

Tree of Life Messianic Ministries

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Message 11-21-09 Toldot-Generations Genesis 25:19-28:9 Malachi 1:1-2:7 Revelation 21:5-8

Introduction

This week's Parashah, Toldot, means "descendants" and is derived from the Hebrew root, to "bring forth," or "beget," as in producing children.¹

Genesis 25:29-34

29 Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. **30** And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.) **31** Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now." **32** Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" **33** Jacob said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. **34** Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

We have all read this story many times before and I have commented on it in the past but I need to visit it again. This story is about Esau and the attitude he had towards his heritage. He felt that a bowl of stew was worth more than the inheritance of the first-born. The promises that the Holy One of Israel made to Abraham and then re-affirmed to Isaac were to be passed down to Esau but Esau spurned his heritage. What a sad commentary that is because we have much to learn from this story because as a people who have been called back to our Jewish Roots we are spurning Torah just as Esau rejected his.

I am sure you are probably saying to yourself, "What is he talking about? I am not spurning my Jewish Roots I am returning to being Biblical and my Hebrew Roots." **There it is in a nutshell!** It has to do with attitude my friends and the attitude here is one that wants to jump over "the Jewish Roots" and go right to Biblical or Hebrew Roots. Some say that Biblical and Hebrew Roots are the correct terms to use. This is not about being politically correct but it is about

¹ From Torah with a Twist of Humor

being Biblically and historically correct. There is no way to get to Hebrew Roots without going through the Jewish Roots. You cannot simply cut out an entire section of the history of the Bible including the parts that speak about Yeshua and His talmidim. **They were all Jewish!**

Luke 2:21 And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was *then* called Yeshua, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. **22** And when the days for their purification according to the Torah of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Torah of the Lord, "EVERY *firstborn* MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD ") [Exodus 13:2, 12, Numbers 3:13, 8:17], **24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Torah of the Lord, "A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS [Leviticus 5:11, 12:8]."

Our Messiah was a Jew and He chose to come into the world as a Jew, so why don't we stop trying to be politically correct and get on with what really matters and that is the study of God's Word. There are too many people in the messianic movement who are trying to be politically correct. We don't have time to play games like this. Our Messiah Yeshua was born as a Jew was raised as a Jew and died as a Jew. In saying that we are returning to our Hebrew roots instead of our Jewish roots we are doing a great disservice to the body of Messiah. When we try to get around who Yeshua was as well as His disciples we hurt not just ourselves but all Believers everywhere. The more that you study what Yeshua and the apostles taught you discover they taught the Torah.

The Torah represents the foundation for all of Scripture. You cannot get from A to Z without using the Torah and going through Judaism to get there. The reason I say this is because it was to the Jews that Torah was entrusted to bring it down through the ages. I have discussed this in previous commentaries but I feel it bears one more look. Let's first look at the blessing given to Judah by his father Jacob before he died.

Genesis 49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people.

The promise of the scepter refers to the kings of Israel descending from the line of Judah, and specifically to Yeshua, though leadership of Israel is given into the hands of Judah. The promise of a lawgiver is a reference to the Torah. Since the dispersion of the ten northern tribes it fell to Judah to keep the Torah safe and to pass it down from one generation to another and it would be Judah's responsibility to teach Torah to the Jewish people and the remnant and to anyone who wanted to learn. Unfortunately Judah has not done this. They have refused to teach the Torah to the nations despite the final instructions to the disciples gathered to watch Yeshua ascend to His Father.

Shiloh is the promise of the Messiah and that until His return the scepter would be kept safe by Judah or the Jewish people. While Judah defines the descendants of Judah, the son of Jacob, today Judah includes Benjamin, Levi, and remnants of the rest of the ten tribes. Some say that Ephraim now stands as the bastion of the returning ten tribes but Biblically speaking there were remnants of the ten tribes already a part of Judah. So, then who is Ephraim and how do you know if you are part of them? That, my friends, is a story for another day.

Romans 3:1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? **2** Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

3051 λόγιον logion {log'-ee-on}

Meaning: a brief utterance, a divine oracle (doubtless because oracles were generally brief), in the NT, the words or utterances of God, **of the contents of the Mosaic law**

The Apostle Paul is very clear about what advantages the Jew has and the advantage is the Torah of Moses. It would be through the Torah we would find our way to Yeshua. It is not through the Apostolic Scriptures alone that one can find the Messiah but through the Tanach as well. Paul clearly upholds the place of Judah in the plan of God so for anyone to reject the ways of Judah because they do not believe them to be Biblical needs to study their Bible further.

1 Corinthians 11:2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

Once more the Apostle Paul stands by the traditions of his people. In fact, from his letters he taught the traditions to the Corinthians and Thessalonians. A Jew taught Jewish traditions to Gentiles, and this from the Apostle many in the Church believe did away with the Torah. What is the Torah without the accompanying traditions? The one thing the customs and traditions of any nation or people add to its basic laws is to bring a flavor or tastes of what the people are like. When studying past civilizations or modern ones we find each has their own particular traditions that bring something to the mix in understanding who they were or are. Look to the traditions of the Jewish people today and if you dig you will find the connection to the Jewish people of two-thousand years ago. In doing this we find the Jewish Yeshua and not the Christian Jesus.

I don't say this to denigrate Christianity but one has to look beyond the Anglo, blue-eyed, and blonde hair Jesus we typically find in Christianity. Look at the people living in Israel today and look at the Jewish people around the world and you will find a people who reach back to antiquity. In bringing to a close this part of this week's Parashah my point is we need to remember not to be like Esau and reject our heritage because it brings with it a very harsh response from the Almighty as we will see in our Haftarah this week.

Malachi 1:1-5

1 The oracle of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. **2** "I have loved you," says the LORD. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "Is not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the LORD. "Yet I have loved Jacob **3** but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert." **4** If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says, "They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called 'the wicked country,' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.'" **5** Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the border of Israel!"

The tie-in between this week's Parashah and the Haftarah portion could not be more obvious and its penalty even more severe. The Lord says that He hates Esau and loves Jacob. Since the descendants of Esau are the Edomites and Esau eventually took one of the daughters of Ishmael for his wife Esau became part of the Arab nations once again coming against his brother Jacob, in this case Judah. While it may appear that it is Esau who is reaping the blessing because of

monetary power the Arab nations possess and the population versus Israel and the Jewish people we must keep in mind that the way God looks at things is different than the way man does.

8130 שָׂנֵא *sane'* {saw-nay'}

Meaning: to hate, be hateful, of man, of God, hater, one hating, enemy, to be hated, of persons, nations, God, wisdom

It is very clear that God is serious about His hating Esau. This may not be our concept of a loving God but we are made in His image possessing some of His traits. He is a jealous God, we are jealous people, He loves, and we can love. He gets angry and wrathful and so do we. The list goes on but I believe you can see where I am going with this. God genuinely hates Esau because Esau rejected his heritage as the first-born son of Jacob. He spurned God when he did this and in turn God spurned him. If Esau repents God will forgive him his sin but I doubt whether He would return Esau to his place as first-born because Jacob or Israel now holds that as a gift from God for remaining true to His covenant.

As men we tend to break our covenants but in ancient times a man's word was his bond literally. When a covenant was made between parties they usually had witnesses and set up markers to mark the covenant. In Israel's case God made His covenant and had Israel place the mark of the covenant in their flesh. All the men were to be circumcised on the eighth day after their birth. This began with our father Abraham and even his son Ishmael was circumcised, a practice that persist to this day among the Arab people as well as in Judaism.

Genesis 17:9 And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. **10** This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. **11** You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. **12** He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, **13** both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. **14** Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

God made this covenant with Abraham and this covenant was everlasting. If the covenant is not obeyed the individual will be cut off from his people. Esau broke the covenant even though he probably had been circumcised as an infant. He spurned his heritage and sold it for a bowl of lentil stew. Later he claimed that Jacob tricked him out of it as Jacob had tricked Isaac into giving him the blessing of the first-born. For over 20 years Esau desired to kill Jacob and that was his intention when Jacob was returning to Canaan but in the end God provided a way out and brought the brothers together for a brief moment but Jacob separated from Esau and went his own way.

How prophetic is this? Arab and Jew are brothers but have chosen to go their own ways - is this by choice or by Divine plan? In Messiah they can come together in unity but without Him they must remain separate. The world is trying to bring peace to the Middle East but they want to do it at the expense of Israel. The Arabs give nothing as Esau gave nothing. Jacob sent gifts to Esau

to pave the way for reconciliation. Israel is being asked to give up its Promised Land in return for a fleeting promise of peace. God hated Esau but He loved Jacob.

Revelation 21:5-8

5 And He who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also He said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." **6** And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. **7** The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be My son. **8** But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

Sinners will wind up in the lake of fire. That is not a pleasant picture but it is the reality of sin. Notice verse seven, it speaks about heritage, the common thread running throughout all of our portions this week. I love the Bible because it never ceases to teach me something. I discover things if I take the time to study the word and immerse myself in it. If more Believers spent time in the word rather than in the world things would be better for them. In verse seven we see what the ultimate heritage is – it is becoming sons and daughters of God. What is a better heritage than this? This is the end result of His covenant of Torah, His covenant of the pieces, His covenant of circumcision, His covenant of the rainbow. I could go on but once again you should get the point.

God has made a covenant with His people, with each and every one of us. If we stay true to His covenant we receive the gift of eternal life through Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of God.

Proverbs 3:3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 7:2 Keep my commandments and live, and my teaching as the apple of your eye. **3** Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Deuteronomy 30:6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

My friends holy fast to the heritage the Lord has passed to us through the Jewish people. Their customs and traditions are our customs and traditions. As a Jew I invite you to partake of this heritage together. Let us make a new way – one where we come together in unity.

The folkspeople of Chelm were natural born worriers so they called a meeting to discuss what to do about the problem. They decided to hire Shmuli, the town cobbler, to be the sole Jew in town authorized to worry on behalf of the whole community. They then agreed to pay him a weekly salary of 5 rubles when suddenly the rebbetzin stands up and objects, "If Shmuli earns 5 rubles a week, what would he have to worry about?"

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

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