

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – LESSON 25

JOSEPH GOES HOME TO CANAAN

Joseph saw to the welfare of all Israel's families until his death. He was seventeen years old when he was sold into slavery in Egypt. He was thirty years old when he was freed from prison and made the ruler over all of Egypt, answerable only to Pharaoh. We do not know his age when Israel moved to Egypt, but he was likely age forty or older. He died at age one hundred and ten. He lived to see his great-great grandchildren.

Before he passed away Joseph had his brethren swear an oath in Genesis 50:24-25, ***“24And 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 swore unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 25And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.”***

When Joseph died, his body was embalmed in the Egyptian manner for royalty. It was placed in a coffin where it remained for more than four hundred years, awaiting burial in Canaan.

When Moses led Israel out of bondage from Egypt, Joseph's coffin was taken with them. As they wandered forty years in the wilderness, Joseph's coffin travelled with them. When Joshua crossed the Jordan River taking Israel into Canaan, Joseph's coffin went with them. Seven years of war took place as Israel, under Joshua, conquered the land. Then it was time to bury Joseph's bones in the promised land as they had sworn to do.

Joseph was buried in Shechem in a parcel of land that had been bought centuries earlier by his father Jacob. Shechem then became the land of inheritance for Joseph's family as the family of his son Ephraim took it for a possession.

Roughly five hundred years later after King Solomon's death, the United Kingdom of Israel was divided. Shechem became the capitol of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 and ½ tribes) under Jeroboam, while Judah (1 and ½ tribes) retained Jerusalem as its capitol under Rehoboam.

God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that the land of Canaan would be theirs forever remains valid today. A covenant is only terminated by the death of one of the covenant makers. God has not died to that covenant, and neither has Israel. All of that land will be restored to Israel in the future, including the land which other nations of the earth (and the United Nations) have taken away.

Nations that try to divide and take away land from Israel (and from God's covenant) will be punished. It is so written in His word. We must always stand by Israel as a friend for then we are also “a friend of God” in so doing.