

Torah: B’resheet (Genesis) 47:28 – 50:26
Haftarah: M'lakhim Alef (1 Kings) 2:1-12
B’rit Hadashah: Yochanan (John) 13:1-19

	<i>year 1</i> 47:28-48:22	<i>year2</i> 49:1-26	<i>year3</i> 49:27-50:26
1	47:28 – 31	49:1 – 4	49:27 – 30
2	48:1 – 3	49:5 – 7	49:31 – 33
3	48:4 – 9	49:8 – 12	50:1 – 6
4	48:10 – 13	49:13 – 15	50:7 – 9
5	48:14 – 16	49:16 – 18	50:10 – 14
6	48:17 – 19	49:19 – 21	50:15 – 20
7	48:20 – 22	49:22 – 26	50:21 – 26

and Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years and the days of Jacob the years of his life were one hundred and forty-seven years

va'yekhi Ya'aqov be'erezt Mitzrayim sh'va' esreh shanah va'yehiy ye'mey Ya'aqov sh'ney khayav sheva' shaniym ve'arbaiym u'me'at shanah

וַיֵּכִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ
 מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עָשָׂר שָׁנָה
 וַיְהִי יָמֵי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חִמָּו
 שָׁבַע שָׁנִים וָאַרְבָּעִים וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה:

This final portion in the book of B’resheet tells of Ya’aqov/Yis’rael making his son, Yosef, swear to bury him in the Cave of Makhpelah along with Avraham, Sarah, Yitz’khaq, Rivkah, and Leah. It describes his adoption of Yosef’s two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (giving Joseph a double inheritance). Ya’aqov’s last words regarding his 12 sons are recorded, after which he dies, and is taken with great procession to be buried as he requested. Finally comes the death and embalming of Yosef. Hazak! Hazak! V’Nit’chazek!

The haftarah tells of the death of David and his final words to Solomon, which connects to the Torah portion with the death of Jacob/Israel and his final words to his sons.

Aliyah Highlights

- Gen. 47:28-31** Ya’aqov’s spirit was revived. He lives to $147=7^2 \times 3$ (Yitz’khaq $180=6^2 \times 5$, Avraham $175=5^2 \times 7$). As he approaches the end of his life, he makes Yosef swear to bury him in Machpelah (as will Yosef himself with his brothers – Ge. 50:25).
- Gen. 48:1-3** First biblical mention of illness/sickness/weakness (*khalah* – חָלָה). El Shaddai (God-sufficient, mountain/rock, breast - אֱלֹהֵי שָׂדַי) – one of 9 Torah occurrences, references pre-Moshe. Luz (לֹז) was the original name for Beit El (בֵּית אֵל) where Ya’aqov’s name was changed to Yisra’el and the promises made to Avraham and Yitz’khaq were reiterated.
- Gen. 48:4-9** Ya’aqov summarizes those promises (Ge. 35:11-12), establishing legal precedent to impart blessing and the land as an everlasting possession (*akhuzat olam* – אֲחֻזַּת עוֹלָם). He begins very specific declarations to formally adopt Yosef’s two sons, mentioning the younger son first. It is possible that by remembering Rakhel, Ya’aqov connects the adopted sons as an expression of those she could have had if she survived the birth of Binyamin (Ge. 35:19). He misses her. Her tomb became a famous landmark (1Sa. 10:2, c. 1020 BC). Ya’aqov’s question (“whose are these?”) is likely a part of the legal adoption process, establishing their true identity in the presence of their natural father, recalling his own circumstances (Ge. 27:18).
- Gen. 48:10-13** The verbs “kissed” (*nashaq* – נָשַׁק) and “embraced” (*khavaq* – חָבַק) appear together only two other times (29:3, 33:4) but in the opposite order. Here, they reinforce the spoken declarations of adoption. The concept of bearing children and “knees” is legitimacy and acceptance (Ge. 30:3). Yosef presents his two sons in birth order to receive their blessing.
- Gen. 48:14-16** This “laying on” (*shyt* – שָׁיַט) of hands is to establish/appoint, not the same verb as for offerings and ordination (Ex. 29:10, Nu. 27:18). This physical contact intimately communicates the

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connection between the bestower and the blessed. “Right” and “left” are used seven times (vs. 13-17) to emphasize how important this is to Yosef. Yosef is vicariously the recipient of Ya’aqov’s blessing, as he was blessed by messenger (Ge. 31:3, 11, 13, 35:3, 32:27, 30 Hos. 12:5), and his name (*shem* – שֵׁם) perpetuated as fish (dag – דָּג)? through Ephraim and Menashe (De. 33:17, Jos. 17:14-18)

6. **Gen. 48:17-19** Yosef attributes Ya’aqov’s elevation of his younger son to his bad eyesight (Ge. 48:10) a reminder of the exploitation of his grandfather’s Yitz’khaq’s failing vision (Ge. 27:1-29).
7. **Gen. 48:20-22** But Yisra’el envisions the future (De. 33:17, Jos. 17:14-18), not only for Yosef, but all of the brothers.

Thought Focus

The passing of Ya’aqov/Yisra’el – Very few verses describe the deaths of Avraham (Ge. 25:7-10) and Yitz’khaq (Ge. 35:28-29). Of the patriarchs, Ya’aqov uniquely dies in exile. This special circumstance results in exceptional requests and treatment. Two sets of 17 years (Ge. 37:2/47:28) connect the lives of Ya’aqov and Yosef (75 for Avraham and Yitz’khaq – Ge. 12:4, 21:5, 25:7). Perhaps this teaches us that there is a divine element in all of our lifespans.

Life after death: The story of Yosef began as “the history of Ya’aqov” (Ge. 37:2). Ya’aqov was a man of dreams upon leaving (Ge. 28:12) and returning to the land (Ge. 31:13) that was promised as an eternal inheritance to his fathers, Avraham and Yitz’khaq. Now, Ya’aqov will leave the promised land, never establishing a House of God there (Ge. 28:20-22), to finish his life in Egypt. Dreams, it seems, do not always come true as anticipated and not always within one’s lifetime. Ya’aqov’s story, then, is one of connecting with those who came before him, and those who will come after.

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (47:28) Ya’akov and Yosef both expressed confidence in the after-life. What gets you through life’s hardships? (Job 19:25-27, 1Co 15:13, 19-20, Gal 2:20, Eph 1:11-14)
2. (48:10) Are God’s plans are hidden from your view? Why or why not? (Isa 6:10, Ecc 3:1-8, 2Co 6:2, Isa 49:8, Mat 11:15, Isa 55:6-7)
3. (48:17) Does God’s right hand uphold you? (Psa 16:11, Psa 18:35, Psa 98:1, Exo 15:6, 1Ki 22:19, Isa 48:13, Isa 62:8, Mat 20:21-23, Act 7:55-56, Col 3:1-3)
4. (49:1) How do you express the hope that is in you regarding the “last days?” (Jer 46:28, Mic 4:1, Gen 49:10, Dan 12:4, Rev 10:4, 1Pe 3:15, 2Ti 4:2, Luk 12:12, Isa 2:1-4, Deu 29:29, Act 4:8-13)
5. (49:19) Does God reveal his word to you, instructing as to when to attack and when to defend? Do you ask Him for understanding? (Hab 3:16, Mat 16:18, Col 3:16, Deu 6:6-9, 2Ti 2:15)
6. (49:28) Are you comfortable with your place in the Kingdom of God? (Gal 3:28, 1Co 12:14-21, Rom 11:16-21, 1Co 7:17-24, Pro 27:8, Rom 12:3-8)
7. (50:21) Do you work from your worst fears, or your best hopes? (Joh 15:19, 13:34, Mat 28:20, Rev 17:14, Hag 2:4-7, 2Ch 20:14-17, Exo 14:13, 1Jo 4:4)