

Sheepfold Gleanings

VAYECHI - AND HE LIVED

Genesis 47:28 to 50:26

1 Kings 2:1-12

Hebrews 11:21-22

Joseph's Life: Part Four

Genesis 47:28 to 48:2

Joseph's obedience to Yahweh and the prominent position he held in the land of Egypt, ensured that his father Jacob/*Israel* and his family were protected in the area of Goshen from the severe famine sweeping the nations. At this time, Jacob had been in the land of Egypt for seventeen years. Knowing his death was close at hand, he made burial arrangements with Joseph his firstborn son, "*to be buried in the land of his anointing.*"

Why was it important for Jacob to return to the promised land of Israel and not be buried anywhere else? Jacob represented all twelve tribes of Israel. Going home and being buried in the land was prophetic of all Twelve Tribes coming out of the nations in the world – and the world system – and returning to Yahweh believing in His promised inheritance, a land, a people and a blessing. By an oath, Joseph promised to carry his father's body back to the land for burial. (Genesis 47:30).

As Jacob approached the end of his life, Joseph was summoned to his bedside. It was the Hebrew custom at the deathbed, that a father would speak his blessing and birthright over his offspring. Joseph took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him for he understood that the time had come for the *promise* to be passed on.

When Jacob saw Joseph he said, "El-Shaddai appeared to me at Luz (Bethel) in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and will increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you' " (Genesis 48:3-4).

The same promise and everlasting covenant given to Abraham in Genesis 13, that was passed on to his son Isaac (the son of promise), then on to his grandson Jacob, was now being passed on to Jacob's son Joseph and his family, the fourth and fifth generations of the covenant of promise.

Full Sonship

Genesis 48:5-6

After confirming Yahweh's covenant to Joseph, Jacob talked to him about the two sons born to Joseph in Egypt by making this unusual statement: "And now your two sons, who were born to

you in the land of Egypt *before I came to you in Egypt, **are mine**; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be **mine**, as Reuben and Simeon are [mine]*” (Genesis 48:5).

Jacob was saying that *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* were to be considered from that time forth, as **his full BLOOD sons**, not as his half Hebrew/half Egyptian **grandsons**. Even though their mother Asenath was an Egyptian, they were to be considered *full Hebrew sons*, as it was the *father's* bloodline, not the mother's that carried the covenant. In this, Jacob was also pronouncing a prophecy for the future of Joseph's descendants coming back to the land and taking up their full inheritance in the Messianic era. This is important information for the returning House of Israel today as they are considered **full BLOOD sons**, not adopted, orphaned or gentile/pagan sons of Jacob's family. The returning remnant is one hundred percent, legitimately *part of Israel by blood*.

To make sure they understood this statement, Jacob added the clause: “*as Reuben and Simeon are [mine]*.” Reuben and Simeon were Jacob's *full blood sons* by his wife Leah. These two sons were the first and second born of the twelve sons of Israel. With the above statement, Jacob effectively elevated Ephraim and Manasseh, his grandsons, to first and second born status, and transferred the covenant name *Israel* that Yahweh had bestowed upon Jacob at Bethel to *Ephraim* along with the firstborn status (Jeremiah 31:9).

This statement was made in part **to control Joseph's brothers**, for their jealousy of him in the past had led them into hatred and murder. Would they have jealously towards Ephraim and Manasseh? Jacob bypassed sibling rivalry and protected Joseph's children and their future inheritance from that day onwards. There would be no challenge of Jacob's inheritance to Joseph and his sons. Their position as full sons of Israel was protected and prophetically guaranteed, setting the stage for the future return of **all Twelve Tribes back to the land**. Not one tribe would be left out or missing. This was what the story of Joseph was really about, the preservation of the **WHOLE House of Israel**.

Quoting from the book *Redeemed Israel* by Batya Wootten: “*Jacob gave the birthright to his beloved Rachel's firstborn son. He gave it to Joseph and to Joseph's sons. In ancient Israel the birthright consisted of a double portion, as well as family preeminence (the right to act as the next family ruler). The Almighty commanded that the father must 'acknowledge the firstborn...by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn' (Deuteronomy 21:17).*

“*The firstborn was given a double portion that he might be equipped to act as a kinsman-redeemer for his brethren. This right of the firstborn speaks of preeminence, primogeniture, the right to act as family ruler, to dispense justice, and to be the family redeemer.*

“*He received the right to inherit family leadership (Genesis 43:33). Preferential status: sanctity, authority, sovereignty, responsibility, and right of succession accrued to (him)...he became the next head of the family...and embodied the soul and character of the social group, becoming responsible for its continuance and welfare.*” (End of quote.)

Note: Ephraim and Manasseh were not “adopted.” The word “adopted” was introduced with the King James interpretation of the Greek / Hebrew Scriptures and implies that one had no physical or blood ties with the original. And “adoptee” in the English language was also considered a gentile/pagan, a second class citizen or a spiritual Israelite but never a full blood relative.

The Hebraic understanding of adoption is *absolute sonship, as being natural born. Those who believe in the Messiah/Yeshua Ha Mashiach are considered full blood sons of Israel and heirs according to the eternal, everlasting Covenant and promises given to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.*

Galatians 3:7, 29 “Understand, then, that those who believe *are children [full blood sons] of Abraham...If you belong to Yeshua, then you are Abraham’s seed, and [full blood sons] heirs according to the promise [covenant].*”

Seed in the Greek is *sperma* (Strong’s #4690), meaning PHYSICAL SEED or traceable DNA. First century Gnosticism in the Church taught separation of the physical realm (considered flawed and corrupt) from the spiritual realm (considered pure). Jacob/Israel did not have “spiritual” sons; Isaac did not have “spiritual” sons, nor did the patriarch Abraham. “Seed” in scriptures is not a spiritual reference nor does it mean “spiritual Israel,” it means physical Israel!

Hebrews 2:14, 16 “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death...For surely it is not angels he helps, but *Abraham’s descendants.*”

Note: This is neither British Israelism nor replacement theology. As a believer in Yeshua, your rightful position and inheritance IS as *part of Israel*. Those from the House of Judah who do not understand their scriptures may attempt to “lord over you” but they speak from ignorance or from what they have learned through man’s theology that is not scriptural. The *whole House of Israel* – all twelve tribes - being recognized individually and as a community are coming home to Torah and the Land of Israel. Scripture is very clear; *those who believe are Abraham’s seed.*

The Covenant Given to Abraham

Romans 4:9-17 “Now is this blessing for the *circumcised* only? Or is it also for the *uncircumcised*? For we say that Abraham’s trust was credited to his account as righteousness; but what state was he in when it was so credited, *circumcision* or *uncircumcision*? Not in *circumcision* but in **uncircumcision**! In fact, he received *circumcision as a sign, as a seal of the righteousness* he had been credited with on the ground of the trust he had **while he was still uncircumcised**. *This happened so that he could be the father of every uncircumcised person who trusts and thus has righteousness credited to him. AND AT THE SAME TIME be the father of every circumcised person who not only has had circumcision, but also follows in the footsteps of the trust which Abraham our father had when he was still uncircumcised (He is the Father of both).*

“For the promise to Abraham and his seed that he would inherit the world did not come through legalism but through the righteousness that trust produces. For if the heirs are produced by

legalism, then trust is pointless and the promise worthless. For what law brings is punishment. But where there is no law, there is also no violation.

“The reason the promise is based on trusting is so that it may come as Yahweh’s free gift, a promise that can be relied on by **ALL the seed**, not only those who live within the framework of the Torah, but also those with the kind of trust Abraham had – He is the father of us ALL (Ephraim and Judah). This accords with the Tanakh, where it says, ‘I have made you a father of many nations’ ” (Genesis 17:5; Romans 3:30). CJB

The problem with the *House of Ephraim*, the *ekklesia* today (believers in Messiah) is that many do not know their bloodline identity. If a people do not know who they are, how can they develop a respect for their heritage? If we are *part of Israel* and we are coming home, we have a responsibility, a place, a people and a blessing in our Hebraic heritage according to an *eternal covenant*. Today, many have lost that identity through the teachings of false shepherds and are walking as lost sheep as a veil covers our heart due to our lack of understanding. When we lose our identity, a veil covers our heart due to our lack of understanding. Not knowing we are full *physical* sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (meaning *full blood relatives*) causes us to only partially see our inheritance.

On the other hand, many today from the *House of Judah* tend to focus heavily on the “law” (contained in the Mosaic Covenant), without the fullness or the *Spirit of Torah, Yeshua*. In doing this, they miss the *SPIRIT LIFE in Torah*. The Mosaic Covenant is also the teachings of *Yeshua to Moses* (John 5:46-47) and is the foundation of our covenant with our Savior. But to separate Torah from the Spirit or Life of Torah (*Yeshua*) produces only legalism. You cannot have one without the other. It is like having an engine without a car, or a motor without gas. *Spirit (the power of Yeshua)* and *Truth (the authority of Torah)* must come together, as we cannot produce this life on our own. To walk in Torah and Yeshua is a gift from Yahweh.

Ephraim/*Israel* in the Nations may still look Egyptian or pagan, but he is Judah’s full **blood relative**. Joseph’s brothers are still quarrelling and jealous, and this is preventing them from coming home. *Joseph* is waking up to his heritage and starting to walk in his full **sonship** in the fulfilled covenant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Messiah. *Ephraim* is learning to walk in Yahweh’s principles found in His teaching and instruction (Torah); he is learning to keep the Sabbaths, Feasts Days and New Moon festivals and learning the difference between clean and unclean, holy and unholy. In this, Joseph will declare the *Truth* (Torah) by the *Spirit* (Yeshua) and share the fullness of the “gospel,” originally given us at Mount Sinai, with his brothers. This is how all the Nations will be blessed (Exodus 19:5-6; Ezekiel 44:23-24).

Israel continued, “Any children born to you **after** them (Ephraim and Manasseh) will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers (Ephraim and Manasseh)” (Genesis 48:6). No other children from Joseph would be in the position that Ephraim and Manasseh would hold.

Ephraim and Manasseh

Genesis 48:8-22

After this divine blessing, Jacob's eyes were now open to see Ephraim and Manasseh as if for the first time. He asked Joseph, "Who are these with you?" Joseph responded they were Ephraim and Manasseh. The two sons are prophetic of Joseph becoming doubly fruitful in the "wilderness". Jacob asked that they be brought closer that he might *see them*, prophetic of the future events of Joseph's life, family, and his descendents who have remained hidden yet are alive!

The time had come for Jacob to pass on the firstborn blessing – *the salvation of his soul* – to "his" children by the laying on of hands. The younger son *Ephraim* was in front of Jacob left hand and the firstborn *Manasseh* was before his right hand. The right hand represented the authority of Yahweh and is used when blessing and passing on inheritance. Jacob, being led by the Holy Spirit/ *Ruach HaKodesh*, placed his right hand on *Ephraim's* head and not on *Manasseh's* head. He *crossed* his hands and pronounced the firstborn blessing upon the younger son, *Ephraim*, saying, "May Yahweh before whom my father's Abraham and Isaac walked, Elohim who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel [*Yeshua*] who has delivered me from all harm, may He bless these boys. May they be called by my name [*Israel*] and the names of my father's *Abraham* and *Isaac*, and may they increase greatly upon the earth" (Genesis 48:15-16).

Joseph was distraught when he saw his father's right hand on *Ephraim's* head instead of *Manasseh's* head. He questioned his father over this but Jacob confirmed his decision by saying, "He [*Manasseh*] will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother [*Ephraim*] will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations." (Genesis 48:19)

The "a group of nations" is *the House of Israel/Ephraim*. The word *goyim* is Hebrew for "nations" and has been incorrectly translated as "gentiles" in many translations, especially in the New Testament/ *Brit Chadasha*. When this happened, the true identity and understanding of the *Nations of Jacob's* children was completely lost to *believers* as the word "gentile" had no connection to the Tribes of Israel, the covenant or anything Hebraic in the Bible. Because of this, people became blinded to their heritage and lost to the full message of *Yeshua* in the New Testament/*Brit Chadasha*. The correct translation of the word "gentile" is: *a confused pagan without God, a group other than one's own*. *Yeshua* was not sent [*to pagans*] but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. (Matthew 13:24; Matthew 10:6).

It is interesting to note that it was *Jacob* who passed the blessing on to *Joseph's* sons and not *Joseph* himself as was the normal Hebrew practice. In this case, we see *Jacob* bypassed *Joseph's* authority and chose to directly impart the firstborn double blessing over Yahweh's chosen son, *Ephraim*, whose name means "doubly fruitful" or "I shall be doubly fruitful." For *Jacob*, the memory of usurping his brother *Esau*, his father's choice for the birthright, may have been on his heart. Knowing *Manasseh* was *Joseph's* first choice, *Jacob* obeyed the Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh* and eliminated the chance of a recurrence of the circumstances in which he had received the firstborn status instead of *Esau*, which caused years of alienation. This also confirmed that *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* were to be as *Jacob's true* sons, and as their father, he blessed them.

Blessing the Sons of Israel

Genesis 48:20

After the formalities, came the final blessing, a blessing that is still pronounced over the sons of the covenant to this day: “In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: ‘May Yahweh make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’ So he [*Israel*] put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.”

Future Return

Genesis 48:21-22

He then said to Joseph, “I am about to die, *but Yahweh will be with you [plural] and take you back to the land of your fathers.*” This statement was prophetic for all Joseph’s descendants today.

Jacob then assigned Joseph and his family an allotment in the land promised to them by Yahweh. Jacob knew Egypt was only a temporary dwelling and the promises of Yahweh were always before him. He spoke of the future to Joseph and gave him a portion of land larger than his brothers. The word *portion* is in Hebrew the word *shechem*; *shechem* is also the word for shoulder, ridge, share, a city in Northern Israel, and the area around the northern city. Shechem is in the area of Samaria and Judea, called the West Bank today. Joseph’s inheritance is the land of Judea and Samaria which is a hotly disputed piece of property, being used by Judah in bartering for peace with their violent neighbors.

Israel Blesses His Sons

Genesis 49:1-28

All twelve sons receive prophetic blessings as Jacob’s life closes. He called to them, “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.” As Jacob blessed each son, we see that Judah was given “the scepter.” Jacob said, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a scholar from among his descendants *until Shiloh* arrives.”

Romans 3:1-2 Paul said, “What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew [*Judah*], or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they [*Judah*] have been entrusted with the very words of Yahweh.”

The scepter given Judah was the Torah, the very Words of Yahweh. They are the keepers of His Word; they have cared for Yahweh’s Words with their very life. They were to keep the scepter until Shiloh arrived. Shiloh is a reference to the *Messiah, the Word of Yahweh made flesh*. The prophets record the time of the Messiah coming. The New Testament/*Brit Chadasha* proclaims the fulfillment of their prophecies: “*The Word [of Yahweh Torah] became flesh and dwelled among us*” (John 1:1, 14). If the Messiah’s first coming has been revealed, then part of the prophecy over Judah has also been fulfilled.

Much of Judah is not aware of this fulfillment or the prophecy of *all* twelve tribes returning. Judah’s ten brothers, who can be seen as the majority of believers coming from a Church background, are aware of the Messiah. However, they are still unaware of the prophecies of the

return of the twelve tribes or about their inheritance which is found walking in Torah. The House of Judah tends to guard or legally police the Word of Yahweh and feels they should lead Israel's restoration because of their generational sacrifices to preserve Torah. Nevertheless their efforts thus far have excluded those who do not choose to convert to Judaism. On the other hand, the Church feels they have replaced Israel and are restored without their Hebraic roots. They want to keep the Messiah while rejecting everything Hebraic about him. Both Houses need to return to their beginnings and embrace the teaching of Moses, in order to see and worship the true Messiah in *Spirit* and in *Truth* (John 5:46-47). The Word (Torah) that became flesh is the Yeshua, the Messiah, the Ruler and the Scepter of Yahweh.

Judah carries the *kingly* portion and they were tasked with sharing the Word of Yahweh with all the nations of their dispersion, to teach them the ways of Yahweh so they too could come and walk with Him. In many cases Judah did not share the Word of Yahweh, nor did they study it themselves. The Torah became rote to them and many made the Torah into an idol. Judah began to study other materials like Kabbalah teachings, which they used in replacement of the *Ruach HaKodesh* (Spirit of God) to teach them. They often elevated man's teaching (Rabbinic authority) higher than the Torah leaving the teaching Yahweh gave Moses far behind.

In the New Testament/*Brit Chadasha*, the book of Luke illustrates Yeshua teaching from Moses and the Prophets. Acts 15 describes the event of the Jerusalem council when the disciples recommended that all those returning to Yahweh should go into the synagogues because "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." In this way they would learn Yahweh's instructions so that they would not fall away again. ***They preached Torah as the only study source for all believers.*** (Acts 15:21)

If we went into a synagogue today, would we find the rabbis teaching Moses from the Torah? If we went into a Church today, would we find the pastors teaching Moses from the Torah? This is what the Jerusalem Council recommended to Paul and to all those who followed the Messiah. Thirty years after Yeshua died, Paul was still teaching Moses in all the synagogues and in every city wherever he went (Luke 24:27; 44; Acts 15:13-21; 28:23).

Yeshua said this about himself, ***"IF you believed Moses you would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how shall you believe My words?"*** (John 5:46-47).

Those of Ephraim who are walking with Yeshua in the Torah, have been given the *"double portion"* birthright (Torah and Messiah), and they are being taught by the Spirit of Yahweh by divine revelation. It is the *Spirit* and *Truth* of Torah that is teaching them. Judah today is searching for the *Spirit of Torah* (Yeshua), which is in the care of Joseph. According to the prophetic story of Joseph and his brothers, they will come to Joseph to buy the grain/food/manna. Joseph will share *freely*, as Yahweh's Word is without cost and without restraints. (Revelation 14:12).

All Israel Will Be Saved

Romans 11:25-27

“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel [*House of Judah*] has experienced a hardening [*blindness*] in part until the full number of Gentiles [*Nations – Ephraim, the House of Israel*] has come in. And so all Israel [*the Whole House of Israel – the Houses of Judah and Israel - all Twelve Tribes*] will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Israel. And this will be my Covenant with them when I take away their sins’ ” (Isaiah 59:20-21; 27:9; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 6:9; 8:14 to both House of Israel; Matthew 13:15; Luke 8:10; 1 Peter 2:8-10).

“*Until the full number of Gentiles [Nations] has come in*” is the appointed time when the exile of the House of Israel, who have been dispersed and hidden among the nations, ends and the restoration back to the covenants and land of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob begins.

When the sons of Jacob were recorded in 1 Chronicles, *Reuben* is listed as “the firstborn of Israel.” Then the scripture continues, “but when he defiled his father’s marriage bed, his rights as firstborn were given to the sons of *Joseph* son of Israel; so he could not be listed in the genealogical record in accordance with his birthright, and ***though Judah was the strongest of his brothers and a ruler came from him [Yeshua], the rights of the firstborn belonged to Joseph***” (1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

After Jacob spoke prophetically to his sons Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, and Naphtali, he blessed Joseph. Joseph carries the birthright, the covenant, and the priestly portion. The reason why this is so important is because the Messiah will return when Judah’s kingly portion **AND** Joseph’s priestly portion “join” and become “one” in the Father’s hand. This is called the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7). The Two Houses, all twelve tribes must come together and be united as one in Yeshua.

As stated before, many in the Christian Church practice *replacement theology*, while many in Judah today have also taken up *replacement theology*, just in reverse. They feel all twelve tribes are presently represented in Israel and are evidenced in the one tribe of *Judah*. Their belief is that the tribe of Judah, which became the strongest and is the only **visible** tribe, took the firstborn position from Joseph/Ephraim by default. But Ephraim in the Nations is the “firstborn” in Yeshua. Joseph/Ephraim has remained hidden from Judah until an appointed time; this is the work of the Ruach (Spirit). Prophetically all the words of the prophets are infallible, and Ephraim has an everlasting covenantal promise that will become a reality in Yahweh’s appointed season. *Both Houses* have broken the covenant with the Father (Jeremiah 11:10), yet there are those that say Judah has been fully faithful and so should lead in Israel’s restoration. This does not line up with the Word of Yahweh that states only the Messiah can lead, as the state of both Houses shows the need for further repair.

In the story of Joseph, it was he who revealed the true heart of Torah to his brothers. Accordingly, this prophetic story will again unfold just as it did in Genesis, with the *House of Israel* revealing the Life in Torah to his brothers the *House of Judah*, through the liaison of the tribe of Benjamin.

“Jacob’s blessing is truly fulfilled in the Messiah, Yeshua. He knew no mere mortal could in himself fulfill the high calling of Israel. Jacob knew that one becomes Israel only when their soul and character becomes like that of the Messiah. Yeshua was sent to restore Israel’s preserved ones, and those who take refuge in Him are forever preserved. They are “the righteous [who] will inherit the land and dwell in it forever” (Psalm 16:1; 37:28).

“My Covenant shall be confirmed to Him (Messiah). So I will establish His seed forever” (Psalm 89:28-29). These same children are called “to the general assembly and ekklesia of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven...to Yeshua, the mediator of the new covenant” (Hebrews 12:22-24). These firstborn ones have become one with THE Firstborn – Messiah Yeshua. For He is the “head of the body, the ekklesia; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy” (Colossians 1:18). In Israel, Yeshua has firstborn supremacy and the double portion. He is the High Priest and the King of kings. Only He fulfills all the requirements to be Jacob’s heir. Yeshua is both Israel the Firstborn, and Ephraim the Firstborn. Both titles are His because He is the epitome of the Powerful Prevailing Prince of Israel – He is the only One truly capable of ruling with Yahweh Elohim. Only He could have paid the price!” (*Redeemed Israel* – Reunited and Restored by Batya Wootten).

Two Sticks Become One

Ezekiel 37:16-19

“Son of man, take a stick of wood and write on it, ‘Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him.’ Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, ‘Ephraim’s stick, belonging to Joseph and all the house of Israel associated with him.’ Join them together into one stick so that they will become one in your hand. When your countrymen ask you, ‘Won’t you tell us what you mean by this?’ say to them, ‘This is what Yahweh says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph – which is in Ephraim’s hand – and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah’s stick, making them a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.’”

Why is this important? Together, the Two Houses, the kingly and priestly lines, are called the order of Melchizedek. According to Scripture, Melchizedek was a king and a priest. King David was a king and a priest in the order of Melchizedek. Yeshua is King and Priest in that same order. When we as a people (*House of Judah* and *House of Israel*) come together in the order of Melchizedek, the time of the Messiah’s return is at hand (Genesis 14:18; 2 Samuel 7:12-16).

One New Man

Ephesians 2:14-16

Paul said, “For He [*Yeshua*] Himself is our peace, who has made the *two* [*House of Judah and the House of Israel*] one and has destroyed the barrier [*sibling rivalry*], the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law [*the curses man invoked against himself for disregarding Yahweh’s instructions*] with its commandments and regulations [*Deuteronomy 28*]. His purpose was to create in himself *one new man out of the two*, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile [*forgiving*] *both of them* to Yahweh through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility.”

The Death of Jacob/*Israel*

Genesis 49:29-50:14

Jacob again gave detailed instructions about his burial, requesting that his body be returned to the Promised Land. When he finished sharing, he breathed his last and was gathered to his people. Joseph grieved deeply for him. He then directed the Egyptian physicians to embalm his father, a way to keep the body preserved and free from decay. The embalming procedure took forty days, and was a process in which many of the vital organs were removed and the body was prepared for dehydration. A total of seventy days would complete the whole mummification process. During that time all Egypt mourned for Israel.

When it came time to bury his father in the Land, Joseph asked Pharaoh's permission to leave Egypt and go to the land of Canaan. So well-liked was Joseph that the Egyptians paid honor to his father; all Pharaoh's officials and dignitaries of his court joined him, as well as all the members of Joseph's family, his brothers and his father's household. They traveled in a very large company with chariots and horsemen. Only their children and flocks and herds remained in Goshen.

This would have been Joseph's first time back in the land since being sold by his brothers. When they reached the burial place they lamented loudly and bitterly. Could they have been weeping over more than the loss of Israel? Could they have wept for their loss of the land and lamenting the fact they could not stay? Would they have also wept and interceded for Yahweh's people who would go into captivity in future generations after them and prayed prophetically for their return?

Joseph observed a seven-day period of mourning for his father. During that time the Canaanites of the region said, "The *Egyptians* are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning." It is interesting that the Canaanites did not recognize the Israelites among the Egyptians as apparently all had the look of Egypt about them. Could this be the same today, even among those who are returning to Torah and visiting the land of Israel? Yahweh has us remaining hidden "for a season", but there will be a time that we must take off our Egyptian clothing, behavior, mindset and habits. How else are we going to be recognized as Yahweh's people among the Nations? After Joseph buried his father, the whole company returned to Egypt, back to the land of Goshen, as the *prophetic* time of their return had not yet come. A full 400 years had to pass before the prophetic return would come to pass (Genesis 15:13; Galatians 3:16-18).

Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 50:15-21

With the covering of their father Jacob gone, the fear of Joseph struck his brothers. They started talking about Joseph behind his back. This was a very grievous thing to do and is called *lashon hara* in Hebrew meaning to gossip and slander. This could only have happened if they had not repented for their earlier action towards him. They had been carrying unforgiveness against Joseph almost forty years. They handled it by sending a letter to him. In it they said, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive

your brother's the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." Reading this, Joseph wept.

Joseph's brothers had not recognized that Joseph had forgiven them and that it was they who were harboring unforgiveness against Joseph. Joseph could not have provided all the food, protection and the best of the land of Egypt if he had not already offered them forgiveness. In all that Joseph had done for them, he had literally saved their lives. An unforgiving heart could not have reached out the way Joseph did, provide abundantly, giving unselfishly to others time and time again. Joseph had given freely to them all these years. To see this behavior still going on in his brother's hearts grieved Joseph deeply.

Only after sending the letter did the brothers have courage to come face to face with Joseph. To further confirm the inclination and guilt of their hearts, they threw themselves at his feet saying, "We are your slaves!" Thus Joseph's earlier dream was fulfilled (Genesis 37:5-9).

Unforgiveness can cloud one's viewpoint and prevent the truth. Unfortunately the sons of Israel continued to walk in this way even in Moses' time when they left Egypt, as we get glimpses of this same mindset throughout scripture. Today it is alive in the hearts of the brothers toward Joseph in the giving away of his land. Metaphorically speaking, Joseph has been in the wilderness a long time, and now, towards the end of that exile, he is learning to lean on his staff, *the Torah*. Ephraim is learning Yahweh's ways and that is bringing him home. Not all Israel is Israel, according to Romans 9:6. Those who love their brothers and care for them are the true sons of Joseph. Judah may not recognize *Joseph* today, but we pray when they do, Joseph will have the grain/bread that gives life and will lead his brother's home.

Joseph said, "Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of Yahweh [*judging you or delivering you*]? You intended to harm me, but Yahweh intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. ***I will provide for you and your children***" (Genesis 50:19-21). This is prophetic language for our day.

Jeremiah 31:9 "They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son."

Joseph's Death

Genesis 50:22-26

In Egypt, Joseph lived to see the third generation of Ephraim's children. He also saw Manasseh's son who came to him for a blessing. At this time, Joseph shared with his brothers the blessings of Yahweh, saying, "Yahweh will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (Genesis 15:13-14). With this, Joseph made them swear to take his bones with them when they left Egypt. At one hundred and ten, Joseph died. They embalmed him and placed him in a coffin in Egypt waiting to be brought home as had been done with Jacob.

Hebrews 11:21-22 “By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.”

Chazak! Chazak! Venischazeik!
Be Strong! Be Strong!
And May We Be Strengthened!



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.

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