

# Sons of Israel

Genesis 35-44

## Rachel's Death and Reuben's Revolt

Genesis 35:16-26 [ESV]

<sup>16</sup> Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor. <sup>17</sup> And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." <sup>18</sup> And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. <sup>19</sup> So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), <sup>20</sup> and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. <sup>21</sup> Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. <sup>22</sup> While Israel lived in that land, **Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine.** And Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. <sup>23</sup> The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. <sup>24</sup> The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. <sup>25</sup> The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's servant: Dan and Naphtali. <sup>26</sup> The sons of Zilpah, Leah's servant: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

## Joseph Brings a Bad Report

Genesis 37:1-4 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup> Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan.

<sup>2</sup> These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. <sup>3</sup> Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. <sup>4</sup> **But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.**

## Joseph's Dreams

Genesis 37:5-11 [ESV]

<sup>5</sup> Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> He said to them, **"Hear this dream that I have dreamed: <sup>7</sup> Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."** <sup>8</sup> His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. <sup>9</sup> Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. **Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.**" <sup>10</sup> But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" <sup>11</sup> And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

## Joseph's Brothers Plot Against Him Genesis 37:12-20 [ESV]

<sup>12</sup> Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. <sup>13</sup> And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." And he said to him, "Here I am." <sup>14</sup> So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word." So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. <sup>15</sup> And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" <sup>16</sup> "I am seeking my brothers," he said. "Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." <sup>17</sup> And the man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. <sup>18</sup> **They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. <sup>19</sup> They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. <sup>20</sup> Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams."**

## Joseph Sold into Slavery Genesis 37:21-28 [ESV]

<sup>21</sup> But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." <sup>22</sup> And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; cast him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"— **that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father.** <sup>23</sup> So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. <sup>24</sup> And they took him and cast him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it. <sup>25</sup> Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. <sup>26</sup> Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him. <sup>28</sup> Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

## Reuben Tears His Clothes

### Genesis 37:29-36 [ESV]

<sup>29</sup> **When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes** <sup>30</sup> and returned to his brothers and said, “The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?” <sup>31</sup> Then they took Joseph’s robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. <sup>32</sup> And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, “This we have found; please identify whether it is your son’s robe or not.” <sup>33</sup> And he identified it and said, “It is my son’s robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces.” <sup>34</sup> Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. <sup>35</sup> All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, “No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning.” Thus his father wept for him. <sup>36</sup> Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

## Judah Takes a Wife

### Genesis 38:1-10 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup> It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and turned aside to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. <sup>2</sup> **There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. He took her and went in to her,** <sup>3</sup> and she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. <sup>4</sup> She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. <sup>5</sup> Yet again she bore a son, and she called his name Shelah. Judah was in Chezib when she bore him. <sup>6</sup> And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. <sup>7</sup> **But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord put him to death.** <sup>8</sup> Then Judah said to Onan, “Go in to your brother’s wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother.” <sup>9</sup> **But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother’s wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother.** <sup>10</sup> **And what he did was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and he put him to death also.**

## Judah Sends Tamar Away

### Genesis 38:11-14 [ESV]

<sup>11</sup> Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow in your father’s house, till Shelah my son grows up”—for he feared that he would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father’s house.

<sup>12</sup> In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua’s daughter, died. When Judah was comforted, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. <sup>13</sup> **And when Tamar was told, “Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep,”** <sup>14</sup> **she took off her widow’s garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage.**

## Judah Hires Tamar

### Genesis 38:15-22 [ESV]

<sup>15</sup> When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face. <sup>16</sup> He turned to her at the roadside and said, “Come, let me come in to you,” for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, “What will you give me, that you may come in to me?” <sup>17</sup> He answered, “I will send you a young goat from the flock.” And she said, “If you give me a pledge, until you send it—” <sup>18</sup> He said, “What pledge shall I give you?” She replied, **“Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand.” So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him.** <sup>19</sup> Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood. <sup>20</sup> When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman’s hand, he did not find her. <sup>21</sup> And he asked the men of the place, “Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim at the roadside?” And they said, “No cult prostitute has been here.” <sup>22</sup> So he returned to Judah and said, “I have not found her. Also, the men of the place said, ‘No cult prostitute has been here.’”

## Judah Repents

### Genesis 38:23-30 [ESV]

<sup>23</sup> And Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, or we shall be laughed at. You see, I sent this young goat, and you did not find her." <sup>24</sup> About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." <sup>25</sup> As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant." And she said, "Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." <sup>26</sup> Then Judah identified them and said, "**She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.**" And he did not know her again. <sup>27</sup> When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb. <sup>28</sup> And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." <sup>29</sup> But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore his name was called Perez. <sup>30</sup> Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.

## Reuben Condemns His Brothers

### Genesis 42:18-25 [ESV]

<sup>18</sup> On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: <sup>19</sup> if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, <sup>20</sup> and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. <sup>21</sup> **Then they said to one another, "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us."** <sup>22</sup> **And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood."** <sup>23</sup> They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. <sup>24</sup> Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. <sup>25</sup> And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

## Jacob's Sons Return

### Genesis 42:26-34 [ESV]

<sup>26</sup> Then they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed. <sup>27</sup> And as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack. <sup>28</sup> He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back; here it is in the mouth of my sack!" At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, **"What is this that God has done to us?"** <sup>29</sup> When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, <sup>30</sup> "The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly to us and took us to be spies of the land. <sup>31</sup> But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we have never been spies. <sup>32</sup> We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no more, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.' <sup>33</sup> Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, and take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way. <sup>34</sup> Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I shall know that you are not spies but honest men, and I will deliver your brother to you, and you shall trade in the land.' "

## Reuben Pledges His Sons

### Genesis 42:35-38 [ESV]

<sup>35</sup> As they emptied their sacks, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack. And when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid. <sup>36</sup> And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has come against me." <sup>37</sup> **Then Reuben said to his father, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."** <sup>38</sup> But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is the only one left. If harm should happen to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."

## Judah Pledges Himself

### Genesis 43:1-10 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup> Now the famine was severe in the land. <sup>2</sup> And when they had eaten the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, “Go again, buy us a little food.” <sup>3</sup> But Judah said to him, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’ <sup>4</sup> If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. <sup>5</sup> But if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.’ ” <sup>6</sup> Israel said, “Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?” <sup>7</sup> They replied, “The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, ‘Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?’ What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, ‘Bring your brother down?’ ” <sup>8</sup> **And Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. <sup>9</sup> I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.** <sup>10</sup> If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice.”

## Joseph Accuses His Brothers

### Genesis 44:1-10 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup> Then he commanded the steward of his house, “Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the mouth of his sack, <sup>2</sup> and put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain.” And he did as Joseph told him. <sup>3</sup> As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their donkeys. <sup>4</sup> They had gone only a short distance from the city. Now Joseph said to his steward, “Up, follow after the men, and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid evil for good? <sup>5</sup> Is it not from this that my lord drinks, and by this that he practices divination? You have done evil in doing this.’ ” <sup>6</sup> When he overtook them, he spoke to them these words. <sup>7</sup> They said to him, “Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing! <sup>8</sup> Behold, the money that we found in the mouths of our sacks we brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house? <sup>9</sup> Whichever of your servants is found with it shall die, and we also will be my lord’s servants.” <sup>10</sup> He said, “Let it be as you say: he who is found with it shall be my servant, and the rest of you shall be innocent.” <sup>11</sup> Then each man quickly lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack.

## Cup Found With Benjamin

### Genesis 44:12-17 [ESV]

<sup>12</sup> And he searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. <sup>13</sup> Then they tore their clothes, and every man loaded his donkey, and they returned to the city. <sup>14</sup> When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there. They fell before him to the ground. <sup>15</sup> Joseph said to them, "What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me can indeed practice divination?" <sup>16</sup> **And Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how can we clear ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; behold, we are my lord's servants, both we and he also in whose hand the cup has been found."** <sup>17</sup> But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so! Only the man in whose hand the cup was found shall be my servant. But as for you, go up in peace to your father."

## Judah Intercedes

### Genesis 44:18-25 [ESV]

<sup>18</sup> Then Judah went up to him and said, "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant, for you are like Pharaoh himself. <sup>19</sup> My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father, or a brother?' <sup>20</sup> And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. His brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' <sup>21</sup> Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' <sup>22</sup> We said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' <sup>23</sup> Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall not see my face again.' <sup>24</sup> "When we went back to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. <sup>25</sup> **And when our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food,' <sup>26</sup> we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother goes with us, then we will go down. For we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'**

## Judah Offers Himself

### Genesis 44:27-34 [ESV]

<sup>27</sup> Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. <sup>28</sup> One left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces, and I have never seen him since. <sup>29</sup> If you take this one also from me, and harm happens to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in evil to Sheol.' <sup>30</sup> "Now therefore, as soon as I come to your servant my father, and the boy is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the boy's life, <sup>31</sup> as soon as he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die, and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. <sup>32</sup> For your servant became a pledge of safety for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father all my life.' <sup>33</sup> **Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the boy as a servant to my lord, and let the boy go back with his brothers. <sup>34</sup> For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the evil that would find my father."**

## Reuben Loses His Birthright

### 1 Chronicles 5:1-10 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup> **The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; <sup>2</sup> though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph), <sup>3</sup> the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. <sup>4</sup> The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, <sup>5</sup> Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son, <sup>6</sup> Beerah his son, whom Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria carried away into exile; he was a chief of the Reubenites. <sup>7</sup> And his kinsmen by their clans, when the genealogy of their generations was recorded: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, <sup>8</sup> and Bela the son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. <sup>9</sup> He also lived to the east as far as the entrance of the desert this side of the Euphrates, because their livestock had multiplied in the land of Gilead. <sup>10</sup> And in the days of Saul they waged war against the Hagrites, who fell into their hand. And they lived in their tents throughout all the region east of Gilead.**

## Jonathan Covenants with David

### 1 Samuel 18:1-5 [ESV]

<sup>1</sup>As soon as he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. <sup>2</sup>And Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. <sup>3</sup>**Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. <sup>4</sup>And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.** <sup>5</sup>And David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him, so that Saul set him over the men of war. And this was good in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

## Jacob Blesses Judah

### Genesis 49:8-12 [ESV]

<sup>8</sup>"Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you. <sup>9</sup>Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? <sup>10</sup>**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.** <sup>11</sup>Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, **he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes.** <sup>12</sup>His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.