

**Message 1-7-17**  
**VaYigash-And He Drew Near**  
**Genesis 44:18-47:27**  
**Ezekiel 37:15-28**  
**Luke 2:25-32**

**Introduction**

Jacob goes down to Egypt. Joseph goes to meet Jacob, and the two of them embrace and weep, as Jacob says, "Now I can die, having seen for myself that you are still alive."

**Genesis 46:29-30**

**29** Then Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He presented himself to him and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while. <sup>30</sup> Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive." (ESV)

This is one of the most emotional moments in the Bible – Joseph and Jacob reunited. When Joseph heard his father was coming, he got in his chariot and went to meet his father in the land of Goshen where he had prepared a place for them. Notice how it says "He presented himself to him," as though he was presenting himself to Pharaoh, and in a way, Jacob was a leader who had been blessed by the Holy One and with whom he had struggled. His had not been an easy life, and maybe that is because he was on a journey that had taken him many places, and now he was once again on a journey, and he knew it would be last one. He would never see the land of Canaan again, but he would be buried there as would Joseph, who would spend the rest of his life looking after his family, but none of them would return to Canaan. One day their descendants would return when a new Pharaoh would arise in Egypt who did not know who Joseph was and what he had done for the nation of Egypt.

How many times do we see things change, and yet they remain the same? The Patriarchs did not have easy lives. They were in a constant struggle in understanding the relationship they had with a God they could not see, but they could hear Him in different ways. He would come and talk with them or appear to them in dreams and visions. They would question and at times plead with him to change His mind, as Abraham did with Sodom and Gomorrah. They would not be the only ones because we see Joseph struggle with what happened to him until he came to the realization that what had happened to him was necessary so God could use him to save his family from extinction and put them in a place where they would grow into a people who would eventually become the nation of Israel. It would not be an easy journey, but a lot of times what comes easy is not what

God desires for you. Every day we must make choices, and those choices are being affected by many different things going on around us. What we need to understand is whatever happens in our lives, it has taken place because the Almighty wanted it that way, and if we learn to understand and accept that, life will be much easier for us. Joseph came to understand this and knew God's plan for him and his family. The people who have learned to place their faith in Him are used mightily by Him. Those who struggle with Him trying to run away from their destiny only wind up hurting themselves in the end.

It is not about building kingdoms for ourselves here on the earth. Our home is where God says it is, and service to Him brings with it its own rewards through the blessings He gives to us. Are the leaders of our congregations supposed to have \$1,000.00 suits, drive a fancy car, or live in a mansion? Where did Yeshua live, and how did He live? He was a simple man who surrounded Himself with simple men and lived a simple life complicated by the calling His Father placed on Him and all of those who were called to follow Him. The wealth we get from following Him is one based on spiritual blessings that may bring with it material blessings as well, but however He chooses to treat us is up to Him, and in the end, He will do as He see fit with how He chooses to treat His people.

### **Ezekiel 37:18-19**

**18** And when your people say to you, 'Will you not tell us what you mean by these?' <sup>19</sup> say to them, thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand. (ESV)

This is the prophetic promise the Lord made to Israel. One day He would bring them back together and reunite them as one nation in His hand, not in our hands. We cannot unite anything or anyone, and that has been proven over and over to be a failure on our part because we neglect to pay attention to what God had told us. We cannot bring about the reunification of the tribes and make them back into the nation of Israel. What we can do is try to reach out and offer to talk to one another without setting up any preconditions. It must be one step at a time, people. One foot in front of the other with everyone trying to go in the same direction.

**Zechariah 10:6** "I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back because I have compassion on them, and they shall be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them. (ESV)

The house of Joseph includes those tribes who seceded from the nation of Israel and formed their own kingdom as the Lord had set it up to happen. It was punishment for what Solomon had done in turning away from God and to pagan gods. It turned out that the wisest man in the world made some very poor decisions. Because of these decisions, the Lord decided He would tear the kingdom into two parts with the one remaining in the south called Judah who would keep the tribe of Benjamin. The ten northern tribes would be called Ephraim/Joseph/Israel. Their king was chosen by God, but he did not follow the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He built two pagan Temples, one in the territory of Dan and the other in the territory of Ephraim. He set up his own priesthood and festivals,

all to keep the people from going to the temple in Jerusalem. In the end, God brought the kingdom down and sent the nation into captivity to be scattered all over the earth. He would do the same to Judah because they followed their brethren right into the same pagan worship, forsaking the God of Israel, and they were exiled. However, He allowed a remnant to remain in the land, one day bringing Judah back because it would be through Judah the Messiah Yeshua would come.

### **Luke 2:25-32**

**25** Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. <sup>26</sup> And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Yeshua, to do for him according to the custom of the Torah, <sup>28</sup> he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, <sup>29</sup> "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; <sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation <sup>31</sup> that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, <sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Nations, and for glory to your people Israel." (ESV)

How would you feel knowing that one day you would be allowed to see the Messiah before He had set out on the mission for which He came? This was the blessing that Simeon, a righteous and devout man, would be permitted to see before he died. When Yeshua's parents brought Him to the temple to perform the *Pydion HaBin*-Redemption of the firstborn and probably His mother's immersion because of bearing a child, Simeon looked upon Yeshua, and the *Ruach HaKodesh* revealed to him the truth. He knew that Yeshua was the Messiah, and he knew He would bring salvation to Israel and to the world.

**Isaiah 9:2** The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. (ESV)

We have all, at one time or another, walked in darkness. In that walk we have endured because there was a promise waiting for us that was given from the very beginning when God created the light to separate it from the darkness. This was not the sun, moon, or stars but the Word brought forth who became flesh – Messiah Yeshua. Even though He was born to a human mother two-thousand years ago, as the Son of God, being part of the Father, He can move back and forth on our time-line because He exists with the Father in eternity, time beyond time.

**Isaiah 42:6** "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, <sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. (ESV)

Who is the light for the nations, who is a living covenant for the people? Who can open the eyes of the blind, those who cannot see the truth of the redemption promised by God to all of mankind through His Son Yeshua, brought forth by a Jewish mother and who lived His life as a Jew, following Torah as it was given by God. He could do nothing else

because He is the living word of the Father. He is the Torah in Spirit and in truth. He brings light into the darkest places and frees the prisoners – us, from the prison of sin for transgresses the Torah and forsaking the God of our fathers. We are kin to Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. We identify with them as well as with David, Daniel, and the rest of the Prophets. These were men called by God to take His word to the people. Can you imagine Abraham living in Canaan surrounded by paganism? Do you think he felt out of place in a world that believed in the gods that man had made? There has always been one God above all the other gods because they are all false gods who seek to turn you away from the road that leads to salvation through faith in Messiah Yeshua. It is the road least travelled because it is paved with the way of Torah. Torah points the way to Messiah showing us that there is a better way but not a way where Torah has been cast aside.

As Messiah is a light to the nations, look to the story of Joseph and how he was lifted out of the darkness of the prison where he was. He had learned to trust in God, and in the end, God used him for His purpose, to build a people that would become a nation and be a light to the world.

***Torah Man says: “A conceited person has one good point. He doesn’t talk about other people.”***

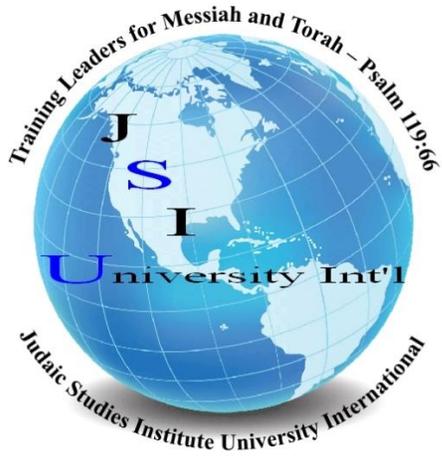
Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

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