

Genesis 50

Verses 1-3

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him. ² Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept on him, and kissed him.

Jacob loved his favorite son and that feeling was reciprocated.

² Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.

Because of his exalted position, Joseph had an entourage that included these physicians that watched over his health but they were also skilled in the science of embalming.

³ Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

The embalming process took 40 days.

It was customary to mourn a Pharaoh's death for 72 days so the Egyptians gave Jacob a royal funeral minus two days.

Verses 4 - 6

⁴ When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now then, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'"

⁶ Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

⁴ **When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying,**

Joseph approached Pharaoh through messengers rather than personally. There may have been a couple of reasons why he did it this way.

1. He might have approached Pharaoh through the priests since they were responsible for the burial of the dead.
2. Maybe Joseph was unpresentable because of his mourning, and he could not see the king in person.

See Genesis 41:14

¹⁴ **Then Pharaoh sent word and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.**

⁵ **“My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now then, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.”**

The three patriarchs and their wives were buried in the cave of Machpelah in Hebron. This included Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah. The only matriarch missing is Jacob's other wife, Rachel, who was buried near Bethlehem. Since this was a family burial cave, graves could be dug ahead of time.

Verses 7-11

⁷ **So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father’s household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen.**

⁹ **Chariots with teams of horses also went up with him; and it was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they mourned there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹ Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians.” Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.**

⁹ Chariots with teams of horses also went up with him; and it was a very great company.

All of the important leaders of Egypt went with the king to Jacob's funeral. The trip covered around 300 miles.

See map 5005



¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they mourned there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days of mourning for his father.

They went to the east side of the Jordan River (red line), went up, and came to the threshing floor of Atad and mourned the death of Jacob for 7 days.

This route would have added 100 miles to their trip but this may have been the best option since the Egyptian delegation had a large group of important people and security was the most important factor to consider.

See Pic 5010 Threshing floor



The funeral for Jacob (1689) took place about 11 years after the famine (1700) was over. It is not clear why Joseph spent a week here in mourning rather than doing so after they arrived in Hebron.

Verses 12 -14

² And so his sons did for him as he had commanded them; ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah opposite Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. ¹⁴ And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah opposite Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite.

This burial site was discussed in great detail in chapter 23.

Verses 15-22

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers had seen that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!" ¹⁶ So they sent instructions to Joseph, saying, "Your father commanded *us* before he died, saying, ¹⁷ 'This is what you shall say to Joseph: "Please forgive, I beg you, the offense of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong.'" And now, please forgive the offense of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to keep many people alive. ²¹ So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers had seen that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!"

The brothers of Joseph were still afraid that he might punish them. Joseph had put them thru the ringer by accusing them of being spies but he had also wept in their presence and told them that God had turned their evil into good.

¹⁶ So they sent instructions to Joseph, saying, "Your father commanded *us* before he died, saying, ¹⁷ 'This is what you shall say to Joseph: "Please forgive, I beg you, the offense of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong."'

The brothers alleged that Jacob wanted Joseph to forgive them. More than likely, they concocted this story and hoped Joseph would be moved to forgive them out of reverence to his father. However, the text does not say that Jacob said this; it says that they said he did.

And now, please forgive the offense of the servants of the God of your father.
And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

It should be remembered that this is 16 years after Joseph had revealed himself to his brothers and told them not to be angry with themselves for selling him there because God had sent him ahead of them to save lives.

He wept because they still thought he might still take revenge on them.

¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God’s place?”

It is God’s place to take revenge.

²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to keep many people alive. ²¹ So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

God can take evil and turn it into a blessing. This truth is easy to quote but so difficult to believe.

Verses 22-26

²² Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father’s household, and Joseph lived 110 years. ²³ Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim’s sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph’s knees. ²⁴ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will assuredly take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will assuredly take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.” ²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of 110 years; and they embalmed him and placed him in a coffin in Egypt.

²³ Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim’s sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph’s knees

See chart 5015

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
41	Joseph	Years of plenty	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Manasseh and Ephraim born	31-37	1714 - 1708
41	Joseph	Years of famine	38-44	1707 - 1701
45	Joseph	5 years of famine left	40	1705
46	Benjamin	5 years of famine left	33	1705
47	Jacob	5 years of famine left	131	1705
49	Jacob	Jacob dies	147	1689
50	Joseph	Joseph dies	110	1635

Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were between 73 and 79 years old when Joseph died. This explains how Joseph was able to see the 3rd generation of Ephraim's sons.

²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will assuredly take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here."

A future generation would take his remains with them when they went into Canaan.

See Exodus 13:19 1446 BC

¹⁹ And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will certainly take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you."

See Joshua 24:32 1375bc

³² Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem, in the plot of land which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money; and they became the inheritance of Joseph's sons.

²⁶ So Joseph died at the age of 110 years; and they embalmed him and placed him in a coffin in Egypt.

Joseph died in 1635 BC