

TORAH portions – Book 1 Genesis

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Introduction.

We have been called out of darkness into Elohim's marvelous light: Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 16, "***Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.***" The following is some wisdom that I copied from a South African magazine entitled 'Jewish Life' ISSUE 12 OCTOBER 2008:

Lamed ל

Lamed is the twelfth letter of the Hebrew alphabet and has the numerical value of thirty. Lamed is related to the word lamad, and means to teach or to learn. Shaped like a shepherd's crook – which in itself represents authority – Lamed stands in the middle of the alphabet and is also the largest letter. While man has a duty to teach G-d's word, he can only do so once he has acquired knowledge. The fact that the alphabet's tallest letter represents the imparting and gaining of understanding draws our attention to the source of all learning, namely the Torah. In turn, the study of Torah should prompt us into the fulfillment of mitzvos. However, as our Sages teach, study is not an end in itself for "Anyone whose deeds exceed his knowledge, his knowledge will endure, but anyone whose knowledge exceeds his deeds, his knowledge will not endure."(Pirkei Avos 3: 12) JL

Index

Chapter		Page
1	Genesis 1 to 6: 8 (B' resheet).	4
2	Genesis 6: 9 to 11: 32 (Noach).	11
3	Genesis 12: 1 to 17: 27 (Lech L' Cha).	16
4	Genesis 18: 1 to 22: 24 (Vayera).	24
5	Genesis 23: 1 to 25: 18 (Cha'yey Sarah).	33
6	Genesis 25: 19 to 28: 9 (Toldot).	40
7	Genesis 28: 10 to 32: 3 (Vayetze).	48
8	Genesis 32: 4 to 36: 43 (Vayishlach).	57
9	Genesis 37: 1 to 40: 23 (Vayeshev).	66
10	Genesis 41: 1 to 44: 17 (Mikeitz).	78
11	Genesis 44: 18 to 47: 27 (Vayigash).	90
12	Genesis 47: 28 to 50: 26 (Vay'Chi).	97

Genesis 1 to 6: 8 (B' resheet).

Commencing in Genesis 1: 1 we read: ***“In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.”*** For us who have proven the existence of YHVH our Elohim and that the Scriptures is the word of Elohim from Genesis to Revelation, YHVH created the universes through His Word, and we cannot argue the point, as we read in Psalm 33: 6, ***‘By the word of YHVH the heavens were made.’***

From the very beginning our Father YHVH planned to bring forth beings that could become his helpers. These helpers or ‘children’ would be like Him in every respect. They would have His character reproduced in them by His Set-apart Spirit. Each one of these created beings would have freedom to choose between right and wrong. YHVH commenced His plan to reproduce Himself by creating powerful spiritual beings called angels. These angels were free moral agents, with the ability to choose to go the way of YHVH: the way of giving and sharing; or the wrong way - which is in essence a way of get. For millions of years these angels followed the correct way, until one day, a third of the angels followed the archangel Lucifer in rebellion against YHVH to take over His throne in the third heaven. They fought against the other two thirds of the created angels, still loyal to the Eternal. However, they were overcome and thrown down to earth, where they are now living as fallen angels or demons (Revelation 12: 3 and the 1st part of verse 4). Satan, who was perfect in all his ways, prior to his rebellion, unlike us, who are partly blinded and do not have all knowledge, sinned with full knowledge. These angels, who are spirit beings, could therefore not change once they had decided to follow a life of wrongdoing (Isaiah 14: 12 - 15).

The result of war between the angels and demons left the world formless and void or in confusion (‘Tohu’ and ‘bohu’ in Hebrew). As we read in 1 Corinthians 14: 33, YHVH is not the author of confusion and did not create the Universe in that state. This is the condition we see the earth in when we open

our Scriptures at Genesis 1: 2. At that point in time YHVH decides to recreate the heavens and the earth. From reading the first chapter of Genesis we notice that we are different from the plants and animals that YHVH our Elohim created. We read in Genesis 1: 21, ***'And Elohim created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and Elohim saw that it was good.'*** Continuing on in verses 25 and 26 of Genesis 1, we read: ***'And Elohim made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and Elohim saw that it was good. (26) Then Elohim said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our Likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*** Here we see that we are different from animals. We see that, different to them, we are made in the image of Elohim. We were created to have a relationship with YHVH our Elohim, distinctly different to the animal life that Elohim created. The image of Elohim is a manifestation of Elohim which served as the pattern or blue print according to which Adam was created.

The question is: why did YHVH create us? If we consider all the birds, fish and animals that Elohim created, we realize that very few of them are able to think, plan and/or make what they planned and designed. Yes, weaver birds build nests and beavers build dams, but all their nests and dams are built according to the same model. They are never able to improve or make their nests or dams according to another pattern. They like all animals and insects do things strictly according to instinct and not by design, like their human counterparts, do. Human beings are able to design and build homes, cars, airplanes, ships, submarines, computers and whatever they require to achieve their goals. Over time man learned to use metals, make bricks and build phenomenal structures. A fellow believer sent me an article of a building being built in Dubai reaching 1, 5 miles into the sky. Mankind developed

explosives allowing him to literally move mountains. However, because our forefathers did not obey YHVH in the Garden of Eden, mankind also learnt how to develop explosives powerful enough to destroy the entire population of the earth a number of times over. Why did YHVH create man with such incredible intellect to make whatever is required to make life easy, yet so destructive and totally helpless to solve key problems? When studying the Scriptures, we will soon realize that when YHVH created man in the beginning, man was not in his final finished form.

YHVH created mankind from physical matter, in His image, with mind power to think, plan and create. But, He created them with free moral agency to decide between good and evil. YHVH planned mankind to eventually become the ultimate masterpiece of all his creation – when finished millions of us, subsequently made spirit beings in the kingdom of Elohim. We read in Genesis 2: 7, ***‘Then YHVH Elohim formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.’*** When YHVH breathed into man the breath of life he became a living soul. We read in John 4: 24 that Elohim is composed of Spirit and not of physical matter. Nowhere in the Scriptures do we read about an immortal soul. As opposed to man, YHVH being composed of Spirit, is immortal and cannot die. We read in Genesis 3: 19, YHVH said to Adam, ***“By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, and to dust shall you return.”*** Even though eternal life was available to Adam and Eve, they did not embrace it yet. We read accordingly in Genesis 3: 22 that they did not take from the tree of life, which was also in the midst of the garden, to eat of it and live forever.

Man at that time had to make a choice. They had to choose to eat the fruit of the tree of life, or the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil. They had to show through their lives that they would develop the perfect character of YHVH

and follow His way of life. But, YHVH has allowed all of mankind to be led into sin by Satan, thus allowing us to see for ourselves where disobedience to His teachings leads us. We read in the first part of Romans 6: 23, ***'For the wages of sin is death.'*** As opposed to Satan's lie, that after disobeying YHVH our forefathers would not die, death was introduced. Induced by the lies and temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve sinned. Since then all humankind have sinned and fall short of the esteem of YHVH. Death spread to all humankind through the sins of our forefathers. We've seen that the wages of sin is death and as opposed to Satan's lie, that after disobeying YHVH, our forefathers would not die, death was introduced. This was indeed a bleak picture, which left humankind in a miserable condition.

Reading from Genesis 3: 21, we see ***"And YHVH Elohim made garments of skin¹ for Adam and his wife, and clothed them."*** YHVH did not slaughter a lamb and covered them in lamb skin after their sin – no He put skin (derma) on their bodies. Many Christians, Messianic Jews and even Nazarene Jews/Israelites believe that in the account in Genesis 3: 21 YHVH slaughtered a lamb as sacrifice for their sin and to dress Adam and Eve in lamb skin. However, the Scriptures do not say that. YHVH did not start the sacrificial system at this stage. Later when Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac, YHVH showed Abraham that He will eventually provide Himself the lamb as a sacrifice to redeem us back from the sins of the world. He will pay our indebtedness due, resulting from our sins, as our Kinsman Redeemer. Originally our forefathers were destined to live forever; they were created in the image of Elohim according to Genesis 1:27. We know from Colossians 1: 15 that Yahshua is the visible image of the invisible Elohim.

¹ As a side light, in Hebrew both the word light (אור) and skin (עור) are pronounced as 'ohr', however, the word light is spelt with an aleph and skin with an ayin.

Before they sinned Adam and Eve looked like the image of Elohim described in Ezekiel 1: 26 – 28, as follows: ***'Now above the expanse that was over their heads there was something resembling a throne, like lapis lazuli in appearance; and on that which resembled a throne, high up, was a figure with the appearance of a man. (27) Then I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins downward I saw something like fire; and there was radiance around Him. (28) As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of YHVH. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and heard a voice speaking.'*** This is similar to what Yahshua looked like, when He was transfigured before Peter, James and John in Matthew 17: 2, in this way: ***'And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light.'*** YHVH is covered in light as we read in Psalm 104: 1 & 2: ***'Bless YHVH, O my soul! O YHVH my Elohim, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with splendor and majesty, (2) Covered Thyself with light as a cloak, Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain.'*** Those of us who are called at this time will one day again be clothed in light, to become immortal spiritual beings, if we overcome and make it into the kingdom of Elohim. We read about this in 2 Corinthians 5: 1 – 4, like this: ***'For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from Elohim, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; (3) inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. (4) For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.'*** Yes, immediately after creation, mankind looked like the transfigured Yahshua, covered in light. However, when they sinned, their light covering was removed and they were

covered in skin. Since then all men are destined to die once; we are physical and therefore we age and eventually die.

Next we read about the events that occurred to man after they were driven out of the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve conceived and gave birth to Cain. After this she gave birth to Cain's brother and called him Abel. In Genesis 4: 3 – 5 we read for the first time about the concept of first fruits; we see here, that YHVH had no regard for Cain's offering, as follows: **'So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to YHVH of the fruit of the ground. (4) And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And YHVH had regard for Abel and for his offering; (5) but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.'** The reason why Cain's offering was not accepted by YHVH, was that it was not of the first fruit of the ground, as was the case with Abel's offering; of the firstlings of his flock. Even though Cain was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve, he lost his firstborn right to Abel, because of disobedience. The account of Cain and his brother Abel conclude, with Cain killing his brother. Cain went out from the presence of YHVH and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Then Adam and Eve had another son whom they called Seth. We read at the end of Genesis 4 in verse 26, when a son was born to Seth, he named him Enosh and **'Then men began to call upon the name of YHVH.'** The meanings of the Hebrew names of our original ancestors in Genesis 5 reveal (YHVH)'s plan to send His suffering Messiah, as a mortal, who would die for us:

In Hebrew: *Adam* means 'man'; *Seth* means 'appointed'; *Enosh* means 'mortal'; *Kenan* means 'sorrow'; *Mahalalel* means 'the blessed Elohim'; *Jared* means 'shall come down'; *Enoch* means 'teaching'; *Methuselah* means 'his death shall bring'; *Lamech* means 'the despairing'; and *Noah* means 'rest' or 'comfort.'

Reading this genealogy of names as a sentence, translating them from Hebrew to English, we get: *“Man is appointed mortal sorrow. The blessed Elohim shall come down, teaching that his death shall bring the despairing comfort.”*

This shows indirectly but clearly that the Elohim Incarnated Messiah would give His life for us, as Yahshua did.

Finally we read in Genesis 6, that the sons of Elohim, i.e. those people who walked with Elohim like Noah did, took for themselves daughters of men, who bore children to them. These daughters of men were obviously the offspring of Cain, who went from the presence of Elohim, and were no longer known as the ‘sons’ of Elohim. Now I know that there are some who insist that this is talking about children of the fallen angels or demons, but this cannot be true as Yahshua, who is YHVH in the flesh, said that angels cannot have marital relations in Matthew 22: 30, as follows: ***“For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.”*** Cain’s children were brutal wicked people and the result of this union with them, resulted in what we read in verse 5 & 6 of Genesis 6, as follows: ***‘Then YHVH saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (6) And YHVH was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.’*** We conclude this parasha with the words: ***‘But Noah found favor in the eyes of YHVH.’***

Genesis 6: 9 to 11: 32 (Noah).

In this week's parasha we find the world in much the same condition in which it is at present, as we read in Genesis 6: 11: ***'Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of Elohim, and the earth was filled with violence.'*** In fact this is exactly what Yahshua prophesied in Matthew 24: 37 – 39, saying: ***'For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. (38) For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, (39) and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.'***

What is the important lesson that we learn from this parasha? In the previous parasha we saw that our original parents, were tricked by Satan to eat from the tree which YHVH forbid them to eat, namely the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Death and sin was introduced as a result of their disobedience. However, at the beginning of this week's parasha, it talks of one righteous man, a glimmer of hope for mankind, as we read in verse 9 of Genesis 6: ***'These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with Elohim.'*** Next we see YHVH telling Noah that He is going to destroy all flesh, because of the violence in the world. However, YHVH tells Noah to build an ark, to protect him and his family, as well as a pair of every living thing of all flesh.

We notice here the 'kosher' food laws coming into operation long before Mount Sinai, when YHVH instructs Noah in Genesis 7: 2. Elohim told Noah that clean animals were to go into the ark by seven pairs, but that the unclean animals were limited to only a single pair. Clearly Noah knew the difference between clean and unclean animals by then. Before the flood, mankind only ate plants, but in Genesis 9: 3 YHVH said to Noah: ***"Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you*** (obviously only the clean animals already specified); ***!***

give all to you, as I gave the green plant” (in Genesis 1: 29). The laws of clean and unclean food are like the law of gravity and the moral laws — they were in effect since the very creation of man. We read in Genesis 7: 5, ***‘And Noah did according to all that YHVH commanded him.’*** Then the rain came and as we read in verse 12 of Genesis 7, ***‘And the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.’*** Noah followed the teachings of Elohim (or walked with Elohim) faithfully. We read about this in Hebrews 11: 7: ***‘By faith Noah, being warned by Elohim about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.’*** This is in fact how YHVH wants us to follow the teachings in His word. If we obey His word without contradicting the same by our actions, we will be saved, as Noah was saved from the flood.

Mankind rejected the way of Elohim and rejection of Elohim equals judgment. It was for this very reason that Noah ***condemned the world***. We read in John 3: 17 & 18, that this was also said about Yahshua’s first advent, as follows: ***“For Elohim did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. (18) He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of Elohim.”*** This tells us that sinful unbelieving people are condemned by not trusting and accepting the only begotten Son of Elohim. The second witness to this is the verse before the one in which we read about Noah’s faith in Hebrews 11: 7, i.e. verse 6, stating: ***‘And without faith it is impossible to please Him (Elohim), for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.’*** Like at the time of Noah, YHVH has provided us with an ark of salvation, where we can once again enter in and find protection from the coming storm, known as the great tribulation. We read therefore in John 3: 36, John the Immerser saying: ***“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he***

who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides in him.”

The flood that occurred in Noah's time was not the first time that YHVH blotted out with water what Satan had caused. In 2 Peter 3: 5 & 6 we read: ***‘For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of Elohim the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, (6) through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.’*** This happened when Lucifer tried to elevate himself on a position equal to YHVH and to take over the government of the Universe. YHVH had to bring judgment upon Lucifer and as a result the contaminated earth perished. The earth's axial position in reference to its journey around the sun shifted by more than 23 degrees and caused a pendulum effect to the waters of the earth, moving to and fro, until it eventually came to rest. Evidence of animal hordes and plant fragments destroyed by the swirling waters, inundated the continents with animal fossils and destroyed plant life bearing witness to this earth shaking catastrophe. The world in Noah's day did not perish and his ark drifted only a few hundred miles without sails. But the catastrophe caused by Lucifer's rebellion carried masses of ice and rock for thousands of miles. The earth underwent a catastrophe, known by geologist as the 'Ice Age'. All life forms perished and the earth became formless and void and Elohim blotted out with water everything that Satan had done. This is similar to our immersion into Yahshua's saving Name, when YHVH blots out from His memory our past sins.

However, as YHVH promised in the covenant that He made with Noah in Genesis 9: 12 – 15, saying: ***“This is the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; (13) I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. (14) And it shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, (15) and I***

will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.” The rainbow is one of many proofs that YHVH exists. However, there are some who try to deny this phenomenon, by offering a scientific explanation for it, thus contradicting YHVH our Elohim with their ‘superior intellect’. We see that the next time the earth and its inhabitants will be subjected to total destruction, will be at the end of the age, after the second resurrection, as is recorded in 2 Peter 3: 7, as follows: ***‘But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.’***

After the flood Noah and his sons started all over again. Next we find that Noah planted a vineyard and produced wine. He drinks too much and gets drunk. This unfortunately leads to what is known as the curse of Noah. Many believe that the curse of Noah has to do with the black nations being cursed by Noah to become slaves to the other nations of the world. However, I believe that the curse of Noah has to do with the abuse of alcohol or drugs, and has nothing to do with race. All of the nations/races of the world are open to the abuse of alcohol, which in turn leads to poverty, resulting in such alcohol and drug abusers becoming the servants and laborers to those who know their limits. We need to warn our children about habit forming drugs, ensuring that they do not come under the dreaded curse of Noah.

Finally we come to the man named Nimrod. The name Nimrod means ‘we will rebel’. We read in Genesis 10: 8 & 9, ***‘Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. (9) He was a mighty hunter before YHVH; therefore it is said’ “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before (or against) YHVH.”*** We read in verse 10 of Genesis 10 that the beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom was Babel (and Erech and Accad and Calneh) in the land of Shinar or present day Babylon. Nimrod also built the city of Nineveh in Assyria, amongst other. We also read in Genesis 11, that at that time

the world used the same language. We read further that the inhabitants of the earth journeyed east and settled in the land of Shinar (Babylon). Next we read that the people started making bricks and mortar and commenced building a city and a tower which they planned to reach into heaven. They were definitely inspired by Satan, who many years before said according to Isaiah 14: 14, ***'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'***

In verse 4 of Genesis 11 we read that the people also said: ***'let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.'*** The people decided to make for themselves a name – i.e. give glory to themselves rather than to the Name of YHVH our Elohim. The giant tower unified the people and YHVH knew that they would be able to accomplish any evil plan that came into their minds. But Elohim was much smarter; He simply divided the people into various groups changing their one language into many. Imagine the sort of confusion that resulted – no one could understand the person he was working next to. From then on Elohim grouped the people of the world by languages. Continuing on in verse 10 of Genesis 11, we read the records of the generations of Shem. From these records, we gather that the language of the generations of Shem did not change. In verse 26 of Genesis 11, we read that Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. We see that Terah took Abram his son, Lot his late brother's son, his grandson and Sarai, Abram's wife and moved from Ur of the Chaldeans to the land of Caanan, as far as Haran, where they finally settled. We end this week's parasha in verse 32 of Genesis 11, where we read about the death of Abram's father.

Genesis 12 verse 1 – 17 verse 27 (Lech L'Cha).

YHVH said to Abram in Genesis 12: 1 – 3 ***“Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; (2) And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing. (3) And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*** YHVH commanded Abram and on the condition that he obeyed, he was made an eternal promise. YHVH started the world from this point on with one man who obeyed Him.

Abram did not argue with YHVH at all. In fact we read from the Scriptures in Genesis 12: 4 ***‘So Abram went forth.’*** YHVH established Abram, whose name He later changed to Abraham, as the father of united Israel. YHVH later promised the land of Canaan to Abram and his descendants after him, for an everlasting possession. YHVH said to him in Genesis 16: 10 & 11: ***“This is My covenant, which you shall keep between Me and you and your descendants after you; every male among you shall be circumcised. (11) And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.”***

Of this new nation Israel that YHVH started, He said in Isaiah 43: 21 ***“The people, whom I formed for Myself, Will declare My praise.”*** This specific prophesy will soon be fulfilled, when all Israel will be saved. Few people today realize that there is a duality which runs throughout the plan that YHVH is working out here below (on the earth). There was the first Adam, physical and carnal, and there is Messiah, who is the second Adam, who is spiritual and divine. Similarly there was the original Covenant which was physical (or material) and temporal. And there is the renewed Covenant which is spiritual and therefore eternal. YHVH also made man mortal from the dust of the ground and of the human kind; but through Messiah we may be begotten immortal, spiritual and of the Elohim kind.

In like manner there were two phases to the promises that YHVH made with Abraham. One was material and national, and the other spiritual and individual. Most students of the Scriptures are aware of the spiritual promise of Messiah and salvation through Him. Most students understand that YHVH gave a spiritual promise to Abraham of the Messiah to be born as Abraham's descendant, and that salvation comes through Messiah to us. YHVH made a twofold promise to Abram in Genesis 12. He said: ***'I will make you a great nation*** (a promise of race in verse 2)' and ***'in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*** (a promise of grace in verse 3).' The last promise is repeated in Genesis 22: 18: ***"And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you obeyed My voice."*** It is at this point where Christianity has fallen into error, or spiritual blindness. They do not see the two-fold promise that YHVH made to Abraham. They know about the Messianic promise of spiritual salvation through Messiah, but they miss the point that YHVH gave Abraham promises of physical race as well as spiritual grace. Christianity falsely assumed that the promises are that believers go to heaven at death. However, the promise of 'a great nation' refers to race and not the one 'seed', who was Messiah according to Galatians 3: 16: ***'Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is Messiah.'*** Yes, we know that Messiah was the Son of Elohim, but also the son of Abraham.

Israel was to become many nations. Notice carefully and understand the promises. In Genesis 17: 1 - 5, we read: ***'Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old. YHVH appeared to Abram and said to Him, "I am Elohim Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. (2) And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."*** (3) ***And Abram fell on his face, and Elohim talked to him, saying,*** (4) ***"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you shall be the father of a multitude of***

nations. (5) No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.” Also notice that the promise was conditional upon Abraham’s obedience and blameless living. The ‘great nation’ now becomes a ‘multitude of nations’ and can definitely not refer to the one seed, Messiah.

In verse 6 of Genesis 17 we read: **“And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you.”** There will come forth out of Abraham nations and kings – physical generation - multiple seed. In verses 7 and 8 of Genesis 17 we see: **“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be an Elohim to you and to your descendants after you. (8) And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their Elohim.”** Notice that the land is promised to plural descendants of whom YHVH is ‘their’ and not ‘his’ Elohim. Yes, the future of the great nations of the world rest on the promises that YHVH made to Abraham. The hope of life after death for anyone, regardless of race, is dependant upon the spiritual part of the promises made to Abraham – the promise of mercy and favor through Messiah, the ‘one seed’ of Abraham.

The children of Abraham have indeed become a multitude of nations. But, they lost their identity because they started keeping pagan holidays such as Sunday, Christmas and Easter, like the pagan nations amongst whom they lived. They forgot the commandments of YHVH and are no longer His people. They have also forgotten the name of YHVH and even though some know that Yahshua died for their sins, they do not know His real name. In addition they do not know that they are Israelites who should keep the Torah commands of YHVH. They worship a three-headed deity whom they call God and do not keep the Feast Days of Elohim any longer: They do also

not for this reason, understand Elohim's plan of salvation for all mankind. This deception is Satan's way to keep these Israelites from knowing their ultimate human potential - to become sons of Elohim in His everlasting Kingdom on earth.

The promises to Abraham are not casual unimportant promises; they are foundational to the establishment of the greatest powers in the world. During the years 718 – 721 BCE the original Israelites were exiled by the Assyrians. They lost their identity and their descendants are to be found throughout the world, but mainly amongst the so-called 'gentile' peoples of Northwest Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The Jews in Israel and those in the Diaspora are mainly descended from the tribe of Judah. The early Israelites are proven to have migrated to the west and over many years formed the nations of France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, The USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The most prominent tribes were Joseph; Ephraim and Manasseh are mainly to be found in the present day English-speaking nations; the tribe of Reuben became the forefather of the French; Benjamin the forefather of Belgium; Zebulon the forefather of the Dutch; Asher gave rise to the Scots; Issachar the Swiss; Dan contributed to the Welsh and Irish and fathered the Danes and so on. Issachar was dominating in Switzerland and Zebulon in Holland, but groups of both tribes were found in each country. The Scots and the Jews are amongst the most intelligent people in the world and many scientific breakthroughs may be attributed to both these groups.

Some of the Israelite seed of Abraham were European colonist from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. The overall effects of colonialism were in the most beneficial, despite claims to the contrary. British, Dutch and French colonialism put an end to internecine (mutually destructive) warfare, ended human sacrifice and slavery, founded and improved irrigation systems, reformed agricultural practices and public hygiene, built bridges, roads, public works and many other beneficial things in the nations that they colonized. The colonial powers

made large investments and improved the lives of the population greatly. The investments benefited all parties – which is part of the blessing of Abraham, with which all the nations whom Israel came in contact with, were blessed.

Turning back to Genesis 15, we notice that our father in the faith, Abraham, was circumcised at a very old age. However, we see in his case that he believed YHVH before he was circumcised. This is recorded for us in Genesis 15: 6 as follows: ***'Then he believed in YHVH; and He (YHVH) reckoned it to him (Abram) as righteousness.'*** When he was circumcised as a sign of the covenant between him and YHVH, his name was changed to Abraham. Since then all Israelites and their children were circumcised at the age of eight days old. However, many of us Israelites, who lost our identity as Israel, became like gentiles and stopped circumcising our children, because we believed that the Torah was done away with. In some of our cases, our renewed belief in Yahshua our Messiah also came first.

In Acts 15 there is a discussion concerning circumcision. In verse 1, we read that certain men from Judea (Jews) taught the brethren, that, except they are circumcised after the manner of Moses, they cannot be saved. In verse 2, we read that Rav Shaul and Barnabas disputed with them, and it was decided that they and certain others would go to Jerusalem to get the opinion of the Apostles residing there. However, when they presented their case, some of the Pharisees who believed on Yahshua insisted that the Gentiles should be circumcised, and keep all the law's of Moses (verse 5). After a further discussion Yaakov (James) said in Acts 15: 19 – 21: ***"Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning (or returning) to Elohim from among the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him (Moses), since he is read in the synagogues every***

Sabbath.” This ruling of Yaakov is in agreement with the rulings of the Pharisaic Rabbis followed by Orthodox Jews of today. New believers should eventually follow all the requirements of the Torah, but is only required to follow the essential four listed in Acts 15: 20 at the beginning of their walk with Elohim. If we understand the ruling of Acts 15 from a Hebraic viewpoint, we will know that it does not contradict what Yahshua taught in Matthew 5: 19, saying: ***‘Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.’***

When new believers come into the faith, we should not demand that they be circumcised as soon as they come to believe on Yahshua, but that they be immersed in His Saving Name for the forgiveness of their sins, as we read in Acts 2: 38 as follows: ***‘And Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Yahshua Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Ruach HaKodesh.”*** Repentance is a process, in that, as we walk with YHVH according to the way in which Yahshua lived His life, we will learn to obey YHVH more fully and begin to apply His Torah teachings in our lives. Rav. Shaul, who was personally and privately taught by Yahshua according to Galatians 5: 11 – 12, made it clear that he did not teach circumcision as a requirement for salvation, or as initially necessary for new converts. They will eventually, as they attend the synagogues on the Sabbath, learn to obey the Torah teachings of Elohim, including the reason for being circumcised. Abraham obeyed the Torah teachings of Elohim well before it was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. We read accordingly in Genesis 26: 5, ***‘because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, and My commandments, My statutes and my Laws.’*** Is this not interesting? Most ministers in Christianity have taught for many years that the commandments, statutes and Laws of YHVH, came through Moses, who did not come on the scene 430 years later. But

here the Scriptures say that the Torah was known and practiced by Abraham 430 years before Moses.

The original covenant made with Abraham is the same covenant renewed at Mount Sinai with Moses and the Israelites. The only difference being, that because of sin, the Sacrificial Law practiced by the Levitical Priesthood was added. The only thing that was different is not Torah, but how the administration for the remission of sins was carried out. The sacrificial law, which was the tutor mentioned in Galatians 3: 16 -19 was added 430 years later to the covenant to attend to the problem of sin until Messiah, became the sacrifice – the lamb that died for the sins of the world. However, circumcision was never part of the sacrificial law. We read in Galatians 3: 29 (paraphrased) that a believer in Messiah is an heir of the promise that was made with Abraham. Whilst new believers are not circumcised, they are not joined to the covenant made to Abraham, and are therefore not a member of the family of Abraham, or the commonwealth of Israel.

Now, in case some insist that the promise to Abraham was to his descendants, which would include Ishmael, you need to understand that the continuation of the promise was through Isaac and then to Jacob. We read accordingly in Galatians 4: 22 – 28, as follows: ***'For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. (23) But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. (24) This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. (25) Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children (26) But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. (27) For it is written, "REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE***

ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.” (28) And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise.’ YHVH showed Abraham by circumcision, that even though we are not all his children through his bloodline, those of us who belong to Messiah, are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise. This agrees with what we read in Romans 9: 6 & 7, as follows: **‘But it is not as though the word of Elohim has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; (7) neither are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: “THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED.”’**

To conclude we need to show for the record, for mentioning again in a later parasha that Abraham called on the name of YHVH, as is recorded in Genesis 12: 8 and Genesis 13: 4. In addition we see that Hagar called the name of YHVH who spoke to her, **“Thou art an Elohim who sees (El roi) .”**

Genesis 18 verse 1 – 22 verse 24 (Vayera).

The transliterated name of this Torah portion is 'Vayera', meaning that *'He appeared'*. We read in Genesis 18: 1 - 5, ***'Now YHVH appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. (2) And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth, (3) and said, "My master, if now I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. (4) Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourself under the tree; (5) and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do as you said."*** Who or what are these three visitors to Abraham? By reading to verse 13 & 14 of Genesis 18, we see that one of the visitors was YHVH, as follows: ***'And YHVH said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am old?' (14) Is any thing too difficult for YHVH? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.'*** It is only in Genesis 19 verse 1, that we see that the other two visitors were angels, who accompanied YHVH when visiting Abraham. From previous studies, we know that this cannot be YHVH 'Himself' since according to 2 Timothy 6: 1, YHVH is ***'the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only Elohim be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.'***

So how was it possible for Abraham to see YHVH? We find the answer to this important question in John 1: 18, where we read: ***'No man has seen Elohim at any time; the only begotten Elohim², who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.'*** For as is confirmed in one of the often quoted portions of the Scriptures, i.e. Colossians 1: 13 – 15, stating: ***'For He (YHVH) delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His***

² Some versions of the Scriptures have 'Son' here.

beloved Son, (14) in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (15) And He is the image of the invisible Elohim, the first-born (protokos meaning brought forth) **of all creation.'** No man has ever seen YHVH, but many have seen Yahshua, YHVH in the flesh, who was the word by which YHVH made the heavens, as is confirmed in Psalm 33: 6. He is the same word who became flesh, and dwelt among us, as we read in John 1: 1 – 14. He was the form (or manifestation) of YHVH whom Moses saw in Numbers¹² verse 8. This is also how YHVH appeared to Abraham.

Next I would like to discuss a topic which is very much related to the subject at hand. In Genesis 18: 7 & 8 we read: **'Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to the servant; and he hurried to prepare it. (8) And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.'** The underlined section tells us that the three visitors ate. It does not say that Abraham ate with them, even though it might be implied. However, think for a moment; what is this saying? What about the sections in the Torah in Exodus 23: 19; 34: 26 and the last part of Deuteronomy 14: 21, where it states categorically: **'You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.'** Is this section of the Scriptures making a mockery of the Rabbinic prohibition of not allowing dairy and meat products to be consumed at the same time, as some in Messianic/Nazarene Israel believe? I do not think so, because we read in Malachi 3: 6, YHVH saying: **"For I, YHVH do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."** Even so, there are many Nazarene/Messianic Israelites who insist that the prohibition not to boil a kid in its mother's milk has to do with a forbidden pagan Canaanite fertility rite, which is not practiced any longer, today. In addition they hold that the section in Genesis 18 (quoted before), effectively nullifies this prohibition.

Let's digress for a moment, for the sake of clarity. In a previous sermon entitled: *'What is the purpose of life?'*, I mentioned that YHVH set in motion spiritual laws which cannot be broken, at creation. These laws dictate that there has to be a cause for every effect. For example, there cannot be peace and happiness, without something causing it. YHVH told Adam and Eve, that if they would eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they would certainly die. The reason for this was that He wanted them to choose what is good for them, and to avoid evil. The tree of life was simply a symbol of Elohim's teachings or Torah. The tree of life was a symbol of the gift of Elohim's Set-apart Spirit, His love which fulfills the law. YHVH explained His way of life to Adam and Eve, because He already set in motion the laws that cause all good, as well as the effects of breaking them. YHVH created man as a free moral agent: he could choose to do right, or he could choose to do evil. With hindsight, we are fully aware that Adam and Eve, induced by the lies and temptation of Satan, disobeyed YHVH and in the end sinned.

The seemingly unexplained law prohibiting the boiling of a kid in its mother's milk, is in fact a health law, which if contravened will result in damage to our health. At the time of YHVH giving this law, it was considered a *chuk*³, or a law which does not make sense. However, with the assistance of modern day medical science, we now know that eating meat and milk derivative products together, could result in increased cholesterol levels for human beings. Other than with humans, Spirit beings do not need food and do not have digestive systems like ours; they probably burn-up food offered them by human beings. In addition we read in Leviticus 3: 17 that we should not eat fat or blood, and in verse 16 we read that ***'all fat is Elohim's.'*** As a Spirit being Elohim may 'consume' or burn fat, whereas it is forbidden for human consumption. The command not to boil a kid in its mother's milk appears three times in the Scriptures for a good reason. Yahshua as the

³ A *Chuk* is an ordinance of Torah not fully logical or understood, yet fully and eternally binding.

word of Elohim, well before He took on a 'human form' and the two angels, as the three Spirit beings who visited Abraham, could therefore partake of the cholesterol rich diet, not suited for human beings. Disobedience to this health law will eventually result in cholesterol problems, but also like with Adam and Eve, it shows that we are disobedient to YHVH our Elohim. In addition, interpreting the Torah portion not to boil a kid in its mother's milk, with pre-conceived ideas about a Canaanite rite, which is nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, is contrary to the teaching in Deuteronomy 4: 2, stating: ***“You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHVH your Elohim which I command you.”*** Do we try to reason away certain Torah commands? Do we have a smorgasbord religion where we may pick and choose which Torah commands we want to obey or not? Think about it!

In Genesis 18: 20, we find YHVH telling Abraham that He is about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah because of the sins being committed by its inhabitants. At this time the angels left Abraham's house and went toward Sodom, while Abraham was still standing with YHVH. Abraham starts negotiating with YHVH to see if he could convince Him to reconsider His plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. He starts by asking YHVH not to destroy the wicked with the righteous and continues by saying in verse 24 of Genesis 18: ***“Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; wilt Thou indeed sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it?”*** YHVH tells Abraham that He will not slay the righteous and wicked alike. But, it turns out that there were not even fifty righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah. So Abraham continues to reduce the number in his negotiation by five and eventually by ten, until he gets to asking YHVH not to destroy the cities, if there were only ten righteous men living there. However, at this point YHVH left Abraham and he went home. So it is safe to assume that there were not even ten righteous men residing in Sodom and Gomorrah, at that time.

Continuing on in Genesis 19, we read that the two angels, who were visiting Abraham and Sarah with YHWH, came to the gate of Sodom, where Lot was sitting. He invites them to overnight in his house before they carry on their way, the next morning. At first they declined his offer, saying that they will spend the night in the square. Yet Lot urged them to enter his house, where he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread for them and they ate. Before they went to bed the men of Sodom surrounded Lot's house and called to him, to bring the two men in his house out so that they could have relations with them. Lot went out to the men outside and told them nicely not to do wickedly. He also offered his two daughters to the men instead, but they refused and pressed hard against Lot's door, until it almost came to breaking point. But the two angels pulled Lot back into his house shutting the door behind him. They also struck the men who were at the door, with blindness. Then the two angels asked Lot about his family, telling him to gather them together and leave the city, as they are about to destroy it. So Lot went to speak to his future sons-in-law, and asked them to join him and his family in leaving the city. However, his future sons-in-law thought he was joking.

The next morning the angels urged Lot and his family to leave, but he hesitated. So the angels pulled him and his family by their hands and took them outside the city. We read in Genesis 19: 17 – 22 about Lot's special request, as follows: ***'And it came about when they had brought them outside, that one said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, and do not stay anywhere in the valley; escape to the mountains lest you be swept away."*** (18) ***But Lot said to them, "Oh no, my Lords!*** (19) ***Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your loving-kindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains lest the disaster overtake me and I die;*** (20) ***now behold, this town is near enough to flee to, and it is small. Please, let me escape there (is it not small?) that my life may be saved."*** (21) ***And he said to him, "Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have***

spoken. (22) *Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.* Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar (meaning small). We read in verses 24 – 26 of Genesis 19 that after Lot arrived in Zoar the next morning: **'Then YHVH rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHVH out of heaven, (25) and He overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. (26) But his (Lot's) wife, from behind him, looked back; and she became a pillar of salt.'** From the last sentence we learn that we need to follow the teachings of YHVH to the 't' (i.e. exactly), if we want to be saved. However, the quoted section brings us to another much disputed or uncertain portion of scripture. There are those in the Messianic/Nazarene Israelite community, who insist that verse 24 (underlined above) proves without a doubt that there are two separate beings called YHVH. To the uninformed this seems to be the case. However, those who studies the Torah, knows that YHVH answers these unbelievers Himself in Deuteronomy 4: 39, saying: ***"Know therefore today, and take it to your heart, that YHVH, He is Elohim in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other."*** I do not believe that those who fully understand this, will be foolish enough to continue to contradict YHVH, by insisting that there are more than One YHVH.

Continuing in verse 27 of Genesis 19, we see that Abraham arose in the morning and looking down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, he saw the smoke of a furnace. Lot and his two daughters went up to Zoar and stayed in a cave. We further read that because Lot's daughters thought the entire world came to an end, they made their father drunk and slept with him each in turn. Both Lot's daughters conceived and bore sons. The eldest daughter named her son Moab; he became the father of the Moabites. The younger daughter called her son Ben-ammi; he is the father of the sons of Ammon.

In Genesis 20 we see that Abraham traveled towards the land of Negev and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then went further to Gerar. Here Abraham, a second time lies about

Sarah, saying to the king of Gerar that she is his sister. Because of Sarah's beauty, King Abimelech of Gerar immediately sent and took Sarah. However, Elohim came to Abimelech in a dream saying as we read in verse 3: ***"Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman who you have taken, for she is married."*** Father YHVH regards marriage as a sacred institution, and will deal swiftly with those who try to interfere in the marriages of His called out servants. We also see that YHVH kept Abimelech from touching Sarah that he sin not. At this point Abraham also tells Abimelech that even though Sarah is his wife, she is in fact also his half sister. Abimelech gave Sarah back to Abraham, together with sheep, oxen, male and female servants, and told Abraham, that he may settle wherever, he wants. Then Abraham prayed to Elohim and Elohim healed Abimelech and his wife and his maids, so that they bore children, because YHVH closed the wombs of Abimelech's household because of Abraham's wife, Sarah.

In verse 1 of Genesis 21 we read that YHVH took note of Sarah, and He did for her as He had promised. So Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son, at the appointed time of which Elohim had spoken. Abraham called the son who was born to him, Isaac. We also see that Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as Elohim commanded him. Abraham was one hundred years old when Isaac was born and Sarah said in verse 6 & 7 of Genesis 21, ***"Elohim has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me."*** (7) ***And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."*** Isaac grew and was weaned and Abraham made a feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. In verse 9 of Genesis 21, we read: ***'Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.*** For this reason Sarah told Abraham to send Hagar and her son away adding in the second part of verse 10: ***'for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.'*** We see in verse 11 that this matter distressed Abraham greatly, but in Genesis 21: 12, Elohim said to

Abraham, ***“Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.”*** Here YHVH confirmed again, what we learnt in the last parasha. Nevertheless, YHVH promises Abraham that He will also make a nation of Ishmael as he is also Abraham’s son. Abraham therefore gave Hagar bread and water and sent her away. Hagar left and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

When the water that Abraham gave Hagar ran out, she left her son under one of the bushes. She sat down opposite the boy and said ***“Do not let me see the boy die.”*** Next we see that Elohim heard the lad crying, and the angel of Elohim called to Hagar from heaven, saying in verses 17 & 18 of Genesis 21: ***‘What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear for Elohim has heard the voice of the lad where he is. (18) Arise, lift up the lad and hold him by the hand; for I will make a great nation of him.’*** At this point Elohim opened Hagar’s eyes and she saw a well of water; she filled the skin with water, for the lad to drink. We also read that Ishmael grew and lived in the wilderness of Paran, where he became an archer. Later Hagar took a wife for her son from the land of Egypt.

Finally we read that Abraham talks to Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his army, complaining that the servants of Abimelech had seized the well of water in Beersheba. Abimelech told Abraham that he did not know about the situation and Abraham took sheep and oxen, giving it to Abimelech and the two made a covenant. Abraham also took seven ewe lambs and gave it to Abimelech as a witness that he (Abraham) had dug the well. And Abraham called the name of the place Beersheba; because there the two of them took an oath. At this time Abimelech and the commander of his army returned to the land of the Philistines. So Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and called on the name of YHVH, the Everlasting Elohim. In conclusion we read in verse 34 of Genesis 21, ***‘And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days.’***

Genesis 23: 1 to 25: 18 (Cha'yey Sarah).

The name of this weeks Torah portion is Cha'yey Sarah שרה חַיֵּיהֶן meaning 'Sarah's life'. Ironically, this portion is about her death and burial, as well as what happened after she died. We read in verses 1 & 2 of Genesis 23, ***'Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. (2) And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (that is Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.'*** Then Abraham rose from before his dead and spoke to the sons of Heth, telling them that he is a stranger and sojourner among them, and asking them for a burial site, to bury his wife. The sons of Heth tell Abraham that he, being a prince amongst them, may bury his wife in the choicest of graves. But Abraham tells them that he is specifically interested in the cave of Machpelah (meaning 'the double cave') and the surrounding field, a property belonging to Ephron the son of Zohar.

Ephron announces that he is prepared to give Abraham the property free of charge, but also adds that it is valued at 400 shekels of silver. Upon hearing this, Abraham weighed out four hundred shekels of silver in negotiable currency and paid it to Ephron. Then Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre in the land of Canaan. This was the first piece of real estate land of Israel that was legally purchased by our father in the faith. Incidentally this piece of land together with a portion which Jacob bought as described in Genesis 33: 19 and a piece of land which David bought many years later from Ornan described in 2 Samuel 24: 24, are some of the areas most disputed in the land of Israel today.

Continuing on in Genesis 24: 1, we read: ***'Now Abraham was old, advanced in age: and YHVH had blessed Abraham in every way.'*** Then Abraham called his servant, saying in verses 2 – 4 of Genesis 24: ***"Please place your hand under my thigh, (3) and I will make you swear by YHVH, the Elohim of heaven and the Elohim of earth, that you shall***

not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, (4) but you shall go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac." Abraham tells his servant that Elohim will send His angel before him allowing him to take a wife for his son from his (Abraham's) country. In verse 8 of Genesis 24 we read: **"But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only do not take my son back there."** The servant therefore placed his hand under Abraham's thigh, and swore to him concerning the matter. The servant took ten camels of his master, and departed with a variety of good things of his master's. He traveled to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor.

Now it was up to the servant to find the right woman to marry Abraham's son Isaac. He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well, at the time the women come out to draw water in the evening. Then he prayed as is recorded in verses 12 – 14 of Genesis 24, saying: **"O YHVH, the Elohim of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show loving-kindness to my master Abraham. (13) Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; (14) now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also'; - may she be the one whom Thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and by this I shall know that Thou hast shown loving-kindness to my master."** Wow, is this not the way YHVH wants us to trust Him to help us resolve difficult problems?

We see that things happen quickly. We see in verse 15 of Genesis 24 (paraphrased) that before he had finished speaking, Rebekah came towards the well with her water pitcher on her shoulder. She was absolutely beautiful, a virgin, and she went down to the water and filled her jar. When she came up with the water, the servant ran to meet her saying (in verse 17): **"Please let me drink a little water form your Jar."** Continuing in verse 18 - 22 of Genesis 24, we read: **'And she**

said, " Drink, my lord": and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink. (19) Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking." (20) So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. (21) Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether YHVH had made his journey successful or not. (22) Then it came about, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold.' YHVH answered the servant's prayer exactly, but he still had to find out if the woman met the criteria insisted upon by Abraham, i.e. that she is related to him. He therefore asked the woman (in verse 23): **"Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room for us to lodge in your father's house?"** In verse 24 she answers: **"I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor."** Bingo, the servant found the right woman, as she was Abraham's brother Nahor's granddaughter.

Rebekah runs home and the servant and the camels follow. Then the servant is greeted by Rebekah's brother Laban, who feeds the camels and gave him and his camel driver's water to wash their feet. We also see that food was set before the servant to eat, but he said (as we read in verse 33 of Genesis 24): **"I will not eat until I have told my business."** The servant told them that he is Abraham's servant and that Elohim has blessed his master greatly, giving him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and servants and maids, and camels, and donkeys. In addition he said that Abraham's wife bore him a son when she was old and Abraham has given all that he has to Isaac his son. The servant tells the entire story, how Abraham instructed him, how he arrived at the well, his prayer and how he finally met Rebekah and her family. At this time Laban and Bethuel responded in verse 50 & 51, saying: **"The matter comes from YHVH; so we cannot speak to you bad or good. (51) Behold Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son as YHVH**

has spoken.” However, the next morning Rebekah’s mother and Bethuel have for some reason changed their minds. They insist that Rebekah remain with them for ten days after which she may go. But the servant insists that they should depart immediately. At this time Rebecca’s mother and brother called her and they said to her (in verse 58): ***“Will you go with this man?” and she said, “I will go.”***

At this point Rebekah’s family are prepared to let her go. We read in verse 60 of Genesis 24, ***‘And they blessed Rebekah and said to her, “May you, our sister, Become thousands of ten thousands, And may your descendants possess The gate of those who hate them.”*** Rebekah’s family uttered this blessing without being aware of the similar blessing which was pronounced by the angel of YHVH over Abraham, after he showed YHVH his willingness to sacrifice his only son Isaac. We read this in Genesis 22: 15 – 18, as follows: ***‘Then the angel of YHVH called to Abraham a second time from heaven, (16) and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares YHVH, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, (17) indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. (18) And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”*** Because much of the business and administration used to take place at the gate of a city, whoever possesses the ‘gate’ also had control over the entire city. To possess the gate of your enemies therefore indicates that you control and rule over your enemies. In the current Torah portion we also saw in Genesis 23: 10, 17 & 18 that the term ‘gate’ was also referred to in Abraham’s business transaction with Ephron, as follows: ***‘and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth; even of all who went in at the gate of his city.’*** And: ***‘So Ephron’s field which was in Machpelah, which faced Mamre, the field and cave which was in it, and all the trees which were in the field, that were within all the confines of its border, were deeded over (18) to Abraham***

for a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.’ Rebekah’s blessing by her family therefore includes rulership and power, but also mentions ***‘thousands of ten thousands’***, which is similar to the blessing Abraham received from YHVH. In a way this is confirmation from the Ruach HaKodesh that Rebekah was indeed the right woman for Isaac.

Then Rebekah and her maids mounted the camels and followed the servant. We read in verse 62 that Isaac came from Beer-lahai-roi; for he was living in the Negev. In the evening Isaac saw the camels approaching. When Rebekah saw Isaac, she fell from her camel. Then she asked the servant (in verse 65): ***“Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?” And the servant said, “He is my master.” Then she took her veil and covered herself.***’ Why does Rebekah do this? I believe that by covering herself in a veil, she was showing Isaac that she was prepared to come under his authority and become his wife. In addition we read in the Encyclopedia Judaica Vol. 8 (Jerusalem: Keter House Ltd., 1971), that *“the general custom was to appear in public, and in the presence of strange men, with covered hair.”* We know from both the Bible and the Talmud that this is true. In Numbers 5: 18, we are told that a woman suspected of being unfaithful to her husband was to have her head uncovered by the priest. This tells us that a woman’s normal clothing in Biblical times included a head covering. We see from this passage that a woman’s uncovered head marks her as one suspected of being unfaithful to her husband. At this point the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. Then Isaac took Rebekah into his mother’s tent and she became his wife, and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

Why does this Torah portion give us these details? The Torah here gives us a picture which is also found in the Brit Chadashah, referring to the ultimate ‘Son of promise’ and His bride; the bride who is removed from her native land to go and dwell with her husband in the land promised to him. The father oversaw the choosing of the bride for his son. The bride is a

beautiful virgin with the best of character. Like Abraham, YHVH also chooses a wife (known as a remnant according to Elohim's gracious choice) for His Son. We need to make sure that those of us called at this time, live up to our calling by cleaning ourselves up by the washing of the word (Torah). We see further that Isaac could only be satisfied with one wife, the bride chosen by his father – Abraham's servant acted as an agent Abraham, and it is therefore regarded as if Abraham chose Isaac's bride himself. Similarly our Messiah and future bridegroom will only be satisfied with one 'wife', the bride chosen by the Father.

This Torah portion has another event to recount, before we conclude. We read in verse 1 of Genesis 25 that Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. In verse 2 we read that she bore to Abraham, Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. In verses 3 & 4 of Genesis 25, we read about these children's children and in verse 5, we read: ***'Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.'*** This is exactly what Abraham's servant told Rebekah's family earlier. We read further in verse 6: ***'but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east.'*** Next we read that Abraham lived one hundred and seventy-five years and died satisfied with life. Isaac and Ishmael buried Abraham in the cave of Machpelah with his wife Sarah. We read in verse 11 of Genesis 25, ***'And it came about after the death of Abraham, that Elohim blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi.'***

In verses 12 – 18 of Genesis 25 we read about Ishmael and his children, as follows: ***Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham; (13) and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael, and Kedar and Abdeel and Mibsam (14) and Mishma and Dumah and Massa, (15) Hadad and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. (16) These are the sons of Ishmael and***

these are their names, by their villages, and by their camps; twelve princes according to their tribes. (17) And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. (18) And they settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.'

We see that the offspring of Lot's daughter, namely Ammon and Moab, as well as Ishmaels children are the ones conspiring against the nation of Israel today, as they did in the days of David, as we read in Psalm 83: 4 – 8, as follows: ***'They have said, "Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, That the name of Israel be remembered no more."*** (5) ***For they have conspired together with one mind; Against Thee do they make a covenant:*** (6) ***The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites;*** (7) ***Gebal and Ammon and Amelek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;*** (8) ***Assyria also has joined with them; They have become a help to the children of Lot.'***

Genesis 25: 19 to 28: 9 (Toldot).

This week's Torah portion is referred to as 'Toldot' meaning generations. Commencing in verse 19 & 20 of Genesis 25, we read: ***'Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; (20) and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife.'*** Next we read that Isaac prayed on behalf of his wife, because she was barren, and YHVH answered him and his wife conceived. We are told in verse 22 of Genesis 25 that the children struggled together within Rebekah, hence she said: ***"If it is so, why then am I this way." So she went to inquire of YHVH.'*** In verse 23 YHVH said to her, ***"Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples shall be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger."***

We see that when she delivered the twins, she called them Esau and Jacob. We read accordingly in Genesis 25: 25 & 26, ***'Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. (26) And afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she (Rebekah) gave birth to them.'*** We know that Jacob, who later became known as Israel, became the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. Rabbinical sources identify Esau as being the Romans (Italians) and Germans. Esau was red and hairy and there could also be a strong Edomite component amongst the Russian people. The Russian communists were known as reds and red is also the color of their national flag. Many Russian surnames have the familiar 'usov' as a suffix, which sounds much like the way Hebrew speakers pronounce the name Esau.

When Esau and Jacob grew up; Esau became a hunter and a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents.

Isaac loved Esau because he enjoyed the game that his son brought home, but Rebekah loved Jacob. We further read that one day when Esau came in from the field, he was famished; and he asked Jacob to give him some of the red pottage that he prepared. However, before giving him some Jacob said to Esau in verse 31 of Genesis 25: ***'First sell me your birthright.'*** In the next few verses we read how Esau eventually came to despise his birthright, as follows (verse 32 – 34): ***'And Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me? (33) And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. (34) Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.'***

At the beginning of the next chapter, we read that there was a famine in the land, so Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines. It is at this point that YHVH appeared to Isaac, saying in verses 2 - 5 of Genesis 26: ***"Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. (3) Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. (4) And I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; (5) because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."*** YHVH tells Isaac that his descendants (not Ishmael's) are blessed, because Abraham obeyed Him. So faith and Torah go hand in hand and are not opposite to the other. We see here that many peoples will be blessed, with goods and services, because Abraham obeyed YHVH. In addition we learn that when one does good, his children and their descendants are also blessed. We also see that despite the fact that YHVH gave Moses His Torah teachings after the Israelites left Egypt many years later, Abraham already obeyed all these Torah teachings in his lifetime. It is therefore safe to

assume that YHVH taught Abraham all His commandments, statutes and laws during His many appearances to Abraham.

In addition to teaching Abraham Torah, Elohim also told Abraham about His plan of salvation for all mankind. Abraham believed in the Salvation of YHVH, namely Yahshua, as we read in John 8: 56, where He told the Jews of His day: ***“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”*** Abraham also believed in the coming kingdom of Elohim and the resurrection of the dead, as we read in Hebrews 11: 9 & 10 and 17 to 19, as follows: ***‘By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim.’ (17) ‘By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; (18) it was he to whom it was said, “IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED.” (19) He considered that Elohim is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type.’*** This tells us that Abraham received Isaac back as a type of Messiah – indicating that Elohim told him about Yahshua’s death and resurrection, and he believed. We are told in Malachi 4: 6 that we as the modern day type of Elijah, those who teach that YHVH is our Elohim, should also restore the hearts (faith) of the fathers to our children, lest YHVH smite the land with a curse – utter destruction. It is our duty to teach our children about the faith of our fathers in the faith. In addition we should follow Abraham’s example by obeying the Torah teachings of Elohim and have faith in the salvation of YHVH, i.e. Yahshua!

The main reason why many Messianic/Nazarene Israelites are not prepared to follow Torah fully, or rather why they follow ‘Torah’ on their own terms is anti-Semitism. This is also the main reason for the many differences in our faith. We know that YHVH has blinded the Jews to Yahshua, until the fullness of the ‘Gentiles’ (those Israelites who lost their identity and

believe that they are gentiles) have come in, and then all Israel (both houses) will be saved. At this time YHVH is calling us from the lost ten tribes (as well as from the gentiles) to become potential kings and priests during the coming millennium rule of Yahshua: We are called to learn Torah as well as to practice it, so that as priests, we will be able to teach those alive during the millennium how to keep the same. We need to realize that we will have a special role to play together with those of our Jewish brothers who will also be saved, to become kings and priests with us during the millennium. The ten tribes lost their identity, because they compromised the Torah of Elohim. Yes, the Jews were also taken into captivity for disobedience, but, they returned to the land of Israel after 70 years, and they remained as the keepers of the oracles of Elohim. They are (YHVH)'s lawgivers (or keepers), as we read in amongst others Psalm 60: 7. Ephraim needs to accept that Judah has been assigned the role of caretaker of Torah, and start making Judah jealous, by keeping the same Torah including weekly and annual Sabbaths with a Spiritual intent. This is the only way that we will eventually be accepted by Judah, as equals: not by us telling them about Yahshua. YHVH has blinded their minds to accept Yahshua, and will Himself be responsible for them to eventually recognizing Him as their Savior. We learn from Abraham's example that we as believers cannot compromise in our walk with YHVH. We are walking a very narrow, lonely road and we need to keep our eyes on the coming kingdom of Elohim and on Yahshua the author and finisher of our faith.

Proceeding with our parasha in Genesis 26 verse 6, we see that Isaac remained in Gerar. We see in the next verse that like his father Abraham, Isaac lies about his wife in verse 7 of Genesis 26: ***'When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "my wife," thinking, "the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful.'*** However, when Abimelech the king of the Philistines saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah, he called Isaac asking him why he told a lie, saying that Rebekah is his sister. Isaac told Abimelech that he

told the lie, because Rebekah was very beautiful and he was afraid that they would kill him for his wife. At this point Abimelech warned his people not to touch Rebekah; else they will be put to death. Then Isaac sowed the land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And YHVH blessed him and he became a very wealthy man. We read in verse 13 & 14 of Genesis 26, ***'and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; (14) for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him.'*** Isaac was like the Jews throughout the ages. Every time that they prospered, they aroused jealousy in their neighbors, who then forced them to move from their land. Even today, Jews are being persecuted for being blessed by YHVH for keeping His Torah. People tend to be anti-Semitic without knowing why – they do not realize that they envy the Jews, for being blessed, because of Torah obedience. From this we should learn, that obedience to YHVH and His Torah is for our own good.

We read in Genesis 26: 15 – 22: ***'Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with earth. (16) Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us." (17) And Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there. (18) Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them. (19) But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, (20) the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they contended with him. (21) Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah. (22) And he moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last YHVH has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.'***

It is at this point that YHVH appeared to Isaac by night, saying in verse 24, ***'I am the Elohim of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham.'***

So Isaac built an altar and called on the name of YHVH. He also pitched his tent there and his servants dug another well. It is after this that Abimelech and his commander Phicol came to see Isaac, saying that they see that Elohim is with Isaac and that He blesses Isaac, so they made a covenant and went in peace. At this time Isaac's servants found water, so they called the well that they dug Shibah, and the name of the city by this well is Beersheba, to this day. Yes, here is another prove that the word of YHVH is true – the city of Beersheba is still in existence in Israel, today. At the end of Chapter 26, we see that Esau married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

Continuing in Genesis 27, we see that many years passed and Isaac grew old, and his eyes became too dim to see. Isaac had to use his sense of touch to tell which son was which. Isaac told Esau to go and kill a deer, as he was close to death and wanted to taste venison for the last time. Rebekah overheard Isaac's conversation with Esau, and because she wanted her beloved son Jacob to receive the blessing from Isaac, she came up with a plan of her own. She told Jacob to go and slaughter two kids and bring it to her. She prepared them in the way that she knew Isaac liked. Then she told Jacob to take the meat to his father Isaac, saying that he is Esau and in this way get the blessing from Isaac. Jacob did not like the idea, because he knew his dad will be able to identify him by feeling the hairs on his arms. He knew that Isaac will immediately know that he is Jacob and not Esau, since he was not as hairy as his brother. Esau was a hairy man and he also wore different clothing to Jacob. But Rebekah, told him not to worry, as she will take care of matters. When the meat was prepared, Rebekah put some of the skin of the kids that they slaughtered, for Isaac, on Jacobs

arms and neck. Jacob took the meat to Isaac, and when he touched his son, he assumed the he was Esau, and he proceeded to bless him, in Genesis 27: 27 – 29, as follows: **“See the smell of my son Is like the smell of a field which YHVH has blessed; (28) Now may Elohim give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine; (29) May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you.**’ What a fantastic blessing: It is possible for us with hindsight to identify the 12 tribes of Israel today, by seeing how they (including us) have been blessed throughout history. Whereas, the Jews in Israel and those in the Diaspora are mainly descended from the tribe of Judah, the early Israelites are proven to have migrated to the west. Over many years they formed the nations known today as France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa⁴.

Back in Genesis 27, we see that shortly after giving Jacob the blessing, Esau returned with his specially prepared venison for Isaac. But it was too late as Isaac already gave the blessing to Jacob. Esau was very angry: Not only had Jacob taken his birthright, but he had now taken Esau’s blessing as well. When he approached his father, Isaac said that he cannot bless him as he has already given the blessing. In verses 38 of Genesis 27 Esau asked his father, **“Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.” So Esau**

⁴ Information for this sentence obtained from Yair Davidi’s book entitled: “The Tribes.” Copies of this and other books on the same subject may be ordered from Yair Davidi at:

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lifted up his voice and wept. Then Isaac answered him saying in verses 39 & 40 ***“Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above. (40) And by your sword you shall live, And your brother you shall serve; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck.”*** So, Esau bore a grudge against Jacob and threatened to kill him, as soon as their father dies. Rebekah tells Isaac that she does not want her son to marry the daughters of the land in which they live. So Isaac called Jacob, telling him to go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel his mother’s father, and take a wife from the daughters of Laban. Jacob obeyed his parents and left on his way to Paddan-aram to find a wife for himself. Esau overheard Isaac telling Jacob not to marry the daughters of Canaan, so Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebaioth.

Genesis 28 verse 10 to 32 verse 3 (Vayetze).

The transliterated Hebrew name of this Torah portion is 'Vayetze', meaning 'and he went out'. Starting in Genesis 28: 10 & 11, we read: ***'Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. (11) And he came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place.'*** According to the prophet Hosea (12: 12), Jacob's journey to Haran was a flight to save his life from his brother Esau.

Continuing in verses 12 – 22 of Genesis 28, we read: ***'And he (Jacob) had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of Elohim were ascending and descending on it.*** (13) ***And behold, YHVH stood above it and said, "I am YHVH the Elohim of your father Abraham and the Elohim of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and your descendants. (14) Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west (Europe, The U K, Canada, and The USA) and to the east (Australia and New Zealand), to the north (Scandinavia) and to the south (South Africa); and in you and your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed*** (transliterated in Hebrew the underlined word here is 'Nivrachu', meaning *blessed*, but also *mixed*). (15) ***And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."*** (16) ***Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely YHVH is in this place, and I did not know it."*** (17) ***And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of Elohim and this is the gate of heaven."*** (18) ***So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on its top. (19) And he called the name of that place Bethel (the house of Elohim); however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. (20) Then***

Jacob made a vow, saying, “If Elohim will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, (21) and I return to my father’s house in safety, then YHVH will be my Elohim. (22) And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be Elohim’s house; and of all that thou dost give me I will surely give a tenth to thee.”

Here we read that the promises made to Abraham and Isaac has now been passed on to Jacob. He took the stone that he rest his head on and set it up as a pillar and anointed it with oil. By so doing he marked the place where YHVH met him, in order to remember where it happened. However, by anointing the stone, he does something usually only done over priests and kings. We know from Scriptures that YHVH is very serious about such landmarks or boundaries set by our fathers in the faith, as we read in Proverbs 22: 28 (and 23: 10 as well as in Deuteronomy 19: 14 and 27: 17), as follows: ***‘Do not move the ancient boundary Which your fathers have set.’*** We see that Yahshua our Messiah identified also himself with the Bethel (the house of YHVH) stone when He said to Nathanael in John 1: 51: ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see heavens opened, and the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”*** In a way this was confirmed for us in Colossians 2: 9, where we read: ***‘For in Him all the fullness of Deity (meaning Elohim) dwells in bodily form.’***

Jacobs children (or the children of Israel) knew about the Bethel stone, as we read about it again in Genesis 49, where Jacob blessed his children and in verse 24, where we read: ***‘But his (talking about Joseph) bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hand of the Mighty One (Elohim) of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel).*** The footnote against the phrase *‘the Stone of Israel’* in verse 24 in the King James Version, refers us to Isaiah 28: 16, where we read the following: ***‘Therefore thus says YHVH Elohim, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for a foundation, firmly placed. He who***

believes in it will not be disturbed.” Wow, are you beginning to see where this is taking us. But before I go off in a tangent, let's get back to the stone and the Nation of Israel, who came forth from Jacob's loins. We know that after Solomon's reign the nation of Israel split into two separate nations, namely Judah and Israel. During the years 721 – 718 BCE the nation of Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians: The Assyrians attacked Israel and destroyed their cities; They took the people of Israel captive and moved them to far distant lands. The Israelites over time lost their identity, their language and their culture. They became known as the lost tribes of the house of Israel. Later the nation of Judah was also taken captive, by the Babylonians and remained captive in Babylon for 70 years. But, different to the nation of Israel, the Babylonians did not try to take away the identity of the Jews. They retained their language, culture and Laws. After 70 years, the king of Persia, named Cyrus allowed them to return to their homeland, to rebuild the Temple.

The house of Israel did not only lose its identity, but also its name. However, YHVH intended the lost tribes of the house of Israel to be located during the last days. It is for this reason that we are able to find some signs or roadmarks (milestones) along the way which ancient Israel journeyed from Assyria the land of their original captivity. We read in Jeremiah 31: 21 YHVH telling Ephraim to: **“Set up for yourself roadmarks, Place for yourself guideposts; Direct your mind to the highway, The way by which you went.”** Throughout the Scriptures we find roadmarks or guideposts, which Israel set up along the way they traveled. In Genesis 49: 17, Jacob blessing Dan (The Irish & Wales among other), saying: **“Dan shall be a serpent in the way.”** Dan is one of the tribes who named every place, where they set foot. We read in Joshua 19: 47, **‘And the territory of the sons of Dan proceeded beyond them: for the sons of Dan went up and fought with Leshem and captured it. Then they struck it with the edge of the sword and possessed it and settled in it; and they called it Leshem Dan after the name of Dan their father.’** We read further in Judges 18: 11 – 12, **‘Then from the family**

of the Danites, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, six hundred men armed with weapons of war set out. (12) And they went up and camped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. Therefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan to this day.' Later the same group of Danites came to Laish and called the name of the city Dan (as per verse 29 of Judges 18).

Most of us are aware that vowels are not written in the Hebrew language. The English name Dan is simply spelt Dn (דן) in Hebrew. Dn might be pronounced as Dan, but also as Den, Din, Don or Dun – all meaning the same original Hebrew name. In Deuteronomy 33, just prior to his death, Moses blessed the sons of Israel. In verse 22 of Deuteronomy 33 we read: **'And of Dan he said, "Dan is a lion's whelp, That leaps forth from Bashan."** It is believed that when Assyria captured Israel, the Danites struck out in ships and sailed through the Mediterranean sea and then to Ireland. Irish history shows that new inhabitants of Ireland at that time were known as the 'Tuatha de Danaans' or the tribe of Dan. However the northern colony of the Danites was taken captive with the rest of the Israelites. They eventually migrated with the rest of the Israelites north west into Europe and left such landmarks as Denmark (Dan's mark), and in the British Isles they left names like Dundee, Donegal City, Dingle, Dunsmor and Dunraven, amongst others.

Now the reason why I mention the annals and history of Ireland in this Torah portion, is that, we also read about Jeremiah the prophet's visit to Ireland in the legends, annals and history of Ireland. We read in Irish History that before 700 BCE a strong colony of the tribe of Dan ('Tuatha de Danaan') arrived in Ireland by ship. Later in the days of king David, a colony of the line of Zarah arrived in Ireland from the East. In the years 569 BCE, an elderly, patriarch referred to as a 'saint' came to Ireland. It is believed that this was none other than Jeremiah. With him came the princess daughter of an eastern king, with a Hebrew name Tea-Tephi as well as a scribe named Shimon Baruch. This royal party included the king of Ireland who was in Jerusalem at the time of the siege. He got

to know Tea-Tephi and married her shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in 585 BCE. Jeremiah brought an ark, a harp and a stone called 'Lia-fail' or the 'stone of destiny', with him to Ireland. A strange coincidence is that many kings in the history of Ireland, Scotland and England have been coronated sitting over this stone, including Queen Elizabeth II. This very stone used to be kept in Westminster Abbey in London, and the coronation chair built over it has the inscription 'Jacob's Pillar Stone' (Genesis 28: 18) on it. The stone was moved to Edinburgh Castle on 30 November 1996, the 700th Anniversary of its removal from Scotland.. The stone came to Ireland with Jeremiah, where after it was taken to Scotland. In 1296 it was taken to England as the coronation stone of England. Ireland is but one of the nations belonging to the lost 10 tribes, which we are able to identify by following the roadmarks that they left along the way. We will attempt to find some of the other tribes in future Torah portions.

YHVH has scattered the original 10 tribes of Israel throughout the nations of the world, but in the end He will take us back to Israel, as we are told in Jeremiah 23, 3 - 6, as follows: ***“Then I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply. (4) I shall also raise up shepherds over them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing.” Declares YHVH.*** (5) ***“Behold, the days are coming,” declares YHVH, “When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land (Israel). (6) In His days Judah will be saved (Wow, and some believe that they are lost), And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘YHVH our righteousness.’*** YHVH is at this time calling out a remnant to become first-fruits among His creatures (see James 1: 18). We from the lost 10 tribes are the remnant according to Elohim's gracious choice as we read in Romans 11: 5.

Back to our Torah portion, we read in Genesis 29: 1, ***'Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the sons of the east.'*** After he traveled many days over stony mountains and hot desert sands he came to the land of Mesopotamia. On approaching a city, he noticed shepherds and their sheep gathered around a well, which was protected by a large rock. He went up to the men and asked them where they are from. The men told him that they are from Haran, a city nearby. Jacob was happy that his long trip was about at an end. He asked the men if they knew his mother's brother Laban and was surprised to learn that Laban lived in the area. The men also told Jacob, that Laban's daughter Rachel was approaching the well with her father's sheep. Jacob was anxious to meet a member of his own family. He asked the shepherds why their animals are not out grazing. When they told him that the animals had to be watered one by one, he started to help them to move the stone cover from the well. When Rachel arrived, Jacob noticed how beautiful she was and after he had drawn water for her sheep, he walk up to her and kissed her (verse 11 of Genesis 29).

He told her that he is Jacob her cousin and told her that his mother is Rebekah her aunt. Rachel was very surprised and she took her sheep and hurried home to tell her father about Jacob. When Laban heard that his sister's son came to visit, he ran to meet him and embraced and kissed him. Laban invited Jacob stay over for a month. During the month Jacob helped doing work that had to be done around Laban's property. In doing so he saw a great deal of Rachel and the more Jacob saw her, the more he cared for her. His uncle noticed that Jacob could be a valuable addition to his family and told Jacob, that if he wants to keep on working for him, he will pay him for his labor. Laban continued by asking Jacob how much he wants in payment for his labor. We read Jacob's answer in verse 18 of Genesis 29, as follows: ***'Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."*** Laban saw an opportunity to get his best employee to work a bit longer and they soon agreed on a deal. Jacob had to work for seven years to marry

Rachel. The time past quickly and soon it was time for the wedding. But soon after the wedding Jacob got the shock of his life. At the time of the wedding Jacob's bride wore a long veil that hid her face from his view. When the veil was removed after the wedding, he saw that he married Leah, Rachel's eldest sister.

Infuriated, Jacob approached Laban and asked him in verse 25 of Genesis 29, ***"What is this you have done to me?" Was it not for Rachel that I served with you?" Why then have you deceived me?"*** In verse 26 & 27 Laban answered, as follows: ***"It is not the practice in our place, to marry off the younger daughter before the first-born. (27) Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years."*** Jacob agreed to work seven more years, as he did not really have another choice. After fourteen years of hard work, Jacob married Rachel. He continued to work very hard and Elohim noticed and decided to turn the tables on Laban. This time Jacob struck a deal with Laban. He told Laban that he worked so long, but do not possess any cattle, sheep or goats. He continued by saying; 'If it is okay with you I'll go through the herds and select all the spotted and speckled animals, and you may keep the ones without spots.' Laban agreed immediately to Jacob's proposal. Laban was not familiar with the art of breeding animals, whereas Jacob was an expert at animal husbandry. So Jacob separated all the spotted animals in Laban's herds. Then he took the strongest of Laban's animals and bred them with the spotted animals. This resulted in more spotted, but healthy animals and before long Jacob had a huge herd of animals.

Elohim blessed Jacob's hard work and by so doing turned the tables on Laban. When Laban noticed how Jacob was blessed he became angry. Then we notice in Genesis 31: 3, YHVH said to Jacob, ***"Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives and I will be with you."*** Fearing that Laban might try to prevent him from leaving, Jacob waited until Laban had gone away to oversee the shearing of his sheep. Then

Jacob told his workers to take down his tents and pack his belongings on his camels. He left with his caravan, but could not move very fast. Leah and Rachel agreed that their father did not treat Jacob fairly and was happy to leave. Only a few days after Jacob's household left, did Laban find out what happened. He was angry but became even more so when he discovered that Rachel had stolen some small idols that he prized highly. He told his servants to saddle up his camels and to follow Jacob at high speed. After seven days Laban saw Jacob's caravan encamped for the night beside the road and he decides to overtake him the next morning.

That night Elohim came to Laban in a dream and said to him in verse 24 of Genesis 31, saying: ***“Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good and bad.”*** The next day Laban caught up to Jacob. He asked Jacob why he sneaked away, without letting him say goodbye to his daughters and grandchildren. He tells Jacob that his Elohim warned him not to argue with Jacob, in a dream. Laban also informs Jacob that someone in his household stole his (Laban's) idols. Not knowing that Rachel stole her father's idols, Jacob said in verse 32 of Genesis 31, ***“That one with whom you find your gods shall not live; in the presence of our kinsmen point out what is yours among my belongings and take it for yourself.”*** Laban and his men searched for the idols, whilst Rachel rested on a camel saddle in which she hid the images. Eventually Laban came to Rachel and told her to get up from the saddle so that he may search for his idols. Rachel stopped the inspection by telling Laban that she is not well and didn't want to be disturbed. Laban could not find his idols and left. Jacob asked Laban why he treated him unfairly through the period that he worked for him and why he treated him like an enemy. Laban knew Jacob deserved better and suggested that they make a covenant, between them, agreeing that all unfriendliness be stopped between them. Jacob took a stone and told his men to gather stones and make a heap, as a monument to the agreement that he made with Laban. They dined together and the next morning Laban bid farewell to his daughters and grandchildren went home.

To conclude this Torah portion, we read in verse 1 of Genesis 32, ***'Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels of Elohim met him.'*** When Jacob saw the angels he said (in verse 2): ***"This is Elohim's camp." So he named that place Mahanaim.*** Ending in verse 3 we read: ***'Then Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.'***

Genesis 32 verse 4 to 36 verse 43 (Vayishlach).

This week's Torah portion picks up where the previous one ends. In verse 1 of Genesis 32, we read: ***'Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels (messengers) of Elohim met him.'*** In verse 3 of Genesis 32 (which is in fact verse 4 in the JPS Jewish Bible published in 1917), the opening statement of the current Torah portion, we read: ***'Then Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.'*** The transliterated Hebrew name for this Torah portion is taken from this verse, i.e. 'Vayishlach' meaning 'he sent'.

Whereas YHVH sent angels to reassure Jacob, Jacob sent human messengers to his brother Esau. This was the second time that YHVH sent angels to Jacob, to reassure him, as he went on his way. In the same way Jacob sent messengers to his brother to win his favor, as we read in verses 4 & 5. But we see that instead of comforting Jacob, these messengers make him more afraid, as they told Jacob that Esau is on his way with four hundred men, possibly not with friendly intentions. Jacob therefore came up with a plan to protect at least some of his company. We read in verses 7 & 8 of Genesis 32, ***'Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and the herds and the camels, into two companies; (8) for he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the company which is left will escape."***

Jacob also spoke in prayer to YHVH, saying in verses 9 – 12: ***"O Elohim of my father Abraham and Elohim of my father Isaac, O YHVH, who didst say to me, 'Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you. (10) I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which Thou hast shown to Thy servant; for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies. (11) Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me, the mothers with the children.***

(12) ***For thou didst say, 'I will surely prosper you and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'***” Jacob starts his prayer stating that he is unworthy of Elohim’s kindness, pleading for protection and reminding YHVH of His promise to prosper him and to increase his descendants. YHVH wants us to look to Him for help, but if there is anything we are able to do to help or protect ourselves, He expects us to do so. Jacob does not receive an answer from YHVH immediately and decides to spend the night there.

Probably inspired by Elohim, he picked out two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. Then he divided each kind of stock into groups, sending each group out at a different time to approach Esau as one of several gifts. He instructs his servants in charge of each of these groups to tell Esau that their master Jacob hopes he (Esau) will accept his gifts. In this way Jacob made Esau to change his attitude towards him.

After the animals intended for Esau had gone on, Jacob moved the two sections of his entourage on ahead a short distance to camp for the night, whilst he remained behind alone to pray. We read about this as well as the strange thing that happened to Jacob that night, in Genesis 32: 22 -30, as follows: ***'Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of Jabbok. (23) And he took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across whatever he had. (24) Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. (25) And when he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. (26) Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (27) So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." (28) And***

he said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with Elohim and with men and have prevailed.” (29) Then Jacob asked him and said, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “What is it that you ask my name?” And he blessed him there. (30) So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, “I have seen Elohim face to face, yet my life has been preserved.””

We read in Hosea 12: 3 – 5 that Jacob actually wrestled with Elohim, as follows: ***‘In the womb he took his brother by the heel, And in his maturity he contended with Elohim. (4) Yes, he wrestled with the angel and prevailed; He wept and sought His favor. He found Him at Bethel, And there He spoke with us, (5) Even YHVH, the Elohim of hosts; YHVH is His name.’*** This was the visible (form or) image of ELOHIM that Moses beheld, as we read in Numbers 12: 8; This was the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us about 2000 years ago, namely Yahshua.

It was a trying night for Jacob, when he realized that he was dealing with more than a human being. He struggled to get a blessing from this Superior being. Before sunset the next morning he was blessed and praised for his determination. Jacob was determined to strive with all his might not to lose Elohim’s blessing and eternal promises. Jacob’s determination was greater than that of Esau, when he sold his birthright for a bowl of stew. He proved that he had strength of character to overcome his spiritual problems. The wrestling match was actually a test of character. Before Jacob’s wrestling partner left, He told Jacob that his name should be changed from Jacob to Israel, which means one who overcomes. Elohim would not give His blessing and a birthright to a man who had taken them from a weaker brother unfairly. He, appeared as a man to give Jacob the chance to prove himself as one who is able to overcome

As our father Jacob had to overcome to prove his strength of character, each one of us, whom YHVH called at this time, has to overcome those sins which so beset us, before we will

be allowed access into the coming kingdom of Elohim. Each one of us has our own set of circumstances to overcome – it reminds me of the saying: that each person must bear his own cross. Overcoming involves righteousness with great contentment. We need to learn to be content with every situation in which we find ourselves in life. Contentment or gratitude is the recognition that life owes us nothing and that all we have are gifts. Pride is a major obstacle – if we have no pride, then we have no obstacle. We are however assured that those of us who have been immersed in Yahshua's saving name (as per Acts 2: 38) and had hands laid upon us by the elders (as we read in Acts 8: 16 & 17), shall receive a portion of the Set-apart Spirit as a pledge of inheritance, with a view to redemption (as per Ephesians 1: 14). This is confirmed for us in 1 John 5: 4, as follows: ***'For whatever is born of Elohim overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith.'***

We read in the book of revelation what we will inherit if we manage to follow in the footsteps of Jacob, as follows:

- Revelation 2: 7 ***'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in Paradise of Elohim.'***
- Revelation 2: 11 ***'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.'***
- Revelation 2: 17 ***'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the ecclesia. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'***
- Revelation 2: 26 - 28 ***'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; (27) and he shall***

rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; (28) and I will give him the morning star.'

- Revelation 3: 5 ***'He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.'***
- Revelation 3: 12 ***'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My Elohim, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of Elohim.'***
- Revelation 3: 21 ***'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.'***
- Revelation 21: 7 ***'He who overcomes shall inherit these things, and I will be his Elohim and he will be My son.'***
- We need to face our sins head on and strive to overcome them, with the help of our Father YHVH. We need to replace bad habits with good habits, making our overriding goal in life to overcome, so that we may qualify to rule under Messiah in the coming Kingdom of Elohim.

Continuing on in verse 31 of Genesis 32, we read: ***' Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Peniel, and he was limping on his thigh.*** After the night's wrestling Jacob found that he was very sore in one hip, showing that Elohim's blessings do not always come without hardship and suffering. In addition we read in verse 32 of Genesis 32: ***'Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip***

which is on the socket of the thigh, because he touched the socket of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip. There are many in Nazarene/Messianic Israel who insists that there is no such thing as the Oral torah. However, we are not told in the Scriptures, how to remove the sinew of the hip which is in the socket of the thigh. This is something that we are taught by our forefathers from generation to generation. Let me ask you a simple question here: How many of you are able to recall how your mothers or Grannies removed the sinew from a leg of lamb, prior to cooking it? If you can recall that, you are most probably an Israelite. Even though most modern ladies have forgotten how this was done, it was taught from mother to daughter throughout many generations – probably before the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians in 721 BCE. For this reason Kosher Butchers rarely sell you a leg of lamb or of any other kosher animal, as it is a fairly difficult process to remove the sinew from a leg of lamb or other kosher animal. Another proof of the existence of Oral Torah may be found in the Brit Chadashah in Acts 1: 12, where we read: ***'Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.'*** Did you know that the Oral Torah is the only place to find out how far a Sabbath day's journey is.

Trusting that there would be little trouble, Jacob nevertheless arranged for Rachel and her son Joseph to stay behind the other people in his caravan. He did this because Rachel was the wife which he loved most and Joseph was his favorite son. Jacob then moved up past his family and servants on his way to meet Esau. Esau and his four hundred men came to a halt a short distance from the front of Jacob's caravan. Jacob, ahead of the others, was so close that he could see his brother staring at him. He bowed seven times toward his brother, as was the custom then, when one party wished to show respect for another party. After each bow, he moved a few paces closer to Esau. After the seventh bow, he straightened up to look squarely at his brother for the first time in twenty years. For a few moments there was a strained silence. Then Esau, who had dismounted from his camel, rushed forward to seize

Jacob and he hugged him. The two brothers were so happy to see each other that they wept. Thus YHVH answered Jacob's prayer.

When Jacob's family saw that the two brothers had met as close friends, the wives, children and servants came near and bowed. Jacob explained that they were his two wives, his twelve children and his servants. Esau was pleased at sight of the courteous people. Then, looking behind him he saw an approaching crowd of sheep, goats, cattle, camels and donkeys. "What is this?" Esau asked. "I passed it on the way to meet you." "You passed it too swiftly," Jacob smiled. "These are gifts I sent out ahead for you!" "But I have no need for stock." Esau said. "I have plenty. Keep them for yourself." "I am so thankful that Elohim has spared you and caused you to be friendly with me that I want to give you these things," Jacob said. Esau could see that Jacob would be disappointed if the stock were refused, so he gladly accepted. (Gen. 33:8-11) Then he suggested that their caravans go together back to Seir, where Esau lived. Jacob knew that with their children and greater numbers of animals, they would tiresomely hold back his brother and their men, who would naturally move much faster. The two agreed that Esau's group should go on ahead, and that Jacob's caravan would follow at a slower pace until turning off to the north into Canaan, where Jacob later bought land for his many animals. After Jacob and Rachel had arrived in their new land, there was a twelfth son, Benjamin. Unhappily, as we read in Genesis 35: 16 – 20 Rachel died at the time.

Prior to this sorrowful event, Jacob's daughter Dinah attended a pagan festival of the Canaanites and got into trouble. The sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard that Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite took their sister and lay with her by force. They were very angry because he had done such a disgraceful thing. Hamor spoke with them and they agreed that Shechem may marry their sister and other Israelite woman, pending that all their men be circumcised. They agreed to this arrangement and all were duly circumcised.

However we read in Genesis 34: 25 – 31 how Simeon and Levi acted in a brutal manner that was distressing to their father Jacob, as follows: ***‘Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. (26) And they killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went forth. (27) Jacob’s sons came upon the slain and looted the city, because they had defiled their sister.(28) They took their flocks and their herds and their donkeys, and that which was in the city and that which was in the field; (29) and they captured and looted all their wealth and all their little ones and their wives, even all that was in the houses. (30) Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have brought trouble on me, by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and my men being few in number, they will gather together against me and attack me and I shall be destroyed, I and my household.” (31) But they said, “Should he treat our sister as a harlot?”*** Even though the action of Simeon and Levi were probably justified, we see later when Jacob blessed all twelve his son’s prior to his death (in Genesis 49: 6 – 7), how he cursed their anger saying in verse 7: ***“Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.”***

Some of the teachers in both houses of Israel are probably from the tribe of Levi, who were scattered in Israel. This is confirmed for us in Jeremiah 33: 19 – 22, as follows: ***‘And the word of YHVH came to Jeremiah saying: “Thus says YHVH, ‘If you can break My covenant for the day, and My covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time, (21) then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levitical priests, My ministers. (22) As the host of heaven cannot be counted, and the sand of the sea cannot be measured, so I will***

multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.” We know that night and day has not changed since creation, so I leave it up to you to come to your own conclusion.

Genesis 37 verse 1 to 40 verse 23 (Vayeshev).

This week's Torah portion begins with the words ***'And Jacob settled'***, which is also the name of the parasha, i.e. *'and he settled'*. We read in verses 1 & 2 of Genesis 37 in the New American Standard Bible (the one I have been using for more than 25 years, and also prefer to use), ***'Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. (2) These are the records of the generations of Jacob.'***

Jacob had twelve sons. In the previous Torah portion we read that after Jacob and Rachel arrived in their new country, they had a twelfth son named Benjamin and Rachel died in childbirth. Jacob's favorite son Joseph grew into a handsome young man, and at age seventeen, he was helping his elder brothers to take care of his father's livestock. Even though this Torah portion is about the generations of Jacob, it starts telling us about Joseph. Why might you ask, does it begin with Joseph, if Reuben is in fact Jacob's first-born son? The Rabbinical Rabbis hold that the reason for this was, because everything that happened to Jacob also happened to Joseph. Among other: Jacob was a shepherd, so was Joseph; Jacob's mother was infertile, so was Joseph's mother; Jacob's mother had two sons, so did Joseph's mother; Jacob's brother hated him, so did Joseph's brothers hate him; Jacob was made great through a dream, so was Joseph made great through a dream; Jacob went down to Egypt, so did Joseph go down to Egypt; Jacob ended a famine, so did Joseph end a famine; Jacob died in Egypt, so did Joseph die in Egypt; and finally, Jacob's bones were brought up from Egypt to the land of Israel, so were Joseph's bones brought up from Egypt to the land of Israel.

Even though this is all true, there are more to this than what meets the eye, and we will soon see the real reason why Joseph is mentioned first, as the Torah portion unfolds. We see that Joseph's brothers disliked him; because on one occasion he brought a bad report about them to their father

(i.e. he was what we might call 'a talebearer', today). In addition we read in verse 3 of Genesis 37 that Israel (Jacob's new name) loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic. Joseph's brothers noticed that their father loved Joseph more than them, so they hated him. To make matters worse Joseph had two dreams, which he related to his family, as we read in Genesis 37: 5 - 10, as follows: ***"Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. (6) And he said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; (7) for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." (8) Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and his words. (9) Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." (10) 'And he related it to his father and to his brothers, and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?"*** We read that Joseph's brothers became jealous of him.

Later, when his ten older brothers moved their animals a few days journey away from home, Jacob, sent Joseph to find them and return with news from them. Joseph had a difficult task finding his brothers, but came upon them after much travel. When his brothers saw him coming, they decided that the opportunity had arrived for them to sort him out, the way they wanted too for a long time, without interference from their father. They said to one another as we read in verses 19 & 20 of Genesis 37: ***"Here comes the dreamer! (20) Now then, come let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, 'A wild beast devoured him.' Then let us see what will become of his dreams!"*** We see that Reuben

his eldest brother overheard his brothers saying this and rescued Joseph by suggesting in verses 21 & 22 of Genesis 37, ***“Let us not take his life.”*** (22) ***‘Reuben further said to them, “Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him” – that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father.’*** When Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his varicolored tunic and threw him into an empty, but deep pit nearby. At first Joseph thought his brothers were playing a trick on him, but soon realized that they were serious. Whilst the other brothers were eating their lunch, Reuben left to take care of his flock, planning to return later to rescue Joseph. However, whilst he was away a caravan of Midianite traders arrived in the area. They were on their way to Egypt to sell spices. Judah told his brothers that killing Joseph will not profit them, and suggested that they sell him to the traders for twenty shekels of silver. When Reuben returned to the pit, Joseph was missing, so he tore his garments and returned to his brothers and saying in verse 30: ***“The boy is not there; as for me, where am I to go?”***

The brothers therefore took Joseph’s tunic, and slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood and sent it to their father, saying (in verse 32): ***“We found this; please examine it to see whether it is your son’s tunic or not.”*** Jacob examined the tunic and was certain that a wild beast has devoured his son Joseph. So Jacob tore his clothes and mourned for Joseph many days. Then all Jacob’s remaining sons and daughters arose to comfort him. In the meantime the Midianite traders took him down to Egypt and sold him at the slave market. Joseph was bought by Potiphar the captain of the guard for the king of Egypt. Potiphar used Joseph to work for him in his household and soon noticed that he was more capable and trustworthy than his other servants. Joseph was honest, and anxious to always do his best, because he followed Elohim’s laws. It was also for this reason that YHVH blessed Potiphar’s household. Things went extremely well, until Potiphar’s wife noticed how attractive Joseph had become. Potiphar’s wife tried to get Joseph to sleep with her,

but he refused. When this happened on a second occasion, Potiphar's wife grabbed Joseph's garment, as he fled, to get away from her. She then called the men of her household and told them that Joseph wanted to lie with her, but he fled when she screamed. She later also told her husband about the 'incident' and he put Joseph in jail. However we read in Genesis 39: 21 & 22: ***'But YHVH was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. (22) And the chief jailer committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there he was responsible for it.'*** However Joseph had to go on living in jail, even though he enjoyed a fairly high office.

Whilst Joseph was in jail, a plot to poison Pharaoh the king of Egypt was discovered and two high ranking officials of the king's court were thrown in jail. One of the men was the chief butler, in charge of the production and serving of wine. The second man was the chef in charge of preparing and serving food at the king's table. However, there was no proof that either of these two men was guilty. We see in Genesis 40: 1 – 4, that the captain of the king's body guard, Potiphar, brought the two prisoners to jail and ask Joseph to look after them. One day Joseph noticed that both these men looked very worried. He therefore approached them to find out why they were worried. The men told Joseph that they both had disturbing dreams the night before and that there was no one to interpret it. We read in verse 8 of Genesis 40 Joseph saying to the men: ***"Do not interpretation belong to Elohim? Tell it to me please."*** The butler commenced telling Joseph his dream, saying in verses 9 - 11 of Genesis 40, as follows: ***"In my dream, behold, there was a vine in front of me; (10) and on the vine were three branches. And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, and its clusters produced ripe grapes. (11) Now Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh's hand."*** Joseph told the butler in verse 12 – 15: ***"This is the interpretation of it; the three branches are three days; (13)***

within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand according to your former custom when you were his cupbearer. (14) Only keep me in mind when it goes well with you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. (15) For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon."

On hearing how Joseph interpreted the butler's dream, the chief baker, anxiously requested that Joseph also interpret his dream, hoping that it would also have a good meaning. He starts telling Joseph his dream, as is recorded in verses 16 & 17 of Genesis 40: ***"I also saw in my dream, and behold, there were three baskets of white bread on my head; (17) and in the top basket there were some of all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."*** When Joseph realized the meaning of this dream, he also knew who had conspired to poison king Pharaoh. He did not enjoy telling the baker what his fate would be, but realized that Elohim would expect him to reveal the truth about the matter. We read Joseph's interpretation of the chef's dream saying in verses 18 & 19 (of Genesis 40): ***"This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; (19) within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh off you."***

Three days later on Pharaoh's birthday, it was a day of great celebration, on which certain prisoners would be brought from jail and pardoned. On that day the butler was given a pardon and was restored to his former position, just as Joseph said. At the same time the chef was hanged in public and the birds of the air came to eat his flesh. However, we see that in the elation of being freed the butler totally forgot to tell king Pharaoh about Joseph and he remained in prison. YHVH masterfully planned every step in Joseph's life, putting him in a position to eventually become a key player in the nation of

Israel. Initially it was necessary to allow Joseph to experience pain and suffering, in order to fit into the ultimate plan of YHVH; a plan to ensure that promised blessings and inheritance to Israel will come to pass.

This parasha was in the main about Joseph, but in Genesis 38 the Torah makes a seemingly odd turn, relating the activities around the life of Judah and his children. At first this interjection might seem odd, until we realize that the main feature of the account of the life of Joseph centers on divine selection, regardless of human weakness and position. Joseph was chosen by YHVH. The blessing given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob finally rested upon Joseph, regardless of the fact that he was young and seemingly unimportant, and unfortunate more than once in his life. Likewise Judah would someday receive the preeminent blessing in Genesis 49: 8 – 12, to become Elohim's lawgiver, as well as being the forefather of the tribe from which Yahshua would be born (see Revelation 5: 5). Judah made a few serious mistakes in dealing with his family in Genesis 38, but as we study further into the life of Joseph we will see that Judah becomes a true leader amongst his brothers.

Now I would like to get back to Joseph's dream, where his entire family bowed down to him. As the account of Joseph's life unfolds in the pages of the Scriptures, we eventually see how his dream comes true, when he became a ruler in Egypt and his whole family eventually bowed down to him, because of his position in Egypt and because they did not recognize him, at the time. However, Joseph's dream had a much deeper or longer term meaning. In fact it meant that Joseph's descendants will ultimately become the chief of the 12 tribe nation of Israel, as we see in Jeremiah 31: 6 & 7, as follows: ***“For there shall be a day when watchmen On the hills of Ephraim shall call out, ‘Arise and let us go up to Zion, To YHVH our Elohim.’”*** (7) ***For thus says YHVH, “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chiefs of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O YHVH, save Thy people, the remnant of Israel.’”***

When we read the prophetic promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we notice again in Genesis 22: 17 ***'indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand of the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.'*** The Fenton translation states ***".... and your race shall possess the gates (plural) of its enemies."*** The question is who is Joseph today? Are we able to identify which nation or nations in the world are the offspring of Joseph? We are by now aware that the ancient nation of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians in the years 721 – 718 B.C.E. They were taken to Assyria via the southern shores of the Caspian Sea and were later lost from view and memory. Reading about them at that time, we see in 2 Kings 17: 18, ***'So YHVH was very angry with Israel, and removed them from his sight; none was left except the tribe of Judah.'*** We see the reason why YHVH removed Israel from His sight in 2 Kings 17: 22 & 23, as follows: ***'And the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, (23) until YHVH removed Israel from His sight, as He spoke through all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away into exile from their own land to Assyria until this day.'*** We know that Israel never returned to the land of Palestine with the Jews as some erroneously believe. Only the tribe of Judah, together with remnants of Benjamin and Levi, who constituted the house of Judah, returned to Palestine. The house of Israel became known as the lost 10 tribes. They are today known by other names, and speak different languages. However, the question is: who are they and where are they located today?

We know that the lost ten tribes exist today, but are looked upon as Gentiles. Reading in Amos 9: 8 & 9, ***"Behold, the eyes of YHVH Elohim are on the sinful kingdom (meaning Israel), and I will destroy it from the face of the earth: Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," Declares YHVH. (9) For behold, I am commanding, and I will shake in a sieve, but not a kernel***

will fall to the ground.” Many Messianics apply this prophesy to the scattered condition of the Jews throughout the world. However, it has nothing to do with the house of Judah, but refers to the 10 lost tribes of the house of Israel. Israel were driven to Assyria, then migrated from there and were scattered among the nations of the world, before the Jews went into captivity in Babylon. Israel, not Judah was sifted and eventually lost their identity.

The blessings given by Jacob to his twelve sons reveal a great deal about the identities of the nations that make up the lost ten tribes of Israel. In Genesis 48 Jacob gives his first-born blessing to Joseph’s two sons. We see in verse 14 of Genesis 48 that Jacob (Israel) stretched out his right hand and laid it upon the head of Ephraim, who was the younger and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the first-born. Jacob then blessed Ephraim, saying in verse 15 & 16: ***The Elohim before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The Elohim who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, (16) The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads: And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.***” Even though Joseph tried to correct Jacob in getting him to place his right hand on Manasseh’s head, Jacob refused saying in verses 19 - 22: ***‘I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people and he also shall be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.’ (20) And he blessed them that day, saying, “by you Israel shall pronounce blessing, saying, May Elohim make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!” Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. (21) Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am about to die, but Elohim will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. (22) And I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”***

So here we see that despite also giving the other brothers of the 12 tribe nations a blessing each, Joseph, i.e. Ephraim received a double portion. We read also in the last part of Jeremiah 31: 9, Elohim saying: ***'For I am a father to Israel and Ephraim is My first-born.'*** Elohim's blessings are unconditional. We read accordingly in Numbers 23: 19, ***"Elohim is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"*** When Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh he set Ephraim first, saying that Ephraim would become a multitude of nations. Of Manasseh he said that he will also become a people, and he also shall be great. From these verses it is understood that Ephraim would become several (or a commonwealth) of nations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. By saying that Manasseh would also become a people, it was almost as if he was saying that they would become a great people, after Ephraim had already established itself. From this we are also able to identify the United States of America as Manasseh.

Yes, Joseph is made up of Ephraim and Manasseh. We know that Britain is Ephraim and the United States of America is Menasha. We also know that from the eighteen hundreds, both these nations possessed the gates of their enemies, as was included in Abraham's blessings of Isaac. Some of these gates are: the Strait of Gibraltar (the western gate to the Mediterranean Sea), the Suez canal, the Panama Canal, Hong Kong, the Khyber Pass, and Cape Town. In Genesis 48: 19 it says about Ephraim: ***"his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."*** Or in Hebrew *'Malo HaGoyim'*. According to Yair Davidy's book entitled 'The Tribes' – *'Onkelos (1st century C. E.) translated the words into Aramaic as "Banohi yihon Shalitin beAmmaia", i.e. 'his sons shall be rulers over peoples', or 'rulers over the peoples' ... We believe Onkelos to be correct: Remember literally the verse says "his seed will be fullness of nations". The Midrash Rashi (97; 7) takes an illustrative approach."*

In Deuteronomy Moses prophesied concerning Joseph in Chapter 33: 13 - 17, saying: ***‘And of Joseph he said, “Blessed of YHVH be his land, With the choice things of heaven, with the dew, And from the deep lying beneath (gold and diamonds found in South Africa). (14) And with the choice yield of the sun, And with the choice produce of the months. (15) And with the best things of the ancient mountains, And with the choice things of the everlasting hills, (16) And with the choice things of the earth and its fullness, And the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let it come to the head of Joseph, And to the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers. (17) As the first-born of his ox (bullock KJV), majesty is his (Ephraim rules), And his horns are the horns of the wild ox (Unicorn, KJV); With them he shall push the peoples, All at once, to the ends of the earth (America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Northwest Europe). And those are the thousands of Ephraim, And those are the thousands of Manasseh.”*** The portion about the ends of the earth is repeated in Isaiah 41: 8 & 9, as follows: ***“But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, (9) You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from the ends of the earth, I have chosen you and not rejected you.”***

Ephraim and Manasseh were the two sons of Joseph by an Egyptian mother. Herewith some interesting facts from Yair Davidy’s book entitled ‘The Tribes⁵’ about the USA: ***‘The official symbols of the U.S.A. (as seen on a Dollar Bill) are used on the Great Seal which has a Shield and a Pyramid. The Shield of the U.S.A. contains the motto: “Out of many, one” (E Pluribus Unum). It has 13 Stars and a Shield with 13 stripes and an eagle holding 13 arrows and a 13 leafed olive branch. There were 13 Tribes of Israel. Stars featured***

⁵Information regarding the 10 lost tribes of Israel was in the main, obtained from Yair Davidy’s book entitled: “The Tribes.” Copies of this and other books on the same subject may be ordered from Yair Davidy at: Brit-Am Israel, P.O. Box 595, Jerusalem. 91004. Email: britam@netvision.net.il

in a dream of Joseph son of Israel and were preminiscent of his future greatness. Archery and a bow were connected with the blessing of Joseph given to him by his father Israel (Genesis 50: 22- 23).

An eagle was one of the symbols of Dan while the Tribe of Asher was represented by the olive tree.

The reverse side of the Great Seal of the U.S.A. (as depicted in the Dollar bill) shows a pyramid, and a single-eye said to suggest the eye of Providence.

A PYRAMID is also a typical representation of Egypt and according to Jewish tradition (Num.Rab.2; 5) the Tribe of Joseph had A picture of Egypt for their Tribal Standard. When you see a pyramid you think of Egypt.

The U.S.A. has a large and mixed population but it includes a large number from the Tribes of Israel, and the Tribe of Joseph especially the portion of Manasseh seems to be paramount.'

This evidence makes it abundantly clear that the British Commonwealth and the United Sates of America are Ephraim and Manasseh, also known as Joseph. Do you now understand how the dream about Joseph's family bowing down to him came true during the 19th and 20th centuries? However, the nations making up Joseph have been declining from the last part of the 20th century to today; the reason for this decline could mainly be ascribed to their refusal to turn to Elohim in obedience. Abortions and teen pregnancies are on the increase in these nations. Divorce, drugs and alcoholism is at an all time high. Paganism is on the increase and Joseph has become the worst of the nations. The time has arrived for Elohim to punish them by stripping them from all the blessings and returning them to captivity. Britton and the USA have already lost a great deal of its power. Many of the gates of their enemies have reverted back to their enemies. Hong Kong and the Panama Canal are but two examples of these. Elohim is currently stripping these once powerful nations of their power and glory. Recently England sold the Jaguar motor company to an Indian car company – if that is not losing their pride, then what is? In addition General Motors, Ford and

Chrysler are on the verge of bankruptcy. We are all in a recession, if not stopped, will end in a depression.

Brethren all the warning signs are there. I have recently had a warning from an American believer warning of a terrorist attack on the USA in a short time. I do not know if one should take such warnings seriously, but all I know that it is time for our nations to repent and to return to YHVH our Elohim, and His Torah. We are much closer to the tribulation than what we think. Some think the current financial problems that the USA is experiencing will not affect us here in South Africa. My question to them is: Why has the value of our Rand deteriorated so much against the Dollar? In 1983 I paid about R23-00 for a \$25-00 book, which I ordered from the USA. Last year this time the Rand/Dollar exchange rate was R10.50 to \$1.00, despite 'their' economic crises. It has since improved to about R7.50 to the \$1.00. However, our previous minister of finance has recently, for the first time admitted that we are in a serious financial crisis. The old maxim 'If America Sneezes we all catch a cold' is still very relevant. Please let us heed this warning and return to YHVH our Elohim - immediately!

Genesis 41 verse 1 to 44 verse 17 (Mikeitz).

This Torah portion is called Mikeitz, meaning 'at the end of'. One of the greatest emotional setbacks that a person in prison can experience is the sense of abandonment. Two years after the chief butler was freed from jail, Joseph must have felt totally abandoned by his friends and foes alike. This is also what our master Yahshua must have felt like when He cried out in anguish, the words recorded in Psalm 22: 2 before He died on the stake, as follows: **'My El, My El, Why hast Thou forsaken Me.?'**

However, we read in Genesis 41: 1 - 7, ***'Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. (2) And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass. (3) Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt (skinny), and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. (4) And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke. (5) And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good. (6) Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them. (7) And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream.*** Pharaoh believed that his dreams held some importance that he should know, so he sent for men who were supposed to have magic powers to interpret his unusual dreams. Pharaoh told these men his dreams, but not one of them was able to tell him the meanings of his dreams.

It so happened that the Chief Butler who was serving at the king's table, was the same one who was released two years previously. When he heard about the king's dream, he suddenly remembered Joseph. Because he thought it would get him more favor with the king, he told the king about Joseph's ability to interpret dreams. Soon after guards came to

escort Joseph to the king. This was the opportunity which Joseph prayed for. We read in verse 15 of Genesis 41, ***‘And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.”*** In verse 16 Joseph answers Pharaoh, saying: ***“It is not in me; Elohim will give Pharaoh a favorable answer.”*** Here we see that Joseph do not take the credit for something that Elohim does through him. If we should answer someone in that way today, he might think that we are over-religious, and laugh about it. But Pharaoh was anxious and prepared to try any method to hear the answer to his dream.

Pharaoh started telling Joseph about his dreams saying: *“I dreamed that I stood by the Nile River and saw seven fat cows come out of the water. As these cows fed on the thick grass at the river, seven skinny cows came out of the river and consumed the seven fat cows. However, the thin cows remained just as this as they were before eating the fat cows.”* Pharaoh continued: *“I dreamed again, and saw seven plump heads of grain growing out of one stalk. Seven thin heads of grain appeared and ate the seven plump heads of grain. Yet even after they ate the seven plump heads of grain, they remained just as thin as before. Then I told my magicians about these dreams, but they could not tell me the meanings thereof.”* Joseph listened to the king and said that both the dreams had the same meaning and that Elohim wanted to make doubly sure that Pharaoh heeds the warning that He wanted him to understand. The seven fat cows and the seven plump ears of grain meant that the next seven years will yield a record number of animal stock and grain harvests to Egypt. There will be much more than what the people of Egypt can consume. However, in the seven years that follow, there will be a severe famine in the land. Cattle will die because there will be nothing growing out of the ground to eat. Pharaoh and the people with him, stared at this Hebrew prisoner in silence. They could not understand how he could tell them what is to happen in their country over the next fourteen years.

However, we see that Joseph continues talking to Pharaoh as is recorded in verses 33 – 36 of Genesis 41, saying: ***“And now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. (34) Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers in charge of the land, and let him exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance. (35) Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh’s authority, and let them guard it, (36) And let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish during the famine.”*** Pharaoh told his advisors that he believes that Joseph was guided by his Elohim and that it would be foolish not to listen to him. They all agreed with Pharaoh. Next he told them that he chose Joseph to take care of storing the food in Egypt, upon which his advisors also agreed.

When Joseph was summoned to the palace, Pharaoh said to him in Genesis 41: 39 – 44: ***““Since Elohim has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. (40) You shall be over my house and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you. (41) And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See I have set you over all the land of Egypt” (42) Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it on Joseph’s hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen, and put the gold necklace around his neck. (43) And had him ride in his second chariot; and they proclaimed before him, “Bow the knee!” And he set him over all the land of Egypt. (44) Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Though I am Pharaoh, yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.”*** Pharaoh also named Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; and gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as his wife.

For a while after that Joseph traveled throughout Egypt and saw wonderful crops and many fat herds. It was clear that Elohim was carrying out His purpose to bless the nation of Egypt for a time with great abundance from the earth. Whereas Egypt used to be a dry sandy desert, there was so much rain during the first seven years that the whole region gave unusual crops. In the mean time Joseph gave orders that granaries be built in various regions in Egypt. He also started a system whereby a fifth of the crops are stored in the granaries. Joseph also became the father of two boys, named Ephraim and Manasseh. Soon the seven good years passed, then there came a change in the weather; rain almost ceased and hot winds blew often. The previously green fields turned yellow. Within a short time it was evident that the crops were going to fail, and the time of famine had arrived.

Farmers in some regions began to run out of fodder for their animals, so Joseph ordered the storehouses to be opened. Soon it was plain to see that if the crops had not been stored, thousands of Egyptians would have starved in the first few years of the famine. The lack of rain affected even the areas outside of Egypt, and soon after peoples from the other nations around Egypt begged the Egyptians to sell them grain and meat. Joseph gave orders that provisions be sold to all who where in need. Meanwhile back in Canaan Joseph's family were also hard pressed for food and fodder for their animals. Joseph's father heard that Egypt had grain to sell, so he sent ten of his sons to Egypt to go and buy provisions. Jacob kept Benjamin to remain behind as he was afraid that harm may befall him.

Before carrying on with the Torah portion, let's reflect on the valuable lesson to learn from Pharaoh's dreams and their interpretation: All people experience cycles of plenty as well as cycles of famine in their lives. There are times in our lives that things go very well for us; we are healthy successful and comfortable. However, invariably during such times of plenty, we fail to put some of the bounty away, for use during leaner times. During such times we usually spend and live

extravagantly, without considering that all good things eventually come to an end; to make matters worse, during such times, we often fail to create a sincere bond with our heavenly Father and to invest quality time and energy to cultivate real emotional intimacy with our loved ones. When eventually a time of famine arrives, we suddenly feel an urgent need to reach out to loved ones and Elohim. But at that point, we do not know how. The reason is that because we did not develop our relationships and spirituality during the years of plenty and are therefore deficient of the means we desperately require to survive the famine. The wisdom of Joseph is that you should never separate your years of plenty from your years of famine. During times of plenty, do not become blind and desensitized to what is really important in your life. Cultivate priorities during the times of plenty, which will keep you going during times of famine.

For most of us life is going to become very hard in the near future. Our commission is to keep telling people about the better world that is coming soon; we have to proclaim the kingdom of Elohim to all the world, then the end will come, as we are told in Matthew 24: 14. We do not go out on street corners and shout for people to repent, because we know according to John 6: 44, that YHVH does the calling. The internet is a very good tool to get the message of the coming kingdom of Elohim out into the world. But we also need hard copies of material to get to those without internet access, and those who find it easier to read printed material. Only the naïve do not realize that the time to do the end time work is getting short. Soon there will be a famine of the word, when people will not hear the word of YHVH any longer, as we read in Amos 8: 11 – 12: ***“Behold, days are coming,” declares YHVH Elohim, “When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of YHVH. (12) And people will stagger from sea to sea, And from north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of YHVH, But they will not find it.”*** Time is of the essence - the great tribulation is closer than we think and it is time to put more energy into getting the

good news of the coming kingdom of Elohim out into the world. We need to work whilst it is still possible, so that we may have material available when there will be a famine for hearing the words of YHVH. I believe that the Internet will not be available once the tribulation has started. Electricity and fuel for transportation will be in short supply and it will not be possible to distribute study material any longer.

At this time we need to be ever mindful of the commission that we received from our Master Yahshua Messiah in Matthew 28: 19 & 20, saying: ***“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*** We are responsible to ensure, that those who come to believe in YHVH are suitably equipped to commence their walk on *‘the way of Elohim.’* We also read in Ephesians 4: 11, ***‘And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building of the body of Messiah.’*** In answer to the commission given us by Messiah and as one who after having practiced Torah for more than thirty years, I consider myself qualified to immerse new believers and teach them to observe all the things that Yahshua taught me through His word and the various teachers who instructed me in the teachings of Elohim. I would accordingly like to make a limited number of hard copies of three of my books as well as e-copies of all four books, for those with computers with Adobe Acrobat readers, available, upon request. I am also prepared to send back numbers of our Torah Portions to new believers, upon request.

Let’s return to our Torah portion: Taking camels and donkeys to carry back the loads they hoped to buy, the ten sons of Jacob went down into Egypt to find that they would have to bring their request for grain to the governor, who was next in power to Pharaoh. When they came before the governor, they had no idea that he was the brother they had sold for a slave

many years before. Joseph knew them as soon as they came before him. When they bowed, he remembered having dreamed as a lad that his brothers were bowing to him. At last that prophetic dream had come true as we read in Genesis 42:6 ***“Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph’s brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.”*** Joseph wanted to welcome them and tell them who he was. Instead, he decided to be harsh with them for their own good as we read in verses 9 – 13 of Genesis 42: ***“You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land.”*** (10) ***Then they said to him, “No my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.*** (11) ***We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies.”*** (12) ***Yet he said to them, “No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!”*** (13) ***But they said, “Your servants are twelve brothers in all, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more.”*** Joseph wanted to ask about Benjamin, but he had to remain stern. So he continued as we read in verses 14 – 17 of Genesis 42: ***“It is as I said to you, you are spies; (15) by this you will be tested; by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here! (16) Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.”*** (17) ***So he put them all together in prison for three days.’***

After three days Joseph had his brothers brought before him. They still insisted that they had come only to buy needed grain. Joseph surprised them by saying that they will get their grain, but insisted that one of them will have to remain in jail, until they bring their youngest brother to him. The brothers’ faces fell. Each feared he would be the one to be jailed. Then they said to one another in verses 21 of Genesis 42, ***“Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we***

would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us.” Reuben answered his brothers as we read in verse 22, as follows: ***“Did I not tell you, ‘Do not sin against the boy’; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood.”***

Joseph’s brothers did not know that he understood every word they said, as he spoke in Egyptian and they answered him in Hebrew through an interpreter. Joseph felt so sorry for them that he turned his head away and wept, even though they had treated him brutally in the past. When he looked back at them he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. Guards took him away and imprisoned him. It was becoming plainer to the brothers that Elohim was having a hand in their affairs. Joseph told them to leave immediately. Later, after the brothers had bought the grain and loaded it on their animals, they were relieved to depart. At dusk they stopped where the animals could be fed and sheltered for the night. When one of the brothers opened his grain sack to feed his animal, he discovered a bag of coins that contained the exact amount he had paid for the sack of grain. “It must be the money I paid for my part of the grain!” he exclaimed. “How did that get there?” “This is not good,” one of the brothers said. “It could be a scheme to arrest you for not paying for the grain.” “They could arrest all of us if they could prove that one of us is a thief,” said another. “Elohim is dealing with us because of the wrong things we have done.” During the rest of the trip the brothers feared that Egyptian soldiers would overtake them, but they safely reached home in Canaan. Jacob was happy at their return with the grain, but he was most unhappy to learn that Simeon was being held prisoner and that the governor of Egypt had demanded to see Benjamin.

When Jacob’s sons began taking the grain out of their sacks, each was shocked to find a bag of money there. It was the same amount each had paid the Egyptians. When Jacob learned about this, he was worried lest his sons be considered thieves and taken back to Egypt. “I have already lost Joseph and Simeon,” Jacob said. “Now you say I should send

Benjamin to Egypt. I won't do that because I don't trust you to return him to me." "Let me take Benjamin so that we may prove ourselves and rescue Simeon from prison." Reuben suggested. "If I don't return, you may have the lives of my two sons." "Don't make foolish promises," said Jacob. "I don't intend to part with Benjamin. If anything should happen to him, I would die of sorrow."

As months passed, famine conditions worsened. Like most others, Jacob did not know that there would be seven years without enough rain to make crops possible. Every day he prayed for rain, and each day he looked for a weather change. Elohim had a plan He intended to carry out in spite of prayers from His followers. We read Genesis 43: 1 & 2, ***'Now the famine was severe in the land. (2) So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had bought from Egypt that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."*** In verse 3 - 5 of Genesis 43 we read how Judah spoke to Jacob saying: ***"The man solemnly warned us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'*** (4) ***"If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. (5) But if you do not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"*** Jacob protested, but Judah continued in verses 8 & 9 of Genesis 43, as follows: ***"Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. (9) I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever."*** Jacob finally agreed. We read in verse 11 - 13: ***'Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. (12) And take double the money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. (13) Take your brother also, and***

arise, return to the man.” Once again Jacob’s sons went to Egypt, and once again they stood before the governor, who was their brother. When Joseph saw that they had returned with Benjamin, he was very pleased. However, he had to keep from showing his feelings. Then he ordered his house steward in verse 16 saying: **“Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon.”** The steward escorted the ten to Joseph’s quarters. They were not sure why they had been brought to such a fine place. They began to wonder if they were there to receive some sort of punishment. Therefore they told Joseph’s house steward about their first trip to Egypt for grain, and how their money had mysteriously been returned to them. They explained to him that they wanted to give the money back, and that they had more money for buying more grain. However, the steward told them not to worry about it and to make themselves comfortable whilst waiting for his master to arrive.

While the brothers waited, they were given the chance to bathe, and their animals were fed. Then, to their surprise, their brother Simeon, who had been a prisoner for about a year, was brought in to them. At noon Joseph arrived at his home with some high-ranking Egyptians. The brothers bowed low to the governor, and humbly presented the gifts they had brought from Canaan. Joseph thanked them and asked about their father. We read further in verses 29 – 31 of Genesis 43: **‘As he (Joseph) lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, he said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?” And he said, “may Elohim be gracious to you, my son.”’** (30) **And Joseph hurried out for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought a place to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there.** (31) **Then he washed his face, and came out; and he controlled himself and said, “Serve the meal.”**” With so many good things to eat and drink before them, the brothers quickly forgot their fears and worries. Benjamin enjoyed the meal more than anyone. For one thing, he was served far more of everything. Besides, he received special dishes not served to the others, inasmuch as Joseph quietly had

instructed his servants to give him special treatment. Benjamin did not try to consume all that was set before him but it increased his awe for the governor. He would have been more awed if he could have known that the governor was his brother!

Josef commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food and put their money back in their bags. He also instructed his house steward to put his (Joseph's) cup in the mouth of Benjamin's sack. Early the next morning Jacob's sons set out for home with as much grain as their animals could carry. However, we read in verses 4 – 9 of Genesis 44: ***'They had just gone out of the city, and were not far off, when Joseph said to his house steward, "Up follow them; and when you overtake them, say to them, "Why have you repaid evil for good? (5) Is not this one from which my lord drinks, and which he indeed uses for divination? You have done wrong doing this" (6) So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. (7) And they said to him, "Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing. (8) Behold the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver and gold from your lord's house?(9) With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."*** They felt that it would be impossible for the cup to be found with them. None would have dared take such a valuable article from the powerful governor of Egypt.

The men searched the brother's belongings and to the unpleasant surprise of Jacob's sons, money for the grain was again found in the sacks. In addition Joseph's silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack! In miserable silence the brothers packed their belongings back on their animals. Surrounded by their pursuers, they rode back to face the governor. When Joseph appeared, they fell down before him. We read Joseph's words to them in verses 15 of Genesis 44: ***"What is this deed that you have done? Do you not know that such***

a man as I can indeed practice divination?” In verse 16 Judah answers Joseph saying: “What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? Elohim has found out the iniquity of your servants; behold, we are my lord’s slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found.”

We conclude this Torah portion with Joseph words in verse 17, saying: ***“Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father.”*** Perhaps some of the brothers thought that this was a fair way of settling matters. But Judah did not. We will read about this in next week's Torah portion.

Genesis 44: 18 to 47: 27 (Vayigash).

This week's Torah portion is called Vayigash, meaning 'and he drew near'. Commencing in Genesis 44: 18, we read: ***'Then Judah approached him (Joseph), and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh."*** In the last Torah portion, we saw that the governor's cup was found in Benjamin's sack after the sons of Jacob completed their business and were on their way to Canaan. They were pursued by Joseph's house steward and it was agreed that the one with whom the cup is found, will become the governor's slave. However, we see here that Judah humbled himself before the governor (even before knowing his identity), pointing out that his father almost died of sorrow when he had lost a young son by the name of Joseph, and that his father was sure to die of sorrow if his youngest son Benjamin does not return home with his brothers. Judah is unknowingly making amends for his past mistakes, in plotting to kill Joseph, and eventually selling him into slavery. This lesson to learn is one of cause and effect: Judah who was many years before so willing to take a life, is here doing everything in his power to save the lives of both Benjamin and his father Jacob. He was making amends for his sin against Joseph by offering to redeem his brother Benjamin. When the fall of Adam brought death into the world, Elohim made amends by sending the Son into the world, as we read John 3: 17, ***"Elohim did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved by Him."*** This is confirmed in Romans 6: 23, as follows: ***'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of Elohim is eternal life in Messiah Yahshua our Master.'*** YHVH corrects us with the hope to restore us, not to judge and prove us guilty. We also read in Isaiah 30: 20 & 21, ***'Although YHVH has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. (21) And your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you***

turn to the right or to the left.’ Elohim’s way is positive explanation and correction, not damnation, like some believe.

In talking to Nicodemus, Yahshua said in John 3: 5 ***“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of Elohim.”*** Yahshua was saying that the outward sign of immersion was the first voluntary step in making amends. When our Father YHVH calls us through the truth of His word, we realize our need to make amends or reconciliation to our Father. We read accordingly in 2 Corinthians 5: 17 – 19, ***‘Therefore if any man is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (18) Now all these things are from Elohim, who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, (19) namely, that Elohim was in Messiah reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.’*** Even after immersion when we get estranged from YHVH by those sins which so beset us, each of us need to make amends (overcome by repenting) and return to Torah observance.

Judah’s account touches Joseph’s heart and he reveals himself to his brothers, saying in Genesis 45: 1 – 4: ***“Have everyone go out from me.” So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. (2) And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. (3) Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. (4) Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer to me.” And they came closer. And he said, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.”*** Joseph’s brothers stared at him in silence. I am positive some of them recalled his dream, of them bowing down to him. Joseph continued to explain to his brothers that all that happened to him was Elohim’s doing – He opened the way for Joseph to be taken to Egypt. Elohim gave Joseph the

ability to see what was going to happen in the future. It was for the good of many people, including them and their father that Elohim directed Joseph to prepare for the famine. He also told them that there remains five years of famine ahead and that they should return to their father, and tell him what happened and what is about to happen. Joseph also tells his brothers to bring their entire family and all their possessions to Egypt to live there during the remaining years of the famine; else they could lose all that they have.

We read in Genesis 45: 14 - 16, ***'Then he (Joseph) fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. (15) And he kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterwards his brothers talked with him. (16) Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants.'*** Joseph their long lost brother is finally revealed to his brothers. Can you imagine what will happen one day when the eyes of the Israelites will be opened to their own identity? When they realize that they are Israel and that Judah is their brother, and when Judah will recognize them as being his brothers Israel. This is about to happen in the near future. But something even more astounding is about to happen in the near future. Yahshua our Messiah is about to appear on the scene, as we read in Zechariah 12: 10: ***"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born."*** When Yahshua returns our Jewish brother's will be in synagogue, keeping Rosh Hashanah or as we know it, the Feast of Trumpets. This will be the start of a new age for the world, when Messiah will return to rule us from Jerusalem, for the next thousand years. The Jews, who are assembled in the Synagogue on that day, will see Yahshua's hands, like His disciple Thomas did, as is recorded in John 20: 28 as follows: ***'Thomas answered and said to Him (Yahshua), "My Master and my Elohim!"*** There is no doubt in my mind that YHVH will

save our Jewish brothers as part of all Israel, at that time. However, Yahshua will return when mankind will be in danger of destroying itself completely, as may be seen in verse 22 of Matthew 24: ***“And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.”*** Yahshua will return to save his chosen ones - the ones who are led by the Set-apart Spirit, to obey Torah, to go on into His millennium rule. We read about this in Revelation 11: 15 ***‘And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Master, and His Messiah; and He will reign forever and ever.’*** The nations will not welcome the return of Yahshua. They will fight against Him as we read in Revelation 17: 14, as follows: ***“These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of Masters and King of Kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”*** The saints made immortal – will rule with Messiah on the earth as we read in Revelation 5: 10 ***“And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our Elohim; and they will reign upon the earth.”***

The lost tribes of Israel will also get to know the real Yahshua at that time. He will not be a little baby in a manger, nor will He be the blond longhaired ‘C*h*r*i*s*t*’ that came to do away with His Father’s laws, with whom they are *‘familiar’*. Talking about the great tribulation in Ezekiel 6, we read in verses 4 – 10, ***“So your altars will become desolate, and your incense altars will be smashed; and I shall make your slain fall in front of your idols. (5) I shall also lay the dead bodies of the sons of Israel in front of their idols; and I shall scatter your bones around your altars. (6) In all your dwellings, cities will become waste and the high places will be desolate, that your altars may become waste and desolate, your idols may be broken and brought to an end, your incense altars may be cut down, and your works may be blotted out. (7) And the slain will fall among you, and you will know that I am YHVH. (8) However, I shall leave a remnant,***

for you will have those who escaped the sword among the nations when you are scattered among the countries. (9) Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations to which they will be carried captive, how I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes, which played the harlot after their idols; and they will loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed, for all their abominations. (10) Then they will know that I am YHVH; I have not said in vain that I would inflict this disaster on them.” However we also read in Zechariah 8: 11 – 13, ***‘But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days.’ Declares YHVH of hosts. (12) ‘For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce, and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.’ (13) ‘And it will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing. Do not fear; let your hands be strong.’***

Back to our Torah portion, we see that when Pharaoh heard about Joseph and his family, he was anxious to help them because of his high regard for Joseph. He supplied them with carriages to take grain and fodder back to Canaan. We also read in Genesis 45: 22 & 23, ***‘To each of them (Joseph’s brothers) he (Joseph) gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. (23) And to his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things in Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.’*** Then Joseph’s family left to travel back to Canaan. When they arrived home they told their father Jacob that Joseph is alive, and has become a ruler over all the land of Egypt. At first Jacob did not believe his sons. However, when he saw the things that Joseph sent for him, his spirit revived and he said in verse 28 of Genesis 45: ***“It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”***

So Jacob set out with all his possessions and when he came to Beersheba, he offered a sacrifice to Elohim. During that night YHVH spoke to Jacob in a dream, saying in verses 2 - 4 of Genesis 46: ***“Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.”*** (3) ***And He said, “I am Elohim, the Elohim of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there.*** (4) ***I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes.”*** We are given the names of Jacob’s descendants from verse 8 of Genesis 47. We read in verses 26 & 27, ***‘All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob’s sons, 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 to Egypt were seventy.’*** We are given the names of the male descendants of Jacob here, as we will later see how they increased in the land of Egypt, before Elohim brought them out through Moses. Seventy men went into Egypt and 600,000 men on foot besides children left Egypt. Together with women and children the Israelites numbered between two and a half to three million people.

Jacob sends Judah before him to Joseph, to show him the way to Goshen. As soon as Joseph heard that his father’s caravan had reached Egypt, he drove out in his chariot with his cavalymen to meet them. The reunion between a father and his long lost son was a joyous occasion. Joseph told his father that Pharaoh would like him to appear before him. He also told Jacob to tell Pharaoh that he and his sons tend animals for a living, even though the Egyptians regarded animals as sacred and was not fond of shepherds or herdsmen. Pharaoh at first asked five of Joseph’s brothers to appear before him, and inquired about their occupations. When he heard that they dealt in sheep and cattle, he told them to settle in the land of Goshen. This is in fact what Joseph hoped for, as the best pastures were in Goshen. When Jacob was brought before Pharaoh, he was treated with great honor, because Pharaoh

had respect for Joseph. During the following few weeks Joseph had the opportunity to visit his father and brothers on a regular basis. However, in the meantime the famine grew worse. The nations who lived too luxuriously during the seven good years were the first to feel the pinch. Joseph informed the surrounding nations that Egypt would accept farm animals as payment for grain. After the animals were turned in, there was a short period during which the people complained less. But, before long, the surrounding nations were in trouble again. So Joseph informed them that Pharaoh will accept land in exchange for food. Soon Pharaoh became the wealthiest landlord in that part of the world.

The food shortage became more of a problem as the time passed. Near the end of the famine, Joseph started moving people back to farms. He told them that Pharaoh now owns their property, but that he will provide seed for them to start cultivating new crops. In return they had to give Pharaoh a fifth of their harvest. Since the people considered this a fair exchange they agreed. After the seven years of famine was over, rain returned to the land and crops began to spring up in abundance. This resulted in the fact that the Egyptians had even a higher regard for Joseph. Joseph made a statute concerning the land of Egypt, stating that Pharaoh should have a fifth of all crops, only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's. We conclude this Torah portion in Genesis 47: 27, as follows: ***'Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen, and they acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous.'***

Genesis 47: 28 to 50: 26 (Vay'Chi).

This week's Torah portion is called Vay'Chi, meaning 'and he lived'. The things that happened in the small community in the book of Genesis is what is happening in the greater world today, as the offspring of these forefathers still live on in nations of today. In this the final Torah portion in the book of Genesis, we will discover the members of the lost tribes of Israel, not previously identified.

Jacob lived seventeen years in Egypt. His family and his children's families increased greatly in numbers during that time. Elohim changed Jacob's name to Israel, and it is for that reason that his descendants are called Israelites, a nation that developed whilst they lived in Egypt. Jacob believed that his life was nearly over, so he sent for Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, in order to bless them. I discussed Jacob's blessing of Joseph's two sons in a previous Torah portion. We learnt by comparing Scriptural prophesy that Ephraim became a commonwealth of nations and Manasseh became a great nation. We learnt that Joseph was the father of the English speaking nations of the world today. We identified Ephraim as Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa and Manasseh as the United States of America. It is for that reason that I insert the portion regarding the blessing of Joseph, even though out of sequence, here, as given in Genesis 49: 22 – 26, "**Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. (23) The archers bitterly attacked him, And shot at him and harassed him; (24) But his bow remained firm, And his arms were agile, From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), (25) From the Elohim of your father who helps you, And by the Almighty who blesses you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. (26) The blessings of your father Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; May they be on the head of Joseph, And**

on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.” As we saw in an earlier Torah portion Jacob blessed his two grandsons in Genesis 48: 15 – 20 before he blessed his sons. We also learnt that Ephraim received a double portion. After blessing Joseph’s sons, Jacob also blessed his other sons (as is recorded in Genesis 49), because he knew that his death was near.

Before identifying the lost ten tribes, I would like to make it clear that, in total agreement and as stated by Yair Davidi in his book entitled “The Tribes”, we are by no means racist. I wish to insert a direct quotation from page 401 of the above mentioned book, showing that we fully concur with Yair Davidi, a fellow Jewish Israelite:

“The Almighty created all mankind and everyone has free will to do right or wrong within the limitations imposed upon him by his surroundings and circumstance. Every person ideally should endeavor to do the best he can as well as he can with what he has which includes his inherited traits as well as his acquired ones. What applies to individuals is even more applicable to groups of common ancestry in which the communal effort re-inforces and empowers all of its members. In the same way as propensities for music and the like are often inherited so too are tribal traits for better or for worse. This does not mean that any group has the right to feel itself racially or otherwise somehow “superior” to any other or to be prejudiced against those who are not family members. By the individual and his group or sub-tribe understanding to what Tribal unit within the overall Israelite framework they belong or are attached to so will they be enabled to consciously contribute in the desired direction.

On the international level, this is a changing world, in which the same or similar forces and alignments periodically re-appear. It would help all concerned to be conscious of their ultimate familial connections as indicated in the BIBLE and what their interest should therefore be. More specifically, the Western peoples should know that the Jewish hold upon all of the Land of Israel is most desirable from the viewpoint of Scripture and is for the good of everybody. Also that as Israelites all Tribal members (especially those pertaining to the northern group headed by

JOSEPH) have an obligation (beyond the duty incumbent on every human being) to do right and to regulate the affairs of humanity in a positive direction. It would pay us all to read the Bible more frequently and to strive for deeper understanding.” The Scriptures clearly show that YHVH is dealing with the various nations at different times, as is recorded for us in the following Scriptures:

- Deuteronomy 32: 8, ***“When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel.”***
- Acts 17: 26 & 27, ***‘and He made from one (blood) every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, (27) that they should seek Elohim, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.’***

Continuing with this weeks Torah portion, we read in Genesis 49: 1 & 2, as follows: ***‘Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, “Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what shall befall you in the days to come. (2) Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father.”***

We are actually able to identify most of the sons of Israel, by the blessings each of them received from their father. Starting with his eldest son Reuben in Genesis 49: 3 & 4, we read: ***“Reuben, you are my first-born; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. (4) Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence, Because you went up to your father’s bed; Then you defiled it – he went up on my couch.”*** The French descend in the main from Jacob’s eldest son Reuben. They possess the dignity and finesse suitable for a first-born son. The Hebrew name Reuben – ראובן pronounced Ra-oo-ben. Ra-oo means ‘see’ and ben means ‘son’. Therefore the name Reuben means ‘see a son’.

We read in Joshua 22: 9, ***“And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh***

returned home and departed from the sons of Israel at Shiloh which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, to the land of their possession which they had possessed, according to the command of YHVH through Moses.” The Galatians descended from the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad and half-Manasseh, had once been located in the land of Israel east of the Jordan River. The area used to be known as Gilead and Bashan. The name of the Galatians was sometimes tendered as ‘Galadi’ and is derived from the Hebrew Gilead. The Galatians had a tendency to join in alliance with the Goths⁶. The Galatians were identifiable in Europe with both part of the Celts and Belgae and with early groups in Germany. Germany like Scandinavia received tribes from Scythia via Scandinavia and westward into Gaul and Britain. Gaul is the inclusive name for modern day France, Belgium, Switzerland and Holland. However, not all of the French were from the tribe of Reuben. The Huguenots identified as Calvinist Protestants from France, were according to Ruth Shecter, an Author and researcher from Beer Sheva University in Israel basically Hebraic in character and mindset.

Jews fled from Portugal and Spain during the Spanish inquisition, to France and Holland, Whilst Jews practiced their religion openly in France and Holland. Portugal and the Spanish colonies in the Americas, where the inquisition was imposed, lead to crypto-Jews secretly practicing Judaism. France, because it was next to Spain was a natural point of escape for Jews fleeing across the border. France was a Catholic country and expelled the Jews in 1394. Although Jews were expelled from France from the twelve through the fifteenth centuries, a large number of conversos remained behind in the south of France. The Sephardic remnant was quietly enlarged by ‘New Christians’ Judaizers or Marranos from Portugal and Spain. France officially opened its borders for fleeing conversos from Portugal and Spain in 1550. In 1615 Louis XIII published an edict insisting that all Jews leave

⁶ *The name Gad in Hebrew could be pronounced as ‘Goth’ meaning the deity or god named ‘troop’ or Luck.*

France within a month, but the Bordeaux parliament, prevented the expulsion from occurring. In 1656, Louis XIV issued an edict confining all 'New Christians' to Bordeaux and its surrounds. As time past, the crypto-Jews or 'New Christians' of southern France were referred to as Jews. However, whilst there were Sephardic communities who openly practiced Judaism, most of the Sephardic Jews in France disappeared. Some merged with Catholicism, whilst others later showed up in Holland.

The rise of Protestantism in France had a special appeal for the Jews. Protestantism had several positive factors that made it attractive for secret Jews, who wanted an outward Christian identity. The mutual enemy of Protestantism and Judaism was Catholicism. In addition Protestantism appealed to traders and the better educated and those who were better off financially. The Sephardic and Protestant or Huguenot areas overlapped. Huguenots were sometimes treated well, but were persecuted most of the time for not being Catholics. Thousands were killed or sent to prison. Because of persecution about 850,000 Huguenots converted to Catholicism and about 160,000 went into exile. Throughout the history of the Huguenots, the French Protestants had an affinity for the Jews. After 1685 about 400,000 Huguenots emigrated to Prussia, Holland, Britain, Switzerland and North America. Among the Dutch-dominated settlers in South Africa, were many of Huguenot origin. Many of the Huguenot family names that showed up in their host countries suggest a connection with Jewish origins. But a large number of crypto-Jews remained in the countries of their origins. Their Jewish names were changed when they were forced into baptism in Catholicism. Today there are many Portuguese names and surnames connected to trees, plants and animals which was a typical way in which crypto-Jews identified themselves after baptism, e.g. Pereira (pear tree), D'Almeida (Almond) or Da Costa (meaning from the coast). These names indicate ancestry going back to the hidden Jews of Portugal. It is for this reason that many Portuguese, as well as many of the French Huguenots and Dutch immigrants who fled Catholic persecution to the USA, Canada, the UK and

South Africa, are in fact Jewish. The historian Arthur J. Zuckerman believed that Jews were referred to as 'Goths', because they often came from the region of Narbonne which was also known as 'Gothia'.

Continuing in Genesis 49: 5 - 7, we read: ***“Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. (6) Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. (7) Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.”*** As I mentioned before, many of the teachers in both houses of Israel are probably from the tribe of Levi, who were scattered in Israel. We also read about Levi in Deuteronomy 33: 8 – 11, ***‘And of Levi he said, “Let Thy Thummim and Thy Urim belong to Thy godly man, Whom Thou didst prove at Massah, With whom Thou didst contend at the waters of Meribah; (9) Who said of his father and his mother, ‘I did not consider them’; And he did not acknowledge his brothers, Nor did he regard his own sons, For they observed Thy word, And kept Thy covenant. (10) “They shall teach Thine ordinances to Jacob, And Thy law to Israel. They shall put incense before Thee, And whole burnt offerings on Thine altar. (11) “O YHVH, bless his substance, And accept the work of his hands; Shatter the loins of those who rise up against him, And those who hate him, so that they may not rise again.”’***

We read in Genesis 49: 8 – 12, ***“Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father’s sons shall bow down to you. (9) Judah is a lion’s whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he lies down as a lion, And as a lion, who dares rouse him up? (10) The scepter shall not depart from Judah. Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (11) He ties his foal to the vine, And his donkey’s colt to the choice vine; He washes his***

garments in the wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. (12) His eyes are darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk." Judah will have the Oracles of Elohim, until Messiah comes to rule His people from Jerusalem. We may twist and turn as much as we like, YHVH does not change. Some insist that YHVH has taken away the Oracles of Elohim, from the Jews, because of their unbelief. In fact one of our previous associates used exactly those words, before leaving our fellowship, for those who follow the visible crescent moon, instead of the Hebrew calendar. However, Romans 3: 3 & 4, indicates that those who say so, are nothing but liars: **'What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of Elohim, will it? (4) May it never be! Rather, let Elohim be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "THAT THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED IN THY WORDS, AND MIGHTEST PREVAIL WHEN THOU ART JUDGED."**" Jews usually have dark reddish-brown eyes and milk white teeth. Yahshua our Messiah came in the form as a man, but was a Jew. I am positive that He looked nothing like some Christian Bibles portray him, i.e. with long blond hair and a refined European nose. There is no doubt that like as the Jews of today, He was from the Tribe of Judah. However, as explained earlier, there might have been Jews amongst the Huguenots (French) and Dutch Protestants who fled Catholic persecution, as well as Spaniards and Portuguese peoples who fled the Catholic (Spanish) inquisition. The modern day Jews descend mainly from the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Talking about Zebulon's blessing in Genesis 49: 13, we read: **"Zebulon shall dwell at the seashore; And he shall be a haven for ships, And his flank shall be toward Sidon."** Zebulon is identifiable with Holland, as only the Dutch dwell on the shores of the sea. The ship is the symbol of Holland. The Frisians are people who are concentrated in Northern Holland, but once spread along the coast from Scandinavia to Holland, Belgium and also into France. Moses blessed Zebulon in Deuteronomy 33: 18 & 19, saying: **"Rejoice, Zebulon, in your going forth, And, Issachar, in your tents. (19) They shall**

call peoples to the mountain; There they shall offer righteous sacrifices; For they shall draw out the abundance of the seas, And the hidden treasures of the sand.” Many South Africans are descended from the Dutch. Both Holland and South Africa are somehow busy on the seashores. A large part of Holland is below sea level; on shores of the sea and South Africa finds a good portion of its diamond wealth from the sands of the sea. The stone of Zebulon (on the Chief Priest’s Breastplate) was a diamond. South Africa produces most of the world’s diamonds today and are processed and traded with Belgium. Many of the white South Africans are from Dutch descent. The people of Flanders in Belgium also have a Dutch connection.

Before going on to another tribe, I insert here another quote from Yair Davidi’s book, entitled; “The Tribes” (pages 233 & 234), for the sake of my fellow South Africans, as follows:

“South Africa was colonized mainly by people of British and Dutch descent with others in addition to the presence of several different African nations. The white (and colored) peoples are those who in this case belong to Israel. The coat of arms of South Africa, prior to 1994 featured a lion (from Joseph- Britain) and two deer (a Springbok and an Oryx). The deer was a symbol of Naphtali of whom it was prophesied that he would be greatly blessed and receive ‘the west and the south’ in Deuteronomy 34: 23. The motto on the previous coat of arms of South Africa means ‘Unity is Strength’. Even though Naphtali was primarily to be found in Norway and Zebulon in Holland, Naphtali had also historical connections to the area of Holland and groups relating to Naphtali were to be found amongst the Dutch, many of whom settled in South Africa. In addition, Vikings from Denmark colonized northeast England. Vikings also settled in parts of Wales and Ireland and Tribes of Naphtali and Dan had given rise to the Viking movement. It may well be that amongst both the English and Dutch settlers of South Africa many were descendant from Naphtali. On the whole, however, the land should be attributed to the domain of Joseph. Things have now changed in South Africa and it remains to be seen what the fate of white people there will be.”

We read in Genesis 49: 14 – 15, ***“Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between the sheepfolds. (15) When he saw that a resting place was good And that the land was pleasant, He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens, And became a slave at forced labor.”*** The tribe of Issachar are to be found in present day Finland and Switzerland. Switzerland is a neutral republic, using its financial influence to ward off enemies and making it worth while for others to respect its neutrality. Finland also received settlers from Issachar, even though they are like Switzerland traditionally neutral, they defeated the Russians single-handedly in battle. The name Issachar in Hebrew connotes ‘rewards’ or ‘hire’. The Swiss are famous in the world for their banks which take commission for hiring out other people’s money. We also read in 1 Chronicles 12: 32, ***‘And the sons of Issachar, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their kinsmen were at their command.’*** Switzerland is famous for its reliable and accurate watches and in that sense they ‘understood the times.’ Finland also shows qualities relevant to Issachar and was also inhabited by the tribe of Issachar. (Even though Jacob called his son Issachar a strong donkey, he was actually paying him a compliment. Donkeys who are supposed to carry burdens have great strength. They do not easily fall under the burdens of life. However, we see in verse 14 of Genesis 49 that the donkey is lying down between two burdens. Things can get too much for us at times, even for the strongest among us. That is when we are required to lie down to rest. The two burdens spoken about here in the prophetic sense are the two main branches of the house of Israel, namely: Ephraim (a collective name for the ten lost tribes in Scriptures) and Judah. The two houses, are as we know, divided and must be made into one. The donkey sees a pleasant resting place, as we are told in verse 15. The resting place is the Land of Israel. This is where Ephraim and Judah will eventually be united as a physical and eventually a spiritual nation, and become one in faith and purpose, as we are told in Ezekiel 37. The donkey is a type of our

determination to bear the burdens that YHVH gives us, without complaining. If we are called to do the work of YHVH we have no choice: We either serve Him 100% or perish.⁷

Continuing in Genesis 49: 16 - 18, we read: ***“Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. (17) Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse’s heels, So that his rider falls backward. (18) “For Thy salvation I wait, O Elohim.”*** We have identified the tribe of Dan in a previous Torah portion, with mainly Ireland, but also with the Danes and the Welsh people. Ireland has a harp on its coat of Arms. The harp is associated with King David. The flag of Wales depicts a dragon, another symbol of the tribe of Dan.

We read about Gad in Genesis 49: 19, as follows: ***“As for Gad raiders shall raid him, But he shall raid at their heels.”*** The tribe of Gad dominated Sweden, whose major constituent divisions bear names reminiscent of Gad and his sons.

Jacob’s blessing for Asher appears in Genesis 49: 20, like this: ***“As for Asher, his food shall be rich, And he shall yield royal dainties.”*** The olive tree was the traditional symbol for the tribe of Asher. Asher was eventually found mainly in the northern part of England and Scotland where they intermarried with the descendants of Joseph. Moses blessed Asher in Deuteronomy 33: 24, saying: ***“More blessed than sons of Asher; May he be favored by his brothers, And may he dip his foot in oil.”*** We know that this refers to the oil found in the North Sea area between Scotland and Norway. Asher is positively identified as being the Scots.

We read about Naphtali’s blessing in Genesis 49: 21, as follows: ***“Naphtali is a doe let loose, He gives beautiful words.”*** The Naphtalites were from the 10 Tribes of Israel and

⁷ The bracketed section at the end of the blessings given to Issachar even though not verbatim, comes from a Parasha given by Nazarene Yisraelite Rabbi T. Mordecai Mitchell exactly one year ago.

were reported to have migrated via the Russian Central Asia to Scandinavia. The Naphtalite Vikings eventually became the Norwegians.

Finally, we read about Benjamin's blessing in Genesis 49: 27, ***“Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; In the morning he devours the prey, And in the evening he divides the spoil.”*** Part of the tribe of Benjamin became the basic stock of the so-called Normans. The Normans used the symbol of a wolf, which is the same symbol used by the tribe of Benjamin. The rest of the tribe of Benjamin, are found in the modern day nation of Belgium.

YHVH has from the time that He called Israel out of Egypt planned for them to be His model nation. He wanted them to show the other nations of the world how to live and serve Him. Because YHVH never changes His plan is still in force and will remain so for ever. The Scriptures are filled with references to the nation of Israel from Genesis to Revelation. Even those who are not bloodline Israelites have the opportunity to become the Israel of Elohim, as we read in such scriptures as Galatians 3: 26 – 29, Galatians 6: 16 and Romans 9:6. We read finally in Revelation 21 & 22 when The New Jerusalem comes down to earth it will only have 12 gates; one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. There will be no gates for the various denominations of Christianity or for any other religion for that matter. The laws applicable in the Kingdom of Elohim will be the same ones given to Moses at Mount Sinai. We will keep the Feast Days as given in Leviticus 23 and the Kosher Laws given in Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14, Genesis 32:32 and Leviticus 3: 16 & 17.

Many Christians do not want to accept the fact that we are Israel and that the Jews were destined to preserve the Oracles of Elohim for all Israel, over the past 2000 years. They preserved the Hebrew language, the timing of the Sabbath, Set-apart days of Elohim and the oral Torah regarding the Koshering of food, etc. Many Nazarene/Messianic Jews/Israelites do not want to accept that the Jews have the

Oracles of Elohim, and by so doing they contradict (or deny) the word of YHVH. I pray that by this exposure of the identity of the Tribes of Israel, many will begin to realize the value of the Word of Elohim in their lives and will as a result determine to obey the Word of Elohim, rather than the doctrines of men.

Most of the material that I used in this Torah portion comes from Yair Davidy's book and web page. I believe that each and every one of us should make an in dept study of his books and the material available on his web page. Yair Davidy may be contacted at: Brit-Am Israel, P.O. Box 595, Jerusalem. 91004. Israel. E-mail: britam@netvision.net.il