

Hear Israel

Parsha Va'yechi / And He Lived

B'reshith 47:28 – 50:26

Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA

Ben Ehrhardt, Shamash

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With this week's *parsha* we end the Book of Beginnings, B'reshith. We've seen the creation both in heaven and on earth. We've seen sin and judgement. And, we've seen the birth of a people. What started with the choosing of just one man, Avram, we've heard Yahweh promise him that a people so numerous they couldn't be counted would come from his loins. And, that a land, a very special land, set-apart by the Creator of heaven and earth and all that is; just for this **chosen** people. We've heard Yahweh repeat this promise to Avraham's son Yitsaq and then to Ya'acob; whose name was changed, by Him who creates and chooses, to Yisra'el.

Our *Parsha Va'yechi / And he lived* plays an integral part in the establishment of the "Kingdom of Yisra'el". We've talked in previous *parashot* (*Torah portions*) about the phrase, "full of days", as it applies to someone's life. This phrase is written in the Hebrew Scriptures of Avraham, Sarah, Yitzaq, Ya'aqob, King David and others, at the recording of their deaths, that they were "**full of days**". It's also recorded of them that their "**years were full**". As I said before, these phrases are Hebrewisms that mean they lived their lives to the full. They fulfilled their missions.

As we open this week's *sidrah*, we read in **B'reshith 47:28-31; And Ya'aqob lived in the land of Mitsrayim seventeen years. So the length of Ya'aqob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years. And the time for Yisra'el to die drew near, and he called his son Yoseph and said to him, "Now if I have found favour in your eyes, please put your hand under my thigh, and show kindness and truth to me. Please do not bury me in Mitsrayim, but I shall lie with my fathers, and you shall take me up out of Mitsrayim and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I do as you have said." And he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him, and Yisra'el bowed himself on the head of the bed.**

From the Hebrew, our opening ½ verse reads, "**And he lived, Ya'aqob, in Eretz Mitsrayim seventeen years....**" They were "**tov**" years. How do I know that? Seventeen is the numeric value of the letters for Hebrew word "**tov**" (**good**). And, I don't believe in coincidences. They must have been great years. After all, he is re-united with Yoseph; the son he grieved over for twenty two years, as he thought Yoseph was dead. He lived out his life surrounded by all of his sons and at least one daughter. Not to mention the fact that he would have spent long hours with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, teaching them what Shem, Eber, Abraham, Yitsaq and others would have taught him; sharing all of his life experiences with his seed. "**So, the length of his days**" Torah says, "**was 147 years**". Now 147 is the numeric value of the Hebrew word

“tza’annah” (tzadee-aleph-nun-vav), which means **“his flock”** or **“his sheep”** and **“na’tsabah”** (nun-tzadee-bet-hey), to **“be established”** or **“stand upright”** and **“amun’on”** (aleph-mem-yud-nun-vav-nun) or **“faithful”**. It’s interesting that Yisra’el, in living his life and establishing his family, would be a perfect picture of the **“flock”** that is **“established, upright and faithful”**.

As the end of his life approaches, Ya’aqob (Yisra’el) has Yoseph, the priest of the family, promise to bury him in the cave of the patriarchs, Machpelah. In addition, Yoseph is the only one of his sons with the power to keep that promise. And, in a bit, we’ll see the very prophetic picture played out as Yoseph keeps that promise.

Let’s read **B’reshith 48:1-11**; **And after these events it came to be that it was said to Yoseph, “See, your father is sick.” And he took with him his two sons, Menashsheh and Ephrayim. And Ya’aqob was told, “See, your son Yoseph is coming to you.” And Yisra’el strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. And Ya’aqob said to Yoseph, “El Shaddai appeared to me at Luz in the land of Kena’an and blessed me, and said to me, ‘See, I am making you bear fruit and shall increase you and make of you an assembly of peoples, and give this land to your seed after you as an everlasting possession.’ And now, your two sons, Ephrayim and Menashsheh, who were born to you in the land of Mitsrayim before I came to you in Mitsrayim, are mine – as Re’uben and Shim’on, they are mine. Your offspring whom you shall bring forth after them are yours, and let them be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. And I, when I came from Paddan, Rahel died beside me in the land of Kena’an on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath. And I buried her there on the way to Ephrath, that is Beyth Lechem.” And Yisra’el saw Yoseph’s sons, and said, “Who are these?” And Yoseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom Elohim has given me in this place.” And he said, “Please bring them to me, and let me bless them.” And the eyes of Yisra’el were dim with age, and he was unable to see. And he drew them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. And Yisra’el said to Yoseph, “I had not thought to see your face. But see, Elohim has also shown me your seed!”**

There are a number of prophetic pictures in these verses. But, here we’ll see that the Hand of Yahweh has brought us all to where we are at this very moment, in preparation for our regathering. Yoseph hears that his father is **“sick”** or **“chalah”** in Hebrew; which more rightly means **“weakened”** or **“becoming weak”** or **“worn down”**. So Yoseph comes to his father with his two sons, Menashsheh and Ephrayim, in tow. Now, in verse two we are told; **And Ya’aqob was told, “See, your son Yoseph is coming to you.” And Yisra’el strengthened himself and sat up on the bed.**

Ya’aqob speaks of El Shaddai’s appearing to him at Luz and the blessing that was given to him there by Yahweh. This caught my attention, in that this place was called Beit El or House of Elohim by Ya’acob and is within 10 miles of the Temple Mount in Yerushalayim. It was very near to where Gan Eden was, or is, and it was here that Ya’aqob saw the **“ladder”** to **“ha’shamayim”** or **“the heavens”** with Yahweh standing above the top. It was here that Yahweh blessed Ya’aqob with the blessing of his fathers, Avraham and Yitsaq. It was here that Yahweh told him that he would become a company of nations (goyim), an assembly of peoples and that his seed would be given the land of Kena’an as a possession **forever**. Now, this hasn’t exactly happened yet.

As I said, the name of this place we are told here, by Ya’aqob is Luz. But why does he call it Luz here, seeing that Luz was its old name. Ya’aqob, himself, named it Beit El. Well, **“Luz”** means **“almond tree”**. Wow, El Shaddai appeared to him at the **“almond tree”**. This is interesting. This is near, or perhaps even part of the site of Gan Eden (*the subject of a coming teaching*); where we

had the “**Tree of Life**” and the “**Tree of Knowledge of Tov and Evil**”. And now, we have the “**Almond Tree**”. So, what does the “**Almond Tree**” represent? Well, when Yahweh showed Moshe the pattern of the Mishkan (*Ohel Mo’ed* or *Tabernacle*), He gave Moshe specific instructions for the vessels and utensils as well, **Shemot 25:31-40 and 37:17-23**. He was told to make the Menorah in the likeness of the “**Almond Tree**” because it is the “**Tree of Light**”. That is why during the rebellion of Qorah in the wilderness, when the chief of each tribe of Yisra’el placed his rod in the Mishkan and only Aharon’s budded and bore fruit, it bore almonds; because Aharon, as the High Priest, was the “**Light Bearer**”, which is what the name “**Aharon**” means in Hebrew.

OK. So now, Ya’aqob adopts Yoseph’s two sons and says they are his; just a Re’uven and Shim’on are his. Any future children Yoseph would have are Yoseph’s. But, Menasheh and Ephraim are to belong to Ya’aqob; so that they would each receive a full portion of the inheritance, so that Yoseph, through his sons, would get a double portion. And with the “**double portion**” came the “**double blessing**”; 1) an assembly of peoples and 2) inheritance in Eretz Yisra’el). And, because they were *adopted*, they would be called by his name, “**Yisra’el**”.

As Yoseph brings his sons in before Ya’aqob, Yisra’el asks “**Who are these?**” Now, we read that his eyes were dim by age and that he could see. But, I find it hard to believe that he did not recognize them. Surely he spent a lot of time with these boys over the past 17 years. We were told back in **Chapter 46** that they had been born before Ya’aqob came down into Mitzrayim. So, why did Ya’aqob ask who they were when he saw them? He asked for the record. He knew who they were. But, he was about to bless them and prophesy over them, just as he would his other sons in the next chapter. As we see from **Chapter 49**, Ya’aqob in his last days is prophesying to his sons about their seed, the nation of Yisra’el, in the “**last days**”. Here, Ya’aqob sees the day coming when all B’nei Yisra’el is again gathered before him, in the last day, as Yisra’el asks in **Yeshayahu 49:21-22**; “**And you shall say in your heart, ‘Who has brought forth these for me, since I am bereaved and barren, an exile, and wandering to and fro? And who reared them? See, I was left alone – from where did these come?’ ” Thus said the Master YHVH, “See, I lift My hand up to the gentiles, and set up My banner for the peoples; and they shall bring your sons in their arms, and your daughters carried on their shoulders;”** As Yahweh also says in **Yeshayahu 11:12**; **And He shall raise a banner for the nations, and gather the outcasts of Yisra’el, and assemble the dispersed of Yehudah from the four corners of the earth.**

Now, let’s finish **B’reshith 48:12-22**; **So Yoseph brought them from between his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. And Yoseph took them both, Ephrayim with his right hand toward Yisra’el’s left hand, and Menashsheh with his left hand toward Yisra’el’s right hand, and brought them near him. And Yisra’el stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephrayim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Menashsheh’s head, consciously directing his hands, for Menashsheh was the first-born. And he blessed Yoseph, and said, “The Elohim before whom my fathers Avraham and Yitsaq walked, the Elohim who has fed me all my life long to this day, the Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil – bless the youths! And let my name be called upon them, and the name of my fathers Avraham and Yitsaq. And let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the earth.” And when Yoseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephrayim, it was evil in his eyes; and he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from the head of Ephrayim to the head of Menashsheh. And Yoseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the first-born, put your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also becomes a people, and he also is great. And yet, his younger brother is greater than he, and his seed is to become the completeness of the nations.” And he blessed them on that day, saying, “In you Yisra’el shall bless, saying, ‘Elohim make you as Ephrayim**

and as Menashsheh!’ ” Thus he put Ephrayim before Menashsheh. And Yisra’el said to Yoseph, “See, I am dying, but Elohim shall be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. And I, I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.”

I found the beginning of this blessing very interesting. First Yisra’el blesses Yoseph, although we’re not told what that blessing was. Then he blesses Yoseph’s two sons. And, he starts off by saying, *“The Elohim before whom my fathers Avraham and Yitsaq walked, the Elohim who has fed me all my life long to this day, the Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil – bless the youths! And let my name be called upon them, and the name of my fathers Avraham and Yitsaq. And let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the earth.”* Yisra’el calls upon Elohim to bless these two. Yisra’el calls upon the Elohim of his fathers who sustained him all of his life, the Messenger (*Malach*, which literally means “**Sent One**”) who has redeemed him from all evil to bless the young men. Here, Yisra’el acknowledges that “**Elohim**” and the “**Sent One-Redeemer**” are indeed “**One**”.

There are numerous commentaries as to why Ya’aqob chose to bless Ephraim with the greater blessing. But, as we have been reading about Yoseph’s life, we have seen the trials and tests, the joy he experienced in hearing from Elohim in his dreams and being elevated within the family to priesthood and the tests that came from being sold by his own brothers into slavery and then being falsely accused and thrown into prison. We can only imagine how much bitterness and resentment a man would ordinarily harbor in his heart over these evil events. Yet, upon reading the biography of Yoseph, we never get the impression of a rough and hateful human being. Quite the contrary, Yoseph is portrayed as a delightful and inspired young man, filled with a zest for life, a love of the world and endless charm. Yoseph’s heart never becomes -- as we would expect it to become -- numb and stone-like. In fact, among all of the great figures in the Scriptures, nobody is portrayed to be as vulnerable as Yoseph. In the biblical narrative about him, we watch him weep excessively on eight occasions. The Torah’s portrait of Yoseph leaves us with the impression of a man who, coupled with an iron will and tremendous ambition remains as tender and innocent as a child.

It was Yoseph’s two children, Menasheh and Ephraim, who came to represent, for him, his personal triumph over adversity. Despite his horrific past, Yoseph chose the path of love and faith rather than the perhaps justified attitude of cynicism and distrust. Yoseph chose to get married and to bring two children into a world that had been so cruel to him. The names Yoseph chose to give his children reflected how Yahweh had sustained him throughout his trials. The Hebrew name Menashsheh denotes “**forgetting**”. The Torah relates that Yoseph named his son so, “**Because Elohim has made me forget all my hardship and all of (the pain inflicted upon me in) my father’s house.**” The Hebrew name Ephraim denotes “**growth and prosperity**”. Yoseph named his second son so, “**Because Elohim has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering**”. These two sons represented the two “**stages**” of Yoseph’s healing. First Yahweh caused Yoseph to “**forget**” his pain and secondly, Yahweh caused Yoseph to be “**fruitful**” beyond measure, in order to fulfill His destiny as “**Savior of the Age**”. By the way, “**Savior of the Age**” is also the meaning of the Egyptian name “**Zaphnath-Pa’neah**”, given him by Pharaoh.

While the “**forgetting**” is the first-born, it’s “**fruitfulness**”, that comes after, that is the bigger blessing. And, Ya’aqob gives Ephraim (*fruitfulness*) the bigger blessing. Being “**fruitful**” is the commandment that Yahweh gave to Adam in **B’reshith / Genesis 1:22**. Sha’ul prayed for the “**fruitfulness**” of the believers in **Colossians 1:9-10**; *That is also why we, from the day we heard, have not ceased praying for you, and asking that you be filled with the knowledge of His desire in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, to walk worthily of the Master, pleasing*

all, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of Elohim, And, as Yahweh promised us in **Yirmeyahu 23:3**; *“Therefore I shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and shall bring them back to their fold. And they shall be fruitful and increase.”*

You see, it was only natural and right that Yisra’el would bless the sons of Yoseph (a picture of us today, in the latter days) as he did. As Yahshua taught in the parable of the **“talents”** in **Mattityahu 25**, to the servant who is **“fruitful”** with what is entrusted to him, more will be added; and so is the blessing of **“multiplicity”**. There is responsibility that goes along with the blessing.

Then Ya’aqob tells Yoseph in **B’reshith 48:21-22**; *And Yisra’el said to Yoseph, “See, I am dying, but Elohim shall be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. And I, I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.”* As I said earlier, Yisra’el had adopted Yoseph’s two sons in order to give them each a portion, in essence doubling Yoseph’s inheritance. Does anyone know which **“portion”** was the extra one? Does it matter? Oh, I think so. You see, the word in Hebrew here for **“portion”** is **“Shekem”**. **“Shekem”** literally means **“the shoulder”**, a **“portion of the upper back”**. Remember, we’ve studied this out before. Shekem is the **“portion”** of the back that **“carries the burden”** as well as receives the **“scourging”** or **“punishment”** for disobedience. So, the **“portion”** is **“Shekem”** because **“Shekem”** means **“the portion”**.

Now, Shekem was a city in the middle of the land of the Amorites. But, you say, *“I’ve checked and Ya’aqob never killed an Amorite.”* But, Yisra’el did indeed take Shekem from the Amorites by sword and bow, through Shim’on and Levi. And, they killed all the men. Ya’aqob/Yisra’el, as patriarch, takes responsibility for the actions of the family. In fact, back in **B’reshith 34:30**, as he is admonishing Shimon and Levi for this deed, he says that they have made **him** **“a stench among the inhabitants of the land”**. And, in the next chapter, as Yisra’el prophesies over his sons, he says of them in **verse 5**; *“Shim’on and Lewi are brothers, their weapons are implements of violence.”* It’s interesting also that the symbol for the tribe of Shim’on is the sword. Tradition has it that, prior to the **“Breastplate of the High Priest”**, a bow was the symbol for Levi.

And, we can’t forget that **“Shekem”** is the very **“portion”** that Ephraim would get in **“The Land”** (by casting lots) as the Children of Yisra’el were preparing to come in and receive their inheritance, at the end of the exodus. Shekem would also become the capitol of the Northern Kingdom of Yisra’el and the last city to be taken by the Assyrians in 722 BCE.

Now, in Chapter 49, we see Ya’aqob/Yisra’el prophetically bless his other sons also, according to what Yahweh revealed to him regarding the **“latter days”**. As we begin to look at these, let’s remember that Ya’acob means **“Yah’s circumventor”**. And, that his name was changed to Yisra’el (**“prevails with Elohim”**). For a more complete look, I’ll be adding their genealogies from last week’s Torah portion and Moshe’s prophetic words over them from **Debarim (Deuteronomy) 33**. Now, we read in **B’reshith 49:1-2**; *And Ya’aqob called his sons and said, “Gather together, so that I declare to you what is to befall you in the last days: Gather together and hear, you sons of Ya’aqob, and listen to Yisra’el your father.”*

Re’uben (#7205) **“behold a son”** the first-born. And, from last week’s parsha, his sons **Hanok** (#2585) meaning **“dedicated”**, **Pallu** (#6396) meaning **“set apart”**, **Hetsron** (#2696) meaning **“surrounded by a fence or hedge”** and **Karmi** (#3756) meaning **“keeper of my vineyard”**. So what is Yahweh saying about the Tribe of Re’uben? *“Behold a son, the first-born, dedicated, set apart, surrounded by a hedge, keeper of my vineyard.”* Ya’aqob blesses Reuven in **B’reshith 49:3-**

4; ***“Re’uben, you are my first-born, my power and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of exaltation and the excellency of power. Boiling like water, you do not excel, because you went up to your father’s bed, then you defiled it – he went up to my couch.*** Here we see that as first-born Re’uben was intended to be the leader of all the tribes. But, in sinning against his own father, he forfeited that right. But, if we set ourselves apart to Yahweh, as a first-born of Messiah Yahshua, we can fulfill this mission in the earth until His return. Notice how Moshe blesses Re’uben in **Debarim 33:6**; ***“Let Re’uben live, and not die, and let his men be numbered.”*** While the man and the tribe may sin, in the last days, Re’uben will live and not die and he will be counted, as I pray we all will.

Shim’on (#8095) ***“hearing & obeying”*** from Sh’ma. His sons **Yemu’el** (#3223) meaning ***“the day of Elohim”***, **Yamin** (#3226) meaning ***“right hand”***, **Ohad** (#0161) meaning ***“united”*** as in echad, **Yakin** (#3199) meaning ***“whom He establishes”***, **Tsohar** (#6714) meaning ***“brightness of radiance”*** and **Sha’ul** (#7586) meaning ***“desired”*** son of a **Kena’anite** (#3669 & 3665) meaning ***“humble” woman***, or bride. So what is said of the tribe of Shim’on? ***“In the Day of Elohim, when His Right Hand will be united with whom He establishes in radiance, a desired and humble bride.”*** Ya’aqob says in **B’reshith 49:5-7**; ***“Shim’on and Lewi are brothers, their weapons are implements of violence. Let my being not enter their council, let my esteem not be united to their assembly; because they slew a man in their displeasure, and they lamed an ox in pleasure. Cursed be their displeasure for it is fierce, and their wrath for it is cruel! I divide them in Ya’aqob and scatter them in Yisra’el.”*** While Shim’on and Levi took horrible vengeance on Shekem for the abduction and rape of their sister Dinah, and they were divided when the Kingdom was split, some of the tribe of Shim’on will, in the last days, Sh’ma (hear and obey) and in humbleness of heart become the Bride of our Redeemer, Yahshua.

And, **Levi** (#3878) ***“joined at the heart with”***. His sons **Gereshon** (#1648) meaning ***“exile”***, **Qehath** (#6955) meaning ***“assembly”*** and **Merari** (#4847) meaning ***“bitter herbs”***. So of Levi we read; ***“He is joined to the exiled assembly, eating the bitter herbs.”*** It is most interesting that he joined to the assembly in exile. There are many “Crypto Jews” throughout the world today; who’s ancestors were forced to convert, or they themselves chose to. As Moshe also prophesied in **Debarim 33:8-11**; ***And of Lewi he said, “Your Thummin (Truth) and Your Urim (Light) belong to Your kind one, whom You tried at Massah, with whom You contended at the waters of Meribah, who said of his father and mother, ‘I have not seen them.’ And he did not acknowledge his brothers, or know his own children, for they have guarded Your Word and watched over Your covenant. They teach Your right-rulings to Ya’aqob, and Your Torah to Yisra’el. They put incense before You, and a complete burnt offering on Your altar. O YHVH, bless his strength, and accept the work of his hands. Smite the loins of those who rise against him, and of those who hate him, that they rise no more.”*** Though they tried their Redeemer in the wilderness, they stood with Yahweh when their brothers sinned with the golden calf and Yahweh set them apart to guard His Torah, serve Him in the Set-apart Place and to teach **kol** Yisra’el (all Israel). **Yeshayahu 66:20-21**; ***“And they shall bring all your brothers as an offering to YHVH out of all the gentiles, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My set-apart mountain Yerushalayim,” declares YHVH, “as the children of Yisra’el bring an offering in a clean vessel into the House of YHVH. And from them too I shall take for priests – for Levites,” declares YHVH.”***

Yehudah (#3063) ***“Yah’s praise”***. His sons **Er** (#6147) meaning ***“watchman”***, **Onan** (#0209) meaning ***“strong”***, **Shelah** (#7956) meaning ***“prayer”***, **Perets** (#6557) meaning ***“to break through”*** and **Zerah** (#2226) meaning ***“dawning”***. There are two things to note here. First, Scripture now tells us that Er and Onan died in the land of Kena’an, or that the watchman and the strong died in the

land of merchants (or the world). Now Perets was Yehudah's son by his daughter-in-law Tamar (palm tree or column) who had been married to Er and Onan, but was childless. We are now told that Perets had two sons **Hetsron** (#2696) meaning "**surrounded by a fence or hedge**" and **Hamul** (#2538) meaning "**spared**". What is Yahweh saying here about Yehudah? Perhaps that "even though Yehudah lost his watchman and strength (became blind and weak), with praise and prayer he will breakthrough and Yahweh's Truth (Yahshua) will dawn on them and in the end, they too will be spared". In **B'reshith 49:8-12** Ya'aqob gives Yehudah the leadership of the House of Yisra'el and the promise of Mashiach; "**You, Yehudah, your brothers praise you; your hand is on the neck of your enemies; your father's children bow down before you. Yehudah is a lion's cub; from the prey you have gone up, my son! He bowed down, he crouched like a lion. And like a lion, who does rouse him? The scepter shall not turn aside from Yehudah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him is the obedience of peoples. Binding his donkey to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine, and his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.**" Moshe's prophetic appeal to Yahweh on behalf of Yehudah, in **Debarim 33:7**, has been proven out in our generation as Yehudah has withstood her enemies; **And this of Yehudah, and he said, "Hear, YHVH, the voice of Yehudah, and bring him to his people. His hands shall fight for him, and You be a help against his enemies."** Baruch HaShem Yahweh.

Zebulun (#2074) "**habitation or dwelling**". His sons **Sered** (#5624) meaning "**fear**", **Elon** (#0356) meaning "**mighty**" and **Yahle'el** (#3177) meaning "**Elohim expects**". Of Zebulun (Yahweh's habitation = Sha'ul says in 1 Corinthians 3:16 that is us) Elohim expects us to "**fear our Mighty One, Yahweh**". Ya'aqob said of Zebulun in **B'reshith 49:13**; "**Zebulun dwells at the seashore, he is for a haven for ships, and his border is unto Tsidon.**" Now, in Scripture, the seas also represent peoples and Tsidon (#6721) means "**fishing**". So, "**Zebulun is a fisher of men.**" Sound familiar? Now, this really begins to make sense, along with a connection to Yissaskar in Moshe's words in **Debarim 33:18-19**; **And of Zebulun he said, "Rejoice, O Zebulun, in your going out, and Yissaskar in your tents! They call peoples to the mountain, there they bring offerings of righteousness, for they draw from the riches of the seas, and treasures hidden in the sand."** Wow! Together Zebulun and Yissaskar, in the last days, are calling the people to Yahweh's Mountain (Tzion) with offerings of righteousness. Then there are riches of the seas and treasures hidden in the sands. You can take that a couple of ways. It could be the secrets of Torah. Or, the children of Avraham, Yitsaq and Ya'aqob (Yisra'el), who are as the sands of the seas.

Yissaskar (#3485) "**recompense**". His sons **Tola** (#8438) meaning "**scarlet**", **Puw'ah** (#6312) meaning "**mouth**", **Yob (Job)** (#3102) meaning "**persecuted**" and **Shimron** (#8110) meaning "**watchtower**" or "**Samaria**". As Yahweh speaks to all Yisra'el through Yissaskar's blessing, He tells us "**that the recompense (reward) for our idolatry is scarlet red, and that from our own mouth we have persecuted our brothers and we will also be persecuted because of our choices in Samaria, the place where our idolatry began**". Ya'aqob says of Yissaskar in **B'reshith 49:14-15**; "**Yissaskar is a strong donkey lying down between two burdens, and he saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant, and he inclined his shoulder to bear a burden, and became a subject to slave labor.**" We have indeed lied down between two burdens (Yahweh's and the world's), in a resting place (Mitzrayim) and have indeed become as slaves to their system. However, it's interesting to note here that in the genealogies listed in **1 Dibre haYamim/Chronicles 7:1** we read; **And the sons of Yissaskar: Tola, and Puw'ah, Yashub, and Shimron, four.** Here Yob's name has been changed to **Yashub** (Strong's #3437) meaning "**he will return**" as in make Teshuvah and come home.

Dan (#1835) “*a judge*” and his son **Hushim** (#2366) meaning “*those who make haste*”. Of Dan, Ya’aqob says in **B’reshith 49:16-18**; “*Dan rightly rules his people as one of the tribes of Yisra’el. Dan is a serpent by the way, an adder by the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider falls backward. I have waited for your deliverance, O YHVH!*” While Ya’aqob says that Dan rightly rules, as a “*judge*” should, many scholars deduce from these verses that from Dan will come the “*anti-messiah*”. That, because of him, we will all wait anxiously for Yahweh’s Deliverance, or the return of Yahshua. We get another piece of the puzzle from **Debarim 33:22**; *And of Dan he said, “Dan is a lion’s cub, that leaps from Bashan.”* This is another clue regarding anti-messiah. Bashan is the Golan Heights and is the area that’s part of the portion given to Yoseph (through *Menasheh*), by Ya’aqob. It’s interesting that when they came from Mitzrayim to enter Eretz Yisra’el, they were attacked and overcame Og, king of the Amorites in Bashan. The mountain of Bashan is Har Hermon. “*Hermon*” was an Amorites mighty one, whose name meant “*Consecrated to Destruction*” or “*Devastation*”. This area has been part of Israel since the 1967 war; but, Syria claims ownership. One of the ancient cities in Bashan / Golan Heights is “*Dan*”. To some it appears that “*anti-messiah*” will attack Yisra’el from Syria. This, some scholars say, is the reason why the tribe of Dan is not listed among the 144,000 in **Revelation 6**. Dan is, however, listed among the tribes of Yisra’el in the Renewed Yerushalayim.

Now, we have **Gad** (#1410) “*good fortune*”. This presents somewhat of a problem, as it relates to the false elohim of fortune. However, the KJV translates **Gad** as “*troop*” or “*band*”, as this alluded to in **chapter 49, verse 19**; as we’ll see in a moment. However, Le’ah clearly stated in **B’reshith 30:11** that “*good luck*” had truly come, and that’s why she named him **Gad**. His sons **Tsiphyon** (#6837) meaning “*longing*” or “*expectation*”, **Haggi** (#2291 & 2287) meaning “*festive*” or “*to keep a festival*”, **Shuni** (#7764) meaning “*in Gad*” or “*fortunate*” or “*blessed*”, **Etsbon** (#0675) meaning “*to see*” or “*to discern*”, **Eri** (#6179) meaning “*guarding*”, **Arodi** (#0722) meaning “*roaming*” or “*to break loose*” and **Areli** (#0692) meaning “*hero*”. Here we see Gad as “*longing to celebrate Yahweh’s Feasts and blessed is he who discerns and guards them.*” Further that “*Gad will one day break loose as a hero*”. Now, Ya’aqob blesses him in this way in **B’reshith 49:19**; “*Gad, a raiding band raids him, but he raids it at the end.*” Some translations say “*heel*”. However, the Hebrew is “*aqeb*” and better translates “*at the end*”. So we have this attack and counter-attack thing going on. Now, let’s add in at what Mosheh says in **Debarim 30:20-21**; *And of Gad he said, “Blessed is he who enlarges Gad. He dwells as a lion, and shall tear off the arm, also the crown. And he chose the best for himself, for there the portion of the lawgiver was hidden. And he came with the heads of the people. The righteousness of YHVH he did, and His right-rulings with Yisra’el.”* This bears looking into for a moment. Yahweh is going to bless those who enlarge, or build up Gad. He dwells as a lion (Ariel) or *a hero* (see above). Scripture says he tears off the arm (zero’ah = political or military forces) and also the “*qodqode*” or crown of the head. While he is attacked (even overcome for a while) he overcomes, in the end, and takes their authority. In the Hebrew, it says he took the “*first portion*” for himself, because **there** the portion of the Torah-giver was hidden. The word used here is “*chelqah*” and means “*portion*”, “*parcel*” or “*plot*”. Who is the Torah giver? Moshe. Let’s sum up here. **Gad** chose the first portion of the Land for himself, as written in **Bemidbar/Numbers 32**, when they asked Moshe for their portion to be east of the Yarden River and Moshe granted their request. This portion, or plot, is where Mosheh, the Lawgiver” is buried (hidden by Yahweh in this portion). In the last days, when Gad overcomes, he will come with the “*heads of the people*” back to his portion, or parcel. This particular piece of land is where our forefathers actually entered Eretz Yisra’el and where we will re-enter the Land after our exodus. So, also in the last days, Gad will practice the righteousness of Yahweh and observe His right-rulings with Yisra’el.

Asher (#0836) "**happy**". His sons **Yimnah** (#3232) meaning "**prosperity**", **Yishwah** (#3438) meaning "**to resemble**" or "**become like**", **Yishwi** meaning "**will be like me**", **Beri'ah** (#1283) meaning "**a gift**", **Serah (Serach)**, their sister (#8294) the same as Sarah meaning "**remnant**", and the sons of **Beri'ah**, **Heber** (#2268) meaning "**a company**" and **Malki'el** (#4439) meaning "**my King is Elohim**". Of Asher, Yahweh says that his "**happiness and prosperity is in learning to be like Yahshua.**" In fact, Yahshua says "**Yishwi**", "**he will be like me.**" For he is a "**gift a, remnant and a company that calls Elohim, my King.**" In **B'reshith 49:20** Ya'aqob says of **Asher**; "**Bread from Asher is rich, and he gives delicacies of a sovereign.**" Bread is Torah and Asher finds rich delicacies within it. As Moshe says in **Debarim 33:24**; And of Asher he said, "**Asher is most blessed of sons. Let him be accepted by his brothers, and dip his foot in oil.**" In these last days, Asher will surely walk in the oil, the anointing of Ruach HaKodesh.

Next is **Naphtali** (#5321) "**wrestling**" and his sons were **Yahtse'el** (#3183) meaning "**Elohim divides**", **Guni** (#1476) meaning "**painted with colors**", **Yetser** (#3337) meaning "**forming**" as man from the dust and **Shillem** (#8006/7999) meaning "**a covenant of peace**". Here **Naphtali** is *wrestling as Elohim divides and paints with colors (many colors) Yisra'el. But, Yahweh will form with man, the dust of the earth, a covenant of peace.* **Yehezqel 34:23-25** tells us; "**And I shall raise up over them one shepherd, My servant Dawid, and he shall feed them. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, YHVH, shall be their Elohim, and My servant Dawid a prince in their midst. I, YHVH, have spoken. And I shall make a covenant of peace with them, and make evil beasts cease from the land. And they shall dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the forest.** And, **Yehezqel 37:25-27**; **And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Ya'aqob My servant, where your fathers dwelt. And they shall dwell in it, they and their children and their children's children, forever, and My servant Dawid be their prince forever. And I shall make a covenant of peace with them – an everlasting covenant it is with them. And I shall place them and increase them, and shall place My set-apart place in their midst, forever. And My Dwelling Place shall be over them. And I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.** Ya'aqob described **Naphtali** this way in **B'reshith 49:21**; "**Naphtali is a deer let loose, he gives words of elegance.**" Further, we read Moshe's words in **Debarim 33:23**; **And of Naphtali he said, "O Naphtali, satisfied with pleasure, and filled with the blessing of YHVH, possess the west and the south."** That's interesting, as this coincides with the new distribution of the Land in **Yehezqel (Ezekiel) 48**.

Now, let's look at the blessing of Yoseph and his two sons. **Yoseph** means "**Yah has added**". **Menasheh** means "**forgetting**" or "**causing to forget**". And, **Ephraim** means "**double portion**" or "**double land**". Ya'aqob speaks of Yoseph in **B'reshith 49:22-26**; "**Yoseph is an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree, an offshoot of a fruit-bearing tree by a fountain, his branches run over a wall. And the archers have bitterly grieved him, shot at him and hated him. But his bow remained in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty One of Ya'aqob – from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Yisra'el – from the El of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, up to the limit of the everlasting hills. They are on the head of Yoseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separated from his brothers.**" Here Ya'aqob states that Yoseph will bear much fruit even to the point of overcoming the walls that divide people. While he will be hated and attacked, Yahweh will preserve him in strength, through Yahshua. Yoseph will know Messiah. The blessings upon Yoseph do exceed that of the patriarchs as they are fulfilled in his sons Ephraim and Menasheh. This is echoed in Moshe's words of **Debarim 33:13-17**; **And of Yoseph he said, "Blessed of YHVH is his land, with the choicest from the heavens, with the dew, and the**

deep lying beneath, with the choice fruits of the sun, with the choice yield of the months, with the finest of the ancient mountains, with the choicest of the everlasting hills, with the choicest of the earth and all that fills it, and the good pleasure of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let it come on the head of Yoseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers. His splendor is like a first-born bull, and his horns are like the horns of the wild ox. With them he pushes the peoples to the ends of the earth. And they are the ten thousands of Ephrayim, and they are the thousands of Menasheh.” Again we see, through Ephraim and Menasheh, Yoseph’s work in the last days. Remember, back in **B’reshith 48:14-22** Ya’aqob blesses them; *And Yisra’el stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Menasheh’s head, consciously directing his hands, for Menasheh was the first-born. And he blessed Yoseph, and said, “The Elohim before whom my fathers Abraham and Yitsaq walked, the Elohim who has fed me all my life long to this day, the Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil – bless the youths! And let my name be called upon them, and the name of my fathers Avraham and Yitsaq. And let them increase to a multitude in the midst of the earth.” And when Yoseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephrayim, it was evil in his eyes; and he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from the head of Ephrayim to the head of Menasheh. And Yoseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the first-born, put your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also becomes a people, and he also is great. And yet, his younger brother is greater than he, and his seed is to become the completeness of the nations.” And he blessed them on that day, saying, “In you Yisra’el shall bless, saying, ‘Elohim make you as Ephrayim and as Menasheh!’ ” Thus he put Ephraim before Menasheh. And Yisra’el said to Yoseph, “See, I am dying, but Elohim shall be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. And I, I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.”*

Now **Binyamin** (*son of the right hand*) and his sons, **Belah** (#1106) meaning “*swallowed up*”, **Beker** (#1071) meaning “*young man*”, **Ashbel** (#0788) meaning “*man of Elohim*”, **Gera** (#1626 & 1627) meaning “*one granule of grain*” or “*1/20 of a shekel*”, **Na’aman** (#5283) meaning “*pleasant*”, **Ehi** (#0278) meaning “*my brother*”, **Rosh** (#7220) meaning “*head*” or “*beginning*”, **Muppim** (#4649) meaning “*serpent*”, **Huppim** (#2650) meaning “*coverings*” or “*protection*” and **Ard** (#0714) meaning “*I shall subdue*”. Ya’aqob spoke in **B’reshith 49:27**; “*Binyamin is a wolf that tears, in the morning he eats prey, and at night he divides the spoil.*” This speaks to the evil that was done in Binyamin to the wife of a Levite and the failure of the whole tribe to dispense justice. In fact, rather than turn over those guilty, they divided the body of the Levite’s wife and sent it to the pieces to the other tribes. Then, they waged war on their brothers. As a result, Binyamin was all but wiped out; **Shoftim/Judges 19-20**. But, forgiveness comes from Yahweh. They would later be joined to Yehudah, as the Kingdom was split. Moshe states in **Debarim 33:12**; *Of Binyamin he said, “Let the beloved of YHVH dwell in safety by Him, shielding him all the day, as he dwells between His shoulders.”* Interestingly, the land of Benjamin (Sha’ar Binyamin) includes the northern ½ of the Temple Mount and Jerusalem, to the south; and, rests between the “*shoulders*” of Eretz Ephraim, to the north.

As we prepare to close out this “*Book of Beginnings*”, I would like us to pick up in **B’reshith 49:28-50:6**; *All these are the twelve tribes of Yisra’el, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them, he blessed each one according to his own blessing. And he commanded 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, in the cave that is in the field of*

Makpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Kena'an, which Avraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial site. There they buried Avraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Yitsaq and Rivqah his wife, and there I buried Le'ah – the field purchased, and the cave which is in it, from the sons of Heth.” And when Ya'aqob ended commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people. And Yoseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him. And Yoseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Yisra'el. And forty days were completed for him, for so are completed the days of embalming. And the Mitsrites wept for him seventy days. And when the days of weeping for him were past, Yoseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If, now, I have found favour in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, ‘My father made me swear, saying, “See, I am dying, bury me in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Kena'an.” And now, please let me go up and bury my father, and return.’ ” And Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

Even though Yisra'el had Yoseph promise to return his body to Hebron for burial, he instructs all of his sons to do so. Then, when he was finished speaking, he simply pulled his feet up into his bed and “*breathed his last and was gathered to his people*”. Ya'aqob's (Yisra'el's) life had meaning and purpose right up to and including his last breath. The preparation of Ya'aqob's body, the embalming, took forty days. Forty is the time of “*testing*”, of “*learning*” and of “*preparation*”. Forty is the numeric value of the letter “*mem*”, which is “*water*” meaning “*chaos*”. The Mitsrites wept for Ya'aqob for a total of 70 days. Seventy is the numeric value of the letter “*ayin*” which is “*eye*” and means to “*watch*” or “*know*”. To “*know chaos*” in this way, was to understand and share in the pain and grief of losing a loved one. This was indeed a great tribute to Yoseph by the Egyptians.

Let's go on with **B'reshith 50:7-14**; *And Yoseph went up to bury his father. And with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Mitsrayim, and all the house of Yoseph, and his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond the Yarden, and they lamented there with a great and very heavy lamentation. And he observed seven days of mourning for his father. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Kena'anites, saw the mourning at the threshing-floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning for the Mitsrites.” That is why its name was called Abel Mitsrayim, which is beyond the Yarden. And his sons did to him as he had commanded them, for his sons brought him to the land of Kena'an, and buried him in the cave of the field of Makpelah, before Mamre, which Avraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial site. And after he had buried his father, Yoseph returned to Mitsrayim, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.*

That must have been some funeral procession. It was made up not only of all of Yisra'el's sons and family, except the “little ones” but also the host of Pharaoh's household, with chariots and horsemen. The oral histories say that the sons of Yisra'el assembled themselves around Ya'aqob's “*coffin*” for this processional, just as they would years later around the “*Ark of the Covenant*” as they traveled through the wilderness. What's really interesting here is that the Hebrew word for “*coffin*” is “*aleph-reish-yud-nun*” or “*arown*” which also means “*ark*”, as in “*Ark of the Covenant*”.

Torah says that this was a very great company. From a distance, it no doubt looked like an army on the march, as if Mitsrayim was invading Kena'an. Since they would be focused on all the chariots and horsemen, which would have outnumbered the Yisra'elites, they must have thought the worst.

No doubt the Kena'anites were prepared for war, at the sight of this "invasion". Imagine when they come to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is near the Yarden, about a days march from Hebron and Makpelah. This great company surrounding an "ark" encamps near the river and then begins a seven day funeral, with great lamentations, we're told. In fact, the Kena'anites renamed this place "**Abel Mitzrayim**" or the "**Mourning of the Egyptians**".

Now, the "**Threshing-floor of Atad**" or "**Goren Atad**" presents an interesting picture. "**Goren**" or "**threshing-floor**" is a round, level surface where grains were threshed, or the grain is separated from the stocks. In Hebraic thought, this represents judgement and times of separating the wheat from the chaff, that which is judged useful from that which is to be burned. "**Atad**" means "**bramble**" or "**thorn bush**". In Yisra'el, it's called "**buckthorn**" because its roots are very strong. It is a formidable bush or small tree. In fact, the oral histories indicate that this threshing-floor was surrounded with a fence of bramble bushes, in order to keep livestock and other animals out. This type of fence or wall was common around these threshing floors. But imagine the view from above, if you could have flown over them. Here is this very large funeral, with wailing and crying around this "**ark**" or "**coffin**"; and next to them, was what appeared to be a large circular wreath or crown of thorns. When I read this and saw the picture in my mind, the hair on my arms stood up.

In closing, let's go to **B'reshith 50:15-26**; *And when Yoseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Yoseph hates us, and pays us back all the evil which we did to him?" And they sent word to Yoseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 'This is what you are to say to Yoseph, "I beg you, please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did evil to you." ' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the Elohim of your father." And Yoseph wept when they spoke to him. And his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "See, we are your servants." And Yoseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of Elohim? And you, you intended evil against me, but Elohim intended it for good, in order to do it as it is this day, to keep a great many people alive. And now, do not fear, I provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. And Yoseph dwelt in Mitsrayim, he and his father's household. And Yoseph lived one hundred and ten years. And Yoseph saw Ephrayim's children to the third generation. The children of Makir, son of Menashsheh, were also brought up on Yoseph's knees. And Yoseph said to his brothers, "I am dying, but Elohim shall certainly visit you and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Avraham, to Yitsaq, and to Ya'aqob." And Yoseph made the children of Yisra'el swear, saying, "Elohim shall certainly visit you, and you shall bring up my bones from here." And Yoseph died, being one hundred and ten years old. And they embalmed him, and he was placed in a coffin in Mitsrayim.*

We end the story of Yoseph with the confirmation that he indeed loved his brothers. When the enemy brought to their remembrance the evil they did to Yoseph and guilt and fear set in, his brothers again asked for forgiveness and mercy. Yoseph wept as they spoke and showed them only love and Torah says that he comforted them and "*he spoke to their heart*".

Yoseph lived in Mitsrayim and saw his children to the third generation. He played with his great grandchildren. Yoseph lived to be 110 years old, we're told. As I looked up the number 110, I was struck by the fact that it represents the letters "**kuf**" and "**yud**" which mean "**surround**" and "**hand**". Yoseph was always surrounded by the Hand of Elohim. But interestingly, in the Paleo Hebrew, the letter "**kuf**" was written as the "**sun on the horizon**" which also indicated "**time**" as in the "**completeness**" or "**total of time**". In other words Yoseph then and future, would always be surrounded by the Hand of Elohim. Words and phrases with a numeric value of 110 appear

throughout Torah. Most of these have to do with the “**palms of the hand**” (6 times) and “**going**” or “**being taken**” (8 times). But, remember this; 110 is numeric value for “*pey-dalet-vav-yud-yud*”, “**padoo’ee**” which is “**redemption**”.

And, Yoseph, as he is dying, reminds his brothers of the words Yisra’el spoke to them, that Yahweh spoke to him; that Elohim would visit them in Mitzrayim and bring them out. Folks, there’s an end to “**slavery**” and an end to “**captivity**”. Yahweh has a plan. Remember, there’s no “**Plan B**”. He said through the prophet in **Yirmeyahu 29:11-14**; *‘For I know the plans I am planning for you,’ declares YHVH, ‘plans of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and an expectancy. Then you shall call on Me, and shall come and pray to Me, and I shall listen to you. And you shall seek Me, and shall find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. And I shall be found by you,’ declares YHVH, ‘and I shall turn back your captivity, and shall gather you from all the gentiles and from all the places where I have driven you, declares YHVH. And I shall bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you.’* When this indeed happens, then may it be as King David declared in **Tehillim / Psalms 14:7**; *‘O’ that the deliverance of Yisra’el Would be given out of Tsiyon! When YHVH turns back the captivity of His people, Let Ya’aqob rejoice, let Yisra’el be glad.*

Another Ya’aqob (*James*) added in **Ya’aqob 1:17-18**; *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change, nor shadow of turning. Having purposed it, He brought us forth by the Word of truth, for us to be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.*

“**And He Lived**” What a fitting close to Sefer B’reshith (the Book of Beginnings). As our forefathers lived, so shall we live, in these last days, to fulfill our destiny; if we will only “**Sh’ma**” (hear and obey). **Tehillim / Psalms 33:11-12** says; *The counsel of YHVH stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose Elohim is YHVH, The people whom He has chosen as His own inheritance.* We are the inheritance of Yahweh. If we will follow Him in obedience, He promises to bring us back from our captivity, just as He did with our forefathers in Mitzrayim. **Yirmeyahu 30:3-4**; *‘For look, the days are coming,’ declares YHVH, ‘when I shall turn back the captivity of My people Yisra’el and Yehudah,’ declares YHVH, ‘and I shall bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and let them possess it.’ ” And these are the words YHVH spoke concerning Yisra’el and Yehudah.*

Baruch HaShem Yahweh