

PARASHAT MIKETZ

(AT THE END)

GENESIS 41-44:17

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading

1 Kings 3:15–4:1

B'rit Chadashah

Stephen on Joseph: **Acts 7:9–16**

What Goes Around Comes Around: **Matthew 7:2**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 41:1 Pharaoh's Dream
- 41:8 The Cupbearer Remembers Joseph
- 41:14 Pharaoh Summons Joseph and Retells His Dream
- 41:25 Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dream
- 41:37 Joseph Becomes Viceroy Over Egypt
- 41:47, He Implements His Plan to Save Egypt
- 41:50 Ephraim and Manasseh Are Born
- 41:53 Famine Ravages Egypt
- 42:1 Jacob Sends His Sons to Egypt to Buy Food
- 42:6 Joseph's Brothers Bow to Him
- 42:18 Joseph Conceals His Identity and Tests Them
- 42:21 The Brothers' Guilty Conscience and Repentant Heart
- 42:23 Joseph Chooses a Hostage
- 42:25 Joseph Returns Their Money
- 42:29 The Brothers Return to Jacob and Recount All to Him
- 43:1 The Brothers Return to Egypt With Benjamin
- 43:16 Joseph Sees Benjamin and Tests and Queries His Brothers
- 43:30 Joseph's Heart Is Touched at the Family Meal
- 44:1 Joseph Tests His Brothers One Last Time: Benjamin Is Accused of Thievery and the Brothers Return to Egypt

—44:16 Judah Steps Forward to Speak on Behalf of All the Brothers

Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

LET'S NOTE A STARTLING STATEMENT from Orthodox Jewish sources: Mesorah Publications *ArtScroll Bereishis*, vol. 1(b) states in its commentary on Genesis 48:19 regarding Ephraim:

“R. Munk explains: ‘while it is true that the dispersion [of the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh] was caused by the unfaithfulness and sinfulness of Ephraim’s descendants (Hos 7:8ff), Jacob’s blessing was not in vain for “they will return to God” and will have their share in the world to come (*Sanhedrin* 110b).’ And R. Eliezer adds: ‘Even the darkness in which the Ten Tribes were lost will one day become as radiant as the day’ (according to the version of *Avos d’Rabbi Nosson* 36). And in the perspective of history, did not these exiled children of the Patriarchs enlighten the nations among whom they were scattered? They did so by teaching their conquerors the fundamental ideas of the knowledge and love of God, ideals they had never forsaken. **Hence they too have a messianic vocation and their Messiah, the Mashiach ben Yosef, Messiah son of Joseph (*Succah* 52a), also called Messiah son of Ephraim (*Targum Yonasan* on Exodus 40:11), will play an essential role in humanity’s redemption, for he will be the precursor of the Mashiach ben David, Messiah Son of David.** It is therefore not surprising to find that the prophet Jeremiah (3:12) speaks affectionately of Ephraim. In this light, Jacob’s words, ‘his offspring’s fame will fill the nations nation,’ assume the significance of a blessing” (pp. 2121–2122). (emphasis added)

What the rabbis are saying here is that Messiah the Son of Yosef/Joseph—the Messiah whose coming precedes that of Messiah the Son of David—is the Messiah that causes the House of Ephraim (that is the ten northern tribes of Israel, many of whose descendants are currently found within the Christian church) to return to YHVH. Yeshua (Jesus), the son of Joseph, of whom the life and ministry of Joseph, the son of Jacob, was an antetype or prophetic shadow picture, is the very Messiah, unbeknownst to them, of whom they speak.

Scripture Reveals Two Messiahs Are to Come:

One Who Will Be Like Joseph and One Who Will Be Like David

In Jewish literature, the Messiah whose life would resemble Joseph was referred to as the suffering servant or “Messiah Son of Joseph” (*Mashiach Ben Joseph*), while the Messiah whose life and ministry would resemble David was referred to as warrior king or “Messiah Son of David” (*Mashiach Ben David*). The Jewish sages came to this conclusion because when reading the messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures (OT) they saw two different, even conflicting Messiahs whose roles were very different from each other. What was not known by the ancient Jewish sages, and was a subject of much debate, was which Messiah would come first, when he would come, would he be the same person or two different individuals, and how much time would separate the two comings.

For believers in Yeshua, this does not seem like a dilemma, for we look back in time and can see clearly that Yeshua fulfilled the Suffering Servant role at his first coming, and will fulfill the Conquering King role at this second coming. But two thousand years ago, without the benefit of historical perspective, this was not so easy a matter to figure out. Even the disciples were at times in a quandary as to which mission Yeshua was to fulfill as evidenced by their last question to him before his final ascension, “Will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 2:6).

Let’s review some of the passages in the Hebrew Scriptures that point to the two different Messiahs:

Messiah Son of Joseph:

- ☞ The Suffering Servant will die a martyr’s death for the sins of his people (Isa 52:13–53:12).
- ☞ In the end of times, the Jews will look upon him whom they pierced and mourn for him as one mourns for his only son (Zech 12:9–10).
- ☞ Verse one of Psalm 22 are some of the last words to come out of Yeshua’s mouth while he hung dying on the cross. This psalm predicts certain aspects of the Suffering Servant Messiah’s ministry.
- ☞ John 1:45 may be a double entendre allusion to Yeshua as being not only the (adopted) son of Joseph, the husband of Mary, but to his being Messiah Son of Joseph, as well.

Messiah Son of David:

- ☞ He will restore righteous government in Jerusalem (Isa 1:26)
- ☞ He shall judge the nations (Isa 2:4)
- ☞ All on earth shall worship him (Isa 2:17).
- ☞ He shall rule the earth and destroy the wicked (Isa 11:4).
- ☞ Under his rulership, all Israelites will be restored to their homeland (Isa 11:12).
- ☞ Matthew 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30,31; 21:9,15; 22:42 are references to the expectations of the Jewish followers of Yeshua that he was Messiah Son of David.

Let us continue from where we left off in last week's Parashah and continue chronicling the striking similarities between the life of Joseph and the ministry of our Savior and Redeemer, Yeshua the Messiah. May your faith in Yeshua and in the Scriptures as the inspired and prophetic Word of Elohim be strengthened! (We are indebted to the book, *Gleanings in Genesis*, by Arthur W. Pink, for much of this material.)

- ☞ **45:7–9**, Joseph was delivered from prison by the hand of Elohim. How did Yeshua get out of his “prison” of the grave? (Acts 2:24,32; 10:40)
- ☞ **41:14; 45:7–9**, Joseph was exalted from prison (death) to throne—to number two in command at the right hand of the king. What happened to Yeshua? (Acts 2:33-34; 5:31; 7:55-56; Eph 1:20; Phil 2:6–9; Heb 1:13; 1 Pet 3:22) If you are “risen with Yeshua the Messiah” and are “in Yeshua” what will likewise happen to you? (Eph 2:5–6)
- ☞ **41:16,25,28**, Joseph is seen as a revealer of secrets. What was Yeshua's mission on earth? (John 17:8; 8:28; 12:49)
- ☞ **41:27**, Joseph warned of a coming danger, and urged his hearers to make suitable provision to meet it. What did Yeshua warn his hearers about? (Matt 11:11–24; 12:36; 15:13; 21:44; 25:31–46; John 3:15–21,36; 5:24–30; 15:2,6)
- ☞ **41:42–43**, In his new royal position, Joseph was publicly recognized. He wore royal garments, a gold chain and a ring of authority. All were to bow to Joseph. Read the description of the glorified Yeshua in Revelation 1:12–16 and 5:13. Every knee must likewise bow to the exalted Yeshua. (Phil 2:10)
- ☞ **41:45–46**, Joseph started his life's work and was given an Egyptian wife when he was 30 years old. What happened in Yeshua's life when he was 30 years old? Yeshua started his ministry and was (re)married (literally, betrothed, in a Hebraic sense) to Israel, his spiritual bride (made up of those who have the faith of Yeshua and keep his commandments, Rev 12:17; 14:12), when he and his disciples drank the third Cup of Redemption (which corresponds to the Cup of Acceptance in the Jewish wedding ceremony) at the Passover Seder just prior to his crucifixion (Matt 26:27–29). Who arranged Joseph's marriage? (Gen 41:45) Who arranged Yeshua's marriage? Who arranged Yeshua's wedding? Read the Parable of the Wedding Banquet in Matthew 22 starting in verse two.
- ☞ **41:46**, Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh to carry forth his mission in Egypt. In Scripture, what does Egypt spiritually represent? From whence did Yeshua come when sent on his earthly mission to spiritual Egypt? (John 13:3; 16:28)
- ☞ **41:6**, Joseph traveled throughout the land of Egypt fulfilling his ministerial responsibilities. Did Yeshua also have an itinerant ministry? (Matt 4:23; 9:35)
- ☞ **41:55**, Joseph alone dispensed bread to a perishing and hungry world and to his own brethren. Did Yeshua's ministry fulfill this prophetic shadow-picture as well? (Read John 6:48–58.)
- ☞ **41:56–57**, Joseph became a savior to those who were famished in all the surrounding countries. Who did Yeshua come to save? (John 3:16; 2 Pet 3:9; Rev 5:9). Who was and is the Savior of the whole world? (John 4:42; 1 Tim 4:10; Tit 3:4; 1 John 4:14)
- ☞ **41:49**, Joseph had unlimited resources to meet the need of the all those who were hungry. Are the resources of Yeshua limited to meet the needs of all those who would come to him? (Eph 1:7; 2:4; 3:8; Col 2:9; Rom 10:12; 1 Pet 1:3)

Prophetic Shadow-Pictures of the Two-Houses of Israel:

- 1 **42:6,8**, Joseph's brothers did not recognize him, though he recognized them. Who were Joseph's sons? (Read Gen 41:50–52.) Who did they become? (See Ezek 37:16; Hos 6:10; 11:12; 2 Chr 30:1, 10–11.) Prophetically speaking, will Joseph's brothers, of whom Judah (whose descendants are the modern-day Jews) was the leader, recognize Joseph's descendants—the House of Ephraim—who constitute a major portion of the lost sheep of the House of Israel today (Matt 10:6; 15:24)? To help us to answer this question, we must be aware of the fact that the Jewish rabbis have long recognized that their Ephraimite brothers are scattered out there somewhere, but they do not know where. They also know that someday they will return and all the brothers will once again be reunited in fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Rabbi Jacob Immanuel Schochet acknowledges that through the efforts of the Messiah the **ingathering of the exiles, including the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom, will occur, and they will be reunited with Judah and the whole house of Israel where they will serve YHVH together** as stated in Ezekiel 20:32–37, 40–42 (*Mashiach—the Principles of Mashiach and the Messianic Era In Jewish Law and Tradition*, pp. 20–22, by Jacob Immanuel Schochet quoting from *Sanhedrin* 110b; *Bamidbar Rabba* 16:25; etc.). (emphasis added)
- 2 Did Joseph's brothers recognize him as their “savior”? To what degree have the modern Jews accepted Messiah, Son of Joseph, the Suffering Servant as their Savior? (Read Isa 8:14 and Rom 11:25.)
- 3 **42:17–19,24**, Joseph made known to his brothers a way of deliverance through substitution. Who in the last two thousand years have been making known to the world the way of deliverance through the substitutionary (sacrificial, blood atonement) work of Messiah Yeshua the Son of Joseph at the cross of Calvary?

Some Additional Points to Ponder:

- 4 **41:9**, YHVH's timing is perfect. Do you have the trust in him to believe that for your life? Had the chief butler remembered Joseph prior to this how would things have been different for Joseph? Would he have had the chance to interpret Pharaoh's dream? Would he have returned to Canaan? How would the history of the nation of Israel been different? Would YHVH's purposes have been fulfilled?
- 5 **41:16**, After all Joseph had endured—multiple false accusations, murder attempts, enslavement and imprisonment—a lesser man might have lost his faith in Elohim, but not Joseph. In this verse, what is evidence that he hadn't given up hope in his Heavenly Father and that he had not lost sight of the dreams and promises from YHVH made to him many years earlier? Do you give honor to YHVH whenever you can—even to strangers? Doesn't the fact that he was able to do so in front of one of the most powerful monarchs of his day show evidence of his strong and abiding faith in and fear of YHVH?
- 6 **41:38**, *A man in whom the Spirit of Elohim is*. Would this be the testimony of those heathens around you about you? If not, why? What changes in your life should you make to insure that it would be?
- 7 **41:50–52**, Joseph was blessed in Egypt with a wife and two sons. What was the ethnic origin of his wife? Therefore, were his sons full-blooded Israelites? What would eventually happen to Joseph's descendants when in captivity in foreign nations? Would they too mix their seed with those of non-Israelite blood resulting in mixed children racially? (Read Hosea 7:8 and 8:8.) Prophetically, would YHVH accept these children of mixed marriages to be grafted in to the olive tree of Israel to become full citizens with equal standing and rights as full-blooded Israelites? (Read Romans 11:13–24.) Who does Paul say these Gentiles are? (See Rom 9:25–26 and then read the Hosea passage Paul is quoting from Hos 2:23. Also read Eph 2:11–19; Rom 4:16; 9:8, 11; and Gal 3:7, 9, 14, 28, 29.)

HAFTORAH READING—1 KINGS 3:15-4:1

Both the Parashah and Haftorah passages deal with prophetic dreams by kings and the future implications of those dreams upon their kingdoms.

Immediately after Solomon's dream where he asks YHVH for wisdom, he is confronted with the opportunity to demonstrate his new gift of divinely originating wisdom. Immediately after Solomon's dream where he asks YHVH for wisdom, he is confronted with the opportunity demonstrate his new gift of divinely originating wis-

dom. Is this story of the two unchaste women a prophetic shadow-picture of some future events to transpire with regard to the nation of Israel (notice verse 8)? Let's examine the facts, and then see what prophetic implications may be contained in the story.

The Facts Presented in the Text:

- ☞ The story concerns two unchaste women.
- ☞ The two women live in one house.
- ☞ No husband is mentioned.
- ☞ The first woman gave birth to a child, and three days later the second woman gave birth to her child.
- ☞ The second woman killed her offspring when she smothered it while sleeping.
- ☞ The second woman, instead of grieving the loss of her child, sought to rob the first woman of her child when at midnight, while the first woman slept, she exchanged her dead child for the other woman's live one.
- ☞ One woman cherished her offspring, the other did not.
- ☞ Both women stood before Solomon, the king of Israel.
- ☞ The name *Solomon* (in Hebrew, *Shlomo*) derives from the Hebrew word *shalom* meaning "peace."
- ☞ Solomon proposed to divide the living child by a sword and give half to each mother.
- ☞ The real mother was willing to give her child to the other (lying) mother rather than to see it killed.
- ☞ The story does not tell us which mother, the first or second, was telling the truth.

Possible Prophetic Interpretation

- ☞ In many places, Scripture likens the nation of Israel in its apostate or backslid condition to an unchaste woman (e.g. Jer 3; 18:13–15; Ezek 16; the Book of Hosea).
- ☞ Scripture shows that the nation of Israel went from being a single woman (spiritually), to a woman with a split personality, if you will, when she became two nations (the Southern Kingdom or the House of Judah and the Northern Kingdom or House of Israel, Samaria or Ephraim). In this state, the Scripture likens her to two unchaste sisters: Aholah (Samaria) and Aholibah (Judah). (See Ezek 23:4ff.)
- ☞ Both women give birth to children—three days apart. If these two unchaste women symbolize the two houses of Israel representing the Jews (the House of Judah) and the Christians (the House of Israel/Ephraim), and three days, according to the year-for-a-day understanding of biblical prophecy (Ps 90:4; Hos 5:13–6:3; 2 Peter 3:8), represent three millennia what can we deduce? Could the first unchaste woman be Judah who gave birth to a child and killed it (i.e., Messiah Yeshua at his first coming), and then wanted to take the child of the other woman (Ephraim or Christianity) when he was born three prophetic days or three thousand years later (Yeshua at his second coming) and claim it as its own? Possibly, but the passage does not tell us which woman was which. So we can't assume that the first woman was Judah. Indeed, there were many of Judah (or the Jews) who *did* accept Yeshua as their Messiah in the first century, but not long afterwards the Gentile church, in a sense, "killed" the Jewishness of the Messiah and substituted for it a paganized, Greco-Roman Western "Jesus." Perhaps much of Christianity still longs for the Jewish baby it "killed" when it divorced itself from its Jewish roots. After all, what is the focal point of the greatest holiday in Christendom to this day? The babe in the manger!
- ☞ What can we conclude from this? Perhaps this passage is saying that both Houses of Israel are guilty of "killing" their Messiah-Child: the Jews literally, and the Christians spiritually.
- ☞ Now let's speculate on the end-time implications of this story. Notice that both women appear before Solomon, the king of Israel, whose name means "peace." Who is coming back as the Prince of Peace (in Hebrew, *Sar Shalom*) to rule from Jerusalem over Israel and all the nations of the world during a one-thousand-year reign of glory and splendor like that of Solomon?
- ☞ At his second coming, Yeshua is coming as the Righteous Judge to divide the goats from the sheep (Matt 25:31–46), the unrighteous from the righteous, those who are liars versus those who abide in YHVH's truth. In fact, at Yeshua's return, what proceeds from his mouth? (See Rev 19:15, 21.) In Scripture,

what does a sword represent? (See Eph 6:17 and Heb 4:12.) How will King Yeshua judge all people? (See John 12:48; Rev 19:13; Deut 18:18–19.)

- ☞ In our end-time scenario, Dr. Frank Morgan speculates that the sword could also represent the great tribulation, which occurs at the end of the age just before the coming of the Messiah. It will be during the great tribulation when the wheat (the righteous ones of YHVH) will be separated from the tares (the wicked ones). The woman (faithful Israelites from both houses of Israel) who truly loves the Son (Yeshua) is revealed through this turmoil. Stated another way, the King (Yeshua) is able to discern the true “mother” (believers from both houses of Israel) through this tribulation. We are given a clue as to who the real “mother” of the Messiah is by Yeshua himself in Luke 8:21, “And he answered and said unto them, ‘My mother and my brethren are these which hear the Word of Elohim, and do it.’”
- ☞ But since the story of the two unchaste women does not leave us with a clear conclusion as to which woman is Judah and which is Ephraim, would it be safe to deduce that within each of the two houses of Israel there are sheep and goats: those who have heard and done the will of the Father, who have abided in the truth of his Word, and who loved and cherished the Messiah, and those who are wicked and unfaithful?
- ☞ Morgan observes that while before the king, the two women argued as to whom the child belonged. Will this happen at the return of Messiah Yeshua as well? Will the two houses of Israel be arguing about to whom Messiah belongs? Judaism will be saying, “yours died (was crucified),” this one is ours! Christianity will be saying: No! You killed yours and now you intend to take ours! In this way, these two women, depicting the two houses of Israel, are vying for “ownership” of the “Son.”
- ☞ David Pennington suggests the following about this story. Maybe this could be looked at in a reversal of intentions. Instead of dividing the child with the sword, we should be bringing it back together into one body (Yeshua). The Torah has been used for too long to cause division (separation of child); its purpose was to bring about unity not division. The sword of the Spirit is the word of Elohim (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12). The two harlots represent the sisters, Judah and Israel. Solomon represents peace and though he brought forth a sword to divide, Yeshua told Peter to put up the sword (John 18:11). Perhaps the reason neither woman was definitively identified was because both Judah (the Jews) and Israel (or Ephraim/the Christians, see Rom 4:16; 9:8–11; Gal 3:7,9,14,28–29; Eph 2:11–19) have been guilty of the death of the other child (Messiah Son of Joseph, Yeshua at his first coming) and both claim motherhood of the living child (Messiah Son of David, Yeshua at his second coming).

We would like to give special thanks to Lynn Davis, Dr. Frank Morgan, Batya Wootten, David Pennington and Trudy Ewing for their insight into this enigmatic passage of Scripture, which confirmed my thoughts and yielded some additional nuggets. The Rabbinic Jewish and Christian commentaries I read on this passage contributed little on its meaning and said nothing about any prophetic implications.

