

MORDEKAI'S DRASH — VAYECHI



Torah: *Vayechi* (And he lived), *B'resheet* (Genesis) 47.28-50.26
Haftorah: *M'lakhim Alef* (1 Kings) 2.1-12
Suggested Messianic Writings reading: *1 Kefa* (1 Peter) 1.1-9

Shalom,

We have reached the end of *B'resheet* (Genesis), the first book of Torah. Back at the beginning, when *Ah-dahm* (Adam) and *Khavah* (Eve) were cast from the Garden, the promise of One to come who would bring redemption was given. *Khavah* believed that *Kayin* (Cain) was the One, and when he failed, generation after generation of mankind awaited some kind of a deliverer. And as mankind distanced itself farther and farther from its Creator, the hope turned into mythologies, rumors and legends. Yet the truth of the promise remained, and continued through the Patriarchs *Avraham*, *Yitz'khak v'Ya'akov* (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). In *B'resheet* 49, *Ya'akov* prophetically narrowed the scope down with the announcement that the Promised One would come from the tribe of *Y'hudah* (Judah).

In 49:10 the term **שִׁילֹה** *Shiloh* (Shee-loh) first appears in Scripture. Most scholars admit to one degree or another that this term refers to the Messiah, although the history of *why* it does is uncertain; but the fact is that Jewish sages wrote of this belief *before* the time of *Yeshua*. It is translated thus in the CJB: "The scepter will not pass from *Y'hudah*, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes to whom [obedience] belongs; [or: until *Shiloh* comes] and it is he whom the peoples will obey."

B'resheet 49:11 notes that this One will wash his clothes in wine, and dip his robes in the blood of grapes. This prophetic analogy is given again in *Yesha'yahu* (Isaiah) 63, and this could also be what *Yochanan* (John) was referring to in *Revelation* 19:13 about the robe soaked in blood, for the Rider on the white horse "treads the winepress...."

Yosef (Joseph) believed in this redemption, for prior to his death he received a promise from his brethren that *when* they were delivered from Egypt, they would carry his bones with them. *Yosef* was embalmed most likely according to Egyptian custom and placed in a coffin. *Zola Levitt Ministries* has an interesting article concerning the discovery of the possible location of the tomb of *Yosef* in Egypt, on their website at www.levitt.com/essays/joseph.html. *Sh'mot* (Exodus) 13:19 relates that *Moshe* carried the bones of *Yosef* out when Israel left Egypt, and later on as *Y'hoshua* (Joshua) conquered the Promised Land, the bones of *Yosef* were buried at *Sh'khem* (Shechem), an area given to *Yosef* by *Ya'akov* at his death, in *B'resheet* 48:22. Although the context is not clear how or when *Ya'akov* actually gained the land by a militant conquest, the land came to be known as *Ya'akov's* gift to *Yosef*, as we see in *Yochanan* (John) 4:5: "[*Yeshua*] came to a town in *Shomron* [*Samarita*] called *Sh'khem*, near the field *Ya'akov* had given to his son *Yosef*."

Messianic Rabbi *Russ Resnik* notes that the wording in *B'resheet* 50.26 says that *Yosef* was placed in a coffin, rather than saying that *Yosef* was buried. In other words, the bones of *Yosef* were placed into a location wherein it was possible to access them for travel. The above web article explains how this was possible. Of note also is that the CJB translation of *Hebrews* 11:22 states that *Yosef* "remembered about the Exodus of the people of Israel, and gave instructions about... his bones" [emphasis mine]. Only by faith in *HaShem* can one truly *remember* about and believe in a *future* event. And the name *Yosef* comes from the root *yaw-saf* **יָסַף**, one definition of which is, "to gather together, to consolidate, to bring people together." This *Yosef* did.

So *B'resheet* ends, not simply with the death of two great Patriarchs, *Ya'akov* and *Yosef*, leaving us hopeless, but rather we see the hope of the promise of redemption. The *Ramban* wrote, "Thus concludes the book *B'resheet*... it tells of what has occurred and of new things that will occur even before they spring up in the hearts of the people." Messianic Jews believe that *Yeshua* is *Shiloh*, the Promised One; *Pre-Messianic* Jews are still unclear on exactly who this is. As *Sha'ul* (Saul, also known as Paul) pointed out, [spiritual] blinders must be [spiritually] removed.

And so we have finished the book of *B'resheet*, Genesis. I leave you with the blessing pronounced at the end of the reading of each book of Torah:

וְנִתְחַזַּק! חֲזַק! חֲזַק! Kha-zakh! Kha-zakh! V'neet-kha-zayk!
Be strong! Be strong! And let us be strengthened!

שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם – *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim* – Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! Pray for the safety of Messianic believers in the Israel military forces. Pray for Israel to seek out her G-d in these trying times. Pray for [spiritual] eyes to be opened to see *Yeshua* for who He is – Messiah of Israel.

B'rakhot v'todah rabbah
(Blessings & thank you very much)

Mordekhi

This Yeshua, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come back to you in just the same way as you saw him go into heaven.
(Acts 1.11 CJB)