



Message 1-3-09
VaYigash-And He Drew Near
Genesis 44:18-47:27
Ezekiel 37:15-28
Acts 17:22-31

Introduction

In the portion for this week Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and send them to bring their father Jacob to Egypt, and at long last, after many a journey, the family is reunited.

Genesis 46:28-34

28 Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him *the way* to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen. **29** So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. **30** And Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you *are* still alive." **31** Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me. **32** 'And the men *are* shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.' **33** "So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' **34** "that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we *and* also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

When you read the beginning of this portion you should see some very obvious similarities to the situation today and in past Biblical stories. In our case we see Israel or the Jewish people living there, as being the advance guard who have been sent into the land to prepare for the next coming of the Moshiach Yeshua. Judah was to go to Joseph to learn the way to Goshen the place that Joseph would send Jacob and his family to keep them safe during the seven years of famine. In this we should see the safe keeping by God of His people, whether Jew or not.

What strikes me in this Biblical narrative is how it would appear that Judah is waiting for more than their Messiah but perhaps for their brethren, Ephraim and his companions, to come to them. Judah has paved the way for Israel to return to the land and maybe just maybe, he is waiting for God to call the rest of His people back before the next part of God's plan comes to fruition.

Jacob's reply to Joseph after he sees his beloved son is that now he can die in peace no longer haunted by the memory of his lost son, one of the two children of his beloved wife Rachel. Joseph embraced his father and cried on him a long time. This is not quite the reaction we find in modern times when Ephraim tries to embrace Messianic Judah. Messianic Judah pushes Ephraim away but in some areas light is beginning to come into the darkness as the time to Yeshua's second coming draws closer.

Daniel 9:26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

John 1:41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Anointed).

John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Anointed). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." **26** Yeshua said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*."

It is in the book of Daniel that we find the only mention in the Tanach of the word Messiah. In Hebrew Messiah is Moshiach and is commonly translated as Anointed One. What we have to keep in mind when using the word Messiah is that it can also be used in reference to a king, priest, and prophet. All of these receive an anointing as well. We cannot be so loose when using the term but we can see types and shadows of the Messiah throughout Scripture. We see Him in Daniel and again in John. In John 4:25-26 He goes so far as to declare Himself to a Samaritan woman. The Samaritan's were not accepted by Israel or the Jewish people in much the same way that Judah does not accept Ephraim.

Here in the book of John He has a conversation with the Samaritan woman and He can tell from His conversation with her that she knows the promises found in the Tanach concerning the Messiah and that her heart is ready to accept the Good News He is about to share with her. Wouldn't that be something to be there when Yeshua reveals Himself to a world on the brink of annihilation? Can you imagine the reaction of the world when Yeshua returns on the clouds the way He left over 2,000 years ago?

Matthew 24:29 "But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **30** "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. **31** "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. [Isaiah 13:10, 24:23, Ezekiel 32:7, Joel 2:10, 2:31, 3:15, Amos 5:20, 8:9, Zephaniah 1:15, Daniel 7:13, Exodus 19:16, Deuteronomy 30:4, Isaiah 27:13, Zechariah 9:14, Daniel 7:2, Zechariah 2:6]

The Torah and the prophets testify of Him. Didn't Yeshua Himself say this? Here we have the confirmation for those promises of the return of the Messiah. He will come back when the Father releases Him. He will come for His bride who have been preparing for this day. Why did Yeshua go back to His Father and not stay here to finish the work that had been given to Him; because He had to return to His Father's house to prepare a place for His bride to come to. This is seen in the Jewish wedding ceremony.

Many do not know this because their connection to their Hebrew/Jewish roots were severed by the Church 1700 years ago at Nicaea and further separations happened over the centuries until we arrive at our day and we have a revival of sorts taking place. This revival is not that loud nor like the revivals that have taken place in the Church in years past. This is a quiet revival where God has been opening the eyes of many Christians to see the heritage they have been denied for so long. As they re-connect to this lost heritage their eyes are opened to new truths in the Bible that they never saw before. The letters of the Apostle Paul (Shaul) begin to make sense when read from the perspective of a Jew rather than a Christian. In time this movement will shake the very foundations of the Church with people crying out to God in repentance for all they have done to the Jewish people before their awakening.

Those of us who have gone before them must be there to help them to find their way. Sadly not everyone will be able to see the truth or fully accept it. We must pray for these people and reach out to them because you never know who will see the truth down the line. Many of us have prayed for family members who need to know Yeshua and have been doing so for many years and then one day when it looks like they will never learn their need for Messiah they get it. **They get it!** The same thing is happening regarding the scales coming off of their eyes when it comes to learning they have a connection to Yeshua that goes back millennia and that our Messiah **Yeshua is a Jew!** Notice that I say is and not was because He lives and despite what anyone might think He never converted to Christianity because that term did not exist in Yeshua's day. He was a Jew and He is a Jew and He will always be a Jew.

This is why so many have difficulty with Him because of who He is and where He came from. His Father is God who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and made His covenant with them and told them that from them would come the promised nation who would give the world the greatest gift it would ever know.

Ezekiel 37:18-22

18 " And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?' -- **19** "say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'" **20** "And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. **21** "Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; **22** "and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.

This is an oft quoted passage especially among the two house or two stick groups. I was part of those groups and I still have a connection to them but I prefer to think of myself as part of a unit, one nation united under God redeemed by the Son of God Yeshua our Messiah. We should not be

emphasizing Judah or Ephraim but Israel. Not the Israel in the Middle East but the Israel that is spread out all over the world who are one people – **am echad**. **Am echad** is Hebrew for one people. I used to use that term for the ministry I have but over time I turned to Tree of Life because I could see the tree of Life – Yeshua – bringing life to all mankind and all they have to do is ask for it.

You might be asking yourself, but that is so easy to do until you think back to when you were faced with the same decision others are making every day. Many of us are sitting on the sidelines waiting for something to happen when it is happening all around us. We focus on the little things when we need to keep the bigger picture in mind. Instead of Messiah bringing peace into our lives we find our lives in turmoil and all because we allow it to happen. No one said that being a follower of Yeshua would be easy, least of all Yeshua Himself. He set the example for us in more than just what He taught but how He lived and died.

Matthew 13:20 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; **21** "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

This description is the sad reality for so many today and will be the description for many more in the coming days and probably years ahead of us before Messiah returns. If we live until His coming, so be it, if we do not our faith has to be in Him and His promises and that He is a faithful God who will keep His word. That strikes me as being kind of funny or just a play on words there. He will keep **His Word!** Once again we are faced with that nagging question of how can God serve God? King David said the same thing many years ago in the Psalms.

Psalms 110:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

The Lord said my Lord. Oh, what meaning there is to be found in these few words? David, under the inspiration of the Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit), wrote so many Psalms where he cried out to God for His mercy and loving kindness and many Psalms filled with praise for His God and Psalms of Thanksgiving but most of all David wrote of Yeshua and from his words we should know that he knew who Yeshua was. How many of us can read Psalm 22 and not feel the pain of Yeshua as He is dying there upon the tree. His pain fills David as he goes through the same death Yeshua did. How many of us understand this and have felt the pain of our Master? There is an old saying about walking in the shoes of another in order to understand where they have been and where they are going. Many of us need to do this before there is no more time.

Acts 17:22-31

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; **23** "for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: **24** "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. **25** "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. **26** "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **27** "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; **28** "for in Him we live and move and have our

being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' **29** "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. **30** "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, **31** "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Paul (Shaul) was standing before an audience of Greeks talking to them about his Messiah but using the beliefs of the Greek people to get his point across. The gospel cannot always be presented in the context in which it was given – as a Jewish way to redemption. Many times it must be tailored to the audience it is being presented to and we see this in the writings of Shaul. This is where the confusion comes in. When you remove Yeshua from His natural setting and place Him in a setting that is foreign to who He really is you will have problems in understanding many of His teachings.

If you don't put what Shaul (Paul) said into the context of who his audience was you will interpret his teachings incorrectly. When you read Shaul's letters you must see who his audience was and what they believed prior to coming to belief in Messiah. We must see who the teacher was and what was his upbringing as well. We need to look to Shaul's pedigree and the place that would have played in his teachings.

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Messiah Yeshua, and have no confidence in the flesh, **4** though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: **5** circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the Torah, a Pharisee; **6** concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the **law**, blameless.

Shaul gives his credentials for who he is and why he is teaching what he does. It would appear that Shaul is responding to the teachings of others, probably Pharasaical Believers who are still trying to put new non-Jewish Believers in Yeshua under the weight of the Rabbinical law rather than a faith based walk that first brought one to a knowledge and acceptance of Yeshua and then taught them about this new walk and what was expected of them by their new Master Yeshua.

Yeshua taught that first one would come to faith and love and that their love for Him would bring them to following His and His Father's commandments and this is the crux of the argument or the problem that has faced Believers since they were cut off from their heritage – the Torah. The Torah contained everything that Yeshua taught and believed and was the way **ALL** Believers were expected to follow, not out of an attempt to earn one's salvation but out of love for our Lord and Master and His love for His Father in heaven.

We were created to lift up the heavens...Chassidic

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