



Parasha: VAYIGASH/AND CAME NEAR

Torah Portion: GENESIS 44:18-47:27

Tanak: EZEKIEL 37:15-28, JOSHUA 14:6-15, ZECH. 10:6-11:7

Brit Hadasha: LUKE 24:13-27, JOHN 19:28-30

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LEAVING AREAS OF COMFORT or giving up ideals and possessions that we hold dear can be some of the hardest things to fulfill. Often, these comfort items or possessions have been with us for as long as we can remember. Some may have sentimental attachments while others may just make life better or easier to deal with. The same is true with our ideals and passions. They may be the product of generational thinking or goals administered by parents wanting better for their children.

In any case, many of these comforts, possessions or ideologies do not bolster well with Torah. As such, they must be dealt with at some point in our walks with YHVH. Some of the biggest obstacles we must deal with in our lifestyles and in the encounters with others include dietary standards and holiday keeping habits.

These items seem to be some of the largest stumbling blocks for those being introduced to Torah to be confronted with by YHVH's Words. We want to cleave to the things that we have grown-up enjoying and not give up the memories that are so deeply related to our earthly traditions. Alas, we see that they are incompatible with a walk that includes all of YHVH's truth and replete with man made customs.

Yosef asks his father to do this very thing. To leave the land that he waited so long to return to live and move all that he had to Egypt. Yet, the prospect of having his son back is the motivational point that sets Ya'akov into action and immediately moves him

to a foreign land. Famine has not accomplished this, mourning the loss of his preferred wife and son has not prompted a move from a land where his memories linger. Nor has the proximity to his brother Esau or the ill will of the native population concerning their quick demise over Dinah been enough to evacuate the land that YHVH told him to live.

It is not until Ya'akov is informed of Yosef's whereabouts that he has an impetus to move to a new habitation. We must look to Ya'akov as an example and inspiration to progress forward when the time comes from YHVH.

When we venture into a Torah lifestyle and start the journey of taking Yeshua's yoke upon ourselves, we must begin to reflect upon the words of YHVH's which paint a picture of what we are to look like. As we relinquish our worldly lusts and ideals we are breaking out of the spiritual bondage that anticipated ensnaring us in the future. Likewise, holding on to the idols that we've grown accustomed to in our hearts provokes Elohim to jealousy, who longs for our direct and undivided attention.

Even when we are walking in Torah, there comes a time when we must press past the initial teaching that brought us to the roots of our faith in Torah and continue the quest to know Him through His Torah as we search the concealed treasures of His personage. It is a constant forward motion. To lag or fall behind is to backslide. We must lay aside all things that hinder us so that we will press on to maturity.¹

¹Hebrews 6:1

²Devarim 30

Shavu Halacha/Weekly Walking:

This week we catch a glimpse of Ya'akov as he hears the words that were spoken by Yosef and sees proof of his existence, then believes that he is, indeed, alive. We must take this as a lesson to place our trust in what YHVH has spoken to us through the Torah bearing witness of His Son, Yeshua. It is so easy to think that the words of Torah have nothing to do with us, or that Yeshua was not really talking to us about how to live or how to behave. Yet this is far from the truth. Moshe writes that this commandment is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.² Previously, Moshe also said that the covenant and oath was not made with only those that stood there in that day, but for those who were not with them that day. Those ancient words that were penned onto lamb's skin with ink were spoken by YHVH to us and are as relevant to us now as they were some 5000 years ago. YHVH is eternal and His Word is eternal!

We are to stand on the Word of YHVH, as it was written then, to believe and walk in now. In walking out and trusting in the covenant, we are keepers of the promise that was spoken to Abraham and will, one day, possess the land of promise. Our Messiah spoke the Words of Torah; He was the Word come to us in the flesh. We only hear of Him and read of Him, yet our faith believes that He lived and died and was resurrected on our behalf. With this knowledge, we walk out our salvation with fear and trembling.

Day 1

PARASHA:
GEN. 44:18-31

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. This portion of Scripture speaks about mediation. When Judah approaches Yosef on behalf of his brothers, it is reminiscent of Abraham interceding for Lot in Sodom. Looking at this situation from that point-of-view, discuss how we should approach YHVH in intercession and how He responds, even when angry or hiding Himself. Who do the characters here represent?

2. Notice how Judah is repeating the words of Yosef back to him? This is representational of how we pray and how we battle the enemy. Here, Judah is speaking to whom he believes is an enemy, yet we know that Yosef is not an enemy, but a redeemer figure. Why would a reiteration of Yosef’s words be gone over again?

3. As we know, everything in Torah reveals Who YHVH is and shows his character to us. In this portion of Torah, Ya’akov is shown to be desirous of bread. He vacillates about which he desires the most: his youngest son to remain by his side or the need for grain for food. Our Father desires our companionship. He made us as counterparts to Himself and to interact with us. Later in Torah, Moshe will intercede on Israel’s behalf many times, to hold back YHVH’s fury and destruction against Israel. It is an ongoing battle of desires and promises verses anger and our stubbornness. How do you see this passage revealing YHVH’s position as desiring two seemingly incompatible ideals?

4. Benjamin does not abandon his father but acquiesces to leave Ya’akov for a transitory time to sojourn back to Egypt with his brothers. This is like Messiah being away from YHVH, but never leaving YHVH. Discuss these similarities and how one could be gone for a time, but never really leave.

5. In verse 28, Ya'akov is quoted by Judah as saying, "Surely he is torn in pieces," speaking of Yosef. It sounds as if there is still doubt by Ya'akov as to the disappearance of Yosef. And, while there seems to be doubt, there is seemingly slight hope of his return. This is indicative of our hope for loved ones to come into or return to the loving arms of Elohim. How do you see this passage as it relates to the prodigal son in relationship to our backsliding and repenting unto YHVH as His children.

6. Contrast Yosef and Benjamin between Adam and Yeshua. Look at ways that Adam failed where Yosef succeeds, as well as, the birth order and purposes for their actions.

7. Judah speaks to Yosef, not knowing who he is. Yet, Judah continues to speak and give an historical account of his family while describing some aspects of their beliefs. In everyday conversations, we are afforded opportunities to speak truth to others. What does this passage show us about speaking to others that do not know YHVH or have no or little spiritual understanding?

8. Everyone seems convinced that Ya'akov will die and go down in sorrow to Sheol, if Benjamin is not returned. For anyone who has already lost a child, this obviously speaks in ways that others cannot understand. This also speaks of YHVH's broken heart upon losing Adam to this world. Describe ways that you see YHVH's sorrow over our lost condition as sinners and how He expressed this sorrowfulness in Scripture.

Midrash Point

There is a plethora of symbolism in the story of Yosef, and the majority points to Messiah. Yosef earnestly desires to reveal himself to his brothers, yet he methodically takes his time doing it.

Our Messiah is clearly seen by some, while others may obscurely see and some unfortunately never see Him. While on the road to Damascus, Shaul's eyes are veiled with something like scales which fall to the ground when Yeshua reveals Himself fully to Shaul/Paul. Why does YHVH cause some to see clearly and seem to hide the revelation of Messiah from others?

Day 2

- PARASHA:
GEN. 44:32-45:8
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

**Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit**

Yeshua said that, "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."¹ In our parasha, we see Judah willing to lay down his life for the sake of his brother, Benjamin, and for the sake of his father's wellbeing.

Yeshua fulfills this foreshadow of himself by laying down his life for his disciples and for all of us whom He considers to be His friends.² While this is fulfilled, that does not mean that we should not be imitators of Messiah and willingly lay down our lives, or become surety, for our friends. This is not to suggest crucifying ourselves, but that we would be last for their sake to be first in the kingdom of YHVH. Through our sacrificial love for our dying friends in this world, we express the love of YHVH for their sake and provide opportunities for them to walk in eternal life.

1. When Messiah was with us on earth, He came so that our punishment would fall upon Him. As we look at Judah's intercession on behalf of Benjamin, we see the foreshadowing of our Messiah and His role as our High Priest ever interceding on our behalf. Describe the ways in which Judah is portraying Messiah and how Ya'akov is portraying YHVH.

2. As Yosef is about to reveal himself to his brothers, he can't control himself before those who stood by him. He cries out for everyone but his brothers to leave. For most of us when we encounter an outburst of emotion along with an appeal for the gathering to leave it is an intimidating ordeal. The brothers do not know why Yosef is crying out, nor do they understand why all of his servants are vacating the room. As we stand in the presence of YHVH, there will be periods of time that we do not understand. Try as we might to interpret Scripture, most likely, there are going to be segments that are just meant to be mysteries. In what ways do we need to understand the way to have faith and trust in our Creator versus understanding His ways and what or how He carries out His business?

3. Yosef weeps so loudly that the Egyptians hear and it that causes the household of Pharaoh to hear of it. This is not even wailing in sorrow, but in joy for the reuniting of a family and the regaining of a Father. Yosef's joy is still his brother's dismay and potential sorrow until they see Yosef completely. Discuss how we are so easily overwhelmed by the love of YHVH and do not even understand our blessings or His love for us.

4. Yosef says to his brothers, "I am Yosef! Is my father still alive?" Yosef has heard all that his brothers have said about Ya'akov, but still asks if he lives or not. Yosef is mirroring our behavior as we struggle to see YHVH, even through Yeshua. What is it that confirms in our hearts that Yeshua is alive and that YHVH is the Creator and real?

¹John 15:13
²John 15:14

5. Our Messiah will one day say to us, “Come closer, I am the one Whom you crucified.” Likewise, He will not be angry with us, but will remind us that He did this to preserve our lives. Contrast this to what Yosef is relating to his brothers in this passage.

6. In verse 5, Yosef tells his brothers not to grieve for what they have done by selling him into slavery. Yosef goes on to relate that YHVH sent him to Egypt to preserve life. That preservation of life is not only for the household of Ya'akov, but for the Egyptians and for all the others nations that are converging into Egypt to buy grain for food. First, how do we see Messiah as the One who was sent and was resurrected as the first fruits from the dead and is recognized as the Bread who came down from Heaven who preserves our life?

Second, how do we rejoice with Messiah in His suffering in contrast to feeling remorse that it is our sin that He suffered for our redemption?

7. The account of Yosef's life is the conception of a great remnant to be saved in the earth; this begins with Yosef, then 70 others of his family journey to Egypt from the land of Canaan. Ultimately this humble remnant becomes the nation of Israel. Yet, even in the overall remnant, there are many that have fallen away, from the wilderness until now, and who even now are falling away from knowing Messiah. YHVH speaks to the prophets about the remnant, and the book of Revelation resonates about how many will overcome during the great tribulation. What is a remnant and what constitutes the dimensions and requirements of being a part of a remnant?

8. If we do indeed view this passage as both historical and prophetic, then the aspect of being kept alive by a great deliverance has future connotations as well. We know that the children of Israel are eventually rescued out of Egypt by YHVH's outstretched arm and that it is a great deliverance. How do you relate this as a prophetic statement about an end time event that will be a great deliverance as well?

Day 3

PARASHA:
GEN. 45:9-28

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. The land of Goshen is believed to be in the northern part of Egypt, on the eastern side of the Nile River. This a place is where the river would have overflowed, maybe even yearly, and deposited rich silt on the land. That, in turn, would make this part of Egypt very agriculturally productive. This also would have been an area that would be easy to depart from and go back to the land of Canaan or to the wilderness to worship YHVH. Those leaving would have been able to go and come back without the involvement of the Egyptians. Discuss these thoughts, and your own, about why Goshen would have been considered a prime allotment to Ya'akov.

2. The news about Yosef's brothers arriving in Egypt is pleasing to Pharaoh. Pharaoh has been extremely blessed by the presence of Yosef, in that his land is not on the brink of starvation and he is becoming rich with the payment for all the grain being purchased by his people and the surrounding nations coming to buy it. How do you see this tying in to Pharaoh's pleased demeanor and order to bring back Ya'akov to Egypt to live?

3. Why does Yosef give Benjamin three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments? Do these items and quantities represent some significant point to be brought out later in Torah, or were they a future telling for when Yeshua sent out His disciples?

4. The donkeys that Yosef sent were ten carrying the best things of Egypt and ten female donkeys carrying grain, bread and sustenance for Ya'akov on the journey back to Egypt. This is a lot of bounty for Ya'akov to consume, it would be probable that it is for Ya'akov and he will give portions to those in his household. Yet, there is still the aspect of sending the best of Egypt to Ya'akov. What does this mean and represent since Ya'akov is going to be coming right back down to Egypt anyway?

5. The ten donkeys and ten female donkeys are representational as well. Back in B'reisheet 16:12, the angel of Elohim tells Hagar, that Ishmael will be a "wild donkey of a man." Discuss how the twenty donkeys and their loads are comparable to Ishmael what way that will have connotation to Israel in the future.

6. As Yosef commissions his brothers for the journey to retrieve Ya'akov, he tells them not to quarrel on the journey. For what reasons would Yosef be so specific to tell his brothers not to quarrel? Does this have any implications upon us as we are of search for our heavenly Father?

7. When Ya'akov is told that Yosef is alive, he is stunned and did not believe; yet, when he hears all the words spoken by Yosef and sees the wagons, then Ya'akov's spirit is revived. Why would Ya'akov need to hear the words of Yosef and see the goods before he would believe that Yosef was still living?

8. Yeshua states that a perverse generation seeks a sign, yet the only sign given was the sign of Jonah. However, while with us, Yeshua demonstrated the power of YHVH through many testimonies of healing and other miracles. It seems that man always needs proof and looks for signs as proof. Why is Yeshua's voice not enough for our belief that we would seek after signs as proof of His existence and importance?

Furthermore, why does Yeshua so readily heal some and then rebuke others for seeking the same type of signs as healing?

*Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit*

Around twenty years have passed since Yosef's disappearance, and in all of that time, Ya'akov is seen as being downcast and despondent. Only when He believes that Yosef is alive, does his spirit revive within him.

Twenty years is a long time to walk in despair and depression. All hope was probably abandoned to ever see Yosef again and he did not have proof of his survival. We see that Ya'akov's life is hinged to Yosef and that he has transferred this affinity to Benyamin as well.

Our hopes must be placed in Yeshua as our Messiah. Otherwise we find ourselves in the mire of despair along with Ya'akov. From the perspective of our flesh we see life through the power of our physical perceptions and not through the eyes of faith which are in essence the lens of Yeshua, who beholds the Father and our lives as He sees us. Our ties to this world are real and are able to carry us down to the pit of torment through emotions that rule us and circumstances that are beyond our control or comprehension. Yet, in all of this, we know that YHVH is working it all together for our good. We must be strengthened in our faith in knowing that we will live and not die. We must realize that our plight is not for destruction or calamity, but for the ongoing story of redemption and victory over the rebellion against the Creator.

Day 4

PARASHA:
GEN. 46:1-28

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

Midrash Point:

In Israel's dream, Elohim calls Israel, "Yacov, Yacov."

Why would Torah and YHVH be telling the narrative with the new name given at Penuel, and then call him his original name?

1. As Ya'akov leaves the land, he stops in Beersheba and offers sacrifices to the Elohim of his father Isaac. The interesting point we see at this juncture is how Ya'akov has sacrificed to YHVH himself and wrestled and talked with YHVH himself. Why would Torah suddenly and seemingly revert to speaking of YHVH as the Elohim of Isaac?

2. What is the significance of offering sacrifices up to Elohim at Beersheba as the last stop coming out of the land of Canaan?

3. In Joel 2:28, YHVH tells us that it will come to pass that He will pour out His Ruach upon all flesh. As such, the old men will dream dreams. Back in B'reisheet 46:2, Elohim speaks to Ya'akov in a night vision. In a way, this could seem like the end of the possession of the land of promise as the entire household moves to Egypt. Contrast these two scenarios and discuss how the Ruach is moving in both accounts.

Moreover, how does verse 2-4 confirm that the Ruach has been poured out on man prior to Yeshua's dwelling with us in the flesh?

4. Verse 7 describes Ya'akov's descendants being *brought* to Egypt. How does this give us insight that B'reisheet might have been first recorded in Egypt and who the scribe would have been?

5. Yeshua said that if He is lifted up, that He would draw all men unto Himself. In our reading, we see the sons of Israel lifting up all generations that are walking in the household of faith and carry the seed of righteousness from Abraham. How are they a picture of Yeshua's future words being fulfilled and prophetic?

6. We must trust that Torah tells us the complete truth. In as much, we are told that all of Ya'akov's descendants were brought down to Egypt. We must trust that none were left behind or that any tried to make a go of it on their own. What type of judgment does this remind us of during an exile and why would it be important for all members of the household of Israel go down to Egypt?

7. In the remaining verses, we are given an account of who went down to Egypt and how many went there. When adding up the numbers given in Torah, the total equals 70 people (adding together 33,16,14 and 7). Yet, in verse 26, we are told that 66 people are accounted for, plus the sons of Yosef that were born in Egypt were two. Give an account for who made up the 70 people.

8. Ya'akov sends Judah before him to meet with Yosef, in order to point out the way to Goshen. Discuss how Judah is acting as proxy to Messiah pointing out the Way to where we should reside.

***Sandals
Worshipping in Truth***

As the sons of Israel transport their father, their little one and wives in the wagons, they unknowingly signify all the future generations in their processional journey which is encapsulated with faith, hope and devotion to the Salvation of their souls. We should carry these ideas and ideals in our spiritual wagons, realizing that our forefathers plowed hard ground for us to walk in Torah; and, that our wives need to be recognized for what they contribute in our lives and our children's lives as progenitors and teachers of Torah. Likewise, our children need to be encouraged and exhorted for walking in steadfastness as covenant members, so that they will not want to seek the ways of the world.

Day 5

- PARASHA:
GEN. 46:29-47:11
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. When people who are separated from each other come back together, they reunite in an immense way by showing affection and admiration toward one another. Yosef prepares his chariot and goes to Goshen to meet his father. Once there, they fall on each other's necks and weep. What other passage of scripture does this remind us of and how would that individual be greeted by YHVH?

2. Yosef makes certain that his brothers and father's household understand to inform Pharaoh that they are keepers of livestock, shepherds to be exact. Even though this is loathsome in the sight of the Egyptians, Yosef does not want their occupation hidden or lied about. Discuss reasons why shepherding was so loathsome to Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

3. While the keepers of livestock are loathsome in the eyes of the Egyptians, Pharaoh still has livestock and requires someone to manage them. In as much, he asks for one of Yosef's brothers to be the keeper of his livestock. Does this look hypocritical? In what ways do we try to be leaders and inform others of what we approve and disapprove, all the while, asking others *beneath* us to pick-up the slack and do the work we won't do?

4. When Yosef brings his brothers before Pharaoh, he chooses only five of them to present and answer questions. Why would Yosef choose only five to be his family's representatives and which five would he have chosen?

5. While one might see the presentation of the five brothers to Pharaoh as a test they must pass or to obtain permission to live in the land, it could be seen that Pharaoh is looking out for Yosef. His questions and summarizations are spoken in such a way to suggest that he agrees, Yosef's father and brothers have come to Yosef. Discuss how this situation could be for Yosef's protection and not only to obtain approval to settle Ya'akov's household in Goshen.

6. Pharaoh is obviously impressed with Ya'akov's old age when he asks, "How many years have you lived?" However, Ya'akov answers with a very pessimistic viewpoint by saying his years of sojourning were one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant and unfulfilled in the length of his fathers' sojourning. First, why do you believe Pharaoh would ask this question to Ya'akov and what do you think he was trying to ascertain?

Second, Ya'akov has had a full life, living past the amount of years that YHVH limits man to live when making covenant with Noach (120 years). Yet, his response indicates being unsatisfied with the quality of life and the hardships endured. Give an account as to why Ya'akov would be so negative about his years lived.

7. We see the name Rameses given as the settlement area for the household of Israel. This is a later name that the area is referred to from a later era to give clarity and locale. At that time the area was probably known as *Rowaty*. This area is in the eastern Nile Delta region. This area is known to be the cross roads of commerce and trade, as well as, a strategic part of the land to defend and occupy. Later, another Semitic race came into this region and overtook the Egyptian government. They were the Hyksos and could be the people that Shemot 1:8 speaks of when stating that "There arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Yosef." The Hykos were Asiatics from Syria-Palestine.¹ It is interesting to see that they probably were not true Egyptians that enslaved Israel, but another Semitic people. How does this viewpoint give any clarity as to what has taken place within Israel ever since their Egyptian occupation?

**Sandals
Worshipping in Truth**

Interestingly enough, Goshen was probably a flood plain that would have had a connection from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea once a year. This was coupled with the fact that the region was already a crossroad for trade, commerce and a military center.

While the children of Israel may not have realized it, they were given a very valuable piece of property to occupy, develop and acquire property in it.

We resemble the household of Ya'akov in many ways. YHVH has placed us within other nations to occupy and sojourn until the time is right for a great intervention. Meanwhile, we are seemingly stuck here; however, the actuality is that YHVH has us exactly where He wants us. The provision is where He tells us to live and His providence is made know there, as well. When we move out of His will or away from the "cloud," then we are away from YHVH's protection and provision. We must be willing to stay put until His outstretched arm rescues us and beckons us further toward the land of promise. Our finding joy and contentment where we reside is part of the journey.

¹www.christiananswers.net

Day 6

- PARASHA:
GEN. 47:112-27
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. We are now able to retrospect Yosef's life as representing the staff of Israel. By this, it is meant that Yosef regulated, mandated and oversaw law and provision for the household of Israel. As his father and brothers are settled in the land of Goshen, Yosef provides them with food according to their little ones. What portion of Torah does this foretell that will happen as the children of Israel would make conquests and inherit the Promised Land?

2. As a provider and upholder of civility, Yosef characterizes his son of blessing, Ephraim. As such, the day is prophesied that Ephraim will rise up and cause Judah to be jealous. Discuss how the jealousy will and is occurring in this manner, understanding Yosef's role as stated above.

3. We see Judah as a law giver and preserver, but others will become doers of Torah. Some of these will be readily seen as part of the twelve tribes and, specifically, Judah. Yet, others will be Law keepers without the benefit of being of the lineage of Judah and, even, in spite of Judah, not as angst, but out of obedience and revelation. Does the Law apply to those outside of the house of Israel?

4. As all the peoples around Egypt buy grain and spend all of their money doing so, they then have to resort to using their livestock to purchase more food. Then the inhabitants of Egypt sold their lands and their bodies as possessions and slaves to Pharaoh in exchange for food. Seeing this, we are struck at how valuable food is and that we, as humans, must have that food to survive and will do just about anything not to starve. Yet, the spiritual implications are readily seen in this passage. What does this show to us about Messiah, His bread and His worth?

5. All the land of Egypt became the possession of Pharaoh, for the inhabitants sold it to him for food. Furthermore, the priests of Egypt were left with their land, as it was an allotment to them by Pharaoh and, apparently, they were the respected people of the land so as to merit this favor of keeping their allotment in tact. Eventually, the twelve tribes of Israel inhabited the land of Israel which will be parceled for them. Through which tribe and in what ways, does this imagery mirror future Torah passages?

6. As the inhabitant's land and they become the property of Pharaoh, Yosef moves all the people from out of the county side to the cities. Obviously, the people would be much easier to control as slave labor and to feed when they are all accounted for and within controlled environments. However, these cities show us an aspect of refuge as well. Discuss these cities as counterparts to Torah's mandate for cities of refuge and laws concerning walled cities.

7. Yosef institutes a levy on the people to benefit Pharaoh. This levy is one fifth of the harvest from the seed that he provides them. The rest of the seed is to be used for replenishing their seeds for planting and for sustaining themselves with food. With minor adjustments, what does Yosef implement and prepare the children of Israel for when they depart from Egypt?

8. Through all of this bartering for food with land and themselves as slaves, the last passage of this portion states that Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen. *They* acquired property in it, were fruitful and became numerous. In your estimation, how was Israel affected by the famine while living in Goshen?

Are there correlations between the priests of Egypt and Israel, as a people? Expound on your answer citing Torah references.

Shabbat

PARASHA:

GEN. 44:18-47:27

RESTORATORY—
MIDRASH

PRAYER LEAVES

Many aspects of Torah reveal other aspects of Torah, all of which should point to Messiah, Who points us back to Torah. It is a never ending cycle of Life that YHVH has placed before us.

Most parashot have reminders, foreshadows and pointers to what will be read in the following weeks. Each reading, reminder and allusion reinforces our resolve to be obedient, shows us how to obey, and what not to do as examples found in the passages previously read.

We should not get anxious in thinking, “I have heard this before,” or “we will get to that later.” Each reminder in Torah is there for many reasons; yet, the main reason is to bring us ever closer to YHVH as His people of promise. Each part is more of the puzzle being shown to us. As that puzzle comes together, we gain more and more insight in how to walk in righteousness; and, we gain more revelation of Who YHVH is.

YHVH uses all things to reveal Himself. This includes the nations around us, not only to bless us or to curse us, but to reveal Himself to us. He reveals His Sovereignty through His people. He, also, brings more clarity about Who created humanity by placing His humankind within the nations of the earth. Each nation of this world has, does or will contain a portion of the population who belong to YHVH. That portion will, usually, have identifying boundaries, looks, actions or lifestyles that are just out of the ordinary from the rest of the nation’s culture. These people seek YHVH with all of their heart. These who listen to and walk in the Ruach Ha Kodesh and acknowledge Messiah as their Messiah, they are a remnant. These individuals are found in the population within the populations, or a microcosm, that lives to serve the one true Elohim of Israel.

Many segments of history have had large constituents of peoples that would make-up YHVH’s distinctive remnant. Many of these are the living survivors of past persecutions, pogroms and holocausts who have come back together to rebuild society or to live in community so as to keep the tenacity of their spirits alive in their children and their future generations. However, there are numbers of people who lose their identity and are meshed into the massive populations who become a majority and cease being a remnant. As interesting as this may sound to you, the reader, here within lays a fork in the road. For the Torah observant believer, our road lies slightly askew to majorities and the main populous. Usually, the majority is overrun with outside influences, intellectual thinking, compromise, and many other deteriorating factors or *mixtures* of everything conceivable to tear apart what was meant for His Glory.

Much of what is involved in creating and keeping a remnant is: first, there is an impetus for a remnant in contrast to everyone being a part of a homogeneous

whole; and second, the remnant endeavors to stay intact and separated in some way from the offensive outside influences or obscurities. The household of YHVH has had many remnants throughout the ages of Torah chronicles. Some such remnants have been found floating on an ark waiting for the waters to subside, others were asked to leave friend and family to sojourn in foreign lands in order to be progenitors of the seed that would inhabit that same land forever. Other remnants have been vanquished into exile while still others were sent out to make disciples of all nations. One main defining factor for each generation is that YHVH does preserve a remnant for Himself from each generation and population.

The time of Yosef is a great example of YHVH preserving a remnant of people for His own possession. We know that the reason for having Israel/ Ya’akov move his household to Egypt is due to a famine encompassing the land, even the whole earth. Yet, we have to quarry a little deeper for more of an explanation as to why they moved instead of the household of Israel separating themselves to another place where they had already resided.

Just like the portions of Torah that instruct us, remind us and allude to other parts of Torah and Yeshua, the sojourning, finding refuge and the persecution is all part of the greater plan of the Creator for His people in which to walk. The particular Torah passages about the years of plenty followed by the years of famine is very close in nature to our lives and the way we journey. Many of us have journeyed from various backgrounds that built roots of faith and righteousness. YHVH saw fit to bring us out of these and into Torah, but we cannot throw out the baby with the bath water. Just because we are brought out of untruths, does not mean that the vehicle is void of good. YHVH did use that vehicle of Charismatic thinking, Baptist mentalities or Liturgical structure to bring us in to His way of Life.

Furthermore, we go through cycles where we seemingly hear His voice so plainly, or we see Truth like never before. Then, we enter more desolate regions of our searches where we are a bit stumped in situations and His voice is a bit more infrequent. Whether these times are due to our own doings or by His Sovereignty, is to be ironed out later. For now we must know that YHVH is taking care of us, even through years of plenty, for the conservation of a nation in years of famine that will ensue.

The cycles that we traverse are very dynamic. They usually cause us to be part of varying remnants that are made by church splits, rallying cries and other causes that we take upon ourselves to be distinctly heard, known or understood. While it would stand to reason that our motives would usually be turned toward the world or others from which we are being separated, it may not be reasonable to assume that

our actions and motives are pure and have a basis of holiness. YHVH is the one Who separates motives from the flesh and spirit where we cannot possibly discern. We may have glimpses and even be able to give clarity by Torah standards, but the repercussions of separation are far reaching. The lives of those we are sojourning along side are touched by us and us by them. However, the impact of our respective influences is determined by the voice of YHVH's guiding our every step in this sojourn. Likewise, those who have separated from us are missing the opportunities to be ministered to by us and in a way that we are called by YHVH to minister.

Yosef was called to endure isolation and be a sole remnant while his father's household lived in freedom and moderate comfort. The call of Yosef's, however, was to be a forerunner for his family, so that they would be preserved, fed and have descendants that were beyond numeration. While YHVH's voice may not have been heard or understood at the beginning of captivity, it was certainly very clear by the time Yosef disclosed his true identity to his brothers.

When we are pushed or prodded out of the nest of our comfort zones, it is time to start listening more intently to the voice of the Ruach. He is preparing us and others for a time to come. If others are not going with us, then the situation becomes one of trailblazing. Just as Yosef blazed a trail into the courts of Pharaoh, his family followed by occupying the best of the land and obtaining property while the rest of the inhabitants were selling theirs and themselves to Pharaoh. As a forerunner, Yosef was indispensable for the future wellbeing of Israel in the early residing of Egypt.

Like most movements of YHVH, once the masses discover the "pot of gold" they over trod, take control or devour for themselves all the blessings. Those who were once a part of the called out remnant assimilate into the masses and sadly the move of YHVH simply becomes a fad as His glory departs.¹ YHVH will not ever be mundane and everyday or common, He is Holy. He looks for the next willing vessel to move out into the fray for the trailblazing to continue. The Kingdom of YHVH is never static, but is always advancing.

As we know, just as we left YHVH in the garden through Adam, we have also left Torah through our ancestors and even leave our first love of Yeshua through coercion, desertion and/or plain abandonment. Yet, the Father's voice resonates in our hearts and we are called back to Truth. Each step of the process is just another form of being identified as a part of Israel. This process begins with being called out and then *crossing over* to the other side where His presence is waiting. At some point, the glory of YHVH's presence moves and we are no longer within the cloud or by the pillar of fire. We must

journey onward until His glory settles once again. There we set-up camp and spend more time with Him. At each station of the way, we lose some, gain others, but are always part of the remnant that He preserves for Himself.

It is by following His cloud or pillar of fire that we find His encampment. Once there, it is the place where He is found and His voice is heard. This is why it is so important to be within the cloud of His camp. His voice is readily heard if we are willing to follow His rules of engagement. By journeying and dwelling in His camp, we allow ourselves to be humbled and exalted by Him. Those who surround us, either friend or foe, are of no consequence to our intimacy with our Master. Our fellow sojourners, whether they are foreigners within our midst or outsiders, will be exempt from the blessings of YHVH if they fail to follow or follow in unbelief.

As the holy remnant of YHVH we are not to mix ourselves with the surrounding nations, nor are we to imitate their detestable ways. We are to be lights to them and yield to those who seek passage. We must test every spirit to see if indeed the Spirit of the Living YHVH speaks through them and lives in them. Remember that the Ruach HaKodesh will never lead His children to break His Covenant or disobey His Word. This process opens our doors for the world to be disciples of Yeshua in Spirit and in Truth, so that they will become worshippers thereof.

Being a remnant of called out believers, those that are not only called, but chosen, means that situations can be lonely and isolation is bound to be encountered. We must take heart to realize that we have the Helper and that He will never leave us nor forsake us. Our Messiah is our Friend, and when all others leave, He sticks closer than a brother.

YHVH used Yosef to trail blaze a passage through land and time for the children of Israel. Initially, Yosef and his family went to Egypt to incubate a fledging nation and eventually the next generations were shaped and molded by the taskmaster's whips of their slavery to the future Pharaohs. Moses became a trailblazer, leaving Egypt and finding YHVH at Mt. Sinai. Later, he would lead the children of the Promise back to that same mountain for the *proclamation* of the ages. Each and every generation has those that are to be forerunners, bearing the torch and clearing the path for others to follow. Both, the leaders and the followers are needed for the kingdom to be advanced. If you have found yourself as a follower, be the best follower of Messiah that you can be. Listening, obeying and being the mouth, hands and feet of Messiah. As for the called leaders, you must prepare for this last day remnant to walk out of the world and into the wilderness to meet with YHVH. It is only after that meeting, that we, as one nation, will be ready to inherit and inhabit the Promised Land.²

¹1Samuel 4

²Romans 11:26-27, Jer. 11:16

