

וַיְחִי Va-Yechi

Genesis 47:28 – 50:26

Genesis 47:28

וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ

מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעַת עָשָׂר שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יָמֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם וְחָמִישׁ

שָׁבָע שָׁנִים וָאַרְבָּעִים וּמֵאָת שָׁנָה: וַיִּקְרָבוּ יָמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

Summary

- Jacob senses his life is coming to an end, he asks Joseph to make an oath not to bury him in Egypt but with his fathers
- Jacob tells Joseph of the covenant YHVH made with him at Luz
- Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manaseh, like Reuben and Simeon
- Israel blesses Ephraim and Manaseh
- Israel assigns a portion (shechem/Shechem?) to Joseph
- Israel gives prophetic message to his sons
- Jacob was gathered to his people

Summary

- Jacob was embalmed, and Joseph asks Pharaoh to allow him to bury his father
- The funeral procession was noticed by the Canaanites
- Joseph and his brothers bury Jacob in Macpelah
- Joseph's brothers were fearful that after their father's death he would take revenge for what they did
- Joseph asks the children of Israel to carry his bones back when they leave Egypt

Questions

- Why are Ephraim and Manaseh seemingly taking place of Reuben and Simeon?
- What continuing trend do we see in this Torah portion?
- Was a double portion given to Joseph?

"And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, [are] mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

Genesis 48:5

the sons of Leah [were] Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun;

Genesis 35:23

Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph [was] not in the pit; and he tore his clothes.

Genesis 37:29

Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me [some] of your son's mandrakes."

Genesis 30:14

And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard [about it]. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

Genesis 35:22

Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying,
"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."

Genesis 42:37

3 "Reuben, you are my firstborn, My might and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.

4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel, Because you went up to your father's bed; Then you defiled [it]--He went up to my couch.

Genesis 49:3-4

5 "Simeon and Levi [are] brothers; Instruments of cruelty [are in] their dwelling place.

6 Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.

Genesis 49:5-6

Examples of First and Second born

- Cain and Able – Able's offering was regarded above Cain's
- Ishmael and Isaac – Isaac was the promised heir.
- Esau and Jacob – Jacob took Esau's blessing
- Manasseh and Ephraim
- Firstborn of Israel and the Levites

"Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

Genesis 48:22

שֶׁכֶם *shěkem*

- shoulder, back
- shoulder, shoulder-blade
- back (in general)

שָׁכַם *shakam*

to rise or start early

1.(Hiphil)

1.to rise early, make an early start

2.early (as adverb)

13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding [the flock] in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am."

14 Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.

Genesis 37:13-14

