

## Genesis 37

Verses 1 - 2

Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had lived as a stranger, in the land of Canaan. <sup>2</sup>These are *the records* of the generations of Jacob. Joseph, *when he was seventeen years of age*, was pasturing the flock with his brothers, while he was *still* a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.

**These are the records of the generations of Jacob**

This is the tenth and final division of Genesis

**Joseph, when he was 17 years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers**

Joseph was not reared in a life of ease or idleness

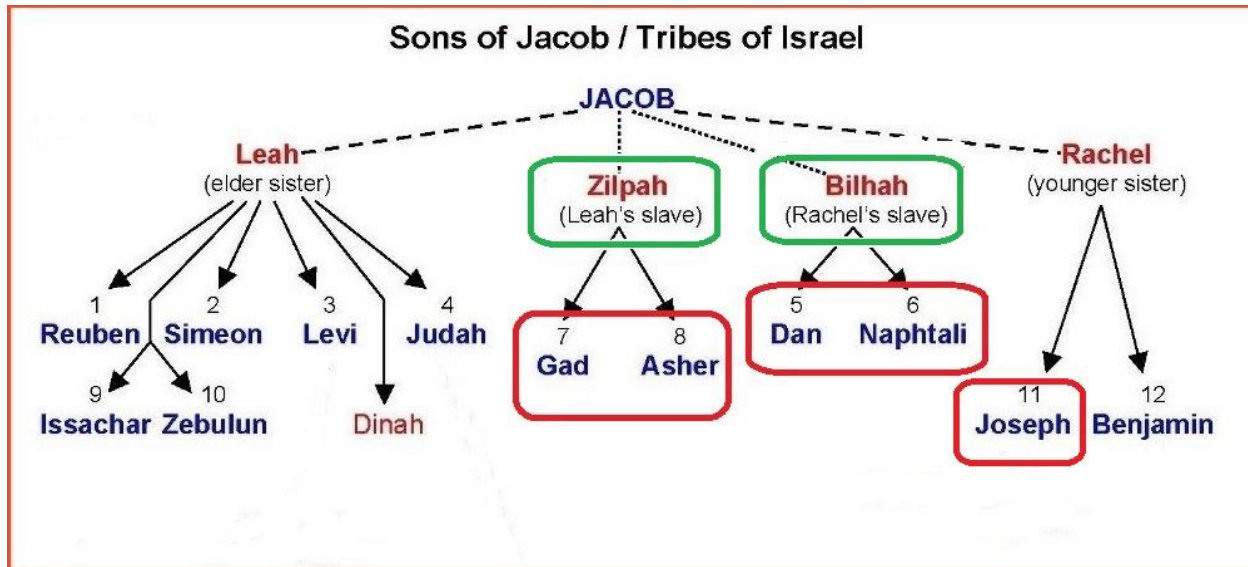
In Ch. 30 Joseph was born in 1745bc, he is now 17 years old (1728 BC)

See pic 3705

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
27 - 28	Isaac	blessing	137	1759
27 - 28	Jacob	Trip to Haran	77	1759
29	Jacob	7 years for Rachel	77-84	1752
29 - 30	Jacob	7 years and 11 kids	84-91	1752 - 1745
30	Jacob	Joseph born	91	1745
31	Jacob	6 years for the flocks	97	1739
32-33		Jacon & Esau reunite	97	1739
35	Jacob	Benjamin born	97	1739
35	Rachel	Dies giving birth	35	1739
37	Joseph	Sold to Ishmaelites	17	1728
40	Joseph	Cupbearer and Baker	28	1717
35	Isaac	Isaac dies	180	1716
41	Joseph	Pharaoh's dream	30	1715
41	Joseph	Years of plenty	31-37	1714 - 1708

Along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives

See pic 3710



Five of Jacob's sons were watching the sheep

**And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.**

We aren't told how they were misbehaving but Joseph made a point of reporting it to their father.

Verses 3 - 4

<sup>3</sup> Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his *other* sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a multicolored tunic. <sup>4</sup> And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms.

<sup>3</sup> Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his *other* sons

Jacob had been brought up in a household with parental preferences

How did that work out for Jacob and Esau?

## **Because he was the son of his old age**

Benjamin was born 6 years after Joseph, so shouldn't this apply to him even more so than to Joseph?

## **And he made him a multicolored tunic**

It was a distinctive garment designed to show Jacobs favor

For Jacob to do this in such a blatant manner was foolish and hurtful

This was certain to create bitter envy and hatred on the part of his brothers.

It also fostered arrogance and pride on Joseph's part

Verses 5-8

**<sup>5</sup> Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; <sup>7</sup> for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf stood up and also remained standing; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." <sup>8</sup> Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.**

**Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more.**

We know this dream came from God, but as far as we know God never told Joseph to reveal it to his brothers

Joseph was either naive or foolish to do that, so it isn't surprising that this caused his brothers to hate him even more

However, Jacob was not the only guilty party

God used the partiality of Jacob, the immaturity of Joseph, and the hatred of his brothers to save the tribe of Jacob

See Romans 8:28

Verses 9-11

**<sup>9</sup> Then he had yet another dream, and informed his brothers of it, and said, “Behold, I have had yet *another* dream; and behold, the sun and the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.” <sup>10</sup> He also told *it* to his father as well as to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have had? Am I and your mother and your brothers actually going to come to bow down to the ground before you?” <sup>11</sup> And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter *in mind*.**

**Then he had yet another dream, and informed his brothers of it**

This 2<sup>nd</sup> dream was much like the first one except his father and mother bow down to him in this one

So why the second dream?

1. This doubling of the dream was designed to indicate its certainty
2. Just as Pharaoh's double dream regarding the cattle and the ears of grain

**He also told *it* to his father as well as to his brothers**

Joseph found himself in a hole but decided to keep on digging

**And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter *in mind*.**

Initially his father rebuked him, but kept the matter in mind

Sometimes two opposing thoughts can be true at the same time

Joseph needed to be rebuked, but what he was saying was trustworthy

His father's reaction to keep the matter in mind was somewhat like Mary's when she treasured up all the things that the angel had revealed concerning Jesus

Some things are hard to understand in the moment but they become much clearer as time passes and certain events unfold

Verses 12-17

<sup>12</sup> Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem. <sup>13</sup> And Israel said to Joseph, "Are your brothers not pasturing *the flock* in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "I will go." <sup>14</sup> Then he said to him, "Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock, and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. <sup>15</sup> A man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, "What are you looking for?" <sup>16</sup> He said, "I am looking for my brothers; please tell me where they are pasturing *the flock*." <sup>17</sup> Then the man said, "They have moved from here; for I heard *them* say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem

See map 3715



Shechem was about a two days' journey from Hebron

Jacob is living in Hebron but his flock is 50 miles away in Shechem

How big a business does Jacob have at this point?

**Then he said to him, “Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock, and bring word back to me.”**

Some time had passed and Jacob wanted to know how things were going

At this point Joseph seems to be a supervisor over the other boys

This would have helped to prepare him for his role in Egypt

**And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan**

Dothan was 15 miles north of Shechem

See Map 3720



It was probably on the third day that Joseph came to his brothers.

Verses 18-24

**<sup>18</sup> When they saw him from a distance, and before he came closer to them, they plotted against him to put him to death. <sup>19</sup> They said to one another, “Here comes this dreamer! <sup>20</sup> Now then, come and let’s kill him, and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, ‘A vicious animal devoured him.’ Then we will see what will become of his dreams!” <sup>21</sup> But Reuben heard *this* and rescued him out of their hands by saying, “Let’s not take his life.” <sup>22</sup> Then Reuben said to them, “Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him”—so that *later* he might rescue him out of their hands, to return him to his father. <sup>23</sup> So it came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the multicolored tunic that was on him; <sup>24</sup> and they took him and threw him into the pit. Now the pit was empty, without any water in it.**

**<sup>20</sup> Now then, come and let’s kill him, and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, ‘A vicious animal devoured him.’ Then we will see what will become of his dreams!**

Question: Does the punishment fit the crime?

Yes, Joseph was somewhat foolish and he should have kept the dreams to himself

Maybe Joseph should have kept the coat of many colors in the closet

But they are planning cold-blooded murder here; Is Joseph deserving of death?

**And Reuben said to them, shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness**

Reuben, being the 1<sup>st</sup> born, was in charge, so he directed them to do this, hoping to return later in secret and take him back to his father

**They took him, and cast him into the pit: and the pit had no water in it.**

The pit was a cistern that held water during the rainy season, but was dry toward the end of the summer

Verses 25-28

<sup>25</sup> Then they sat down to eat a meal. But as they raised their eyes and looked, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying labdanum resin, balsam, and myrrh, on their way to bring *them* down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> And Judah said to his brothers, “What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, and let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our *own* flesh.” And his brothers listened *to him*. <sup>28</sup> Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled *him* out and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver. So they brought Joseph into Egypt.

<sup>25</sup> Then they sat down to eat a meal

How does someone sit down to eat a meal after considering murder?

Not a problem for someone with a hardened heart and no conscience

**A caravan of Ishmaelite’s was coming from Gilead**

See map 3725





<sup>26</sup> And Judah said to his brothers, <sup>27</sup> Come, and let's sell him to the Ishmaelite's and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our *own* flesh.

Reuben's plan to rescue Joseph just got scrapped because he was not present when this decision was made

Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled *him* out and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelite's

They were Ishmaelite's by race, being descended from Ishmael

And they were Midianites by residence

See Map 1702



## **They sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver**

This may have been the going price for a slave at this time

Verses 29-34

**<sup>29</sup> Now Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; so he tore his garments. <sup>30</sup> He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is not *there*; as for me, where am I to go?” <sup>31</sup> So they took Joseph’s tunic, and slaughtered a male goat, and dipped the tunic in the blood; <sup>32</sup> and they sent the multicolored tunic and brought it to their father and said, “We found this; please examine *it to see whether* it is your son’s tunic or not.” <sup>33</sup> Then he examined it and said, “*It is my son’s tunic. A vicious animal has devoured him; Joseph has surely been torn to pieces!*” <sup>34</sup> So Jacob tore his clothes, and put on a sackcloth *undergarment* over his waist, and mourned for his son many days.**

**<sup>30</sup> He returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is not *there*; as for me, where am I to go?**

As the firstborn, he would be held responsible for Joseph’s well being

Nevertheless, his concern should have been for Joseph, not for himself

**We found this; please examine *it to see whether* it is your son’s tunic or not.**

His brothers called Joseph, your son, instead of our brother

In the parable of the prodigal son, the older brother did the same

The lack of concern for Joseph was quite evident

Jacob deceived his father Isaac, concerning the blessing

Jacob then got deceived by Laban

And now he is being deceived by his sons

Jacob reaped what he had sown

Verses 35 - 36

**<sup>35</sup> Then all his sons and all his daughters got up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, “Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.” So his father wept for him. <sup>36</sup> Meanwhile, the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh’s officer, the captain of the bodyguard.**

**And all his sons and daughters rose up to comfort him**

Only one daughter of Jacob, Dinah, is mentioned in the scriptures

But this indicates that there were others

None of the names of Jesus' sisters were given

See Matthew 13:56

**Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.**

How did jealousy affect Jacob’s family?

Jacob was in perpetual mourning

Jacob’s sons had to live with their lie and deception

Joseph became a slave