

Genesis Chapter 50

Genesis 50:1 "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

"And Joseph fell upon his father's face":

Laid his own face to the cold face and pale cheeks of his dead father, out of his tender affection for him, and grief at parting with him.

This shows that Joseph had been present from the time his father sent for him, and all the while he had been blessing the tribes, and giving orders about his funeral.

“And wept upon him”:

Which to do for and over the dead is neither unlawful nor unbecoming, provided it is not carried to excess, as the instances of David, Christ, and others show.

"And kissed him":

Taking his farewell of him, as friends used to do, when parting and going a long journey, as death is.

This was practiced by heathens, who had a notion that the soul went out of the body by the mouth, and they in this way received it into themselves.

Joseph no doubt at this time closed the eyes of his father also, as it is said he should, and as was usual (see Gen. 46:4).

Jacob had just died at the end of chapter 49.

Joseph truly loves his father.

His emotions were stirred as his father died, and he wept, and kissed him.

Verses 2-3

“Physicians to embalm”:

Joseph summoned medical men, who were fully capable of embalming.

Usually in Egypt, mummifying was a 40 day process, which included gutting the body, drying it, and wrapping it.

Genesis 50:2 "And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel."

"And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father":

Which he did, not merely because it was the custom of the Egyptians, but because it was necessary, his father's corpse to be carried into Canaan to be interred there, which would require some time.

"The physicians to embalm his father":

And of these Joseph had more than one, as great personages have their physicians ready to attend them on any occasion, as kings and princes, and such was Joseph, being viceroy of Egypt.

Herodotus says the Egyptians had physicians peculiar to every disease, one for one disease, and another for another.

Jacob was "embalmed" and "Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians" (haropeim), to do the work.

Medicine and the embalming were two distinct professions.

He may have employed the physicians, so as to avoid the magic and mysticism of the embalmers and priests.

Verses 3-6

Once normal embalming and mourning had been properly observed according to Egyptian custom, Joseph was free to seek permission to conduct a funeral in Canaan.

Genesis 50:3 "And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days."

The "threescore and ten days"

for mourning accord with the traditional period for mummification and mourning.

The various internal organs were removed and placed in ancient Egyptian vases of a mixture of sodium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate, causing rapid dehydration and preventing decomposition of the body.

Hebrews did not, and do not, embalm the dead.

This was an Egyptian custom.

Joseph was just a lad when he came to Egypt and picked up some of their customs.

The dead body would begin to smell the fourth day, if it was not embalmed.

It is the law in the U.S., if a person is not embalmed, they must be in the ground in 24 hours.

Even today, some Hebrews do not embalm.

Since the body does not smell, they mourned for him for 40 days.

Genesis 50:4 "And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,"

"And when the days of his mourning were past":

The forty days before mentioned, in which both the Egyptians and Jacob's family had mourned for him.

An Arabic writer says, the Egyptians mourned for Jacob forty days, which was the time of embalming; but the text is express for seventy days:

"Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh":

To the court of Pharaoh, the principal men there.

So the Targum of Jonathan and also the Septuagint version to the great men or princes of the house of Pharaoh.

It may seem strange that Joseph, being next to Pharaoh in the administration of the government, should make use of any to speak for him to Pharaoh on the following account.

It may be that Joseph was not in so high an office, and in so much power and authority, as in the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine.

And it is certain that that branch of his office, respecting the corn, must have ceased.

Or this might have been a piece of policy in Joseph to make these men his friends by such obliging treatment, and by this means prevent their making objections to his suit, or plotting against him in his absence.

Or if it was the custom in Egypt, as it afterwards was in Persia, that no man might appear before the king in a mourning habit (Esther 4:2).

This might be the reason of his not making application in person.

Moreover, it might not seem so decent for him to come to court, and leave the dead, and his father's family, in such circumstances as they were.

Besides, he might speak to them not in person, but by a messenger, since it is highly probable he was now in Goshen, at a distance from Pharaoh's court.

Unless it can be supposed that these were some of Pharaoh's courtiers who were come to him in Goshen, to condole his father's death.

"Saying, if now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh":

However, as these men had the ear of Pharaoh, and an interest in him, Joseph entreats the favor of them to move it to him: saying, as follows, in his name.

Genesis 50:5 "My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again."

"My father made me swear, saying, lo, I die":

Having reason to believe he should not live long, he sent for Joseph, and took an oath of him to do as follows.

This Joseph would have observed to Pharaoh, to show the necessity of his application to him, and the reasonableness of his request.

The words of dying men are always to be regarded; their dying charge is always attended to by those who have a regard to duty and honor.

But much more when an oath is annexed to them, which among all nations was reckoned sacred.

"In the grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me":

It was usual with persons in their lifetime to prepare graves or sepulchers for themselves, as appears from the instances of Shebna, Joseph of Arimathea, and others, and so Jacob provided one for himself.

And when he is said to "dig" it, it is not to be supposed that he dug it himself, but ordered it to be dug by his servants.

And very probably this was done at the time he buried Leah.

Onkelos renders it, "which I have bought", possessed or obtained by purchase.

And so, the word is used (in Hosea 3:2).

But the cave of Machpelah, in which Jacob's grave was, was not bought by him, but was bought by Abraham.

And now, since it was Jacob's desire, yea, and his dying charge, to be buried in the grave he had provided for himself.

The mention of this to an Egyptian king could not fail of having its desired effect; since the Egyptians, as the historian says, were more careful about their graves than about their houses.

"Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee":

To the land of Canaan, this lay higher than Egypt.

"And bury my father":

There, in the grave he has provided for himself.

"And I will come again":

To the land of Egypt; this he would have said, lest it should be thought he only contrived this to get an opportunity of going away to Canaan with all his wealth and riches.

Genesis 50:6 "And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear."

"And Pharaoh said":

To Joseph, by the courtiers that waited upon him at Joseph's request, who having delivered it to him had this answer.

"Go up, and bury thy father, as he made thee swear":

The oath seems to be the principal thing that influenced Pharaoh to grant the request, it being a sacred thing, and not to be violated.

Otherwise, perhaps, he would not have chosen that Joseph should have been so long absent from him, and might have thought a grave in Egypt, and an honorable interment there, which he would have spared no cost to have given, might have done as well, or better.

Here we see that, even though Joseph had been second in command in the land, he was still subject to Pharaoh.

He told Pharaoh of swearing to his father that he would bury him in Canaan with his ancestors.

Pharaoh trusted Joseph and agreed.

Verses 7-11

Out of respect for Joseph, a substantial escort accompanied him and all his relatives into the land of Canaan.

This extraordinary event gave assurance to later generations because the bodies of the 3 patriarchs were in Canaan and Joseph's bones awaited transport there when, as per Joseph's last words, God's promise to the 3 began to be fulfilled.

Genesis 50:7 "And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,"

"And Joseph went up to bury his father": According to his request.

Having obtained leave of Pharaoh, and being desirous of paying his last respects, and doing his last duty to so dear a parent, with all the honor and decency this service could be done with.

"And with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh":

A great number of them, as some must be left to wait upon him; who these were the next words of explanation.

"The elders of his house":

His senators and counsellors, his courtiers and principal officers of state.

"And all the elders of the land of Egypt":

Governors of provinces and cities, the chief officers, civil and military; all which was done by the orders of Pharaoh, out of respect to Joseph and his family, and to make the funeral procession grand and honorable.

Genesis 50:8 "And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen."

"And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house":

Joseph and his two sons, and his servants, and his eleven brethren and their sons that were grown up, and as many of his father's domestics as could be spared attended the funeral.

"Only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen":

There must be some servants left, though they are not mentioned, to take care of the little ones, and of the flocks and herds.

And these being left behind, plainly show they intended to return again, and did not make this an excuse to get out of the land.

Genesis 50:9 "And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company."

"And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen":

Which was done both for the sake of honor and grandeur, and for safety and defense, should they be attacked by robbers in the deserts, or opposed by the Canaanites, and be refused the use of the cave of Machpelah, and the right to it disputed.

"And it was a very great company":

Both for quantity and quality.

The attendants at this funeral were very numerous, and many of them were great personages.

And upon the whole was a very honorable company, as the word signifies, and made a very great figure and grand appearance.

Or a very great army, consisting of chariots and horsemen fit for war; if there should be any occasion for it.

The Jews give us the order and manner of the above procession.

First came Joseph, next the servants of Pharaoh or the princes, then the elders of the court of Pharaoh.

Then all the elders of the land of Egypt, then the whole house of Joseph, next to them the brethren of Joseph, who were followed by their eldest sons, and after them were the chariots, and last of all the horses.

This funeral was fit for a king.

Heads of state are sometimes awarded this fanfare at their departure.

Ordinary people do not get this kind of funeral.

Of course, the Egyptians did this for Joseph, whom they loved and respected.

The others went for love and respect of Israel.

To prove they would return, they left their children with their earthly possession.

Genesis 50:10 "And they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which [is] beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."

"And they came to the threshing floor of Atad":

Which was either the name of a man the owner of it, or of a place so called from the thorns and brambles which grew here, and with which the threshing floor was surrounded, as Jarchi says (see Judges 9:14).

And it was usual to make a hedge of thorns round about a threshing floor, so that it might be continually preserved.

Mention is made in the Talmud of the wilderness of Atad, perhaps so called from the thorns and brambles in it.

Jerom says it was three miles from Jericho and two from Jordan, and was in his time called Bethagla, the place of a circuit, because there they went about after the manner of mourners at the funeral of Jacob.

"Which is beyond Jordan":

As it was to those that came out of Egypt.

"And there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation":

Being now entered into the country where the corpse was to be interred.

And perhaps they might choose to stop here and express tokens of mourning, that the inhabitants might be apprised of their design in coming, which was not to invade them and make war upon them, only to bury their dead.

This mourning seems to be made chiefly by the Egyptians, which was done in an external way, and it may be by persons brought with them for that purpose.

Since both the name of the place after given was from their mourning there, and the mourning of Joseph is next observed as distinct from theirs.

"And he made a mourning for his father seven days":

Which was the time of mourning, afterwards observed by the Jews (see 1 Samuel 31:13).

This Joseph ordered and observed after he had buried his father.

We know that "seven" means spiritually complete.

This mourning was over.

This threshing floor had one large area big enough to hold the mourners.

Genesis 50:11 "And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This [is] a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which [is] beyond Jordan."

Following a seven-day period of mourning at the threshing floor of “Atad” (named “Abel-mizraim” or “Mourning of Egypt,” because of the sorrow expressed by the Egyptians).

"Abel-mizraim":

This means meadow, or mourning.

These local people saw so many Egyptians; they assumed the dead person was an Egyptian.

Genesis 50:12 "And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them:"

"And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them":

Not only Joseph, but all the sons of Jacob were concerned in the burial of him, being all charged by him with it, and who were obedient to his commands as follows (see Gen. 49:29).

Genesis 50:13 "For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre."

"For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan":

That is, they took care that he was carried there, as he desired to be.

For it cannot be thought that they carried him on their shoulders there, in like manner as the devout men carried Stephen to his burial (Acts 8:2).

And buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, etc. the very place where he chose to be buried (Genesis 47:29).

The body was placed in the cave of Machpelah with the other patriarchs.

All of this showed great respect and obedience to the father from Joseph and his brethren.

Genesis 50:14 "And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father."

"And Joseph returned into Egypt":

As he promised he would (Genesis 50:5).

"He and his brethren":

The eleven sons of Jacob; for though they had not made the same promise, nor Joseph for them, yet they returned, having left their little ones, flocks and herds, in Egypt.

"And all that went up with him to bury his father":

The elders and great men of the land of Egypt, with their attendants.

"After he had buried his father":

In the land of Canaan, which, though given to the seed of Jacob, the time was not come for them to possess it.

Nor the time of their departure out of Egypt from there, which was to be a good while therefore, and after another manner.

Verses 15-18

The brother's guilty consciences reasserted themselves and caused them to seriously underestimate the genuineness of Joseph's forgiveness and affection for them.

Jacobs's concern to plead on his sons' behalf equally underestimated Joseph's words and actions toward his brethren.

Genesis 50:15 "And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him."

"And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead":

And buried; for this and what follows were after their return to Egypt, coming from the burial of their father.

Though some think it was before, and as soon as they saw their father was dead.

When they thought it a proper time, while Joseph's heart was tender and affected with his father's death, to compromise matters with him.

But there is no reason to invert the order of the narration, for this "seeing" is not to be understood of their bodily sight, but of the contemplation of their minds.

They considered with themselves that their father was now dead and buried, they had lost an affectionate parent, who was concerned for the welfare and peace of all his family, but what a turn things would now take they knew not.

"They said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him":

Their sin came fresh to their remembrance, their guilt arose in their consciences and then flew in their faces.

And this caused fear and distrust where there was no reason for it, and led them to treat Joseph's character very ill.

Who was far from being of such a temper and disposition suggested by them, as if he retained hatred in his breast, and was of a revengeful spirit, only hid it during his father's life, because he would not grieve him.

Genesis 50:16 "And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,"

"And they sent a messenger unto Joseph":

Not Bilhah, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, nor her sons, Dan and Naphtali.

Though it is not improbable that some from among themselves were appointed, who were most interested in Joseph.

Since it is not very likely they would commit such an affair to a stranger or to a servant.

And the most proper persons to be sent on such an errand seem to be Judah and Benjamin, the latter as having had no concern in the affair of selling him, and was his own brother by father and mother's side, and very dear to him.

And the former, because he saved his life, when the rest, excepting Reuben, were for shedding his blood.

And had endeared himself also to Joseph, by his tender concern both for his father and his brother Benjamin.

However, they thought fit first to test Joseph by a messenger, how he stood affected to them, before they appeared in a body in person.

To whom they gave a charge, as the words may be rendered, "they commanded unto Joseph"; that is, they commanded those that were appointed by them to him.

"Saying, thy father did command before he died":

Some think, this was no better than a lie, which their fear prompted them to.

And that they framed the following story, the more to work upon the mind of Joseph, and dispose it in their favor.

Seeing it is a question to discover whether Jacob ever knew anything of the affair of their evil done to Joseph.

Since otherwise it would have been, in all likelihood, taken notice of in his last dying words, as well as the affair of Reuben, and that of Simeon and Levi.

Besides, had he been apprised of it, he knew such was the clemency and generosity of Joseph, that he had nothing to fear from him, nor could he entertain any suspicion of a malevolent disposition in him towards his brethren.

Or that he would ever use them ill for former offences.

Genesis 50:17 "So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him."

"So shall ye say unto Joseph, forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin":

Their very great sin and therefore more words than one are used to express it.

Unless this repetition should be intended, and signifies that their crime was a trespass against God, and a sin against their brother.

And however, they are directed to ask forgiveness for it, and then to urge the relation they stood in Joseph.

In order to obtain it, which they were ready to acknowledge as a very great evil, and of which they repented.

"And now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father":

They urge not only the common relation they were to Jacob, but what they stood in to the God of Jacob, being his servants, his worshippers, as Joseph also was.

And therefore, being his brethren not only in nature but in religion and grace, they hoped he would forgive their trespass.

"And Joseph wept when they spake unto him; by their messenger":

Being troubled that they should be in such anxiety and distress of mind, which he had a fellow feeling with, and that they should have no better opinion of him, but then to entertain such distrust of him.

Notwithstanding all the kindness he had shown them, as to imagine that he should ever deal hard with them for their former ill usage of him.

Which was forgiven and forgotten by him long ago.

A guilty conscience can eat you up alive.

That was what these brothers were feeling now.

They were thinking what they would do, if they were in Joseph's place.

They realized that Joseph's heart was tender right now from the loss of his father.

They used their father to get forgiveness from Joseph.

Joseph's tears here, were partly because they do not understand the kind of man he was.

He had already forgiven them.

They were so afraid, that they sent a substitute, but as we see in the next verse, they decided to go themselves.

Genesis 50:18 "And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we [be] thy servants."

"And his brethren also went":

The messengers being returned to them, and acquainting them with what Joseph had said, they took courage and went from Goshen to Joseph's house or palace, be it where it may.

"And fell down before his face":

In a humble pleading manner.

"And they said, behold, we be thy servants":

They were content to be so, would he but forgive their sin, and not resent their ill behavior toward him.

Thus, they further fulfilled his dream of the eleven stars making obeisance to him (Genesis 37:9).

Genesis 50:19 "And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for [am] I in the place of God?"

“Am I in the place of God”:

This concise question tweaked their memory of his explanation of how God had put him where he was (45:3-8), in the place God intended him to be at that time.

Genesis 50:20 "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; [but] God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as [it is] this day, to save much people alive."

"And Joseph said unto them, fear not":

That any hurt would be done by him to them, or that he would use them ill for their previous treatment of him.

"for am I in the place of God?"

To receive such homage from you, that you should be my servants, as Saadiah Gaon thus gives the sense.

Or rather to take vengeance for injury once done, which belongs to God alone: or, "am I not under God"?

Subject to him, a servant of his, and why should you be mine?

Nor is it in my power, if I had a will to it.

To change his purposes, to alter his providences, or contradict his will, and do hurt to those whom God hath blessed.

And so may have regard to the late patriarchal benediction of his father, under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Or, "am I in the place of God?" and under him a father of them, as he had been a provider for them, and a supporter of them, and still would be.

What the brothers had meant for “evil,” God had intended for “good.”

This is one of the clearest declarations of divine providence found anywhere in the Bible, reminding us that God’s purpose prevails over the evil of men.

Joseph’s wise, theological answer had gone down in history as the classic statement of God’s sovereignty over the affairs of men (see note on 45:1-8).

Here, we see Joseph as a type of Christ.

Joseph forgave them, even though they did not deserve it, and reassured them that this was God's plan to save many people.

Joseph was a savior of these, and many more people's bodies through the famine.

Jesus is the Savior of our soul.

Genesis 50:21 "Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

"Now therefore, fear ye not":

Which, is repeated to dispossess them of every fear they might entertain of him on any previous account whatever.

"I will nourish you, and your little ones":

Provide food for them, and their families, which was not only for themselves and their sons, now grown up, but their grandchildren and even the youngest and latest of their families should share in his favors.

"And he comforted them, and spake kindly to them":

Even "to their heart"; such things as were quite pleasing and agreeable to them, served to banish their fears, revive their spirits, and afford comfort to them.

Just so God and Christ do with backsliding sinners, and would have done with his own people by his servants (see Isaiah 40:1).

This Scripture reminds me of the one in John where the Lord tells us "Let not your heart be troubled ...", so here again, we see Joseph as a type of Jesus.

Genesis 50:22 "And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years."

"And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house":

Comfortably, quietly, and in great prosperity.

Not only he, but his brethren and their families, as long as he lived.

"And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years":

And all but seventeen of them in Egypt, for at that age it was when he was brought there.

Thirteen years he lived in Potiphar's house, and in prison, for he was thirty years of age when he was brought to Pharaoh, and stood before him, and fourscore years he lived in the greatest honor and prosperity that a man could well wish for.

Genesis 50:23 "And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third [generation]: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees."

"And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation":

His great grandchildren's children; and which shows, as most interpreters observe, that Jacob's prediction, that Ephraim should be the greatest and most numerous, very early on that began to take place.

"And the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees":

Machir had but one son by his first wife, whose name was Gilead; but marrying a second wife, he had two sons, Peresh and Sheresh (see 1 Chron. 7:14).

Who might be born before the death of Joseph, and be said to be brought up upon his knees, being educated by him, and often took up in his lap.

And dandled on his knees, as grandfathers, being fond of their grandchildren, are apt to do.

This was a statement of peace, happiness, and joy that came to Joseph in his last days.

He lived long enough, 110 years to enjoy his great grandchildren.

This is somewhat like the fate of the Christians, when we will live with Jesus in heaven.

Genesis 50:24 "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die":

Some time before his death he called them together, and observed to them, that he expected to die in a little time, as all must.

"And God will surely visit you":

Not in a way of wrath and vindictive justice, as he sometimes does, but in a way of love, grace, and mercy.

Joseph died just as he had lived, firmly trusting in God to carry out His promises (Heb. 11:22).

Almost 4 centuries later, Moses took Joseph's remains out of Egypt (Exodus 13:19), and Joshua buried them at Shechem (Joshua 24:32).

"And bring you out of this land":

The land of Egypt, in which they then dwelt.

"Unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob":

Meaning the land of Canaan, which he swore to those patriarchs that he would give to their posterity.

"To Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob":

The death of Jacob had finally allowed for the 3 patriarchs to be mentioned together.

God does not lie.

He would bring them out and take them to the Promised Land, but it would be 400 years later, after many hardships in Goshen.

Genesis 50:25 "And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence."

"And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel":

Not of his brethren only, but of their posterity, as many of them as were now grown up, that so it might be communicated from one to another, and become well known to that generation which should depart out of Egypt.

"Saying, God will surely visit you":

Which he repeats for the certainty of it, and that it might be observed.

"And ye shall carry up my bones from hence":

When they should go from there to Canaan's land.

He did not desire them to carry him there when he should die, which he knew would give umbrage to the Egyptians, and they would not be so able to obtain leave to do it as he had done for his father.

This was accordingly done; when Israel went out of Egypt, Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, and they were buried in Shechem (see Exodus 13:19).

Joseph, like his father before him, wanted his final resting place to be with Abraham, Isaac and also Jacob.

He made his brothers take an oath to take his bones back when they left Egypt.

Genesis 50:26 "So Joseph died, [being] a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

"So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old" (ca. 1804 B.C.).

Joseph's span of life was considered, at that time in Egypt, an ideal lifespan.

Amenemhet III (ca. 1841-1792 B.C.), was the reigning Pharaoh.

Exodus picked up the historical narrative, after a 280 year silence (ca. 1525 B.C.), with the birth of Moses (see note on Exodus 1:6-8).

"And they embalmed him":

His servants, the physicians, according to the manner of the Egyptians, and as his father Jacob had been embalmed (see Gen. 50:2).

"And he was put into a coffin in Egypt":

In an ark or chest, very probably into such a one in which the Egyptians had used to put dead bodies when embalmed.

In what part of Egypt this coffin was put is not certain, it was most likely in Goshen, and in the care and custody of some of Joseph's posterity.

Joseph made the Israelites pledge with an "oath" that they would carry his "bones" to the Promised Land when God visited them to "bring" them "out" of Egypt (which they did, Exodus 13:19; Josh. 24:32).

And he was dug up by Moses, when the children of Israel departed.

Like his father before him, he was embalmed and put in a "coffin" (aron); which is the same word used for the ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament.

He was embalmed, because it was an Egyptian custom.

His coffin would surely be carried to the Promised Land by the Hebrew's in the Exodus.

Genesis Chapter 50 Questions

1. When Jacob died, what did Joseph do?
2. What did Joseph command his Physicians to do?

3. How many days did they mourn in Egypt?
4. Why did they embalm a Hebrew?
5. Where did Israel want to be buried?
6. Why did Joseph have to ask Pharaoh to be allowed to go?
7. How many went?
8. This funeral was fit for whom?
9. What did Joseph leave behind to assure them that he would be back?
10. Where did they stop and mourn seven days?
11. What did the Canaanites believe?
12. "Abel-mizraim" means what?
13. Who had bought this burying place?
14. What did the brothers think Joseph would do to them?
15. When the brothers asked forgiveness, what did Joseph do?
16. Why did God allow this?
17. Compare Joseph and Jesus as saviors.
18. How long did Joseph live?
19. How many generations of Ephraim's children did Joseph see?
20. What three things did Joseph know in his last days?
21. What three men did God promise the Promised Land to?
22. How many years would it be, until they leave Egypt?
23. What did Joseph make his brethren promise to do, when they went to the holy land?