²³ Joseph saw Ephraim’s children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born on Joseph’s knees.

²⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die; but God will surely come to you, and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” ²⁵ So Joseph made the Israelites swear, saying, “When God comes to you, you shall carry up my bones from here.” ²⁶ And Joseph died, being one hundred ten years old; he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.