

א שטיקל תורה A LITTLE SLICE OF TORAH

פון פרשת דער וואָך FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION

October 24, 2026



“Fostering diverse modes of attention to textual details cultivates correlative forms of attention to the world and divine reality”

Michael Fishbane (1943-), *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*

ברוך אתה יי, אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו לעסוק בדברי תורה:

“Tachometer Torah”



...read down to the red line

Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: Leich L'cha

Consists of: Genesis 12:1-17:27

Sequence—

in Genesis: 3rd of 12

in annual Torah cycle: 3rd of 54



A Salient Selection from the Portion -

Genesis 12:1-7

Context: *Genesis, first of the Five Books of the Torah, is an outline of the Creation of the physical universe; a description of the origin of the human family by their respective nations; and an account of Abraham's and Sarah's lineage through their grandson Jacob as the foundation of the Israelite people.*

Content: *The history of the Jewish people begins with Abraham— whose departure from his setting becomes an archetype for all of Jewish history.*

12:1] - The Eternal One said to Avram, “**Get yourself out of your land**; the place of your birth; and your father's house, to the land that I will show you.

12:2] - “**I will make of you a great nation**, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, **and you shall be a blessing**. [12:3] - I will bless those who bless you, and curse the one who curses you; all the families of the earth shall bless themselves by you.”

12:4] - **So Avram left, as The Eternal One had said to him** (and Lot went with him). Avram was seventy-five years old, at the time he went forth from Charan.

12:5a] - Avram took his wife Sarai; his brother's son, Lot; all the substance they had amassed; and the souls they had acquired in

ויאמר יהוה אל אברם **קם לך** מארצך וממולדתך ומבית אביך אל הארץ אשר אראך

ואעשך לגוי גדול ואברכך ואגדלה שמך והיה ברכה ואברכה מברכך ומקללך אאר ונברכו בך כל משפחת האדמה

וילך אברם כאשר דבר אליו יהוה וילך אתו לוט ואברם בן חמש שנים ושבעים שנה בצאתו מחרן

ויקח אברם את שרי אשתו ואת לוט בן אחיו ואת כל רכושם אשר

- more over

Charan, and set out for the land of Canaan.

רָכְשׁוּ וְאֵת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרוֹן
וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אֶרֶצָה כְּנָעַן

12:5b] - When they arrived in the land of Canaan, [12:6a] - Avram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, at the terebinth of Moreh.

וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרֶצָה כְּנָעַן וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם
בְּאֶרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֵם עַד אֵלוֹן
מֹרֶה

12:6b] - The Canaanites were established in the land, [12:7a] - so The Eternal One appeared to Avram and said: “it is to your descendants that I will assign this land.”

וְהַכְנַעֲנִי אֲזִי בְּאֶרֶץ וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל
אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזֶרְעֲךָ אֶתְּנוּ אֶת
הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת

12:7b] - At which he built an altar there to The Eternal One, Who had appeared to him.

וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה הַנִּרְאָה אֵלָיו



לָךְ לָךְ מֵאֶרֶצְךָ

12:1 - “**Get yourself** out from your land...”

וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו יְהוָה

12:4 - **So Avram left**, as The Eternal One had said to him

A) Soniah Shah (1969-),
The Next Great Migration -

The genetic record demonstrates that Western Europeans of today are hybrid descendants, like the rest of us. The past is, in other words, as [Harvard geneticist David] Reich notes, “no less complicated than the present.” We weren’t migrants once, in the distant past, and then again in the most recent modern era, with a long defining period of stillness in between. **We’ve been migrants all along.**

B) Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm,
Kinder- und Hausmärchen (1812),
“The Knapsack, the Hat, and the Horn” -

There were once three brothers, who had fallen deeper and deeper into poverty. At last, their need was so great that they had to endure hunger, having nothing left to eat or drink.

At that point they resolved: “We cannot go on like this; we had better **go out into the world and seek our fortune** [*Hinaus in die Welt und unser Glück suchen*].”

Indo-European	<i>bher</i>	“carry; bear [whatever chance] brings”
	▼	
Latin	<i>fors</i>	“chance; luck; destiny”
	<i>fortuna</i>	“having, by virtue of chance”
	▼	
French	<i>fortune</i>	“chance; luck; destiny”
	▼	
English	fortune	“wealth” [17 th century] “happenstance; luck”



- continued

1) Fortune Favors the Bold –

Jacob Genesis 28:10-11, 28:20-22 -

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּעֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה וַיִּפְגַּע בְּמָקוֹם וַיָּלֵן שָׁם כִּי בָּא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ

Jacob left Be'er-Sheva to go to Charan. He came to a place, and settled there for the night— for the sun had gone down.

וַיָּדָר יַעֲקֹב נֶדָר לֵאמֹר אִם יְהִיָּה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וּשְׁמִרְנִי בַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְנָתַן לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבִגְד לִלְבָּשׁ וְשָׁבְתִי בְשָׁלוֹם אֶל בֵּית אָבִי

[The next morning, after his encouraging dream,] Jacob swore a vow: “If God is truly with me, to guard me on this road I am traveling; if He gives me food to eat and garments to wear; and if I return whole to my father’s house,

וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֶּאת אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַתִּי מִצֵּבָה יְהִיָּה בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֶּן לִי עֲשֹׂר אֶעֱשְׂרֶנּוּ לָךְ

“then The Eternal One will be my God; this rock, which I have raised up as a marker pillar, will be The House Of God; and of all You will have given me, I will give a tenth-portion to You!”

Outcome:

C) Genesis 30:43 -

וַיִּכְרַץ הָאִישׁ מְאֹד מְאֹד

The man’s endeavors increased mightily—

וַיְהִי לוֹ צֹאן רַבּוֹת וּשְׁפָחוֹת וַעֲבָדִים וּגְמָלִים וַחֲמֹרִים

for he had many flocks, as well as man- and maidservants, camels, and donkeys.

D) Genesis 32:11 -

קִטְנֹתִי מִכָּל הַחֲסָדִים וּמִכָּל הָאֱמֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת עַבְדְּךָ

“I am unworthy of all the faithfulness that You have shown to Your servant—

כִּי בְּמִקְלִי עָבַרְתִּי אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה וְעַתָּה הֵייתִי לְשָׁנִי מִחֲנוֹת

“for I last crossed this Jordan with but the staff in my hand, **but am now become two entire encampments!**”

Judah Genesis 38:1-3 -

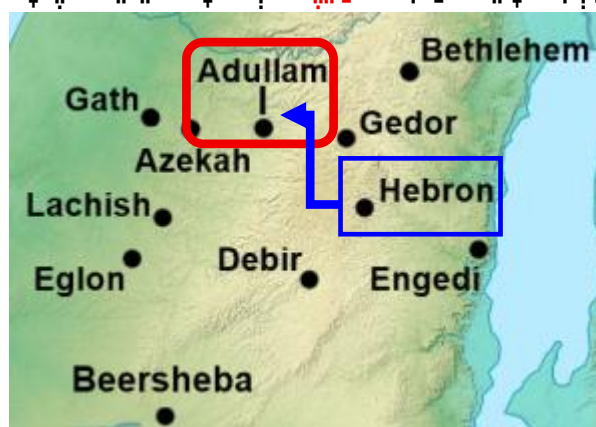
וַיְהִי בָעֵת הַהוּא וַיֵּרֶד יְהוּדָה מֵאֵת אָחִיו וַיֵּט עַד אִישׁ עַדְלָמִי וּשְׁמוֹ חִירָה

Now about that time **Judah went down from his brothers**[, at their hilltop home of Chevron], and encamped together with an Adullamite fellow named Heerah.

וַיֵּרָא שָׁם יְהוּדָה בֵּת אִישׁ כְּנַעֲנִי וּשְׁמוֹ שׁוּעַ

There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shu’a,

וַיִּקְחָהּ וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ וַתְּהַר וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן
whom he married. After he had been intimate with her, she birthed a son. . . .



- more over

Outcome: progressive levels of national leadership ∴ we are called “Jews.”

Genesis 46:28 - **את יהודה שלח לפניו אל יוסף להורית לפניו גשנה**
It was Judah that [Jacob] **dispatched before him**, to lead him to Joseph and to show [the household of Israel] the way to the land of Goshen.

Genesis 49:8, 49:10 - **יהודה אתה יודוך אחיך . . . ישתחוו לך בני אביך**
Judah, it is you that your brothers must acknowledge;
 Before you will your father's sons bow low.

II Samuel 5:3 - **ויבאו כל זקני ישראל וימשחו את דוד למלך על ישראל**
 All the elders of the Israelites came and anointed David **to be king over all Israel.**

2) Going Willingly –

Nehemiah – Nehemiah 2:3, 2:5

ואמר למלך המלך לעולם יחיה מדוע לא ירעו פני אשר העיר בית קברות אבתי
 חרבה ושעריה אכלו באש ואמר למלך אם על המלך טוב ואם ייטב עבדך
 לפניך אשר **תשלחני אל יהודה** אל עיר קברות אבתי ואבננה

I said to the Emperor [Artaxerxes I]: “O King, live forever! How can I not look dejected, when the city of my ancestors’ graves is a ruin, and her gates have been consumed by fire? If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, **send me to Judah**, to the city of my ancestors’ graves, to rebuild it.”

Outcome: Imperial wine-steward promoted to **פחה** *pasha* [“district governor”] of Judah.

Akkadian	𒂗𒍪𒌦𒍪𒀭𒂗	<i>bel paḥāti</i>	“lord of the district”
Persian	پادشاه	<i>pād'shāh</i>	“royal master”
Turkish	پاشا	<i>pāshā</i>	} “governor”
Arabic	باشا	<i>bāshā</i>	

- twelve-year rule: governed with probity, and supported his administrative staff out of his own pocket, as part of his measures to relieve the burden of imperial taxation on the people. Nehemiah 5:7-19
- bolstered national pride (and secured the people from attacks by their Samaritan and Arab neighbors) by rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem in 52 days. Nehemiah 6:15
- coordinated Ezra’s public reading— and the peoples’ canonization— of the Torah. Nehemiah 8-10

Ruth Ruth 1:16, 1:18-19 -

ותאמר רות אל תפגעני בי לעזובך לשוב מאחריך כי אל אשר תלכי אלך
 Ruth said: “Do not entreat me to leave you, nor to follow after you— for **wherever you go, I will go**;

- continued

תְּלִינִי אֵלָיו

wherever you lodge, will I lodge.

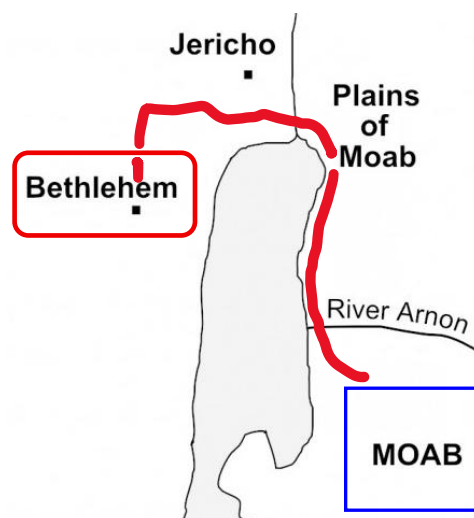
עַמְּךָ עַמִּי וְאֱלֹהֶיךָ אֱלֹהֵי

Your people shall be my people, and your God, my god.

וַתֵּרָא כִּי מִתְאַמְצֶת הִיא לָלֶכֶת אִתָּהּ
וַתַּחְדֹּל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ וַתִּלְכְּנָה שְׁתֵּיהֶם עַד
בֵּאתָהּ בֵּית לָחֶם

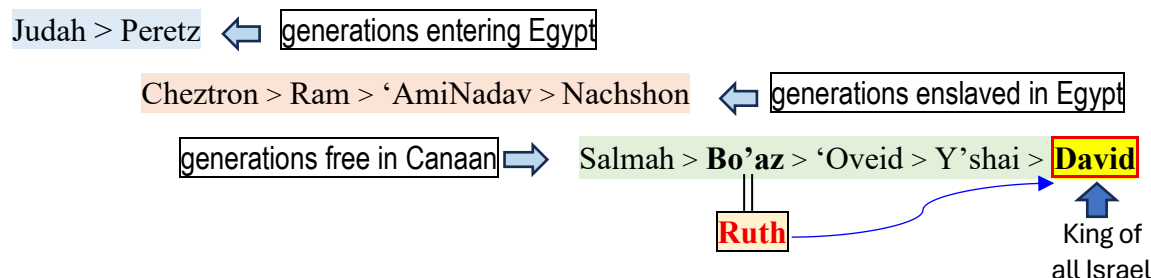
Seeing that she was resolved to go along with her, [Naomi] ceased discouraging her. **So the two of them went on their way**, until their arrival at Bet-Lechem.

Outcome: progenitress of the royal dynasty of Israel.



Lineage of the Chieftains of Judah

[Ruth 4:18-2]



3) Going Unwillingly –

Moses Exodus 2:15, 3:10, 4:12-13 –

וַיִּשְׁמַע פַּרְעֹה אֶת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וַיִּבְקֹשׁ לַהֲרֹג אֶת מֹשֶׁה וַיִּבְרַח מֹשֶׁה מִפְּנֵי
פַּרְעֹה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ מִדְיָן

When Pharaoh learned of the matter, he sought to kill Moses. So **Moses fled** on account of [the wrath of] Pharaoh, and **settled in the land of Midian**.

וַעֲתָה לָכֵה וְאַשְׁלַחְךָ אֶל פַּרְעֹה וְהוֹצֵא אֶת עַמִּי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם וְעַתָּה
לֵךְ וְאַנְכִּי אֶהְיֶה עִם פִּיךָ וְהוֹרִיתִיךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּדְבֹּר

“Come, therefore, I will send you to Pharaoh, and you shall free My people, the Israelites, from Egypt. . . . Now **go**, and I will be with you as you speak, and will instruct you what to say.”

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי אֲדֹנָי שְׁלַח נָא בְיַד תְּשַׁלַּח

To which [Moses] replied: “prithee, my lord— **please send** [Your message to Pharaoh] by means of whomever You wish to send.”

Outcome: liberates the Israelites, and lays the foundation for ethical monotheism.

Deuteronomy 34:10 - וְלֹא קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה

- more over

And there has never since arisen in Israel a prophet the like of Moses, whom God knew face to Face; for all the signs and wonders that The Eternal One sent him to perform in the land of Egypt before Pharaoh, his court, and his entire land; nor for the mighty deeds and awesome acts that Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.

Jonah Jonah 1:1-3 -

וַיְהִי דְבַר יְהוָה אֶל יוֹנָה בֶּן אֲמִתַּי לֵאמֹר **קוּם** **לֵךְ** אֶל נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה וּקְרָא עָלֶיהָ כִּי עָלְתָה רָעָתָם לִפְנֵי

The word of The Eternal One came to Jonah son of Amittai: “**Arise, and go** to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim judgment upon it—for their wickedness has come before Me.”

וַיָּקָם יוֹנָה לְבָרֹחַ תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה **וַיֵּרֶד** יָפוֹ וַיִּמְצָא אֲנִיָּה בָאָה תַרְשִׁישׁ וַיֵּתֶן שְׂכָרָהּ **וַיֵּרֶד** בָּהּ לָבוֹא עִמָּהֶם תַּרְשִׁישָׁה מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה

So Jonah **arose**— and **fled** to Tarshish, away from the Presence of The Eternal One. **Going down** to Yafo, he found a ship bound for Tarshish; paid its fare; and **went down** to sail with them to Tarshish, **away from the Presence of The Eternal One**.



Outcome: he brings about the penitence—and hence the redemption—of the wicked.

Jonah 3:5-6, 3:10 - **וַיֵּאֱמִינוּ אַנְשֵׁי נִינְוָה בֵּאלֹהִים וַיִּקְרְאוּ צוֹם**

The people of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast, and great and small alike put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne; divested himself of his royal robes; put on sackcloth; and sat in ashes.

וַיִּנָּחֵם הָאֱלֹהִים עַל הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה

God, seeing what they had done— how they were turning back from their evil ways— **renounced the punishment planned for them,** and did not carry it out.

4) No Choice in the Matter –

Kayin Genesis 4:10, 4:12, 4:16 -

קוֹל דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ צֹעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן הָאֲדָמָה וְעַתָּה אָרוּר אֶתָּה מִן הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָה אֶת פִּיהָ לְקַחַת אֶת דְּמֵי אָחִיךָ מִיָּדְךָ נֹעַ וְנָד תִּהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ

“Your brother’s bloods cry out to me from the soil— wherefore you are to be even more cursed than the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. **You shall become a ceaseless wanderer on the earth.**”

- continued

וַיֵּצֵא קַיִן מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֶרֶץ נֹד קִדְמַת עֵדֶן

So Kayin went forth from the Presence of The Eternal One, and settled into the land of Nod, to the east of Eden.

Outcome: his descendants, compelled to endeavor and diversify, create civilization.

Genesis 4:17-22 - **וַיְהִי בְנֵה עֵיר וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הָעִיר כְּשֵׁם בְּנוֹ חֲנוֹךְ**

He founded a city, which he named after his son Chanoch.

כָּל הוּא הָיָה אָבִי יֹשֵׁב אֹהֶל וּמִקְנָה

[Of his subsequent descendants,] Yaval was the forerunner of **those who dwell in tents and herd livestock**;

יֹבֵל הוּא הָיָה אָבִי כָל תֹּפֵשׁ כִּנּוֹר וְעֹגָב

his brother Yuval was the forerunner of **those who play the lyre and the pipe**;

תּוּבַל קַיִן לִטֵּשׁ כָּל חִרְשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת וּבְרָזָל

and his half-brother Tubal-Kayin was the forerunner of **all those who fabricate in brass and iron**.

Joseph Genesis 39:1, 39:19-20 -

וַיֹּסֶף הָיִיד מִצְרַיִמָּה וַיִּקְנֵהוּ פוֹטִיפָר סָרִיס פְּרָעָה שֶׁר הַטַּבָּחִים אִישׁ מִצְרִי מִיַּד הַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדָהוּ שָׁמָּה

Once **Joseph had been brought down** to Egypt, Poti-Far— an Egyptian who was a cabinet minister of Pharaoh, his Minister of Justice— **bought him from the Ishmaelites** who had brought him there.

וַיְהִי כְשֶׁמַּע אֲדֹנָיו אֶת דְּבָרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר דִּבְרָה אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה עָשָׂה לִי עַבְדְּךָ וַיַּחַר אָפוֹ

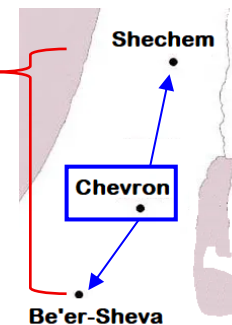
When his master heard the story that his wife told him (“Your slave did thus and so to me”)

וַיִּקְחַח אֲדֹנִי יוֹסֵף אֹתוֹ וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ אֶל בֵּית הַסֵּהָר מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֹסִירִי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֲסוּרִים וַיְהִי שָׁם בְּבֵית הַסֵּהָר

he became furious, and consigned him to the prison where criminals of the empire were kept in ward. **So it was that Joseph was imprisoned.**

Outcome: you can’t keep a good man down: consistently pushed down, Joseph continually rises to the top:

- principal manager of his older brothers in running their father’s far-flung pastoralist enterprise, operating from Be’er-Sheva to Shechem from headquarters in Chevron
Genesis 37:12-13
- majordomo of the estate of his Egyptian master.
Genesis 39:5-6
- prime minister and high priest of all Egypt.
Genesis 41:39-46

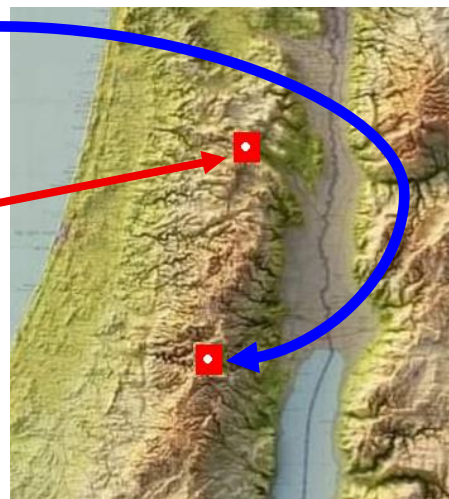


- more over

E) Claude Reignier Conder (1848-1910), *Judas Maccabæus, and the Jewish War of Independence* (1872) - Jerusalem's position, shut in at the back of the Judean watershed, while affording it security, was at the same time unfavorable to communication with



the rest of the world, and possessed of only one spring. . . . Shechem, with its beautiful gardens and abundant springs—being in a central position of the country and easily accessible, yet **strongly defended by mountains on all sides**— is more likely than is Jerusalem to be in the future the political centre of the country.



ואת עצמות יוסף אשר העלו בני ישראל מצרים קברו בשכם

F) Joshua 24:32 - **The bones of Joseph**, which the Israelites had brought up with them out of Egypt, they buried in Shechem,

בחלקת השדה אשר קנה יעקב מאת בני חמור אבי שכם במאה קשיטה in a portion of that field which Jacob had bought from the sons of [the city chief] Chamor, father of Shechem, for a hundred *q'sitah* [Genesis 33:19],

והיו לבני יוסף לנחלה

for **they** had become the legacy of the descendants of Joseph.

Genesis 48:22 -

ואני נתתי לך שכם אחד על אחיך

Moreover, I have assigned you—over your brothers— Shechem.

G) Genesis 42:24 -

ויסב מעליהם ויבך
He turned away from [his brothers], to weep.

וישב אליהם וידבר
אליהם

Then[, when he had composed himself,] he returned to speak with them further.

H) Genesis 43:30 -

וימהר יוסף כי נכמרו רחמיו אל אחיו ויבקש לבכות

Joseph hastened away—because **his compassion was aroused** towards his brothers, and he was about to cry;

ויבא החדרה ויבך שמה

so he went off to his room, and wept there.

I) Genesis 50:25 -

וישבע יוסף את בני ישראל לאמר פקד יפקד אלהים אתכם

Joseph exacted an oath of all Israel: “God will assuredly one day take note of you—

והעלתם את עצמתי מזה

“so[, when that happens,] bring up **my bones** out of here with you!”

שלשה דברים מבטלין גזירות רעות ואלו הן תפלה צדקה תשובה

J) Midrash Ecclesiastes Rabbah 5:4 [expansion of Talmud, Rosh haShanah 19b] - Three things **annul a destructive decree**. They are: prayer, righteousness, and repentance.

ושלשתן בפסוק אחד הה"ד ויכנעו עמי אשר נקרא שמי עליהם ויתפללו
ויבקשו פני וישובו מדרכיהם הרעים ואני אשמע מן השמים ואסלח לחטאתם
וארפא את ארצם

All three are taught in a single verse— even as it is written: “And My People, upon whom My Name is called, will humble themselves and pray and seek My presence, and they will turn from their evil ways; then I will hear from On High, and forgive their sin, and heal their land” [II Chronicles 7:14].

ר' מונא אמר אף התענית שנאמר יענך ה' ביום צרה

Rabbi Muna said that fasting, too[, can change to a positive outcome]— even as it is said in Scripture: “The Eternal One will answer you in the day of distress” [Psalm 20:2].

ר' חייא ור' יוסי אומר אף שינוי השם ושינוי מעשה

Rabbi Chiya and Rabbi Yossi say that changing your name, and a change in comportment [can also implement a change in outcome].

ויש אומרים אף שינוי מקום דכתיב **לך לך מארצך**

And there are those who say: also a change of venue— even as it is written: “**Get yourself out of your land**[. . . and I will make you a blessing].”

משנה מקום משנה מזל

“Who change their place, change their luck.”

טוישן אָרט טוישן גליק