by Augustine. In his comment on  
the place, he has nothing of adoring the  
staff or the top of the staff. What Jerome  
thought of such an idea, is plainly seen:  
for he derides it, and treats it simply as a  
mistranslation of the Hebrew, which he  
explains as it stands in our A.V. Chrysostom   
has the idea, but not a word of the  
*image*: thinks that Jacob worshipped the  
power, symbolized by Joseph. I will only  
cite the inference from the above ancient  
data in Cornelius-a-Lapide, as most instructive   
regarding the grounds on which  
age after age the chief abominations of the  
church of Rome have been introduced:  
“Rightly therefore do the Fathers of the  
second Nicene Council prove, from this  
adoration of Joseph’s staff, the adoration  
and culture of images, and teach that it  
does not stop with the image, but is referred   
and passed on to its prototype.”  
The real question with regard to the passage  
is confined within very narrow limits. The  
same Hebrew word signifies a *staff*, or a  
*bed*, according as it is pointed. And, as  
there are no points in the ancient Hebrew  
texts, it is an open question, which meaning   
we are to take. The Septuagint have  
taken “*staff,*” though, as Jerome notices,  
they have rendered the same word “*bed*”  
in Gen. xlviii. 2, two verses after. Our  
A.V. has taken this latter: “And Israel  
bowed himself upon the bed’s head.”  
And so almost all the moderns agree in  
taking it. Stuart, it is true, has argued  
at some length for the meaning “staff,” on  
the ground that the eastern beds have no  
head properly so called, being merely a  
carpet or rag spread on the ground. But  
he has in his mind in thus objecting, a  
bed*stead*, not a bed. The head of a bed,  
be it where or what it may, is that part of  
it where the person’s head lies; and Delitzsch   
has made it probable, that Jacob  
turned himself in his bed so as to lay his  
face to the pillow: compare Isa. xxxviii. 2.  
If the ‘staff’ is to be taken, then it must  
be his own, not Joseph’s staff, which is indicated,   
and the gesture might have had a  
meaning correspondent to the thought in  
Gen. xxii. 10, “*with my staff I passed  
this Jordan;*” viz. the recognition of that  
God who had supported him through life,  
and declaration of his having done with  
all human supports. It is due to the  
better Roman-Catholic Commentators, such  
as Estius and Justiniani, to say, that no  
such inference as that cited above is to be  
found in them. Some have expressed  
surprise that no mention is made of the  
far more important blessings of the twelve  
sons of Jacob in Gen. xlix. But Delitzsch  
says well, “He plucks, so to speak, only  
the flowers which stand by his way, and  
leaves the whole meadow-full to his readers”).

**22.**] **By faith Joseph, when  
dying, made mention of the exodus** (by  
this time technically so known, from the  
title of the second book of Moses) **of the  
sons of Israel; and commanded concerning   
his bones** (even Joseph, who had  
attained such eminence and power in  
Egypt, did not account it his country, but  
in faith spoke of the promise of God as  
certain, Gen. l. 24, and realized it so as  
to enjoin the removal of his own remains  
when it should come to pass).

**23.**] Now the Writer passes on to Exodus, and  
its chief example, Moses, who even in his  
preservation by his parents was the child  
of faith. **By faith Moses, when born, was  
hidden three months by his parents,  
because they saw the child was comely;  
and they feared not the command of the  
king** (to destroy all the male children,  
Exod. i, 22, faith was, loving trust  
in God who had given them so fair a child,  
which led them to perform, as far as in them  
lay, the duties of parents to it, and not the  
cruel part which the tyrant prescribed).