



Message 1-10-09
VaYechi-And He Lived
Genesis 47:28-50:26
1 Kings 2:1-12
John 19:28-37

Introduction

This week's portion closes the book of Genesis with a further reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers. We also have the death of Jacob and the death of Joseph. It is with the close of Genesis that God will now move to building the nation of Israel.

Genesis 49:28-50:1

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing. **29** Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, **30** "in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. **31** "There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. **32** "The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth." **33** And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people. **50:1** Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him.

Jacob did not have an easy life by any means, but through his life we see the progression of a man whose original name Jacob means "heel-holder" or "supplanted." In the end he becomes a man devoted to God as was his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac. Jacob receives the new name of Israel which means "prince of God". He did not receive this new name because he felt he deserved it but because he has matured in his walk from when he swapped Esau a bowl of lentil stew for his birthright to when he tricked his father into receiving the blessing of the first-born.

Jacob's mother had been told by God that Jacob would be the one who would be greater than the elder son Esau.

Genesis 25:23 And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger."

Esau was not destined to be the carrier of the mission of the family of Abraham. He thought very little of his birthright that he bartered it away without a second thought. Would God have done things differently or was this the way God allowed Jacob to receive part of what was to be his anyway? We all know that God moves in mysterious ways and His ways are not our ways. We have only a minute fraction of the brain power that God possesses. The way I think about it is that when Adam was created he was given full use of his mental capabilities because God gave Adam the responsibility to name all the creatures He had created.

That does not show me that Adam was some hunkering, prehistoric man with the brain the size of about *nothing*. God created man in His own image. This is more than just looking like God but it means we received God's emotions though ours are different than God's. If God gets angry or wrathful it is a righteous anger and wrath. God's wisdom exceeds ours to the point that there can be no comparison. It was said that Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived and the choices he made were not wise ones as he moved deeper into his reign as king over Israel. Throughout the Bible we see examples of God's creation – man – doing the right thing or choosing not to do the right thing.

We inherited this ability from our parents Adam and Chavah when they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The capacity to then know the difference between the two was given to us and was given by our parents because they chose to disobey God and to pay heed to the serpent through which Satan used to cause man to fall from God's grace that day. From that day forward man was cast out of the Garden of Eden unable to return. We exist in that state today being unable to gain access back into the Garden but we can be reconciled with our heavenly Father if we choose to accept His Son our Messiah Yeshua.

My messages throughout most of last year have been focused on holding onto one's faith in Yeshua. As we grow closer to the last days the falling away from Yeshua will increase as will the denial of Torah. This will be a sign of the times and I believe we are close but I cannot say whether we have entered into those days because I believe things have to get worse before they can get better under the power of the beast of Satan. We are the watchmen on the wall and we must be alert at what is coming. We will be ridiculed for our beliefs, many of us already are, there will be a need for us to be aware of what is happening each and every day.

Isaiah 52:8 Your watchmen shall lift up *their* voices, with their voices they shall sing together; for they shall see eye to eye when the LORD brings back Zion.

Isaiah 62:6 I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent.

Jeremiah 51:12 Set up the standard on the walls of Babylon; make the guard strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes. For the LORD has both devised and done what He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon.

Jeremiah 6:17 Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the shofar!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'

The watchmen of God have a very important purpose in God's plan. They will be God's front line to warn the people of God about the enemy coming. This is what the watchmen did in Biblical days; they watched to see if an enemy was coming. Do you see what God says in Jeremiah 51:12 about Babylon? Some believe this will be a literal Babylon and some believe that Babylon represents a physical country or city. Some have speculated that Babylon could be the United States. We don't really know and everything we think we know will be shattered by God when reality sets in.

I believe that God is going to make all of us slap our foreheads when we see His plan coming to fruition. All of our preconceived ideas about prophecy will be turned on its head. We are to look for the signs which Scripture shows us but we need to keep watch for these signs. This will take a mature man or woman of God not someone who thinks they know all about prophecy. It will take many Israelites and not Jacobs. Many of us are still in the Jacob phase of our walk with God and we are still hanging onto those things which make us Jacobs. We must put aside all that keeps us in Jacob and move forward into becoming Israel.

Genesis 35:2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who *were* with him, "Put away the foreign gods that *are* among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments.

This is pretty far along in the story of Jacob and there were still idol worshippers in his household. Then again the story is about Jacob and God's relationship with him not with the rest of the nations. Maybe Jacob allowing members of his household to hang onto their idols was what was holding him back from fully entering into this phase of his life that required him to take on the mantle of Israel?

1 Kings 2:10-12

10 So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. **11** The period that David reigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. **12** Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.

In our Torah portion we dealt with the death of Jacob. It is interesting why Jacob is referred to as Jacob when he died and not as Israel This pattern is found throughout Scripture and could be meant to show us that as Jacob man will eventually die but as Israel we receive the gift of eternal life as our reward for accepting Yeshua as our Lord and Savior? These are just thoughts that are passing through my head as I read this passage and the Torah portion.

Here in our Haftarah portion we have the death of David and the ascension of his son Solomon to the throne. David was the one who united the twelve tribes of Israel. For seven years he ruled over Judah alone in Hebron. Then he became king over all of Israel and for the next 33 years he ruled over the first united nation of Israel. Solomon would then rule for the next 40 years over a united Israel and because of his sins Israel would be divided never again to be one people until God decides it is time. The story of Israel, the nation, is reflective of the life of Jacob. As Jacob went

through his trials and tribulations he grew closer to God while Israel, the nation, grew further apart. In doing this they lost that part of themselves that was Israel, Prince of God, and traded it for being Jacob who struggled in his flesh with the ways of God.

To follow God was never meant to be easy. It is a difficult walk and along the way we encounter many things that can draw us off course. While some of the attack originates from Satan, some of it comes from God. God means for us to go through trials and tribulations so that we can be refined. When God cleansed the earth in Noah's day He did it through water and He promised never to do that again. But there will come a day when we enter the Refiner's fire so that our impurities (sin) may be removed.

Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," says the LORD of hosts. **2** "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a **refiner's fire** and like launderer's soap. **3** He will sit as a **refiner** and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness. **4** "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the LORD, as in the days of old, as in former years.

Every time I read the Word I feel God's blessing. He desires that we study His Word, know His Son and be aware of His plan. Things are happening in our day that show us time may be indeed growing short. We each need to examine our own hearts and determine if we were to die tomorrow would we be ready to meet our Creator? There are many Christians who believe that the Church will be the bride of Messiah. I happen to disagree with that belief because it runs contrary to Scripture and what Messiah Himself has to say on the matter. The Gospels tell us what Yeshua taught on the subject. I urge you to go and study the words of Yeshua to see what He really had to say to Believers.

John 19:28-37

28 After this, Yeshua, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty." **29** A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a *branch of hyssop* and brought it up to His mouth. **30** Therefore when Yeshua had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. **31** Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. **32** So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; **33** but coming to Yeshua, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. **34** But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. **35** And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe. **36** For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN." [**Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12, Psalm 34:20**] **37** And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED." [**Zechariah 12:10**]

Once more I have tied death into this week's portion because it holds a very important place in our lives my friends. Many believe they know where they will wind out when all is said and done. I know

where unbelievers wind up but I also believe that many Believers, who think they are good with God, will not wind up where they have been taught they would be.

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. **22** "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' **23** "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.**'

<458> ἀνομία *anomia*

Meaning: lawlessness

Do you notice what Yeshua is saying here? Notice in verse 22 it talks about those who believe they are prophesying, casting out demons, and performing miracles? He is **not** talking about unbelievers here! He is speaking about those who believe, that by the things they are doing in His name, that they are doing the work of God when they are not. I am not saying that the entire Church falls into this category because I believe that there are many people who are Christians who are following the instruction of Torah without realizing what they are doing.

On the same token we, as Torah observant Believers, must not allow an air of superiority to enter into our minds and hearts so that we wind up sitting in judgment of other Believers. There is one Judge and one Judge only who sits in judgment of all of mankind. We are not to do that and we are warned of the consequences if we do so.

Matthew 7:4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?"

While we are permitted to correct our brethren we must not have a judgmental attitude about it. We are to lead by example and if we hope to draw others to the truth we have found we had better be living it in our own lives. If we are not they will see it and will either shut you down from sharing anything else or politely listen and that is the last time you will probably see them or you will be told not to share with them because they do not see the evidence of a changed life in you. We can speak all the right words but if you are not living it in your own life then forget it people.

Remember what Yeshua had to say about the keeping of the Torah?

Matthew 22:36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Torah?" **37** And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' [**Deuteronomy 6:5**] **38** "This is the great and foremost commandment. **39** "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' [**Leviticus 19:18**] **40** "On these two commandments depend the whole Torah and the Prophets."

Yeshua taught what the Rabbis taught. When the word in Matthew 7:23 is translated as lawlessness what it should say is Torahlessness. A lack of love for God **and** a lack of love for your fellow man is cause for being kept out of the kingdom of God. Love is at the heart of the Scriptures my friends. Without love we have nothing...nothing. Keeping Torah without faith and without love is a

fundamental waste of time. Keeping Torah alone will not open the doors to the kingdom of God. I don't say this to be hurtful but to share the truth of what we find in the Word. If the Word is indeed Yeshua made flesh then Torah through faith and kept through love is the example He set for us.

I am a teacher of the Torah but I also need to be an example of Messiah to those around me, those I come in contact with which means I am to show the love of Messiah to each and every one whose path crosses mine.

For the times when I could have made peace with my neighbor but picked a quarrel, forgive me; and forgive me, too, for the times when I could have accepted with grace an offering of friendship or reconciliation but did not choose to listen. At times, in my willfulness, I may have closed my heart to the possibility of a healing word: Today—and tomorrow—let my heart be open.

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

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