

Sheepfold Gleanings

VAYECHI / AND HE

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

Because of Joseph's obedience to YHVH and the prominent position he held in the land of Egypt, Jacob/Israel and his family were protected and taken care of while living in Goshen. Jacob/Israel had been in the land of Egypt for a total of seventeen years when, knowing how close he was to death, Jacob/Israel made burial arrangements with Joseph, his *firstborn son*. His last request was "*to be buried in the land of his anointing.*"

Why was it important for Jacob/Israel to return home and not be buried outside the promised land? Jacob/Israel represented all twelve tribes of Israel. Going home and being buried in the land was prophetic of all Twelve Tribes coming out of the world—the Nations, and the world system (represented by Egypt)—and returning to YHVH and the inheritance He has for us, both physically and spiritually. By an oath, Joseph promised to carry his father's body back to the land for burial.

Awhile later, when Jacob/Israel was ill, Joseph was summoned to his bedside. He took his two Egyptian-born sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him to see his father, for he understood that the time had come for the *promise* to be passed on.

When Jacob/Israel 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 Joseph and his family, the next carriers of the Covenant.

Genesis 48:5-6

After confirming the Covenant to Joseph, Jacob/Israel talked to him about the two sons born to Joseph in Egypt *before* Jacob/Israel's arrival by making the following 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/Israel was saying that Ephraim and Manasseh were to be *his full sons*—that they were to be *as his full BLOOD sons*. Even though their mother Asenath was an Egyptian, they were to be considered *full sons*, as it was the *father's* bloodline not the mother's that was important. In this,

Jacob/Israel was also pronouncing something prophetic for the future of Joseph's family of coming home 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 just adopted or orphaned sons of Jacob/Israel's family, or a gentile with pagan origins. The returning remnant is to be considered full, one hundred percent *part of Israel by blood*.

To make sure they understood this statement, added the clause: "*as Reuben and Simeon are.*" Reuben and Simeon were full blood sons by his wife Leah and not through a maidservant. These two sons were the first and second born of the twelve sons of Israel. With the above statement, Jacob/Israel effectively elevated Ephraim and Manasseh, his grandsons, to first and second born positions, and conferred the Covenant name *Israel* upon Ephraim along with the firstborn status (Jeremiah 31:9).

All Jacob/Israel's sons were equal in YHVH's sight but this statement was made as an important announcement **to the brothers of Joseph**, for their jealousy in the past had led them to hate Joseph and plan his murder. Jacob/Israel bypassed sibling rivalry and protected Joseph's children and their future inheritance from that day on. There would be no robbery of Joseph and his sons' inheritance. 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 described one who generally had **no blood ties to the family** adopting them. Ephraim and Manasseh had Joseph's (and Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham's) blood in them. The Hebraic interpretation of adoption is *absolute*. The Greek interpretation of adoption leaves room for debate, implying the thought of *second-class citizens*. Adoption is another word introduced by the King James Version of the Brit Chadasha/New Testament. It is this interpretation that leads to the phrase and mindset of being **spiritual Israelites**. Many people today think they are solely spiritual Israel because the word

adoption is used. The correct rendering of adoption in Scripture should be *sonship*. *We who believe in the Messiah are full blood sons of Israel and heirs according to the eternal, everlasting promises given Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*

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

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. Do not let anyone lord anything over you, bully, or rob you of your rightful position and inheritance as *part of Israel*. Those who do are speaking from ignorance, or from what they have learned through man’s teaching that is not scriptural. The whole House of Israel—all twelve tribes are being recognized individually and as a whole, and are coming home. Scripture is very clear, those who believe are Abraham’s seed. Seed in the Greek is *sperma* (Strong’s #4690), meaning PHYSICAL SEED. Israel did not have spiritual sons; Abraham’s seed is not merely spiritual or spiritual Israel but physical and physical Israel!

Romans 4:9-17 The Covenant Given to Abraham

“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 YHVH’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 ekklesia (the body of believers in Messiah) today is that many do not know who they are. They have no identity. If a people do not know who they are, they do not develop a respect for their heritage. If we are *part of Israel* coming home, we have a place, a people and a blessing in our Hebraic heritage according to an *eternal covenant*. Today, many have lost that

identity and are walking as lost sheep without a shepherd. 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 miss our inheritance and be able to see only partially.

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

As carriers of the scepter (Torah), many in Judah have not recognized—or are unwilling to recognize—their brother Joseph and have missed the understanding and fullness of his return and heritage. Yes, Ephraim/Israel may still look Egyptian, but he is their *full blood relative*. Joseph’s brothers are still quarrelling and jealous. This is preventing them from coming home. Joseph is waking up to his heritage and coming to walk in his full *sonship* in the Covenant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that is renewed and fulfilled in the Messiah. Ephraim is learning to walk in YHVH’s promises stated in His teaching and instruction (Torah), is learning to keep the Sabbaths, Feasts 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.

Genesis 48:8-22 Ephraim and Manasseh

After pronouncing this divine announcement, Jacob/Israel’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, two sons who were prophetic of Joseph becoming doubly fruitful in the “wilderness”. Jacob/Israel asked 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/Israel to pass on the firstborn blessing to “*his*” children by the laying on of hands. The younger son Ephraim was in front of Jacob/Israel left hand and the firstborn Manasseh was before his right hand. The right hand represented the authority of YHVH and is used when blessing and passing on inheritance. Jacob/Israel, being led by the Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit, 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 YHVH before whom my father’s Abraham and Isaac walked, Elohim who has been my

shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel 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 shocked when he saw his father's right hand on Ephraim's head instead of Manasseh's head. He questioned his father about this but Jacob/Israel confirmed his choice 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."

The "fullness of the nations" is the House of Israel/Ephraim. The word *goyim* is Hebrew for Nations and has been incorrectly transliterated as Gentiles in some translations, especially in the Brit Chadasha/New Testament. When this happened, the understanding that the Nations held Jacob/Israel children was completely missed or *lost*, because the word gentile had no relationship to the Tribes of Israel or anything Hebraic in the Bible. People became blind to their heritage and lost to the full understanding of Yeshua in the Brit Chadasha/New Testament. The word gentile means: *a confused pagan without God, a group other than one's own*. Gentile does not describe YHVH's people or those in Yeshua. When Yeshua indwells His people they are no longer confused, pagans or without God!

It is interesting to note that it was Jacob/Israel who passed the blessing on to Joseph's sons and not Joseph himself. It was customary for a father to bless his sons before he passed away, with a special prayer of double blessing to rest on his firstborn son, or the son that would step into the role of firstborn, the leader of the family. In this case, however, we see Jacob/Israel bypassed Joseph's authority and chose to directly pray that foremost blessing over YHVH's chosen son, Ephraim, whose name means "doubly fruitful" or "I shall be doubly fruitful." For Jacob/Israel, the memory of usurping Esau, his father's choice for the birthright, may have been on his heart. Knowing Manasseh was Joseph's first choice, Jacob/Israel obeyed the Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit 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/Israel *true* sons, and as their father, he blessed them.

Genesis 48:20 Blessing the Sons of Israel

With the formalities over, now came the final blessing, a blessing that is still pronounced over the sons of the Covenant today: "In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: 'May YHVH make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.' So he (Israel) put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh."

Genesis 48:21-22 Future Return

He then said to Joseph, "I am about to die, *but YHVH 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.

When Jacob/Israel was about to die he assigned Joseph and Joseph's family an allotment in the land. Jacob/Israel knew Egypt was only a temporary dwelling and the promises of YHVH were always before him. He spoke of the future to Joseph and gave him a portion of land above, or more 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 called the West Bank today, a hotly disputed piece of property that has been used in bartering for peace.

Genesis 49:1-28 Israel Blesses His Sons

All twelve sons receive prophetic blessings as Jacob/Israel'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/Israel blessed each son, we see that Judah was given "the scepter." Jacob/Israel 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 YHVH."

The scepter given Judah was the Torah, the very Words of YHVH. They are the keepers of His Word; they have cared for YHVH'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 YHVH made flesh*. The prophets record the time of the Messiah coming. The Brit Chadasha/New Testament proclaims the fulfillment of their prophecies: "*The Word (of YHVH, 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 brothers, who today can, for the most part, be seen as the majority of believers coming from a Church background, are aware of the Messiah. They are still unaware, however, of the prophecies of the return of the twelve tribes or about walking in Torah. The House of Judah tends to guard or legally police the Word of YHVH and feels they should lead Israel's restoration. 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 minus His Hebraic heritage. Both houses are lacking and both need to come back to their roots (Moses' teaching) 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 Yeshua, the Messiah, the Ruler and the Scepter of YHVH.

Judah carries the *kingly* portion and their job was to share the Word of YHVH with the nations and teach them the ways of YHVH so they too could come and walk with YHVH. In many cases Judah did not share the Word of YHVH to the Nations, nor did they study it themselves. The Torah had become as rote to them and many even made the Torah an idol. Judah began to study other materials like the Talmud and Kabbalah teachings, which they used in replacement for the need of the Ruach HaKodesh (Spirit of God) to teach them. They lifted other teaching higher than the Torah and left the teaching YHVH gave Moses far behind.

In the Brit Chadasha/New Testament, 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 YHVH should go into the synagogues because "*Moses [was] taught every Sabbath.*" In this way they would learn YHVH's ways that they might not fall away again. ***They recommended Torah as their number one and only study source for all***

people. If we go 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? That 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).

Ephraim has the *“double portion”* and is being taught by the Spirit of YHVH 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. Joseph will share *freely*, as YHVH’s Word is without cost and without restraints. Selah.

Romans 11:25-27 All Israel Will Be Saved

“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 – both Houses - 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 of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob begins.

When the sons of Jacob/Israel 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/Israel spoke prophetically to 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 *one—one* in unity in Yeshua.

As stated before, many in the Church practice replacement theology, and many in Judah today have also taken up replacement theology, just in reverse. They feel all twelve tribes are included and are evidenced in the one tribe of Judah. Their belief is that the tribe of Judah, which became

the strongest tribe, also took the firstborn position from Joseph/Ephraim. But we are all “firstborn” in Yeshua. Joseph/Ephraim has remained hidden from Judah for an appointed time; this is the work of the Ruach (Spirit). Prophetically, all the words of the prophets are eternal, and we have an everlasting Covenantal promise that will come about in its 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 YHVH 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 Joseph 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, House of Judah, through the liaison, 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 YHVH Elohim. Only He could have paid the price!” (Redeemed Israel – Reunited and Restored by Batya Wootten).

Ezekiel 37:16-19 Two Sticks Become One

“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.’”

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).

Ephesians 2:14-16 One New Man

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, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law with its commandments and regulations (that was against us because of our disobedience). His purpose was to create in himself *one new man out of the two*, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile *both of them* to YHVH through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility.”

Genesis 49:29-50:14 The Death of Jacob/Israel

Jacob/Israel 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, 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, along with 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 exact 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 YHVH’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 we who are returning? YHVH 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 YHVH’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).

Genesis 50:15-21 Joseph and His Brothers

With Jacob/Israel their father 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 brothers 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’s did and 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 brothers’ hearts grieved Joseph deeply.

Only after 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 view 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. Even today it is prevalent in the heart of the brothers toward Joseph. Metaphorically speaking, Joseph has been in the Wilderness a long time, and during this time has learned to lean on his staff, the Torah. Ephraim is learning YHVH’s ways and coming 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 now, but we pray they will, and 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 YHVH (judging you)? You intended to harm me, but YHVH 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.”

Genesis 50:22-26 Joseph’s Death

Joseph lived in Egypt with all his father’s family. He 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 YHVH, saying, “YHVH 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/Israel.

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
Carl and Julie Parker

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