

Opening Scripture Reading/Prayer:

Exodus 31:12-17

The Sabbath

¹² And the Lord said to Moses, ¹³ “You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, ‘Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you. . . .’ ¹⁶ Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. ¹⁷ It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”

Isaiah 58:13-14

¹³ “If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath,
from doing your pleasure on my holy day,
and call the Sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the Lord honorable;
if you honor it, not going your own ways,
or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;
¹⁴ then you shall take delight in the Lord,
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Week 12 - Vayechi (And He Lived)
Genesis 47:28–50:26; 1 Kings 2:1–12; John 10:1–21

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God”

“And Jacob lived (Vayechi Yaacov) in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were a hundred forty and seven years.” Genesis 47:28

This week’s *Scripture* portion, *Reading “and he lived”* (Vayechi), is the **final Shabbat reading from the book of Genesis (Bereisheet)**.

In last week’s study, Joseph revealed his identity to his brothers and invited them, as well as his father, to live in Egypt in order to provide for them during the famine. **Joseph, his brothers, and his father were joyfully reunited and reconciled.**

Genesis 46:26-34

Joseph Brings His Family to Egypt

²⁶ All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were **sixty-six persons in all.** ²⁷ **And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two. All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were SEVENTY.**” Genesis 46:26-27

Jacob and Joseph Reunited

²⁸ He had sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him in **GOSHEN (meaning a land or place of plenty and comfort)**, and they came into the land of Goshen. 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.** ³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, “Now let me die, since I have seen your face and know that you are still alive.” ³¹ **Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, “I will go up and tell Pharaoh and will say to him, ‘My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. ³² And the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock, and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.’ ³³ When Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ ³⁴ you shall say, ‘Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,’ in order that you may dwell in the land of Goshen, for every SHEPHERD is an abomination to the Egyptians.”**

The Abomination of Egypt; the Miracle of the Passover Sacrifice

After the fourth plague, Pharaoh offered Moses a compromise – the Israelites could worship God in Egypt without going to the wilderness. Moses replied, **“We are going to sacrifice the gods of Egypt in honor of our God. Could we possibly slaughter the Egyptians’ gods right in front of their eyes, and they not stone us?”**

And Moses said: ‘It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God; lo, if we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us?’ Exodus 8:26

According to the *Scriptures*, the Egyptians held sheep to be sacred, as the image of their deity.

Ultimately, the *Scriptures* tells us, God commanded the Israelites to take a lamb or a kid for each household. They were to hold it for four days, from the tenth until the fourteenth of the first month, and slaughter it on the fourteenth. This was done in Egypt, despite the Egyptians’ religious beliefs. **To this day Jews commemorate this event, calling the Sabbath preceding Passover Shabbat Hagadol – “The Great Sabbath” – for the Egyptians were powerless to do anything to harm them or to prevent them from sacrificing the Egyptian gods.**

Egyptian mythology confirms this. **The god Khnum** was one of the principal gods of Egypt, and one of the oldest. Khnum’s temple was located on the island of Elephantine, today known as Aswan. He was said to be responsible for the level of the Nile and the *mud* that was deposited from the river’s flooding. **He was also portrayed as the creator of mankind.** His image is of that of a man with a ram’s head. Remains of mummified rams have been found in Khnum’s temple.

Bible Confirms that The Egyptians worshiped Sheep

The lamb in the context of the Passover story was a god (amongst many) for the Egyptians. Indeed some of the ten plagues were with respect to the other idols of the Egyptians (frogs, river Nile, wild animals for example). Tellingly, the lamb, a sign of fertility, was killed in the middle of the month of Nisan (Aries in the zodiac corresponds to the time of Nisan and has the sign of the sheep) and the blood of the lamb placed on the door lintels of the Israelites’ dwellings. A biblical proof that the lamb was a god of the Egyptians is by consideration of Exodus 8 which concerns Moshe’s request of pharaoh to allow a sacrifice in the desert. Considering verse 26:

And Moses said: ‘It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God; lo, if we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? Exodus 8:26

The Ancient Egyptians Worshiped Sheep – Menashe’s Blog (wordpress.com)

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by not acknowledge the counterfeit, but the Truth that has been counterfeit.

Genesis 47:1-10

Jacob’s Family Settles in Goshen

¹ So Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, “My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan. **They are now in the land of Goshen.**” ² And from among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. ³ Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, as our fathers were.” ⁴ They said to Pharaoh, “We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants’ flocks, **for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan.** And now, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen.” ⁵ Then *Pharaoh said to Joseph*, “Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶ The land of Egypt is before you. **Settle your father and your brothers in the BEST of the land. Let them settle in the land of Goshen, and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my livestock.**”

⁷ Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and stood him before Pharaoh, and **Jacob blessed Pharaoh.** ⁸ And Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How many are the days of the years of your life?” ⁹ And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. **Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life,** and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning.” ¹⁰ **And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from the presence of Pharaoh.**

AND JACOB SAID TO PHARAOH, “THE DAYS OF THE YEARS OF MY SOJOURNING ARE 130 YEARS. FEW AND EVIL HAVE BEEN THE DAYS OF THE YEARS OF MY LIFE, AND THEY HAVE NOT ATTAINED TO THE DAY SO FTHE YEARS OF THE LIFE OF MY FATHERS IN THE DAYS OF THEIR SOJORNING.” (47:9)

Most of us are satisfied with reasonable aspirations: develop your mind, make ends meet, live in peace with your neighbors. **But then there are those special individuals who derive no satisfaction from personal achievements. For it is total, universal perfection they seek - as long as they inhabit a world where evil and want still exist, they perceive their own selves as deficient and wanting . . .**

Such a man was Jacob. Of the three founding fathers of the Jewish nation, only Jacob’s names (“Jacob” and “Israel”) are synonymous with “*The Jewish People.*” For Jacob lived not an individual’s life. His earthly life and deeds were but the beginnings of the 35-century mission of Israel to perfect G-d’s creation.

AND JACOB BLESSED PHARAOH (47:10)

He blessed him that the Nile should rise at his feet and water the land; **thus the famine ended after two years (instead of seven).**

(Midrash Tanchuma; Rashi)

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by acknowledge the famine in the Promise Land, and begin Seeking for its True famine, the Word of God, Repentance, and a Life Pursuit of Holiness, in that All The World might See the True Deliver of Famine: “The Word of God, who is The Lamb of God”.

“Strive for . . . holiness without which no one will see the Lord.”

Hebrews 12:14

Genesis 47:11-12

Jacob’s Family Settles in Goshen

¹¹ Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. ¹² And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father’s household with food, according to the number of their dependents.

The Exodus

There are several figures given for the length of the Egyptian Exile. **Genesis 15:13** mentions 400 years, while **Exodus 12:40** puts its duration at 430 years.

Year 2018: God tells Abraham his descendant will be exiled in Egypt for 400 years. **This 430 years before Exile.**

Year 2048: Isaac is born. **The 400 years of exile date from his birth.**

Year 2238: Jacob’s family comes to Egypt. **This is 210 years before the Exodus.**

“²⁶All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own descendants, not including Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all.” **And the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two.** All the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.” Genesis 46:26-27

The total here is only 69 persons, who and where is person 70?

ALL THE SOULS OF THE HOUSE OF JACOB WHO CAME INTO EGYPT WERE SEVENTY (46:27)

But if you count them, you find only sixty-nine; the seventieth is Jocheved the daughter of Levi, who was born between the boundary walls as they entered Egypt.

(Talmud, Bava Batra 123a)

“⁵⁹The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt (And she bore to Amram Aaron and Moses and Miriam their sister).” Numbers 26:59

Jochebed (or properly pronounced as **yokhéved**) name *meaning* and *declaration*: “**glory of Yahweh**” or “**Yahweh glory**”, the first person in Scripture to have a name compounded with **Yahweh** . . .

The name **Jochebed** is a combination of two elements, the first one being יָהּ (Yah) = יָהוּ (Yahu) = יוּ (Yu), which is the commonly accepted abbreviated form of יְהוָה, which is **YHWH, the Name of the Lord** . . . and the second element of the name is the verb כָּבַד (*kabed*), to be impressive.

https://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Jochebed.html#_X_BtiDSSk2w

“Behold the Man with Nail Pierced Hands” The Great Name of God

Our Bibles start at **Genesis 1:1** with this statement, “*In the beginning God.*” The Hebrew word for the book of Genesis is B’reshite and means, “In the Beginning.” The word for God used in this opening statement is . . . Elohim, a plural word indicating that God, although one exists in parts or aspects. We have come to know the three parts or aspects of God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And since every man was created in the image of God we too are each individuals having three parts . . . a spirit, a soul and a body.

God also has an actual name and it is revealed for the first time in **Genesis 2:4** and is used over **7,000 times** in the Old Testament.

However, our Bibles don't use the name but insert a special designation for it such as . . . “*Lord God*” when the name is being used. This happened when the Hebrew people were taken captive to Babylon around 600 BC. Their leaders purposely hid the name of God so it would not be profaned among the nations.

The Hebrew people now refer to God's name as Ha Shem, meaning “*The Name*”. They do not speak His name but are taught to say Adonai, meaning “Lord” in its place. They do not write God's name but instead substitute the tetragrammaton, **YHVH**, the four Hebrew letters that make up the name. God's name is “*Yah-u-wah*”, which basically means “**I AM THAT I AM**”.

Let's take a look at something very special about His name by just using the tetragrammaton, **YHVH**:

Pronunciation of the Letters

(yad)

(hey)

(vaw)

(hey)

Ancient Hebrew Symbols for the Letters of the Tetragrammaton



Interpretation of the Symbols

"Hand"

Man with raised hands means "Behold"

"Nail"

Man with raised hands means "Behold"

As we see here, *the very name of God that was hidden over 2,500 years ago*, to prevent it from being profaned among the nations, has consequently also hidden its “*True Meaning*” of God’s name, as read above, “**Behold the Hands of the Man with Raised Hands, Behold the Nail Pierced Hands of the Man with Raised Hands**”, who will one day be identified by his “*Raised Nail Pierced Hands*” our Messiah, our Lord, our Savior, our Redeemer, our Hope.

According to traditional rabbinic biblical chronology, Moses was 80 years old when the Exodus occurred, the Israelites had been in Egypt for 210 years in total, and thus in combination with the rabbinical claim that Jochebed was born on the border of Egypt, as her parents had entered it, **this would require Jochebed to have been 130 years old when she gave birth to Moses.**

ALL THE SOULS OF THE HOUSE OF JACOB WHO CAME INTO EGYPT WERE SEVENTY (46:27)

When they reached the border of Egypt, they added up to sixty-six; together with Joseph and his two sons, they were one less than seventy. What did G-d do? He entered into the count with them, in fulfillment of what is written, “*I will go down with you into Egypt.*” (*Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer, ch. 39*)

“³Then he said, ‘I am God, the God of your father. **Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt**, for there I will make you into a great nation. **I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again**, and Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes.’” **Genesis 46:3-4**

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”
1 Corinthians 10:13

The fact of the matter is that God always provides a way out of our time(s) of adversity before we even enter into to our time(s) of adversity (“¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation **he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.**” **1 Corinthians 10:13**). The mother of the deliver, Moses, was born before Jacob’s family even set foot into Egypt. **How “Awesome” is that?** And yet the reality to Jacob’s families new position, **and our ultimate inheritance**, is that Joseph, a type of “Messiah”, provided the entire family a safe haven (“⁴So Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come near to me, please.’ And they came near. And he said, ‘I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷And **God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here, but God.**” **Genesis 45:4-8**) for his family to prosper, multiply (“¹⁷But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong . . . ⁸Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹And he said to his people, ‘Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us.¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.’” **Exodus 1:6-10**), and ultimately be “raptured” (covered from God’s ultimate Wrath on his enemies), in a city that He designate in Egypt, “the World”, for their provision, protection, and ultimately their deliverance into their future inheritance, “Goshen”, meaning, a land or place of plenty and comfort. It was in “Goshen” that God’s people were protected from the Wrath of God, through the plagues, beginning with the fourth plague, “Flies”, as read in Exodus 8:22 (“²²But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people dwell, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth.” **Exodus 8:22**; “²⁶Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, was there no hail.” **Exodus 9:26**), **which symbolically is the number of “divine appointments” and “divine/appointed rest”**:

The number 4 derives its meaning from creation. On the fourth day of what is called 'creation week' God completed the material universe. On this day he brought into existence our sun, the moon, and all the stars (Genesis 1:14 - 19). Their purpose was not only to give off light, but also to divide the day from the night on earth, thus becoming a basic demarcation of time. They were also made to be a type of signal that would mark off the days, years and **seasons**.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word for '**seasons**' in Genesis 1:14 is *moed* (Strong's Concordance #H4150), which literally translated is "**appointed times**" (divine appointments) in reference to God's festivals. This is the earliest known allusion to what would later be called the Holy (or Feast) days (periods) of worship, which are seven in number.

The 4th of the Ten Commandments is to remember and keep God's holy Sabbath day (Exodus 20:9-11). The Sabbath day is tied directly to the creation week. God himself made the period between Friday sunset and Saturday sunset extra special when he rested on it after bringing everything into existence the previous six days (Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:11).

<http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/4.html>

Year 2332: Egyptian slavery begins after the death of Levi, the last of Jacob's sons (to be alive). **This is 116 years before the Exodus.**

Positive effect of Slavery (“¹⁹Then the Lord said . . . “they will be enslaved and mistreated (*not simple suffering, but* the bread of affliction (“³ You must not eat leavened bread with it; for seven days you are to eat with it unleavened bread, **the bread of affliction**, because you left the land of Egypt in haste – so that you may remember for the rest of your life the day you left the land of Egypt.” **Deuteronomy 16:3**), **bread that allows us to actually be able to find answers to contexts, a strip down to the essential self, exposure of the deep areas of our lives where we realize strength, purpose, and meaning**) for hundred years.” **Genesis 15:13**) . . . a developed sense of gratitude towards God and therefore readily acceptance of his teaching and instruction (Torah) . . . God's Word often mentions this precept “*And you shall remember that you were once Slaves in Egypt, therefore, I command you to do these things,*” (Exodus 13:3, Deuteronomy 5:15, 15:15, 24:18).

Year 2362: The most intense persecution, which lasts 86 years, begins with Miriam, the sister of Moses is born. Her name means “Bitter”. **This is 86 years before the Exodus.**

Miriam, the daughter of Amram and Yocheved, and older sister of her two famous brothers, Aaron and Moses, was born in Egypt just when the Jewish people were reduced to slavery, oppression and hard labor. This was in the year 2362 (after Creation), eighty-six years before the liberation. She was born four years before Aaron and seven years before Moses. Having been born at the time when the bitter enslavement began, her parents named her “Miriam” (from the Hebrew word meaning “bitterness”).

Miriam the Prophetess died at the age of 126 (or 127) years (1400 – 1274 BCE). She was the oldest of the three. She died on the tenth day of Nissan, in the year 2487, almost exactly one year before the children of Israel entered the Promised Land.

Year 2448: The Exodus.

The people were Redeemed because of their faith Genesis 15:6, Exodus 4:31

Genesis 15:6

⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Exodus 4:31

²⁹ Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. ³⁰ Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people.

³¹ And the *people believed*; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

God Promises Deliverance Exodus 6:1-9, Exodus 12:30-32

Exodus 6:1-9

God Promises Deliverance

But the Lord said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for with a strong hand he will send them out, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.”

² God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord. ³ I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty,^[a] but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. ⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. ⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. ⁶ Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and **I will bring you out** from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and **I will deliver you** from slavery to them, and **I will redeem you** with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. ⁷ **I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God**, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ **I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord.**”⁹ Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel, but they did not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and harsh slavery.

Exodus 12:30-32

³⁰ And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead. ³¹ Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, “Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. ³² Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!”

Genesis 47:19-28

¹⁹ Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we with our land will be servants to Pharaoh. And give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate.”

²⁰ So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for all the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe on them. The land became Pharaoh's. ²¹ As for the priests, he made servants of them from one end of Egypt to the other. ²² Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on the allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land.

²³ Then Joseph said to the people, “Behold, I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. ²⁴ And at the harvests you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones.” ²⁵ And they said, “You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be servants to Pharaoh.” ²⁶ So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; the land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

²⁷ Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly. ²⁸ And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

AND ISRAEL DWELT IN THE LAND OF EGYPT IN THE COUNTRY OF GOSHEN; AND THEY TOOK POSSESSION OF IT (47:27)

The Hebrew word *vayei'achazu* (“and they took possession of it”) literally means “and they took hold of it,” but also translates, “and they were held by it.”

This duality defines the **Jew's*** attitude toward *galut* (exile). On the one hand, we know that no matter how hospitable our host-country may be, and no matter how we may flourish, materially and spiritually, on foreign soil, *exile* (*galut*) is a prison in that it dims our spiritual vision, hinders our national mission and compromises our connection with G-d.

But we also know that we are in *exile* (*galut*) **for a purpose**. We know that we have been dispersed throughout the world in order to reach and influence the whole of humanity. We know that it is only through the wanderings and tribulations of *exile* (*galut*) that we access and redeem the “sparks of holiness” - the pinpoints of Divine potential which lie scattered in the most forsaken corners of the globe.

So *exile* (*galut*) is a possession/property (*achuzah*) in both senses of the word: **a “holding” to develop and a “holding pen” we must perpetually seek to escape.**

Indeed, it can only be the one if it is also the other. If we relate to *exile* (*galut*) solely as a prison, we will fail to properly utilize the tremendous opportunities it holds. But if we grow comfortable in this alien environment, we risk becoming part of it; and if we become part of the *exile* (*galut*) reality, G-d forbid, we could no more succeed in our efforts to develop and elevate it than the person who tries to lift himself up by pulling upwards on the hairs atop his own head.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

John 17:13-19

¹³ But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ **They are not of the world**, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

John 16:33

³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; **I have overcome the world.**”

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by acknowledge that although you are in this World (exile), that you are not of this World (exile).

Genesis 47:28-50:26

Genesis 47:28-48:7

²⁸ And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.

²⁹ And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal kindly and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt, ³⁰ but let me lie with my fathers. Carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burying place.” He answered, “I will do as you have said.” ³¹ And he said, “Swear to me”; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself upon the head of his bed.

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by acknowledge the Promises of God over your Life, through your entire Life.

Genesis 47:1-7

Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

¹ After this, Joseph was told, “Behold, your father is ill.” So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ² And it was told to Jacob, “Your son Joseph has come to you.” Then Israel summoned his strength and sat up in bed. ³ And Jacob said to Joseph, “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴ and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a company of peoples and will give this land to your offspring after you for an everlasting possession.’ ⁵ And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. ⁶ And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷ As for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was still some distance to go to **Ephrath**, and **I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).**”

Although the New Testament does not tell us where in Bethlehem Jesus was born, the Old Testament does. **Micah 4:8** states:

“And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” Thus the Old Testament clearly states that the Messiah would be born at the **“tower of the flock”** (Hebrew: *Migdal Edar*).

The phrase **“tower of the flock”** is the Hebrew phrase *“Migdal Edar”* [mig-dawl ay-der] and means a **“watch tower of the flock”**. In ancient times this was a military tower erected to view into the valley on the edge of Bethlehem to protect the city. Several of these military towers are recorded in the Old Testament (See Judges 8:71, 9:46, 9:51; 2 Kings 9:17, 18:8; Nehemiah 3:1) The tower at Bethlehem is first mentioned in **Genesis 35:21**, *“And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar”* (**“tower of Edar”** - Migdal Edar). After Jacob left Bethel he came to **Edar (the tower)** and there Rachel began hard labor and as she delivered Benjamin she died and was buried there in Ephrath which is Bethlehem” (**Gen. 35:19**). After burying Rachel, Jacob moved his flocks beyond the **tower of Edar**. This would pinpoint the location as being near to what is present day Bethlehem. Clearly, this establishes that **Migdal Edar, “the tower of the flock”** was in Bethlehem in Bible times.

Genesis 35:19 and **48:7** both state that Rachel was buried at **“Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.”**

*“And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to **Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.**”* **Genesis 35:19**

Prophecy of the Birth Place of the Messiah:

*“And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the **way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem.**”* **Genesis 48:7**

Why did Jacob evoke the memory of Rachel’s burial?

So said Jacob to Joseph: I am asking you to trouble yourself to take me to be buried in the Land, even though I did not do the same for your mother. **She died a short distance from Bethlehem, and I did not even take her to [Bethlehem] but buried her at the wayside.**

But know that it was by Divine command that I buried her there (*the way of Ephrath*), so that she should be a help for her children when . . . (in) . . . exile . . . (when) . . . **they will pass by there.** Then Rachel will (*speak to them*) . . . , as it is written (**Jeremiah 31:14**):

“A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel is weeping for her children...”; and G-d will answer her, “There is reward for your toil... The children shall return to their own borders” (*ibid.*, v. 15).

(Rashi)

The location of Rachel’s tomb today is outside, on the outskirts of present day Bethlehem, but clearly it was not when Jacob, buried his wife there.

*This watch tower from ancient times was used by the shepherds for **protection from their enemies and wild beasts.** It was also the place ewes were safely brought to give birth to the lambs. In this sheltered building/cave the priests would bring in the ewes which were about to lamb for protection. These special lambs came from a unique flock that was designated for sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem.*

Thus, with the establishment of Temple worship in Jerusalem, *the fields outside of Bethlehem became the place where a special group of shepherds raised the lambs that were sacrificed in the Temple. Being themselves under special Rabbinical care, they would strictly maintain a ceremonially clean stable for a birthing place. **The Tower of the Flock was used for birthing ewes, and the surrounding fields were where these shepherds grazed their flocks.*** These shepherds customarily kept their flocks outdoors twenty-four hours a day every day of the year, *but brought the ewes in to deliver their lambs where they could be carefully cared for. It was to this place that Joseph took Mary. **It was in this special place at “Migdal Edar” that Christ was born!** How do we know? **Micah 4:8 tells us so!***

**And you, O tower of the flock,
hill of the daughter of Zion,
to you shall it come,
the former dominion shall come,
kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem.**

Prophetically, "Migdal Edar" is the exact place in Bethlehem for Christ to be born. He was born in the very birthplace where tens of thousands of lambs, which had been sacrificed to prefigure Him. God promised it, pictured it, and performed it at "Migdal Edar". It all fits together, for that's the place the place where sacrificial lambs were born! Jesus was *not* born behind an inn, in a smelly stable where the donkeys of travelers and other animals were kept. He *was* born in Bethlehem, at the birthing place of the sacrificial lambs that were offered in the Temple in Jerusalem which Micah 4:8 calls the "tower of the flock."

God's word tells us that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, of Judah in the city of David at a place called the "tower of the flock."

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:4-5

by Cooper P Abrams III
<http://www.bible-truth.org/BirthPlaceofJesus.html#2>

"Be Strong and show yourself a person for God" – by acknowledge God in all of your way, that He may be the One who Directs your Path, not Leaning on your own understanding, that others may too see the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Genesis 48:8-22

⁸ When *Israel* saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" ⁹ Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." ¹⁰ Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. So Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹ And Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face; and behold, God has let me see your offspring also." ¹² Then Joseph removed them from his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. ¹³ And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him. ¹⁴ And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands (for Manasseh was the firstborn). ¹⁵ And he blessed Joseph and said,

**"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day,
¹⁶ the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys;
and in them let my name be carried on, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."**

¹⁷ When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. ¹⁸ And Joseph said to his father, "Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." ¹⁹ But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, **his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.**" ²⁰ So he blessed them that day, saying,

**"By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying,
'God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.'"**

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. ²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your fathers. ²² Moreover, I have given to you rather than to your brothers one mountain slope (*Shechem – "And Joseph's bones . . . they buried in Shechem" Joshua 24:32*) that I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow."

Jacob then blessed his two grandsons and added the following words: "With you, Israel will bless, saying, 'May G-d make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh.'" This is why we bless our sons with the words: "*May G-d make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.*"

Genesis 41:50-52

⁵⁰ Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore them to him. ⁵¹ Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." ⁵² The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Manasseh: In the Land of Hardship and Affliction, God has Made Me FORGET all My Hardship

and . . .

Ephraim: In the Land of My Affliction, God has Made me Fruitful.

In the Land of Hardship and Affliction, God has Made Me FORGET all My Hardship & God has Made me Fruitful.

Psalm 34:19-22

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken. Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Psalm 119:92

If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

Isaiah 30:20-22

And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. Then you will defile your carved idols over laid with silver and your gold-plated metal images. You will scatter them as unclean things. You will say to them, "Be gone!"

Zechariah 3:2

And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?"

Isaiah 63:8-9

And he became their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Matthew 4:23/Matthew 9:35

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10

but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by acknowledge that in your Hardships and Afflictions, God will Make you Forget all your Hardships and Made you Fruitful.

Genesis 49:1-27

Jacob Blesses His Sons

¹ Then Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.

² “Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father.

³ “**Reuben**, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

⁴ Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!

⁵ “**Simeon** and **Levi** are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords.

⁶ Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstring oxen.

⁷ Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel!

I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

¹⁴ “**Issachar** is a strong donkey, crouching between the sheepfolds.^[a]

⁸ “**Judah**, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you.

⁹ **Judah** is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?

¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him;^[g] and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

¹¹ Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes.

¹² His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.

¹³ “**Zebulun** shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his border shall be at Sidon.

¹⁵ He saw that a resting place was good,
and that the land was pleasant,
so he bowed his shoulder to bear,
and became a servant at forced labor.

¹⁶ “**Dan** shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁷ **Dan** shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that his rider falls backward.

¹⁸ I wait for your salvation, O Lord.

¹⁹ “Raiders shall raid Gad,^[1]
but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰ “**Asher's** food shall be rich,
and he shall yield royal delicacies.

²¹ “**Naphtali** is a doe let loose
that bears beautiful fawns.

²² “**Joseph** is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall. ²³ The archers bitterly
attacked him,

shot at him, and harassed him severely,

²⁴ yet his bow remained unmoved;
his arms^[1] were made agile

by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(from there is the Shepherd,^[m] the Stone of Israel),

²⁵ by the God of your father who will help you,
by the Almighty^[n] who will bless you

with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that crouches beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

²⁶ The blessings of your father
are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents,
up to the bounties of the everlasting hills.^[o]

May they be on the head of Joseph,
and on the brow of him who was set apart from his
brothers.

²⁷ “**Benjamin** is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the prey
and at evening dividing the spoil.”

Why did God choose Judah? Perhaps because he is the only brother who showed compassion toward Joseph, saving his life when his brothers wanted to kill him (*Genesis 37:26–27*). And as we saw earlier, he would show the same compassion toward Benjamin, offering to become a slave in his place. Both of Judah's acts foreshadowed what

Yeshua would do for all of us spiritually.

Both of Judah's acts foreshadowed what Yeshua would do for all of us spiritually.

The Picture of the Anti-Christ

Revelation 7:4-8

⁴ And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

⁵ 12,000 from the tribe of **Judah** were sealed,

12,000 from the tribe of **Reuben**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Gad**,

⁶ 12,000 from the tribe of **Asher**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Naphtali**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Manasseh**,

⁷ 12,000 from the tribe of **Simeon**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Levi**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Issachar**,

⁸ 12,000 from the tribe of **Zebulun**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Joseph**,

12,000 from the tribe of **Benjamin** were sealed.

Note: Dan is missing from this list, and Joseph's family is mentioned twice, a double portion, both Joseph and his son Manasseh.

Why is this?

Jacob Blesses His Sons

"Then Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come.'" **Genesis 49:1**

Genesis 49:16-17

"**Dan shall judge his people** as one of the tribes of Israel. **Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward.**"

The Blessing of Dan by Jacob

Before Jacob, Dan's father died, he gave a blessing to each of his sons. This is the blessing given to Dan

"**Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider tumbles backward.**

"**I look for your deliverance, Lord.**"

Genesis 49:16-18

Notice several things about this blessing. First, Jacob prophesied that Dan would judge Israel. This part of the blessing was fulfilled by Samson who judged Israel for twenty years. We find this judgement and confirmation that he led Israel in Judges 15:16, 20 as well as Judges 16:31. Second, he claimed that Dan would become idolatrous and would become like the serpent in the Garden of Eden in that he would not be faithful to God. When the Israelites finally entered the Promised Land, the tribe of Dan was seventh in line to select their territory (Joshua 19:40-51). However, they were not able to occupy their selected territory due to a lack of faith and later moved north (Judges 18:1-31), as we read above. As they moved north, the Danites stole Micah’s idols and Micah’s priest agreed to be the priest for the the tribe.

“Then the five men who had spied out the land of Laish said to their fellow Danites, “Do you know that one of these houses has an ephod, some household gods and an image overlaid with silver? Now you know what to do.” So they turned in there and went to the house of the young Levite at Micah’s place and greeted him. The six hundred Danites, armed for battle, stood at the entrance of the gate. The five men who had spied out the land went inside and took the idol, the ephod and the household gods while the priest and the six hundred armed men stood at the entrance of the gate.

When the five men went into Micah’s house and took the idol, the ephod and the household gods, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?”

They answered him, “Be quiet! Don’t say a word. Come with us, and be our father and priest. Isn’t it better that you serve a tribe and clan in Israel as priest rather than just one man’s household?”

Judges 18:14-19

Jacob’s prophesy, again, proves true as we see in Judges 18:30:

“There the Danites set up for themselves the idol, and Jonathan son of Gershom, the son of Moses, and his sons were priests for the tribe of Dan until the time of the captivity of the land.” – Judges 18:30

The Danites continued this idolatry until the Assyrian Empire took them captive in 722 B.C.

“After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. 30 And this thing became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other.” – 1 Kings 12:28-30

And

“However, he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit—the worship of the golden calves at Bethel and Dan.” – 2 Kings 10:29

Why is The Tribe of Dan Absent From Revelations?

In the book of Revelation, when the Messiah tells the apostle John that he will choose 144,000 special servants from the twelve tribes of Israel (Revelation 7:1-8), and chooses 12,000 out of each tribe, it is interesting to note that he chooses double from the Tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh’s portion). We may find at least some of the answer in the book of Judges. We know that they attacked Laish and turned to idolatry. Throughout the centuries, they continued to engage in idolatry and were slow to repent of their sins. So, the tribe is missing from the list of tribes in Revelation 7:4-8 and will not be part of the 144,000 Jewish witnesses in the tribulation period. An interesting note, however, is that they appear again in Ezekiel 48:1-2, 32.

“These are the tribes, listed by name: At the northern frontier, Dan will have one portion; it will follow the Hethlon road to Lebo Hamath; Hazar Enan and the northern border of Damascus next to Hamath will be part of its border from the east side to the west side.

Asher will have one portion; it will border the territory of Dan from east to west.”

Ezekiel 48:1-2

And again:

“On the east side, which is 4,500 cubits long, will be three gates: the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin and the gate of Dan.”

Ezekiel 48:32

These scriptures do show that the tribe of Dan will have land designated for them during the millennial kingdom. They will continue to reject God in the tribulation but they will turn to God at the end of the millennial kingdom because our God will draw them to Christ.

Interesting Facts about the Tribe of Dan:

- Their tribe symbols are the scales and serpent/snake (from Jacob’s blessing)
- **Descendants of the tribe of Dan are said to be found in modern day Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Northern England and Denmark as well as the United States.**
- Their gemstone is said to be the sapphire

https://www.womanofnoblecharacter.com/the-tribe-of-dan/#The_Blessing_ofDan_by_Jacob

Note: Dan would cause the people of God to **Fall Away**:

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And then **many will fall away** (the word used here is apostatized, breaking of a covenant, idolatry) and betray one another and hate one another. And **many false prophets will arise** and **lead many astray** (the word used here is apostatized, breaking of a covenant, idolatry). And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” **Matthew 24:9-14**

Note: Jesus warned us to beware, be alert/awake, be watchful not to be mislead from false teachers, false prophets, and false messiahs, telling us the following: "I have said all these things to you to keep you from **falling away** (the word used here is apostatized, breaking of a covenant, idolatry)," **John 16:1**.

Jeremiah 8:15-17

"We looked for peace, but no good came; for a time of healing, but behold, terror. "The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan; at the sound of the neighing of their stallions the whole land quakes. They come and devour the land and all that fills it, the city and those who dwell in it. For behold, I am sending among you serpents, adders that cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you." declares the LORD."

Note: It was Jesus' Reason for coming, to destroy the works of the devil (lawlessness, the teaching and instruction that would contradict and oppose the teaching and instruction of God (the Law)), which he empowered his followers to do the same.

"Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. **The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.** No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God." **1 John 3:7-9**

"Behold (listen with understanding), I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you." **Luke 10:19**

Zechariah 11:15-17

"Then **the LORD said** to me, "Take once more the equipment of a **foolish shepherd**. For behold, I am raising up in the land a **shepherd who does not care for those being destroyed, or seek the young or heal the maimed or nourish the healthy, but devours the flesh of the fat ones, tearing off even their hoofs.** 'Woe to my worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! **May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! Let his arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded!**'"

Note: God here **gives a picture** of *who* the Anti-Christ will come from, "a foolish **shepherd** . . . tearing off even their **hoofs** . . . **who deserts the flock**," the tribe of Dan, a shepherd of the people of God, from the curse spoken of Dan from his father Israel/Jacob. In addition, God **gives us a picture** of the *physical attributes* of the Anti-Christ, "his **arm be wholly withered, his right eye utterly blinded.**"

A secondary picture is also found in scripture of the Story of God's Redemption, as read in Judges:

Judges 13:2-5, 24

"There was a certain man of Zorah, of the **family of the Danites**, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had borne no *children*. Then the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, 'Behold now, you are barren and have borne no *children*, but you shall conceive and give birth to a son. Now therefore, be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines' . . . Then the woman gave birth to a son and named him **Samson**; and the child grew up and the LORD blessed him."

Judges 14:8-9, 13-14, 18

⁸After some days he returned to take her. And he turned aside to see **the carcass of the lion**, and *behold* (listen with understanding), there was a **swarm of bees in the body of the lion**, and **honey**.⁹ He scraped it out into his hands and went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and mother and gave some to them, and they ate. *But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey from the carcass of the lion.*

And they said to him, "Put your *riddle*, that we may hear it."¹⁴ And he said to them,
"Out of the eater came something to eat.
Out of the strong came something sweet."
And in three days they could not solve the riddle.

¹⁸And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,
"What is sweeter than **honey**?
What is stronger than a **lion**?"

Note: The **Lion is a symbol** of Judah, from whence the Messiah would come out of, the **Carcass is a symbol** of the Death and Resurrection of the Messiah out of the line of Judah, the **honey is a symbol** of the Messiah, Jesus, ("My son, eat thou **honey**, because it is good: and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: so shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off." **Proverbs 24:13-14**) and the **bees are a symbol** of the Tribe of Dan, of which come the same symbol and teaching of the present day Freemasonry/Masonry.

"Be Strong and show yourself a person for God" – by acknowledge that in your Hardships and Afflictions, God will Make you Forget all your Hardships and Made you Fruitful.

Genesis 49:28-50:26

Jacob's Death and Burial

²⁸All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him. ²⁹Then 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, ³⁰in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ³¹There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah— ³²the field and the cave

that is in it were bought from the Hittites.”³³ When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

Genesis 50:1-26

¹ Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

⁴ And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ ‘My father made me swear, saying, “I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me.” Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return.’” ⁶ And Pharaoh answered, “Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear.” ⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians.” Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; [L] it is beyond the Jordan. ¹² Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them, ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

God's Good Purposes

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷ ‘Say to Joseph, “Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.”’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ **As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.** ²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by comforting those who have Offended you, through the Power of Forgiveness, for what men have meant for evil against you, God has meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be Saved (kept alive).

The Death of Joseph

²² So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years. ²³ And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's own. [L] ²⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall **carry up my bones from here.**” ²⁶ So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Exodus 13:19, “Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying ‘God will surely visit you, and you shall **carry up my bones with you from here.**’”

Hebrews 11:22, “By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave direction concerning his bones.”

Joseph was hoping in the promises of God and in the power of the resurrection.

Joseph would die, but his bones, the very emblem of his life, would be bought up out of the land of the dead and into the land of the living.

“Be Strong and show yourself a person for God” – by posturing your Life as a Light of God's Truth to all mankind, desiring that non-perish, absent of God's Truth, even in Death, not separating yourself from the Truth (as Paul taught, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” Philippians 1:21)

Final Instruction:

1 Kings 2:1-4

David's Instructions to Solomon

When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, ² “I am about to go the way of all the earth. **Be strong, and show yourself a man,** ³ and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, ⁴ that the LORD may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention

to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’

Be strong, and show yourself a person for God . . .

Be strong* , and show yourself a person for God. . .

- * **Be strong:** for to govern one's life according to the law of God, requires great resilience or strength of mind; to arm yourself against the subtle devices and avoidance of some; against the flatteries and importunities of others; against terrors and dangers from revengeful men, and especially against himself and his own weakness, partiality, through fear or favor; and against all those evil thoughts and passions to which the temptations of their great wealth, and glory, and uncontrollable power naturally expose them, ex. **Proverbs 16:32** Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city; **Joshua 1:7** - Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.
- * **Person for God:** in manly wisdom, and courage, and constancy – i.e.. 1 Chronicles 22:5 - For David said, “Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, of fame and glory throughout all lands. I will therefore make preparation for it.”

Purpose: Keep (watch the watch/serve the service) **the charge of the LORD your God:**

1. **Walking** in his **ways** and
 - * **Walking:** fixed ones love/affection upon.
 - * **ways:** in general respect his whole walk and conversation, and his obedience to the law and will of God.
2. **Keeping** his **statutes**, his **commandments**, his **rules**, and his **testimonies**, as it is written in the **Law of Moses** (which a king of Israel was obliged to write a copy of, keep by him, and read it, and rule according to it - Deuteronomy 17:18)
 - * **Keeping:** consider all his appointments to be holy, just, and good; receive them as such, and conscientiously observe them.
 - * **commandments:** whatever he has commanded/instructed you to do, perform; what he has no commanded/instructed you to do, leave out.
 - * **rules:** what he has determined to be right, is essentially and inherently right; what he has determined to be wrong or evil, is inherently and essentially so.
 - * **testimonies:** bear witness to all to which he has borne witness . . . His testimonies are true; there is no deceit or falsity in them,

Result: that you may prosper (experience intimacy with God, in true wisdom and abundance/fruitfulness) **in all that you do and wherever you turn.**

1. That the LORD may establish his **word** that he spoke concerning me, saying:
 - * **word:** fulfill his promise - God promised David that the Messiah should come from his descendants, and that promise was absolute - Joshua 23:14: You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the LORD your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.
2. If your sons pay close attention to their **way**.
 - * **way:** diligently observe all their actions, to order them according to God’s word.
3. **Walk** before me in **faithfulness** with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the **throne of Israel.**
 - * **Walk:** to live as those that have God before their eyes, and endeavor to approve themselves to him.
 - * **faithfulness:** not only in pretense and show, but truly and sincerely. With all their heart, and with all their soul, i.e. universally, freely, and fervently.
 - * **throne of Israel:** but the promise, that there should not fail of them a man on the throne of Israel, was conditional; if he walks before God in sincerity, with zeal and resolution.

Next Week’s Reading:

Week 13 - SHEMOT (Names)
Exodus 1:1–6:1; Isaiah 27:6–28:13, 29:22–23; Jeremiah 1:1–2:3; Romans 12:1–21