

# Genesis 47:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

## Analysis

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**And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in t...** This passage is part of the Joseph narrative, a masterfully crafted account demonstrating God's sovereign providence working through human choices and circumstances to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The Joseph cycle shows how God transforms evil intentions into instruments of salvation.

Central themes include divine providence orchestrating events toward redemptive ends, the testing and refinement of character through suffering and success, forgiveness overcoming betrayal and injustice, and the preservation of God's covenant people through famine. Joseph's rise from slavery to second-in-command of Egypt illustrates how God exalts the humble and uses seeming disasters for ultimate good.

Theologically, these chapters reveal:

1. God's meticulous sovereignty over all events, even evil human actions
2. suffering as preparation for future service rather than punishment
3. forgiveness as reflecting divine character and enabling reconciliation
4. God's covenant faithfulness across generations ensuring the survival and blessing of His people

5. how present suffering gains meaning when viewed from the perspective of God's larger purposes.

Joseph's words "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20) epitomize biblical theodicy and providence.

## Historical Context

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The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

## Related Passages

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**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What theological truths about Settlement in Goshen emerge from this passage?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?
3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֵּשֶׁב בַּ	יֹסֵף	אֶת	אָבִיו	וְאֶת	אֶחָיו	וַיֵּתֵן	לָהֶם
placed	And Joseph	H853	his father	H853	and his brethren	and gave	H0
H3427	H3130		H1		H251	H5414	
אֶחָיהֶם	בְּאֶרֶץ	מִצְרַיִם	בְּטֵמִיטָה	בְּאֶרֶץ	בְּאֶרֶץ		
them a possession	in the land	of Egypt	in the best	in the land	in the land		
H272	H776	H4714	H4315	H776	H776		
רַעְמֶסֶס	כְּאֵשׁ	צִוָּה	פַּרְעֹה:				
of Rameses	H834	had commanded	as Pharaoh				
H7486		H6680	H6547				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Exodus 12:37** (Parallel theme): And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.

**Exodus 1:11** (Parallel theme): Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

**Genesis 47:6** (References Egypt): The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

