



Message 11-8-08
Lech Lecha-Go Forth Yourself
Genesis 12:1-17:27
Isaiah 41:1-4
Revelation 1:17-18

Introduction

We begin a journey at birth, whose destination we discover as we go along. In our journey we learn, as did Abraham and Sarah, that wonders and trials abound along the way.

Genesis 12:1-3

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. **2** I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

This is a promise that many of us forget about. The Lord promises Abraham that He will bless those who bless Abraham and curse those who curse him. In verse 2 God promises to make Abraham a great nation. The interesting thing that we find in this verse is the promise relating to Abraham being made a great nation. The Hebrew word used here is *goy* which we know that it is used today to describe those who are not of the Jewish people unless they convert to Judaism.

We also know that the use of *goy* or its plural *goyim* is used by many Jews and Messianic Jews to place non-Jews into a secondary position to a Jew and that the Jew is the only one who is entitled to be a part of Israel who are known as the chosen people. This is nothing more than a play to lay claim to the promises and the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and later the Hebrew people and the mixed multitude who gathered at Mount Sinai to receive the covenant from God. It is too easy for Jewish and Messianic Jews to try to take over the identification as Israel. In many ways there is nothing different about the Church trying to claim that it is Israel until 1948 when the country of Israel came into existence. Then the Church became *spiritual* Israel.

The promise to Abraham is a promise to all of us who believe in Yeshua as Messiah and in God. Our ancestors anticipated the coming of Yeshua because they knew the promises made in the Tanach.

Galatians 3:29 And if you *are* Messiah's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Abraham was not a Jew nor was Isaac or Jacob. A Jew is one who comes from the tribe of Judah the same as one who would come from the tribe of Benjamin. The difference being is because of the two exiles, the Babylonian and the Assyrian, we wind up with two headings under which the tribes of Israel would be assigned by God. So today, if someone is from the tribe of Manasseh he would not technically be a Jew but would be of the Kingdom of Ephraim. Into this mix we find a mixture of the ten northern tribes found in Judah or among the Jewish people and they are Jews by affiliation and eventually assimilation. The same is true among the northern kingdom.

Some view this as the message of the two houses or the two sticks as spoken about in Ezekiel 37:15-28. At one time I viewed this as they did but over time I have come to see this not so much as an issue of the two houses but of the whole house of Israel. We need to stop focusing on the differences and look to what ties us together. Many who come out of the Church and into the Messianic Movement have been searching for congregations that would accept them as equals in ways that the Messianic Jewish side of the Movement does not. Their frustration with this system has driven them to start their own congregations and shunning all things Jewish except for the blowing of the shofar and the wearing of the tallit in some cases.

In shunning most things Jewish they are doing what the Church has done even if they deny it. I have seen it for myself in too many groups and congregation. Their desire to keep Torah is there and that I do not deny because I have seen Messianic Jewish congregations who discard Torah. There has to be a happy medium that we can all find for ourselves in order to unite us not divide us? I have travelled to other congregations and conferences and I know many Torah teachers who try as hard as they can to avoid the issue of the two sticks because of the division it has brought about to the Body of Messiah in the Messianic Movement. We are the children of Abraham, whether Jew or not, and the covenant of Israel is for all of us who have faith in Messiah and who live Torah in their lives. Torah is what God calls for when we come to faith in Yeshua. We are instructed to do as Yeshua did and Yeshua lived and taught Torah. He kept the 7th day Shabbat, he was circumcised on the 8th day as Torah commands, His parents took Him to the Temple for the redemption of the first born and the cleansing of His mother Miriam as Torah instructs. He went into the synagogue on the 7th day as was His custom.

So my question is this? Yeshua was Torah observant as were His parents Miriam and Joseph. If it was good enough for Yeshua why isn't it good enough for us? Yeshua was born into the line of Judah and lived His life as a Jew. Why the need for so many to throw away the ways of Judaism in favor of what they describe as an Ephraimite lifestyle while disdaining its Jewish ways that gave birth to the idea of Ephraim? The customs and traditions of the Jewish people add flavor, meaning and depth to our lives. Why would we cast this away looking to bring upon ourselves ways that resemble what many left behind in the Church?

I am not trying to say that those who feel they are of Ephraim are not. I am saying that this idea of separateness is causing a schism that the Movement does not need. Abraham separated from his nephew Lot because in order to grow, they each needed more land than they had. They were still related but they had to go their own way. The promise was Abraham's and his family. Abraham would be the catalyst that would bring the Children of Israel into existence. Moses worked for 40

years to unite twelve tribes into one unit known as the Children of Israel. Here we are today moving away from the idea of one people – one covenant towards a two nation solution similar to the two nation solution of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Instead of focusing on the thinking of Judah and Ephraim we need to be looking at the idea of a one nation solution that brings us together into Israel not Judah and Ephraim. I do not want to part of the problem I want to be part of the solution. I look to Israel to define who I am and what I will be. I look to the Messiah who will bring the two sticks together in His hand to make them one nation. I want to see the Whole House of Israel **not** the nation of Judah nor the nation of Ephraim.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua.

Colossians 3:11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Messiah is all and in all.

Our identity should be found in Yeshua and what we do because of His grace to us. Once we repent of our sins and ask Messiah into our hearts we must become part of the greater whole known as Israel or we may be left out in the cold.

Isaiah 41:4

4 Who has prepared and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first and the last; I am he.

The Apostle John or in Hebrew Yochanan, was not the first one to use the terminology of the first and the last.

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Revelation 1:11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

Revelation 21:6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

Revelation 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last."

The book of Revelation contains numerous references to many of the books of the prophets. John was being shown the end times in a vision. It was playing in his mind much as a movie plays on a screen or a television set. John tried to describe what he had seen as best as he could from his position of understanding. The book of Revelation, much as the gospel of John, shows us a spiritual level of understanding that John had which was much deeper than many of the other Apostles. It is also worth noting that in the first few compilations of what we call the Apostolic Scriptures the book of Revelation was left out. In the end result it was included in the canon of Scripture that we have today.

This reminds me of the story of the modern state of Israel. When they were searching for a homeland for the Jewish people the early founders were offered land in Africa. It was taken into consideration, but briefly, and in the end they wound up in the Middle East where the nation of Israel had been from its earliest days. Originally Israel was going to be named Judea to reflect its Jewish influence. In the end it was named Israel. Though Israel was founded by secular Socialist's Jews God used them to bring about His plan not theirs.

Today the Jewish nature of Israel has come under attack as being a form of apartheid while the Arab or Muslim nature of other countries is not even mentioned in passing. The right of return that the Palestinians so greatly desire into Israel will destroy the Jewish nature of Israel and that is what the Palestinians want. If they cannot get what they want by war they will get it by diplomacy because the present leaders of Israel are willing to sell the Jewish nature of the land for the false promises of peace.

I can only assume that God has brought blinders on the leaders of Israel in these last days in order to accomplish His plan. The countries of the world are preoccupied with their own problems and the current meltdown of the financial sector of the American economy and the government bailout that is coming. For better or for worse the government of America is becoming a business owner like many other countries do when they nationalize private businesses. The hand of God is moving across the earth and so many are missing out on the fulfillment of the word of God.

Psalm 37:38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the future of the wicked shall be cut off.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Jeremiah 31:17 There is hope in your future, says the LORD, that *your* children shall come back to their own border.

These three passages of Scripture give us hope for the future. God has a plan and His plan will trump anything that Satan tries to come up with. God has His hand on His people and He is calling them to be watchmen on the walls. Are you one of the watchman who look for the signs of the coming of the anti-Messiah or are you one of those who sit on the fence waiting to see what the truth is: that God is supreme or Satan? You had better be very careful about having an attitude like that. God tells us in His word what He thinks of a fence sitter.

Revelation 3:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. **16** "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

God will not tolerate anyone who does not choose which side they will be on. While this verse may be talking about unbelievers there are several other verses that talk about Believers who think they are in but they will find themselves out. We are living in very serious time's people. Decisions have to be made and you have to make them. ***The time is now – not later!***

Revelation 1:17-18

17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. **18** "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

This passage takes us right back to Isaiah and the other passages from Revelation. Our portion this week takes us into that world of Bible study called eschatology which has to do with end-times events. There has been speculation among both Jews and Christians about the last days and the Moslem's also have their own version of the end-times as well. Many people did not know that or that the current president of Iran is one of those who believes in a Moslem Messiah who will be brought in by war, a war that Iran desires more than anything to bring to the Middle East and the rest of the world.

We are posed on the brink of the unknown; the unknown being are we really in the last days or is this just another phase of changes the world has to go through? I don't know about you but I feel a quickening in my spirit because I feel God on the move and Satan is moving as well. If all this is taking place on the surface where we can see it think about what is happening under the surface where we cannot see it? Can the Messiah Yeshua be far behind preparing to return as the Messiah ben David the ruling and reigning King of Israel and of the world as His Father always meant it to be?

Matthew 27:37 And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS YESHUA THE KING OF THE JEWS.

How prophetic this was. Even more than that how much more it will entail when the world finds out that Yeshua is not only the King of the Jews but the King of all mankind? Now won't that shake some people up? We are living in exciting times my friends. What are you going to do? Have you placed your faith in Yeshua, a Jew, who was born into the kingly line of David through Miriam His mother and His adopted father Joseph? But the most important thing is His actual Father. His Father sits in the heaven's waiting for the time to tell His Son, "Now is the time we have been waiting for my beloved Son, You are to return to the earth to set things right and prepare the way for my coming with the heavenly Jerusalem."

Yeshua created everything and everything was created for Yeshua. He is the living word of God who brings life to all humanity and humanity to all of life. Satan is the enemy and he is not interested in you one bit. To choose him is to choose certain death. I cannot say that you will wind up in the lank of fire with Satan and his followers but I don't think you want to find out what your punishment will be. I ask you in the name of Yeshua to please choose the Messiah Yeshua the only way to come to the Father. He is waiting for you, now is the time.

May your heart carry your feet.

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Tony Robinson at www.devoted.to/Torah (sign up)

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Ardelle Brody [abrody@mchsi.com](posted on Mordecai's website along with his Torah commentary-an excellent woman's perspective)

May the Lord bless you and yours... *Mordecai Silver*

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