

Sheepfold Gleanings

VAYESHEV - HE DWELT

Genesis 37:1 to 40:23

Amos 2:6 to 3:8

Acts 7:9-16

Joseph's Life: Part One

In the last study we followed Jacob under Yahweh's guidance that enabled him to work out the salvation of his soul. As the story continues, it now turns to focus on his son Joseph, the firstborn son of his beloved wife Rachel.

Slander

Genesis 37:2-4

We enter our study with Joseph when he was seventeen years old, tending sheep with his brothers Dan and Naphtali (his half brothers from Rachel's maidservant Bilhah), and half brothers Gad and Asher (from Leah's maidservant Zilpah). Joseph returned from the fields to his father Jacob's tent, bringing back a negative report about his brothers. In Scripture we are not told what the bad report was, but gossip and slander (*lashon hara* in Hebrew) against someone causes division. Joseph set in motion his future exile from his family, by the power of his own tongue.

1 Peter 3:10-11 "For 'He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.'"

Joseph gained firstborn status over his elder brothers when Leah's firstborn son Reuben dishonored his father and as a result, had his preeminent standing taken from him (Genesis 35:22). Joseph knew he was special and wore with great pride the coat his father gave him that set him apart from his brothers. This coat in Hebrew is the word *katan* (Strong's H3801, TWOT 1058), a *talit* worn over the body with four *tzitzit* on the corners (Deuteronomy 22:12). They can also be used to display a future rank and honor of position in the family. Those who wore the *katan* were usually ones who studied Torah and were sons of the Covenant. Joseph's coat was multi-colored. As we will see, this *katan* was a prophetic garment representing the twelve tribes of Israel (a multi-colored people) who would come forth from Jacob, and represented the mantle of responsibility given Joseph in the future deliverance of his family.

In the book *Joseph* by Yair Davidi, he refers to the multi-colored garments as *cotonet pasim* in Hebrew. The word translated as *pasim* means strips, denoting both a pattern of interwoven lines

and different colors, i.e. a tartan-type design. *Cotonet pasim* (TWOT 1789a) can also mean overcoat or dress, or a kind of tartan cloak or kilt. Yair Davidi quotes J. Wall, “*I cannot see why Joseph’s brothers would be jealous of him for his colorful apparel, unless the colors somehow were an indicator of rank. In Scotland, one’s rank was shown by the number of colors one wore on the kilt, one color being the lowest rank, seven colors being the highest.*”

Attitude

Genesis 37:5-11

After receiving the two dreams from Yahweh, Joseph is set on a course that would change his life and the life of his family forever. He shared his dreams with his family but failed to lift Yahweh up as their source. Joseph had a self-righteous attitude; he only talked about himself when telling of the dreams Yahweh gave him.

- ✚ The first dream was of bound sheaves of wheat gathered around Joseph’s upright sheaf. When the brothers heard this they said, “*Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?*”
- ✚ In the second dream the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down to him.

Speaking of the dreams made Joseph’s brothers hate him even more and the manner in which he shared them caused his father Jacob to also question him.

Joseph had an attitude problem that brought trouble upon him. Jealousy already hid just below the surface in his brother’s hearts over the handling of the birthright and the bad report Joseph brought back to his father, and the dreams just added more bitterness, and an intolerable spirit in his brothers. Embers of resentment smoldered, waiting for the right moment to burst into flame. We are told not to touch *the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* as its fruit will bring death into our lives. Pride is one of its poisoned fruits. The anger produced in his brothers upon hearing about Joseph’s dreams opened the door for Yahweh’s plans to unfold in Joseph’s life. Through all this, Jacob was left to ponder Joseph’s words and remember the Covenant Yahweh had given Abraham and to himself that he now carried in his heart, the *Covenant of Promise*.

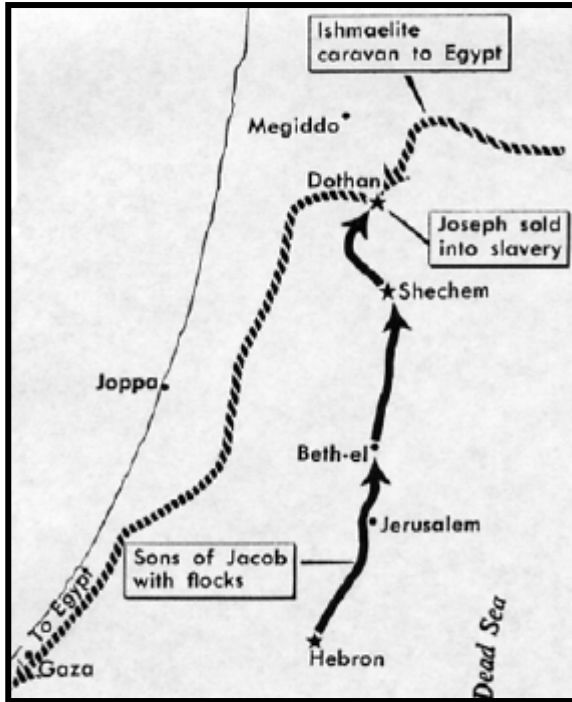
Genesis 35:11-13 God said to Jacob: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land."

Joseph is Sold and Keeps His Identity

Genesis 37:12-36

Israel (Jacob) called his son Joseph (representative of the future House of Israel) to journey to the region around Shechem to see his brothers (representative of the future House of Judah) who were shepherding and bring word back to him whether they and the sheep were well. This request was the beginning of the prophetic dreams that were to unfold in Joseph’s life. These dreams were also prophetic of future generations and events that would bring about the reunion of all Twelve Tribes of Israel in the Messianic Age, in our day (Ezekiel 37; Acts 26:6-8).

This was a dangerous journey for Joseph, as the territory he was entering was the same area his sister Dinah had been violated (Genesis 34). The objective of this journey was to bring *shalom* to his brothers and return with a good report to Jacob. In Hebrew *shalom* means: peace,



completeness, soundness, welfare and safety; soundness (in body), health; prosperity; quiet, tranquility and contentment; friendship and peace from war.

When he arrived in Shechem, *a man* found him wandering around in the fields. He asked Joseph who he was searching for. Joseph declared to this man, “I’m looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?” Once again, this was prophetic of Joseph (representing the House of Israel/Ephraim) looking for his brothers (the House of Judah) in the future. Joseph would be able to recognize (the House of Judah) because they would be “pasturing their sheep” in this region, an idiom for teaching the people Torah. *The man* represents Yeshua, who knows the pastures where His sheep are grazing.

Today, the territory around Shechem, which is rightfully Joseph’s land, has been sold and given away by the House of Judah. To them that land is no longer valuable because in their eyes Joseph is dead, so they are no longer *grazing their Father’s sheep* there.

When Joseph found that his brothers were not in Shechem, he traveled another ten miles to a region between Shechem and Dothan known as *Dothan*. Dothan was a city of commerce with very pagan influences, close to the main highway that stretched all the way to Egypt. The Hebraic understanding of these scriptures is that the brothers were indulging themselves and not caring for the sheep, which also meant that the brothers were not “in” Torah.

The brothers had not obeyed their father and were following the lust of their eyes. In Dothan they were more interested in looking after their own desires and were neglecting their father’s sheep. Dothan means *two wells*. The wells were dried up, which represented a person’s life as being spiritually dry and without life (Torah). It also reflected a community’s spiritual dryness, as commerce and material wealth fulfilled fleshly desires. When the brothers saw Joseph approaching they knew he would report their bad behavior to their father and their hatred of him turned to plotting his murder. They had fallen completely away from Yahweh’s righteous ways, and had allowed a stronghold of bitterroot judgments (*Olam Hahez*) to rule and control their actions. Allowing the realm of death to live within their hearts brought death and great moral decay to the brother’s lives. They no longer thought in the spiritual kingdom (*Olam Haba*) but were led astray by the temporal power of the world (*Olam Hahez*).

Touching the realm of death brought murder and great moral decay into the brother's lives. They no longer thought logically and were led astray by the imagination of their hearts. Being outside Torah causes the heart to become disconnected. Morals and responsibility were no longer an issue. Morals are connected to the heart and if the heart is disconnected then moral decay sets in and a lawless society prevails. Thus we see Joseph's brothers actually choosing murder as a viable answer to cover their wayward deeds. In this mindset they felt perfectly justified in pronouncing the death sentence over Joseph to eliminate him.

✚ Joseph's story is prophetic of Yeshua, whose jealous brothers, the chief priest, the Sanhedrin and Torah teachers at the time, also schemed to eliminate Him.

Only Reuben, Jacob's firstborn by Leah, spoke up. He recommended, instead of murder throwing Joseph into one of the empty wells. In proposing this, Reuben secretly hoped to return later to free him. However, Reuben never had an opportunity as Yahweh had a better plan for Joseph; a walk toward maturity called *circumcision of the heart* that would lead to salvation/redemption of the soul and the redemption of all Israel.

When Joseph approached his brothers they stripped him of his *cotonet pasim*/plaid talit (representative of his priestly rank of power and authority - just as Yeshua was stripped of His priestly garment) and threw him into the empty cistern. He was 'dead' in the brother's minds. Joseph would have cried out for help but his brothers were not bothered by their decision, and with callousness (*Olam Hazeah*) they all comfortably sat down to eat a meal together. Breaking bread helps us 'see' and when the brothers broke bread they looked up and saw a caravan of Midianites coming towards them with camels loaded with goods, on their way to Egypt. When they "looked up" – God set in motion the next plan in Joseph's life and the life of his family.

✚ Yeshua's Israelite brother's, the ruling council of Pharisees of Israel/*Sanhedrin*, under the influence of the *Olam Hazeah*, callously approved of the Roman style of crucifixion as a way to eliminate Yeshua, and at his death they all comfortably sat down to eat a meal together, called Passover/*Pesach*.

John 12:32 Yeshua said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

Yeshua's death was preordained from before the foundation of the earth, to regather the twelve tribes of the whole commonwealth of Israel, not to tear it apart.

It was Judah who recommended they sell Joseph to the Midianites, so they would not have his blood on their hands. This idea seemed good to the brothers, so they sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, the price for a *young* slave.

✚ Yeshua was sold for thirty pieces of silver, the price for a *mature* slave. Silver also represents redemption. Like Joseph's brothers, when the Pharisees discussed Yeshua, rather than have His death on their hands, they also decided to have their victim die by

the hand of someone else (the Romans), thinking that it absolved them of guilt. (Matthew 20:19).

The caravan Joseph found himself sold to, carried spices, balm, and myrrh used for making perfumes. These were also the spices used with linen in the Hebrew culture, when wrapping a dead body before burial.

Joseph facing a certain death in the well “rose from the dead,” and was carried away into Egypt. From his “death”– being entombed alive in the cistern – came his deliverance. Joseph had to die first (spiritually) before resurrection life could enter. This was the end of *his life* and the beginning of *Yahweh’s life* in him.

🌿 Joseph is a pictograph of Yeshua. The women came to the tomb to prepare Yeshua’s body with spices but He had already risen.

The brothers would not see Joseph again until he had prepared a place of deliverance for them. In the same way, Yeshua our Bridegroom, has gone to prepare a place for us.

Yahweh had given Joseph revelations by way of dreams. Now he was about to walk out those revelations. From the moment of his deliverance from the pit, Joseph knew he had been saved from certain death and it was Yahweh who had saved him. He now came into submission to Yahweh, as he no longer had the freedom to live by his own preferences and choices. In his captivity, Yahweh enabled Joseph to walk into true freedom, the *salvation of his soul*. In reflection, Joseph *laid his life on the Altar* in order to receive Yahweh’s *greater Life* in him.

The journey from Dothan to Egypt was approximately three hundred miles. Doing twenty miles a day by camel, if conditions were good, the journey would take about fifteen days. Reaching their destination, the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard.

While we can be introspective of the circumstances we may find ourselves, and the lesson we are learning here through Joseph, we have to ask: do our actions lead to life and abundance or do they lead us into poverty and death. Which Tree are we eating from: life or death? Is Yahweh trying to get our attention through circumstances so we can hear Him in order to deliver us? Joseph’s life is teaching us how to inherit Yahweh’s Kingdom and pass this understanding to our following generations as they return to Torah so they also can inherit the Promised Land. Joseph’s journey is the future of all Israel. Through our obedience and surrender, the redemption of our souls, the people called *Israel* will come forth.

Hebrews 12:6 "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

Judah Leaves and Loses His Identity

Genesis 38

At this point, scripture breaks away from Joseph's life and focuses on the life of his brother Judah, (which parallels Joseph's while he was in Egypt). Immediately after selling Joseph to the Midianites, Judah left his family and journeyed to live with the pagan Canaanite's. He had gone from believing he had destroyed his brother, to living in a culture that exemplified all the spiritual death that was found outside of Yahweh's teaching and instruction. What we sow, we will reap. The choices we make can have repercussions that flow from generation to generation.

While in Canaan, Judah stayed with a man from the region of Adullam named Hirah and there he met and married a Canaanite woman. She and Judah had three sons. When the eldest son was old enough to marry, Judah found a wife for him by the name of Tamar.

Tamar in Hebrew (Strong's H8559/ TWOT 2523b) means palm tree; a position of authority, judgment and wisdom, also called "trees of life".

While married to Tamar, Yahweh put Judah's firstborn son to death as he was wicked in His sight. In Torah it was commanded that the eldest son was to marry his brother's widow to carry on the family line. Judah's second son married Tamar, but this son was also wicked. He spilled his seed intentionally, not fulfilling the righteous ways of Yahweh to bless his dead brother with an heir. He also died.

Judah's first two sons died because they disobeyed Yahweh. They were not living in Torah as their hearts were not after the redemption and restoration life found in the promise of a Savior that would come through the promised son/seed of their great grandfather, Abraham (Deuteronomy 25:5).

In Genesis, God's message to "be fruitful and multiply" was given to Yahweh's people numerous times, including Adam and Eve, Noah, and Abraham and his *seed* after him. We are all part of one seed, the Promised Seed of Isaac, Yeshua. The spiritual and the physical are considered to be inter dependant – not separated into two independent issues as taught in Gnosticism. The seed was not the brother's to govern but was a gift from Yahweh. By refusing to glorify God through multiplication of that seed, they denied Yahweh and rejected their inheritance. Because they did not value the next generation, they died.

Since the youngest son was not yet of age to marry, Judah asked Tamar to be a widow in widow's garb until the last son could fulfill the obligation of marriage to her. This she agreed to do. After much patience as the waiting period for this third son went well past the time of his adulthood, Tamar decided to rectify the situation by meeting her father-in-law as he journeyed to shear his sheep.

Looking at this story through prophetic imagery, Rabbi Ralph Messer of *Simchat Torah Beit Midrash* says that Judah represents the *House of Judah* and Tamar represents the *House of Israel*. Tamar comes from a priestly line (revealed later), a line that was taught Torah. The understanding was that her desire was to be with child. As Judah went to shear the sheep, Tamar took off her widow's garb and dressed as a prostitute. She did not go to the House of God in Timnah, but knew Judah would stop at the Canaanite prostitute's temple along his way - a common practice for the culture he lived in. It was here that Judah noticed her and thought she

was a harlot. Judah propositioned the veiled Tamar for sexual favors with the promise of a goat for payment, to be delivered afterwards (a representation for the despised and rejected).

Tamar understood Deuteronomy 25:5: "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her."

The name of Judah's last son was *Shelah* (Strong's H7956), which in Hebrew means *a petition*. Tamar in turn *petitioned* Judah for a *pledge* until he sent the goat for payment.

The House of Israel is looking for a pledge from *the House of Judah*. The pledge Judah gave Tamar consisted of three things:

- ✿ A signet ring, also called the miter of a High Priest (his *identity*).
- ✿ His staff also called the rod (which are terms that refer to *the Tree of Life/Torah*),
- ✿ The crimson cord (which speaks of *redemption*). Not holding his identity very highly after having left his family and inheritance, Judah agreed to *sell his identity and birthright for services provided by a harlot*.

Later, Judah sent his friend Hirah to find the harlot to give her the promised goat and to retrieve the items of his identity. Hirah asked at the temple for the prostitute but she was not to be found, as *the House of Israel* is not a harlot. Three months later (the number three represents divine intervention) Tamar was declared to be pregnant by harlotry. Judah judged her by saying, "Bring her out and let her be *burned!*" (Genesis 38:24). Scripture states that if a prostitute of a non-priestly line was convicted of this transgression she was to be *stoned* to death but a daughter from a priestly line caught in prostitution was to be *burned*. Thus scripture reveals that Tamar was from a priestly line (Leviticus 21:9; John 8:3-5).

The House of Israel has indeed worshipped idols throughout her history. However, the lost sheep of *the House of Israel* have been made clean by the blood of the Lamb and can no longer be compared to temple prostitutes, but are virtuous in Yeshua, the Redeemer. They are the daughters of the priestly bloodline of Yeshua, our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. Many outcasts from *the House of Israel* are returning to Yahweh's Temple/House, learning to obey and walk in His ways, having left the ways of harlotry to other gods far behind (Matthew 10:6, 15:24; 1 Peter 2:9).

Judah, representing *the House of Judah* was sitting in the seat of judgment; he felt he had the right to judge Tamar, (representing *the House of Israel*) according to Torah that he himself was not honoring. This was neither his job nor his calling in Torah - that is the work of the Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh*. Tamar, (*the House of Israel*), brought out Judah's items of *identity* and said, "To whom these belong, judge."

The House of Israel holds the House of Judah's forsaken identity:

- ✿ The signet ring (*identity in Yahweh and the Shabbat*)

- ✿ The staff (*identity in Torah/the rod of Yahweh*)
- ✿ The crimson cord (*the redemption of Yahweh*).

The last (coming into Torah, *the House of Israel*) will be first, and the first (in Torah, *the House of Judah*) will be last. (Matthew 20:16)

The House of Judah has given up its identity for the teachings and identity of Kabbalah. When *the House of Israel* comes under judgment by Judah, *the House of Israel* will stand up to the allegations and what will Judah have to say, “She is more righteous than I.”

House of Judah will say this to the House of Israel/Ephraim: “You are more righteous than I.” Selah. (Genesis 38:26)

Tamar kept Judah’s identity as we see the crimson cord once again during the birth of her twin sons. The scarlet thread was tied around the second son, Zerah, when his hand reached out during the birth. But it was the other baby, Perez, who was born first and is listed in King David’s lineage (Ruth 4:18-22).

Joseph and the Wife of Potiphar

Genesis 39

The Biblical narrative now returns to Joseph in Egypt and the next step in his sanctification process. He was in service to Potiphar and Yahweh was with him, prospering all he did. Joseph was soon elevated and put in charge of Potiphar’s entire household, entrusted with everything Potiphar owned. As a young man, Joseph was very handsome, and one day Potiphar’s Egyptian wife tried to entice him. Wisdom in Torah principles and respect for Potiphar, caused Joseph to flee from her advances, and as he fled she reached out and grabbed his cloak from him.

Potiphar’s house represents a type of enslavement to a worldly or Egyptian mindset and lifestyle. Touching worldly ways will lead to compromise in our lives. If Joseph was becoming comfortable in this Egyptian life circumstance, Yahweh would provide a way to separate him from it and keep him consecrated unto Him. We are not to take refuge in the world but press into Yahweh’s Life, the Living Torah/Yeshua. We are in the world but not of this world.

A lie from Potiphar’s wife put Joseph in prison, for in righteousness Joseph had chosen not to defile Yahweh, his employer or his employer’s household. While in prison, Yahweh blessed him. The prison warden granted Joseph favor and promoted him to be an overseer in the prison.

The Cupbearer and the Baker

Genesis 40

Joseph had been in prison many years when Yahweh presented an opportunity for him to test Joseph’s heart. Pharaoh’s cupbearer and baker were also in prison. One day, Joseph noticed how downcast they were and asked what was bothering them. The cupbearer revealed they both had dreams but had no one to interpret them. Joseph said, “Do not interpretations belong to Yahweh?” This was the first time Joseph acknowledged where dreams came from. The test

continued...

As the cupbearer told his dream, Yahweh gave Joseph the interpretation. He explained that this man would be set free from prison in three days. Joseph seized this opportunity to plead his case before this man and Pharaoh by saying, “When all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. For I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon.”

Joseph sealed the timeframe to be in prison one more time. His answer revealed he still had a mixture in his heart that sought the favor of man and Pharaoh, verses wholly trusting Yahweh for his needs and deliverance. Joseph was not yet totally dependent or trusting in the faithfulness of Yahweh for redemption in his life. This was a costly mistake. Our actions will speak what is in our hearts. Yahweh had huge plans for Joseph and Yahweh has huge plans for us also. Yahweh needed Joseph to be ready as the future deliverance of his brothers depended on his heart being stable and at peace, trusting that Yahweh was in charge of his life, as a covenant keeping God. Yahweh would never leave Joseph nor have him suffer needlessly. The delay was on his end, as it is on our end. May we be a people who are faithful to the One who is Faithful, by keeping dishonor and sin far from ourselves.

✿ **Matthew 8:5-10** “When Yeshua had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.’ Yeshua said to him, ‘I will go and heal him.’ The centurion replied, ‘Master, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, “Go,” and he goes; and that one, “Come,” and he comes. I say to my servant, “Do this,” and he does it.’ When Yeshua heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, ‘I tell you the truth, *I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.*”

Joseph’s positive interpretation of the cupbearer’s dream encouraged the second man, the baker, to share his dream with Joseph, but his dream did not produce the same result. Yahweh revealed that this man would be executed in three days. What Yahweh revealed to Joseph did take place. The test continued as the cupbearer, when released from prison, did not remember Joseph. Two more years passed before Yahweh tried Joseph’s heart again....

To be continued...



Shabbat Shalom
Julie Parker

Since its inception in 2003, *Sheepfold Gleanings* has been written under the pen name of *Carl and Julie Parker*. It will now be published under the authors name *Julie Parker*, with her husband Carl’s continued support and covering.

Note: We are in the process of publishing the studies in soft spiral study format and soft bond format for prison ministry (an eBook format is coming!). **Genesis** is the first book in a five part series: **Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers and Deuteronomy**. Each book is part of the yearly Torah

cycle starting in Genesis and is designed to be used each year for study purposes. To pre order please contact the information below.

Reference

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