

Sheepfold Gleanings

MIKETZ / AT THE END

Genesis 41:1 to 44:17

Zechariah 2:14 (10) to 4:7

John 6:1-71

Joseph's Life: Part Two

Genesis 41:1 Two Full Years Have Passed

The last parsha ended with Joseph being forgotten by the cupbearer and having to face two more years in prison. This is a long time for a young man. Joseph was seventeen when he was sent to Egypt and enslaved against his wishes. Serving in Potiphar's house gave him some freedom but not freedom from worldly things. Life in a prison dungeon brought Joseph to one of the lowest levels of life one could experience. In all this, Joseph flourished in his life with YHVH. What is it that was different that brought this spiritual growth? And, could we say the same about our hearts if any one of us was put into these same conditions, or would our hearts betray us?

We learned about *redemption/salvation of the soul* through Jacob's life two studies ago, now we are shown *circumcision of the heart* through Joseph's life. Joseph ate from the Tree of Life while going through his trials. This produced abundant life even though he was imprisoned. YHVH has given us very applicable life portrayals that are helping us to better understand the maturing process of the priesthood in Yeshua. Jacob and Joseph's lives, with their many trials, are prominent examples that provide practical applications for our own lives today. Joseph had come from a background where his father loved him deeply. Our earthly fathers are to reflect a shadow of our heavenly Father's love and care over us (Matthew 3:17). Joseph's father was just such a man, as he was brought up knowing YHVH's teaching and instruction (Torah) and how to apply these principles that govern the earth in his life and to those around him. This awarded Joseph favor in a foreign land. Because of this strong background and foundation, Joseph was able to handle trials and extreme hardships that came his way; he prevailed through YHVH's faithfulness and covering over him. He was an overcomer.

Some people have not had the love, care or nurturing of a father in their lives. Many have never known a father's love or had a stable, balanced, scripturally sound family life growing up. Many have had to endure absentee parents or lived in an abusive home. These children had to endeavor to process incorrect love. Having such a childhood does not exactly equip these individuals to care for or handle their own families as adults. Many bring old family habits and traits into their new family, where the cycle begins all over again. This foundation, governed by forefathers' iniquities and lifestyles of strongholds, can cause lack and decrease, adding to the breakdown of a family that never seems to get ahead of the cycle.

This is what made the difference for Joseph. He was taught morals and knew what was right in YHVH's Kingdom. This strong, healthy background helped him make it through the trials of life that refined him into a man after God's own heart. He was taught the difference between the Tree of Life, which brought Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil which brought death.

He chose to stay in the realm of Life and that was what kept him during his trial years. May we be a people who, when faced with trials, take refuge in our Heavenly Father by no longer dwelling in our past but moving forward toward the reward that lays ahead for those who choose to overcome. The purpose of trials from YHVH is to reveal what is in our hearts. His testing is to help deliver us and reveal YHVH's mighty hand of redemption for the salvation of our souls.

Joseph had a decision to make when his brothers tried to murder and then sell him: Was he going to live and *rest* in the knowledge and understanding that ALL was in YHVH's care or take matters into his own hands? Joseph chose wisely. He chose to grow with the situation of hardships and trials and allow his Heavenly Father to guide, correct and mould him into the image and destiny YHVH purposed for his life. Letting go of self (earthly realm) until only YHVH existed (heavenly realm) was the ultimate challenge for Joseph and is the same for us today. This is the way to faith, holiness and sanctification and prepares the white linen priestly garments for the wedding of the Bride to the Bridegroom (Genesis 37:4, 8; John 15:25; Psalm 35:19, 69:5; Isaiah 49:7).

Genesis 41 Pharaoh's Dreams

YHVH continued to reveal Joseph's life to him, and when two full years had passed, Pharaoh had two dreams that no one could interpret. The cupbearer remembered Joseph, who was able to interpret dreams. With this recommendation, Pharaoh requested Joseph be brought before him. Joseph was thus taken from prison, cleaned and given fresh clothes to wear, and made ready to stand before a king. The process that Joseph was taken through was a Mikvah; this brought a change of status from the position of slave to overseer of Nations. When Joseph stood before Pharaoh he was thirty years old. In Torah, a priest begins his duties in the temple at the age of thirty (Numbers 4:3). This was the same age Yeshua began His earthly ministry (Luke 3:23).

When we are chosen and called by the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, Yeshua Ha Mashiach, we prepare ourselves (set ourselves apart from the unclean realm, Mikvah) to walk with Him. When we leave our earthly sinful nature and rise to a heavenly nature we too will stand before the King. We too are taken from slavery to servanthood that we might appear before Yeshua in preparation of entering into His ministry and priesthood.

Joseph had been in Egypt thirteen years. Imagine a man who had been a shepherd and lived in prison situations now coming to stand before Pharaoh. We should not be surprised at this. If we have truly surrendered our whole body, soul and spirit to YHVH and emptied our hearts of all our idols (such as bitterness, self-reliance, self-centeredness and pride) and all that brings corruption in us, truly desiring to serve a holy YHVH in *the Holy Place*, then we too will stand before Kings. This is the difference between the two Trees. We will be elevated to positions of authority because we are not standing before men in *our* righteousness but in *HIS*, Yeshua Ha Mashiach's, righteousness. Nothing of ourselves, everything of HIM! This is why Joseph could stand before Pharaoh, a mere man.

Genesis 41:16 Only YHVH Can Interpret Dreams

Pharaoh said, "I have heard it said that you can interpret dreams." "No!" said Joseph boldly. "YHVH will give Pharaoh the answer he desires" (Genesis 41:16). With this, Pharaoh told Joseph about his two dreams. Joseph shared that YHVH gave Pharaoh the dream with the same

message in two forms because it was firmly decided and already established by Him. YHVH was bequeathing to Pharaoh a revelation of what was soon about to happen in Egypt and the surrounding lands. Joseph then made suggestions of how Pharaoh could handle the extreme draught conditions in the future.

Joseph was humble and completely unconcerned about his own position as he spoke. He went on to advise Pharaoh to look for a man who was wise and discerning to be in charge of all of Egypt. Joseph never assumed or expected anything for himself, instead he simply went on to help Pharaoh qualify the man who would be suitable for the job of overseeing the project that YHVH had revealed to him. Joseph went into detail of what would be needed and how to go about accumulating the food from the first seven abundant years to augment the seven years of famine that lay ahead of them.

This impartation by Joseph showed he was not reliant on man and was totally at peace with where he was with YHVH (Tree of Life). With no expectations for himself, he could rest in the Father's care for his life, totally dedicated to serving Him alone and not looking to man for his needs. With this heart, Joseph was now ready for the work that lay before him. With this test, YHVH knew the world (earthly nature) no longer had a hold on Joseph and that he was totally free in Him. Therein lies the delivery of man, the heart is thus empowered and effused with YHVH's Power alone.

Pharaoh was so greatly impressed with Joseph's aptitude for administration that he selected Joseph for the job! "Can we find anyone like this man, one in who is the Spirit of YHVH? Since YHVH has made all this known to you there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only I will be greater than you. I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt" (Genesis 41:41).

With this astonishing announcement, Pharaoh took off his signet ring and placed it on Joseph's finger, dressed him in robes of fine linen and placed a gold chain around his neck. Joseph was then carried about in a chariot with men shouting before him, "Make way, make way!" Pharaoh further added, "Without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt." Then he pronounced a new name over Joseph, *Zaphenath-Paneah*, which means "He who explains what is hidden." Pharaoh also presented Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be Joseph's wife.

In the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament Joseph's Egyptian name in the Coptic signifies: a revealer of secrets or the man to whom secrets are revealed; a priest or a prince. This translation is based on the fact that the name is not Hebrew in origin but Egyptian, requiring Coptic entomology; it refers to Joseph being a "shadow" of Yeshua. Joseph was a reflection of the One he served.

Romans 16:25-27 Paul writes: "Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Yeshua the Messiah, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal YHVH, so that all nations might believe and obey him - to the only wise YHVH be glory forever through Yeshua the Messiah! Amen." (Matthew 5-7)

Isaiah 61:1-2 “The Spirit of the Sovereign YHVH is on me, because YHVH has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the blind to proclaim the year of YHVH’s favor.” Isaiah was given this prophecy of the Messiah, and it was the Messiah who revealed the fulfillment of this word to the people (Luke 4:18-19).

Genesis 41:46-57 The Birth of Two Sons

During the seven years of abundance the land was so plentiful Joseph stopped keeping records, as the harvest was beyond measure. The grain was gathered from the fields and stored in the cities. During this fruitful period two sons were born to Joseph by his wife Asenath. The firstborn Joseph named *Manasseh*, saying, “It is because YHVH has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” The second son he named *Ephraim*, declaring, “It is because YHVH has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”

After the period of plenty the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. The famine was not only in Egypt but also in the surrounding lands. The people from all the countries had to come to Joseph for food; they were dependent on him for their survival.

Genesis 42 Prophecy Fulfilled

In time, Joseph’s father, Jacob, learned there was grain in Egypt and sent his *ten* sons down to buy grain for the family “so that [they might] live and not die.” They tried to buy life without a change of status. When Jacob’s sons arrived in Egypt, Joseph recognized them but they did not recognize Joseph for his Egyptian appearance and high position hid his true identity from them. They never suspected that the governor before them was a Hebrew and their brother. They could not yet *see*, as their hearts were still covered with sin. When you are in the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil you are deemed wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. There was no doubt this is what was happening to Joseph’s brothers at the time. When you eat from this Tree YHVH’s kingdom becomes distorted and you lose your way in the wilderness. With murder still on the brother’s hearts and without repentance or a change in status from death to life, his brothers would not be able to see or hear/recognize their own brother when coming face to face with him (Revelation 3:17-18).

Joseph was at peace with YHVH and at peace with the process he needed to go through to arrive at the realization of his destiny for, to whatever extent he realized it, it was for the preservation of his people Israel. Joseph’s heart remembered the dreams given him earlier by YHVH and now the time had come. He also held on to the fact that the Covenant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the foundation that he could stand firm on and would be the foundation that would also keep his family alive. YHVH’s *faithfulness* and His word, Yeshua, was Joseph’s source of life and his guide. Joseph saw he was the one chosen to bring this life to his brothers. YHVH’s dreams to him were about to unfold as he held firm to the Tree that brought Life.

The Covenant spoken to Abraham included this prophetic statement by YHVH: “Your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions” (Genesis 15:13-14).

Joseph continued to be a *stranger* and an *alien* to his brothers (Psalm 69:8). And he would soon test his brothers as to the sincerity of their hearts. Joseph's brothers may be children of Abraham, circumcised in the flesh, but it is children of faith/circumcision of the heart/doers of the word who are called Abraham's true children. When Joseph's brothers stood in front of him and did not recognize their own flesh and blood, he knew their eyes were still blinded because of sin; they still needed a heart circumcision. The covenant and word given Abraham was indeed coming true; the appointed time prophesied earlier was now presently being brought to fulfillment. Joseph's family was about to come to Egypt. The bigger picture was unfolding, starting with the dreams Joseph was given and made clearer with the understanding of the purpose of his involvement and role in Egypt to set his family free from their own heart imprisonment. He was sent on ahead of his brothers to prepare the way for his family. It came by way of Egypt. Joseph was a forerunner for his brothers and his whole life an unfolding of prophecy. The *Ruach HaKodesh*/Holy Spirit made Joseph ready to prepare the way for his family, the whole house of Jacob. May we be like Joseph and allow YHVH to prepare us through every trial and hardship in our lives, for they may hold the *very key* to a work the Father has prepared for us to do. If we can have *faith* in His faithfulness over us in the small areas of our lives, He can raise us up for a much larger work to come: the redemption of the Whole House of Israel (John 8:39-40).

Under the direction of YHVH, Joseph set the wheels in motion for the examination of his brothers' character by first setting a hard image before them in order to watch their reaction and response to the demands made upon them.

The story of the House of Israel that is today returning is reflected here, for Joseph remained hidden for a time to his brothers, the House of Judah. Judah cannot yet see his brother (House of Israel), as many look too Egyptian or Greek to them through the distorted lenses of the uncircumcised heart. The House of Israel still reflects the cultures they have been living in. They still smell of pork, lobster and crab, and still identify with the Babylonian feasts of Christmas and Easter. As House of Israel is shedding its contamination (physically and spiritually) and making themselves clean before YHVH, they continue to remain hidden in the Messiah until the time of the Messiah. "Israel (House of Judah) has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles (House of Israel/YHVH's people who were captivated by the nations) has come in. And so all Israel (the *Whole* House of Israel) will be saved" (Romans 11:25-26).

It appears the brothers did not have life-sustaining food in "*their houses*" as *only the Tree of Life produces seed with life in it*. Instead they came to Joseph and said to him, "We came to buy food" (revealing that the Tree they ate from did not produce life giving seed). Joseph is the one who had the grain (manna) that would sustain life. The brothers came to Egypt to "buy the Bread of Life." In the end times, the brothers will again see Joseph as a stranger and try to buy bread from him.

Today, as it was then, Joseph is the one who has the bread! Yeshua, the Bread of Life, will be revealed to his brothers by "Joseph" (John 6:35). Even though Judah was given "the law"—Torah—to guard and keep, they gained no life-sustaining power from it alone. Because they have not yet recognized Yeshua as their Messiah and the author and embodiment of the Torah, they have continued to try to get life from the Torah without going to the One who gives *everlasting*

Life. Only the Messiah in the Torah is life-sustaining “food” for us (Tree of Life), our manna in the wilderness. Without Him, Torah has no life of its own. If people don’t eat from this tree they will seek another Tree to eat from; The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil that only produces death. Until they seek the Messiah in the Torah, Tree of Life, they will continue to have nothing that will sustain their lives. In perspective of the biblical narrative of Joseph and his brothers, it was Joseph who was in the wilderness and hidden for so long, who searched diligently for the *HEART of Torah*, the Messiah. Only when YHVH had circumcised Joseph’s heart did Torah become a life-giving source to him (heavenly realm/realm of life); he treasured this life in his heart. The Messiah is seen when we rent the veil of our heart, for only then can we have life. Just as Joseph’s brothers came to buy food from him, so it will be Joseph (the House of Israel) who will reveal the fullness of Torah to his brothers (the House of Judah), the keepers of Torah, in the future. Joseph’s story is a type and shadow of the Messiah. Yeshua is the Bread of Life and we come to him, the Living Manna, for life.

When Joseph’s brothers came to him in Egypt for food, he implied that they were spies and had them interned in prison as part of the testing of their character. Upon request, they agreed to bring their youngest brother to Joseph in Egypt to prove their innocence. Simeon was chosen to be collateral until they returned with Benjamin. At this point they turned to one another in dismay saying, “Surely we are being punished because of our brother.” Then, after paying for the grain, they left for home. On route they discovered their payment of *silver* coins for the grain was back in their sacks! Fear fell on them and, driven by the guilt, they said, “What is this that YHVH has done to us?”

At home, Jacob expressed his grief with them over the loss of his sons. First Joseph, then Simeon, and now this Egyptian wanted Benjamin! Did Jacob remember the prophecy given Abraham about his family living in another country?

Notice: Scripture uses *Jacob* when he is acting in a soul-led or fleshly/earthly nature and uses his new name *Israel* when he is in a heavenly nature resting in YHVH and being led by the Ruach/Spirit, having full confidence in His faithfulness.

Genesis 43 A Second Journey to Egypt

Time passed, and their need for more grain urged Jacob to consider Egypt again. Judah reminded Jacob of the conditions needed for their return, recalling for his father the vizier’s warning: “*You will not see my face again unless your brother (Benjamin) is with you.*” This was prophetic wedding language, for: “*We will not see the Bridegroom (Yeshua) unless—and not until—all twelve tribes are together again.*”

Luke 13:35 Yeshua said, “Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of YHVH.’” (Psalm 118:26)

They returned to Egypt, this time in the company of Benjamin their youngest brother, with Judah taking full responsibility for his safety. They came bearing gifts from the land of Israel for Joseph and double the silver for purchase of the new grain for both trips to Egypt. Joseph received them and gave orders to “take [the] men to [his] house, slaughter an animal and prepare dinner; [for] they [were] to eat with [him] at noon.” The sacrifice for the meal was prophetic

reference to Yeshua's payment and redemption for their souls. The banquet was also prophetic of all twelve tribes of Israel coming together in the Father's house and eating at the Feast of YHVH (Tabernacles), the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.

Luke 22:29-30 Yeshua said, "And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

The brothers spoke to Joseph at the *entrance of the house*, explaining the silver payment from the first trip. This was symbolic of the confession of sins at the door of salvation before our redemption through Yeshua. Yeshua is the door. "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep" (John 10:1-7).

As the brothers presented themselves *in the house*, Joseph had the stewards wash their feet. Washing represented a change of status and consecration. In the same way, Yeshua also washed the feet of his disciples (John 13:5). At noon they were ready. When Joseph came in to them, they presented their gifts and bowed down before him twice to pay him honor. Then they presented Benjamin to him. Overcome by emotion, Joseph removed himself to weep.

For the meal, they were seated in order of birth. The meal was served from Joseph's table. He had the life-giving food. Benjamin was given five times what his brothers received. Five represents grace and the receiving of the Torah, the five books of Moses. Joseph, separated from his brothers, watched for signs of which Tree they were eating from especially if they demonstrated jealousy between them over the favoritism of Benjamin (Genesis 43:32-34).

Genesis 44 The Silver Cup

The time came for them to leave and Joseph instructed his servants that each man was to be given as much new grain as possible (symbolic of Yeshua, the Bread of Life/Living Word/Torah) and that their silver was to be returned to them. Redemption cannot be purchased from the Tree of Life, as it is a gift from YHVH. Yeshua is the Judge/Deliverer of mankind. Yeshua gave mercy when no one deserved mercy. While we were yet still sinners, Yeshua died for us (Romans 5:8).

1 Timothy 2:5-6 "For there is one Elohim and one mediator between Elohim and men, the man Yeshua the Messiah, who gave himself as a ransom for all men."

After the meal, along with the return of silver and more grain, Joseph also gave instructions for his own cup, the silver one, to be placed inside Benjamin's sack, hidden among his grain. Once again, it was a symbolic picture, this time of the cup Yeshua drank on our behalf at the Passover. This he drank to bring redemption for the Whole House of Israel from their—*our*—own sins that brought about Yeshua's death (Numbers 15:1-5; Matthew 26:42).

This silver cup of Joseph's revealed prophetic redemptive imagery fulfilled in Yeshua as silver represents redemption in scripture. Yeshua is also the lamb offering. A lamb offering must have the grain and wine offering accompanying it. That is why Joseph placed his cup among the grain, hidden for such a time when the Father will reveal His redemptive plan for His people (Numbers 15:1-5).

As the men made their way home, Joseph sent his steward after them declaring the men had stolen the master's cup. In this final test, Joseph wanted to know how they would react in regard to Benjamin if anything happened to him. The brothers vehemently denied any of them stole this valued cup. So sure were they that they pronounce this vow and oath, "*Anyone among your servants with whom it is found shall die, and we also will become slaves to my lord*" (Genesis 44:9). With this pledge having left their lips, Joseph's cup was then found in Benjamin's sack.

As Jacob had pronounced a death sentence over his wife, so had his sons pronounced a death sentence over Benjamin. (Genesis 31:32).

That the brothers rent their garments in response revealed the condition of their hearts. It was a sorrowful group who journeyed back to Joseph. No longer did they plead for and defend themselves. The sin committed against Joseph had now revisited them. Twenty-two years after having made their father go into mourning over the lies and murderous deeds spoken against Joseph, their conduct had now come full circle upon them. They were being falsely accused of a crime they had not committed, and went through deep anguish over their serious situation. They needed a savior to survive this. At last they experience the renting of the veil of their hearts (circumcision of the heart) (Genesis 44:13).

Together they fall prostrate before Joseph in mercy. All eleven brothers now bowed before him, fulfilling the dream Joseph had been given many years earlier (Genesis 37:7). This is prophetic of the day when every knee will bow to the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords, Yeshua Ha Mashiach (Romans 14:11).

Judah stepped forward on behalf of his brothers. He knew YHVH had uncovered their sin. In effect his words implied admission of the earlier sin committed against Joseph. Knowing it was the hand of YHVH upon them, Judah committed them all to be slaves to Joseph, along with Benjamin. Only when Joseph showed that he had his mind set solely on Benjamin did his brother Judah, Benjamin's guarantor, come forward to defend his brother and plead his case on Benjamin's behalf with *all* his heart (Genesis 44:16-17).

"Many nations will be joined with YHVH in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that YHVH Almighty has sent me to you. See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you. If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here. For these two olive branches are My two chosen witnesses. And I will grant authority to them, for they are the two sons of fresh oil (House of Israel and House of Judah) who are standing by YHVH of all the earth" (Zechariah 2:10-4-14; Revelation 11:3-4; Jeremiah 2:18-21; 11:10,16-17; 12:15; Hosea 1-2).

To Be Continued...

Shabbat Shalom
Carl and Julie Parker

Reference:

Redeemed Israel: Reunited and Restored by Batya Wootten www.messianicisrael.com

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (2-vol. set) (Hardcover)

by R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Bruce Waltke

Call to Torah by R. Munk

The 7000 Year Plan of God by Rabbi Ralph Messer. www.torah.tv

Sheepfold Gleanings written by Carl and Julie Parker

Mail: 6655 Royal Avenue; P.O. Box 94014; West Vancouver, BC; V7W 2B0 CANADA

Website: www.sheepfoldgleanings.com

Email: sheephear@yahoo.ca

Now in Spanish / Espanol

© Copyright 2003-2009 Sheepfold Gleanings Inc. All Rights Reserved.