**CHAPTER** **48**

*Joseph visiteth his father in his sickness, who adopteth his two sons Manasses and Ephraim, and blesseth them, preferring the younger before the elder.*

**1** After these things, it was told Joseph that his father was sick: and he set out to go to him, taking his two sons Manasses and Ephraim.

**2** And it was told the old man: Behold thy son Joseph cometh to thee. And being strengthened he sat on his bed.

**3** And when Joseph was come in to him, he said: God Almighty appeared to me at Luza, which is in the land of Chanaan: and he blessed me,

**4** And he said: I will cause thee to increase and multiply, and I will make of thee a multitude of people: and I will give this land to thee, and to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

**5** So thy two sons who were born to thee in the land of Egypt before I came hither to thee, shall be mine: Ephraim and Manasses shall be reputed to me as Ruben and Simeon.

**6** But the rest whom thou shalt have after them, shall be thine, and shall be called by the name of their brethren in their possessions.

**7** For, when I came out of Mesopotamia, Rachel died from me in the land of Chanaan in the very journey, and it was springtime: and I was going to Ephrata, and I buried her near the way of Ephrata, which by another name is called Bethlehem.

**8** Then seeing his sons, he said to him: Who are these?

**9** He answered: They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said: Bring them to me that I may bless them.

**10** For Israel’s eyes were dim by reason of his great age, and he could not see clearly. And when they were brought to him, he kissed and embraced them.

**11** And said to his son: I am not deprived of seeing thee: moreover God hath shewed me thy seed.

**12** And when Joseph had taken them from his father’s lap, he bowed down with his face to the ground.

**13** And he set Ephraim on his right hand, that is, towards the left hand of Israel; but Manasses on his left hand, to wit, towards his father’s right hand, and brought them near to him.

**14** But he stretching forth his right hand, put it upon the head of Ephraim the younger brother; and the left upon the head of Manasses who was the elder, changing his hands.

**15** And Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, and said: God, in whose sight my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, God that feedeth me from my youth until this day;

**16** The angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys: and let my name be called upon them, and the names of my fathers Abraham, and Isaac, and may they grow into a multitude upon the earth.

**17** And Joseph seeing that his father had put his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, was much displeased: and taking his father’s hand he tried to lift it from Ephraim’s head, and to remove it to the head of Manasses.

**18** And he said to his father: It should not be so, my father: for this is the firstborn, put thy right hand upon his head.

**19** But he refusing, said: I know, my son, I know: and this also shall become peoples, and shall be multiplied: but this younger brother shall be greater than he: and his seed shall grow into nations.

**20** And he blessed them at that time, saying: In thee shall Israel be blessed, and it shall be said: God do to thee as to Ephraim, and as to Manasses. And he set Ephraim before Manasses.

**21** And he said to Joseph his son: Behold I die, and God will be with you, and will bring you back into the land of your fathers.

**22** I give thee a portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorrhite with my sword and bow.