

# Sheepfold Gleanings

## VAYIGASH / HE APPROACHED

Genesis 44:18 to 47:27

Ezekiel 37:15-28

Colossians 1:1-29

### Joseph's Life: Part Three

It had been a long journey for Joseph leading up to this stage of his life. As the Torah portion opens, we read of one last heart test Joseph has set up for his brothers. Namely, how will they respond to his supposed intention of keeping their youngest brother, Benjamin, and sending the rest of the brothers on their way? With the possibility of Benjamin being taken from them, Judah stepped forward, speaking on behalf of his father and brothers. Knowing that any amount of defense would at this time be pointless, and realizing the great risk he was taking by approaching him, Judah courageously came before Joseph, acknowledging that the vizier was equal to Pharaoh himself. Judah shared with passion, detailing, in chronological order, their journey from beginning to end and how the brothers had complied with all that Joseph had asked of them. Judah then shared about their family life, focusing on Benjamin and his father's love of him. This was the main thrust of Judah's story, and he disclosed to Joseph that he himself had guaranteed Benjamin's safety to their father.

"Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. One of them went away from me, and I said, "He has surely been torn to pieces." And I have not seen him since. If you take this one from me too and harm comes to him, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in misery' " (Genesis 44:27-29).

"He has surely been torn to pieces" is a prophetic reference to the future separation of the twelve tribes of Jacob/Israel; they will separate and become Two Houses—the House of Judah and the House of Israel—and they will be assimilated into the Nations around them. Following the pattern this prophetic biblical narrative portrays, we can ascertain that as the tribes are even now being drawn together by the Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 37), it is imperative that Benjamin is with them, as he will act as the liaison between the Two Houses of Israel.

Though Judah was Jacob's son through Leah, he did not appear reticent or jealous as he acknowledged Rachel's children were Jacob's beloved. Jacob loved all his children, but the children coming from Rachel had a special place in his heart. All the sons now understood this and accepted it in their hearts. After this plea for mercy, in an act of self-sacrifice, Judah now offered his life for Benjamin's life so the boy could return to his father.

### Genesis 45 Joseph Declares Himself

Joseph could no longer contain his emotions. He cried out, "Have everyone leave my presence!" Joseph wept so loud that even the Egyptians heard him. There was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. The Messiah Yeshua, represented by Joseph, also revealed

himself to his brothers alone. “As Yeshua approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it and said, ‘If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes’ ” (Luke 19:41-42).

**John 20:19** “On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were [alone] together, with the doors locked, Yeshua came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ ”

Joseph said to them, “*I am Joseph,*” but his brothers were unable to answer him, as they were terrified. So shocked were they in the presence of this mighty man of Egypt they were not able to fully take in what Joseph was saying. Flooded by memories long buried, they struggled to put everything together and tried to understand that it was indeed Joseph standing before them.

If you had plotted someone’s murder twenty years earlier and now had him standing in front of you as one of the most important people in the country, you might think that your life was in imminent danger. As the brothers so freely “took Joseph’s life,” so now Joseph was in the position to take their lives.

Sins done in secret are always seen by YHVH; eventually the sin will be exposed if we do not deal with it in our lives. The brothers had acted out of their fleshly/sinful nature and now it was all catching up with them. They feared this was the time YHVH was repaying them for the hatred they had held toward Joseph and for the lies they told their father and continued to tell him about his beloved son. Joseph’s dreams seemed to be coming true before their very eyes (Genesis 37:2-11).

The truth is, it was as if the brothers were looking at resurrection life. Joseph, who had been dead to them, was now standing before them—alive! In the same way, Yeshua was dead to *His* disciples, then stood before them alive after His crucifixion. Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me” (Genesis 45:4). Likewise Scripture says, “now in Yeshua [we] who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Yeshua” (Ephesians 2:13). “Once [we] were alienated from YHVH and were enemies in [our] *minds* because of [our] evil behavior. But now he has reconciled [us] by Yeshua’s physical body through death to present [us] holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation” (Colossians 1:21-22). Joseph declared, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!” Oh, the brothers’ worst fears were now coming back to them! Joseph, reading their dismay, said, “Do not be distressed and angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that YHVH sent me ahead of you” (Genesis 45:5).

**John 11:49-52** “But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, ‘You people don’t know anything! You don’t see that it is better for you if one man dies on behalf of the people, so that the whole nation won’t be destroyed.’ Now he didn’t speak this way on his own initiative; rather, since he was high priest that year, he was prophesying that Yeshua was about to die on behalf of the nation and not for the nation alone, but so that he might gather into one the scattered children of God (all twelve tribes of Jacob).”

Joseph freely forgave them. Notice the brothers did not respond at this point. Forgiveness is the theme of this study.

Again, it had been a long road for Joseph. Many thoughts were going through his mind at this time. Twenty-two years had passed since he was sold into slavery. His anguish would have been deep. In a sense, he had given himself up to save his brothers, for their delivery, and now he stood before them. Yeshua, of whom Joseph was a type and shadow of, anguished in the Garden before giving himself up for our deliverance (Luke 22:39-44).

Why could his brothers not "*see*" him? His brothers had sold him into slavery because of the bitterness that had grown in their hearts and "blocked them up" spiritually. It was not Joseph who had been in slavery all those years - *it was his brothers*. They were slaves to their own evil inclinations of their hearts and imaginations. Unforgiveness was the stronghold that prevented them from seeing the truth before their eyes. It needed to be revealed, taken responsibility for and repented over before Joseph's brothers could really "*see*" him.

We are told that the stronghold of bitterness hosts seven other spirits: unforgiveness, resentment, retaliation, anger, hatred, violence and murder (and murder with the tongue). Family alienation, relating to both biological and spiritual family, is rampant in our society today. Restoration in the lives of believers begins with recognition, repentance and forgiveness. We can no longer deny or excuse sin. Only then can a family (spiritual or physical) come together and be whole again.

Joseph had matured in his thirteen years as a slave. While in his father's house, he had studied in the *tents of Jacob* and was familiar with Torah by the age of seventeen when he was sold. He made choices and walked in Torah; this saved his life and those of his family. His brothers were not as familiar with Torah and their lives reflected what was in their hearts. It was this difference that was the basis for the necessity of their deliverance and change.

For some, forgiveness may not come easily due to the hardness of their hearts. Others have learned to hide it for years, like Joseph's brothers, hoping it would not be detected, denying it is there, keeping it secret even to the point of not remembering it but being riddled with guilt. This deprives a person of the abundant life they could have in Yeshua as unforgiveness separates us from His love. Left unchecked, bitterroots grow that can lead to physical ailments in our bodies.

Leviticus 16 teaches us that we must forgive others. Yeshua confirmed this, saying, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

**Matthew 6:14** "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive you."

**Mark 11:25** "If you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you."

**Luke 11:4** "Forgive us our trespasses (Strong's #G266 *hamartia*: sin, from G264 *hamatoano*: to miss the mark), for we also forgive everyone their trespasses."

**1 Corinthians 11: 27-30** "Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of YHVH in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of YHVH. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of YHVH eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep."

What Yeshua was sharing here was the difference between life and death. Touch death and you receive death; touch life and you receive Life, *His* Life. Yeshua was teaching Deuteronomy 28. In effect He was saying, "Obey *My Words* (*spoken at Mt. Sinai*), and you will live in my Presence with blessings. Disobey *My Words* (*given at Mt. Sinai*), and you will still live in my Presence but miss My Provisions; you will have life, but life without the blessings."

Yeshua made it very clear for us to understand that we must forgive others. If we do not forgive others we "miss the mark." His blood covered ALL our sin: past, present and future (Hebrews 9:12). The calling on our lives is to be a *holy* people (Hebrews 13:12; 1 Peter 2:9; 3:11). Our walk must match our confession. When we commit to living our lives for Yeshua yet hold unforgiveness against our brother (or any other sin in thought or deed), this prevents the Body of Yeshua from functioning in His anointing and resurrection power. As believers, we are in His salvation and righteousness, but we must learn to walk in that redemption that we might distinguish between holy and unholy, keep His *moedim*/feasts and circumcise our hearts (remove our sinful nature) (Ezekiel 44:23-24). This leads to sanctification and holiness. This is what heals the sick, makes the lame to walk, enables the blind to see and resurrects the dead – all called "elementary things" in Hebrews 6:1-2. A walk of righteousness and sanctification puts oil in our lamps and makes white the linen (wedding) garments (Matthew 25:1-13; Revelation 19:8).

Unforgiveness will lead to sickness, poverty and possibly even to death—both spiritually and physically. YHVH is a Holy God and will not mix unholiness with what is holy. Bitterroot strongholds or any other sin we participate in will affect how we interact with YHVH and others in every area of our lives. This is how the Israelites in the desert with Moses lost their lives.

**Hebrews 3:15; 4:1-2** "As has just been said: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Psalm 95:7-8). Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith (obedience and holiness)."

Just as Joseph's brothers could not "see" Joseph because they had unforgiveness in their hearts, so we also will miss many revelations of Yeshua in the Torah if we harbor unforgiveness in our hearts towards people. When we harbor sinful nature we will see through a distorted lens and think that is the truth when it is not. Yeshua was the ultimate example when right before His death He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23: 34). The level to which we forgive is the level of blessings we receive.

**James 1: 22** "Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. *Do what it says.*" Forgiveness is a pivotal point in our lives. The teaching of Joseph is a huge blessing to us, for those who would take hold of it. We can cry out to YHVH in areas of our lives that we need a breakthrough or healing in, but if we have unforgiveness we can cry all we want. Not until we forgive and repent will we see the benefit of praying with a clean pure heart before our Father.

### **Genesis 45 Further Revelation**

Joseph continued to reveal what he knew about the conditions of the land and the reason his brothers were before him, saying, "For two years now there has been famine in the land and for the next five years there will not be plowing and reaping. But YHVH sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great delivery" (Psalm 105:17; Genesis 45:7). This revealed to the brothers that, yes, they personally needed to be responsible for their behavior toward him, but also that YHVH's plan was higher than theirs and it for a great delivery in their lives and their families' (2 Corinthians 1:10).

Joseph continued, "He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. So then, it was not you who sent me here, but YHVH (Genesis 45:8). Now hurry back to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me don't delay.' "

Yeshua prayed, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. And eternal life is this: to know you, the one true God, and him whom you sent Yeshua the Messiah" (John 17:1-3).

Joseph revealed that they would be living in the land of Goshen to be near him. In the same way, Yeshua told believers, "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 13:2).

Goshen is also referred to as the land of lights (Exodus 10:23), which hinted at the prophetic coming of the Messiah Yeshua, the Light of the world, who would bring light unto the nations (John 8:12; Isaiah 51:4). One of the objectives of our Redeemer is the deliverance of the Twelve Tribes from the yoke of slavery from the nations by which they have been enslaved: The Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Greeks and the Romans.

Only after Joseph reported all the news to his brothers did he approach Benjamin and throw his arms around him and weep. Joseph then kissed and embraced his other brothers and wept over them also (Genesis 45:14).

Pharaoh offered the brothers carts that they could carry their goods back down to Egypt on. This was prophetic of the night of Passover when the carts would be used to deliver the Israelites from Egypt (Genesis 45:21).

Before sending them home to Jacob, Joseph gave them provisions for the journey. "To each of them he gave new clothing (signifying change in status) but to Benjamin he gave three hundred

shekels of silver and five sets of clothing (reflection of Torah). To his father he gave ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other provisions” (Genesis 45:22-23). Ten signified completion and multiplication, and represented the future ten “lost” tribes of Jacob who would return from captivity. This, together with the grain—representing Torah, YHVH’s Word—would be the confirmation to Jacob that Joseph was indeed alive and that he remembered the Torah his father taught him and it had born much fruit.

When Joseph sent his brothers on their way he said, “Don’t quarrel on the way!” Joseph knew they were still in their fleshly ways and would talk among themselves out of Joseph’s hearing.

Paul wrote to the saints at Philippi, “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Yeshua” (Philippians 3:13).

Once home, the brothers told Jacob that Joseph was alive. At first he did not believe them, then his sons told them everything Joseph had asked them to say. It was not until Jacob saw the carts Joseph sent that the message was received and the spirit of Jacob was revived. “And Israel said, ‘I’m convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die’ ” (Genesis 45:27-28).

### **Genesis 46 Jacob Goes to Egypt**

With the news of Joseph’s life, Jacob was free to go to Egypt. He left with his whole family, their livestock and possessions. On route he stopped and offered sacrifices at Beersheba, and there YHVH spoke to Israel and gave him this confirmation: "I am YHVH, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes." (Genesis 46:3-4).

**Acts 7:9-15** "Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him as a slave into Egypt. But YHVH was with him and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to gain the goodwill of Pharaoh king of Egypt; so he made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace. Then a famine struck all Egypt and Canaan, bringing great suffering, and our fathers could not find food. When Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers on their first visit. On their second visit, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about Joseph's family. After this, Joseph sent for his father Jacob and his whole family, seventy-five in all."

Jacob sent Judah ahead to meet Joseph, who went out to meet his family in the “land of light.” A deeper, spiritual understanding of this scripture looks at how Jacob ardently hoped to witness this “*Melchizedek*” union of his two children, Judah and Joseph, with Judah representing the kingly side (*melech*), and Joseph, the priestly side (*zadok*). In this act of prophetic foreshadowing, the two, who represented the Two Houses, came together, in a sense to pave the way for the future coming of the Messiah (Genesis 46:28).

“As soon as Joseph appeared before [Israel], he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time. Israel said to Joseph, ‘Now I am ready to die since I have seen for myself that you are still alive.’ ” Joseph’s second dream was now fulfilled (Genesis 46: 29-30; 37:2-11).

Joseph appeared before his father at the age of forty. Forty relates to a period of probation, trial, and chastisement (not judgment). Forty also relates to enlarged dominion, renewal, an extended rule, and to follow.

Joseph now prepared his family to meet Pharaoh. Pharaoh received them and asked their occupation. Shepherding was not a favorite among the Egyptians. In fact it was considered the lowest of all occupations. This helped keep the Israelites separate, locating them as far away as possible. The land of Goshen was offered to Jacob’s family as being the best for both parties. Joseph promised his family a regular supply of food before returning to serve Pharaoh. Even though his family was with him, Joseph remained faithful to the service that YHVH brought him to Egypt to do: the job of looking after Pharaoh’s interests. There were still five more years of famine ahead of them and lots of work to do.

Joseph continued to control the affairs of Egypt, supplying grain to the people for money, and then in trade for land. Pharaoh owned all the land, and in return for grain Joseph had the people return one fifth of their crops. In this way the people did not starve and the land was not left destitute.

### **Ezekiel 37 The Word of YHVH Came to Ezekiel: One Nation Under One King**

Ezekiel was from a priestly family born in Judah of the sons of Zadok. He was taken into exile in the year 597 or 596 BC when he was twenty-five, and called into prophetic office five years later. Ezekiel was a student of Jeremiah and his call was to the ten northern tribes – the House of Israel.

**Ezekiel 37:15-28** “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 YHVH 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.” ' Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on and say to them, 'This is what YHVH says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their dwelling places where they sinned and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their Elohim.

"My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their Elohim, and they will be my people. Then the nations will know that I YHVH make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever."

The prophesy of Ezekiel is unfolding today. Judah and those associated with him are coming together with Ephraim, belonging to Joseph and the House of Israel and those associated with him. No longer is there division between them. Yes, opposition has risen in the Two Houses, but the TRUE House of Judah and the TRUE House of Israel, a remnant from each, are coming together and becoming one in the Father's hand, joining together as true brothers. Those who understand the truth of Ezekiel 37 are becoming one new man. The scripture does not say for everyone to come into the tribe of Judah only, or that everyone is to come into the tribe of Ephraim. It says that all Twelve Tribes will come in unity together into *Yeshua*. No longer will there be a separation between Jews and Ephraim ("gentiles"). That thinking will fail because it is against Scripture and does not have the Spirit of Yeshua in it. All Twelve Tribes are coming home just as YHVH declared through His prophets and through the testimony of His Son, Yeshua.

"The couriers went from town to town to Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun, but the people scorned and ridiculed them. Nevertheless, some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and went to Jerusalem. Also in Judah the hand of YHVH was on the people to give them *unity of mind* to carry out what the king and his officials had ordered, following the word of YHVH. A very large crowd of people assembled in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast..." (2 Chronicles 30:10-12).

To Be Continued...

Shabbat Shalom  
Carl and Julie Parker

**Reference:**

*Call to Torah* by R. Munk

*Complete Jewish Bible* by David Stern

*Numbers in Scripture* by E. W. Bullinger

*A More Excellent Way* by Henry W. Wright [www.pleasantvalleychurch.net](http://www.pleasantvalleychurch.net)

*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](http://www.sheepfoldgleanings.com)

Email: [sheephear@yahoo.ca](mailto:sheephear@yahoo.ca)

Now in Spanish / Espanol

© Copyright 2003-2010 Sheepfold Gleanings Inc. All Rights Reserved.

