

# 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

After recounting the struggles of Jacob, with YHVH working out the salvation of his soul in the last lesson, the story continues with Jacob's family in the land of Canaan. Scripture now begins to focus in on Jacob's son Joseph, the firstborn son of his wife Rachel.

### Genesis 37:2-4

We enter our study of Joseph's life with Joseph as a seventeen year old tending sheep with his brothers Dan and Naphtali (from Rachel's maidservant Bilhah), and Gad and Asher (from Leah's maidservant Zilpah). Joseph returned home from the field, bringing back a bad report to his father about his brothers. In Scripture we are not told what the bad report was, but gossip and slander (*lashon hara* in Hebrew) against someone will separate, divide and cause a falling away. Joseph produced his own future exile by the power of his words.

Joseph gained firstborn status over his brothers when Reuben, Leah's firstborn son, transgressed against his father and lost his preeminent standing (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. Coat in Hebrew is the word *katan* (Strong's # 3801, TWOT 1058), a *talit* worn over the body with four *tzitzit* on the corners (Deuteronomy 22:12). They can also display a future rank and honor of position in the family. Those who wore the *katan* were usually ones that studied Torah and were sons of the Covenant. Joseph's coat was multi-colored, which was a prophetic representation of the twelve tribes of Israel (a multi-colored people) who would come forth from Jacob, preserved through the mantle of responsibility Joseph wore that symbolized the role he would play 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."

### Genesis 37:5-11

Starting with an impartation of dreams, YHVH began to set Joseph apart and on a course that would change his life and his family's lives forever. Joseph shared the dreams given him by

YHVH with his family in a manner that did not lift YHVH up as his source. Joseph had a self-righteous attitude; he only talked about himself when telling about the dreams YHVH 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?" Disclosing the dreams made the brothers hate him even more. In the second dream the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down to him. The manner in which Joseph shared the dreams even caused his father Jacob to question him.

Joseph had an attitude problem that brought trouble upon him. Jealousy already hid just below the surface of his brothers' hearts over the handling of the birthright, and with the added bad report brought back by Joseph – it just added more fuel, producing a bitter and intolerable spirit in his brothers' hearts. 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 or it will bring death into our lives. Hearing about Joseph's dreams set the fire in motion, and their vengeance of anger opened the door for YHVH's plans to unfold in Joseph's life. Through all this, Jacob was left to ponder Joseph's words and remember the Covenant given Abraham 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."

### **Genesis 37:12-36 Joseph is Sold**

Israel (Jacob) called his son Joseph (representative of the House of Israel) to him, asking him to travel to see his brothers (representative of the House of Judah) who were shepherding up in Shechem and bring word back to him whether they and the sheep were well. This request was prophetic of the dreams Joseph had, and prophetic of the future that would bring about the reunion of all Twelve Tribes of Israel in the Messianic time (Ezekiel 37).

This was a dangerous journey for Joseph. The territory he was entering was the same area his sister Dinah had been violated in (Genesis 34). The objective of this journey was to bring *shalom* (peace, completeness, soundness, welfare and safety; soundness (in body), health; prosperity; quiet, tranquility and contentment; friendship and peace from war) to his brothers.

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

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 fifteen miles north to a place called Dothan. Dothan was a city of commerce with very pagan influences, close to the main highway that runs down 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 doing their own thing. In Dothan they were more interested in looking after their own interests than that of the sheep. Dothan means *two wells*. The wells were dry and not used, 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 coming they knew he would take a bad report back to their father and their hatred turned to murderous thoughts in their hearts. They wasted no time strategizing Joseph's demise by scheming an actual physical death. They had fallen far away from YHVH's righteous ways, and a stronghold of bitterroot judgments directed toward Joseph was the force behind their heart motives.

Touching the realm of death brought murder and great moral decay into the brothers' 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.

Only Reuben, Jacob's firstborn by Leah, spoke up. He recommended, instead of murder, to throw Joseph into one of the empty cisterns. In proposing this, Reuben secretly hoped to later release Joseph. He never had an opportunity, however, as YHVH 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 to bring them *shalom*, they stripped him of his *Cotonet pasim*/plaid talit (representative of his authority - just as Yeshua was stripped of *His* priestly garment) and threw Joseph into the empty cistern. He would have cried out for help, but the brothers did not seem to hear or care. They were not bothered by their decision, and with a clear conscious they all comfortably sat down to eat a meal together. Breaking bread helps us "see" (prophetic of Yeshua's healing ministry to build the Kingdom up, not tear it apart), and when the brothers broke bread they looked up and saw a caravan of Midianites coming toward them with their camels loaded with goods, on their way to Egypt. Joseph was dead in his brothers' minds. When they "looked up" - it was a reference to Yeshua when He was lifted up at His death (John 12:32).

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

It was Judah who recommended they sell Joseph and 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. When the Pharisees discussed Yeshua's death, instead of having His death on their hands, they also decided to have their *victim* die by the hands of someone else (Matthew 20:19).

The caravan carried spices, balm, and myrrh used for making perfumes. These were also spices used in the process of wrapping a dead body in linen before burial. Joseph is a picture of Yeshua. The women came to the tomb to prepare his body with spices but Yeshua had already risen before they could apply the treatments and wrap the body. This also happened to Joseph, he "rose from the dead" and was carried away into Egypt. In his "death"—enclosed in the cistern—deliverance came. Joseph had to die first (spiritually) before resurrection life could enter. This was the end of *his life* and the beginning of *YHVH's life* in him. The brothers would not see Joseph again until he had prepared a place for them. In the same way, Yeshua has gone to prepare a place for us.

YHVH gave Joseph revelation by way of dreams. Now he was going to walk out those revelations. Many times we don't think things are going in our favor but they are perfectly following YHVH's plan, for our life unfolds just as He ordains it. Like Joseph, we too are learning to submit to Yeshua's life in us or be thrown into a cistern in order for us to get the message. From the moment of his deliverance from the pit Joseph knew he had been saved from certain death and it was YHVH who had saved him. He now came into submission to YHVH and started to surrender his life to Him, walking out His salvation with fear and reverence of YHVH.

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. There, Joseph was sold to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard.

Question: Do our actions render us death and lead us into Egypt, a type of captivity? Which Tree are we eating from; life or death? Is YHVH trying to get our attention by preventing us from moving forward so we can hear Him, in order to deliver us? Joseph's life is a teaching of the redemption for our soul, straight from the heart of YHVH.

**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."

### **Genesis 38 Judah**

At this point in the story, Scripture breaks away from Joseph's life and focuses on Judah's life, which runs parallel to Joseph's while in Egypt. Right after the selling of Joseph, Judah left his family and his brothers and journeyed to live in a Canaanite world. He had gone from getting rid of his brother to living in a culture that brought death not life. What we sow we will reap. The

choices we make can have repercussions that may well 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 the daughter of a Canaanite man. She birthed Judah 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 #8559/ TWOT #2523b) means palm tree; a position of authority, judgment and wisdom, also called "trees of life. The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament says palm or tamar was called "trees of life," as some think these palm trees were considered to be, were carved on the face of the pilasters and at the height of the wainscoting in the holy place (cf. Paul Leslie Garber, "A Reconstruction of Solomon's Temple, " *Archaeological Discoveries in the Holy Land* (1967), pp. 101-11; cf. 1Kings 6:21-35. B.K.W.

YHVH put Judah's firstborn son to death as he was wicked in His sight. In Torah it was commanded that the next son was to marry his brother's widow to carry on the family line, but Judah's second son was also wicked. He spilled his seed intentionally, not fulfilling the righteous ways of YHVH that would bless his brother's wife. Judah's first two sons died because they disobeyed YHVH. The Word of God (Torah) judged them. 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 Abraham (Deuteronomy 25:5).

In Genesis, God's message to "be fruitful and multiply" was given to YHVH'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. It is said, "As it is in the spiritual, so it is in the physical"—this seems to be the case in this situation. The seed was not the brothers' to govern but was a gift from YHVH. By refusing to glorify God through multiplication of that seed, they denied YHVH and rejected their inheritance. Because they did not value their inheritance, they died.

Since the youngest son was not of marrying age yet, 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. As the waiting period went well past the rightful time, 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, 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 prostitute's temple on his way. It was here that Judah noticed her and thought she was a harlot. A harlot was one that was cut off. Judah propositioned the veiled Tamar for sexual favors with the promise of a goat for payment later (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 #7956), which in Hebrew means *a petition*. Tamar in turn *petitioned* Judah for a *pledge* until he sent the goat for payment.

House of Israel is looking for a pledge from the House of Judah. The pledge Judah gave Tamar consisted of three things: First, a signet ring, also called the miter of a High Priest (his *identity*). Secondly, his staff also called the rod (which are terms that refer to *the Tree of Life/Torah*), and thirdly, 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 retrieve his items of identity for him. 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 (three representing 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 acted like a prostitute. However, the lost sheep of the House of Israel have been found and made clean by the blood of the Lamb. They are no longer found to be temple prostitutes, but virtuous in Yeshua, the Redeemer. They are the daughters of the priestly bloodline of Yeshua, our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek. May we be a people who obey and walk in His ways, leaving the ways of harlotry far behind us (Matthew 10:6, 15:24; 1 Peter 2:9).

“House of Judah” was sitting in the seat of judgment; he felt he had the right to bring forth “House of Israel” and judge her according to Torah. This was not his job or his calling in Torah. Tamar, the House of Israel, brought out *his identity*, and said, “To whom these belong, judge.” The House of Israel has the House of Judah’s forsaken identity, *the Torah* (the rod of YHVH), the *signet ring* (the identity of YHVH) and *the crimson cord* (the redemption of YHVH). The House of Judah has given up its identity for Kabbalah teaching. When the House of Israel comes into judgment by Judah, the House of Israel will stand up to the allegations, and what will Judah say at that point? Judah will 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.*

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).

### **Genesis 39 Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife**

The Biblical narration now returns to Joseph in Egypt and his next step in the maturing process to fulfill a promise and a dream. Joseph was in service to Potiphar. YHVH was with him, and he prospered in all he did. Joseph was soon elevated and put in charge of Potiphar’s whole household and entrusted with everything he had. As a young man, Joseph was very handsome,

and while working one day, Potiphar's Egyptian wife tried to entice him with her fleshly desires. Wisdom warned Joseph to flee from her advances. As he left, she reached out and grabbed his cloak that fell off him.

Potiphar's house represents a type of prison to an Egyptian mindset and ways. Touching worldly ways will lead to compromise in our lives. If Joseph were becoming comfortable in this Egyptian surrounding and lifestyle, YHVH would provide a way out to separate and keep him consecrated unto Him. We are not to take refuge in the world but press into YHVH's Life, the Living Torah and 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 YHVH, his employer or his employer's household. While in prison, YHVH was with him. The prison warden granted Joseph favor and put him in charge of all those held in prison.

### **Genesis 40 The Cupbearer and the Baker**

Joseph had been in prison many years when YHVH presented an opportunity for Joseph to see where his heart lay. Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker were sent to prison. One day, Joseph noticed how downcast they were and asked what the problem was. The cupbearer revealed they both had dreams but had no one to interpret them. Joseph said, "Do not interpretations belong to YHVH?" This was the first time Joseph acknowledged where dreams came from. The test continued...

As the cupbearer told his dream, YHVH 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 his fate one more time. His heart revealed he still relied on the favor of man and Pharaoh for his needs and deliverance. Joseph was not totally dependent or trusting in the faithfulness of YHVH for redemption in his life yet. This was a grave mistake. Our actions will speak what is in our hearts. YHVH had huge plans for Joseph and YHVH has huge plans for us also. YHVH needed Joseph to be ready. The future deliverance of his brothers depended on his heart being stable and at peace, trusting that YHVH was in charge of his life and was a covenant keeping God. YHVH would never leave him nor have him suffer needlessly. The delay is on our end. May we be a people who are faithful to the One who is Faithful by keeping the sin of fear far from us.

**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. YHVH revealed that this man would be executed in three days. As Pharaoh had these men presented before him, indeed what YHVH revealed to Joseph did take place. The test continued, as the cupbearer, when released from prison, did not remember Joseph. Two more years pass before YHVH tried Joseph's heart again....

*To be continued...*

Shabbat Shalom  
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