

וַיִּגַּשׁ

VAYIGASH/AND HE DREW NEAR Bereshith/Genesis 44:18-47:27

We have reached the **climax** between **Joseph and his brothers**. Our parasha begins with **Judah pouring out his heart** to who he thinks is the **Egyptian governor**, but is actually his **brother, Joseph**. It was **Judah** who had years earlier **cooperated** with his brothers to **betray Joseph**. Now, **Joseph** has been able to **recreate** something of the **original situation**. The **brothers** are again in **control** of the **life and death** of a **son of Rachel**. This time, however, **Judah** will lay aside his **fear of imprisonment** and perhaps even **death** at the **hands of this Egyptian** to **defend** and **rescue** his **brother, Benjamin**.

Joseph has been able to **test** and **reveal the heart** of his brother, **Judah**, and finds that these **experiences** have brought **Judah** to the place of **repentance and sacrifice**. It is a **love** similar to what **Yeshua** taught and **demonstrated**:

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

A **repentant Judah** pleads with **Joseph** on **behalf of a father** who has already **"lost"** a **child** dear to his heart. Is this an **end-times** picture of **repentant Jews**, who **recognize** that they **"lost"** their **brother and Messiah** the **first time** around? So, who is **Benjamin**?

Let's read a little of **Judah's** plea:

Bereshith 44:20 "And we said to my adonai, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.'²¹ "Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.'²² "And we said to my adonai, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.'²³ "But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.'²⁴ "So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my adonai.²⁵ "And our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.'²⁶ "But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'

According to verses 23 and 26, it is **only Benjamin** who can **reveal Joseph's true face** to **Israel**. Last week's commentary gave these **facts about Benjamin**:

- **Beloved** by the **father** and **full brother** to **Joseph** (Bereshith 44:20)
- **Born** near **Bethlehem**
- **Rachel** named him **Benoni** (**Son of Sorrows**)
- **Father** named him **Benjamin** (**Son of my right hand**)
- Was **not involved** in the **conspiracy** to **sell Joseph**

It is my contention, **in this context**, that **both Joseph and Benjamin** are **pictures** of the **Messiah**. In **Acts 2**, **Peter** tells a **story reminiscent** of **Joseph** and his **brothers**. His **audience**, **Yeshua's brethren** of the tribe of **Judah** are told that they **crucified their Messiah**. The **Father**, however, **brought Him back** and they would one day **bow to Him**, and He would **rule over them**:

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Yeshua of Nazareth, a Man attested by Yah to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which Yah did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know --²³ "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of Yah, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;²⁴ "whom Yah raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it...³² "This Yeshua Yah has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.³³ "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of Yah, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.³⁴ "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ׀׀׀׀ said to my Adonai, "Sit at My right hand,³⁵ Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." '36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that Elohim has made this Yeshua, whom you crucified, both Adonai and Messiah." 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Yeshua the Messiah for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Adonai our Elohim will call."

As in our parasha, there will come a point in time when **Judah (Jews)** will not be able to bear the thought of going to the Father without the Son (Benjamin/Yeshua). At that time, they will weep as they recognize the One whom they pierced (Joseph/Yeshua):

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn."

Judah finds himself in an interesting situation. I'm not sure how this could play out in end-times, but **Judah** is not aware of the identity of the one to whom he is pleading with. When **Joseph** hears **Judah** expressing concern for **Jacob (their Father)** and responsibility for **Benjamin**, he hears the words he didn't hear 20 years earlier. While **Judah** might have intended to stir the soul and arouse the mercy of the **Egyptian**, his words of **humility, caring, concern, and repentance** stirred an altogether different soul:

Bereshith 45:1 Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers.² And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.³ Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.

This awesome reunion of all of the brothers of Israel together with their Messiah takes place in the land of exile and not in the land of Israel. The brothers have left the land due to famine, have found reconciliation, and will now be settled in Egypt until the Almighty takes them out in the Exodus. Now remember **Joseph** represents not only the **Messiah**, but also the **body** of Messiah. He is in a position to nurture and provide for the rest of Israel during the difficult years to come. Let that sink in as to what **YOUR** role could be, should this pattern be repeated.

Now it is fairly easy for us to see that the revelation of **Joseph** is a picture of the revelation of **Yeshua, the Messiah**. It is interesting that there is an entire book of the Bible entitled "The Revelation of Yeshua the Messiah". We tend to read that book looking for various revelations concerning the future. The intent of Revelation, however, is that through the prophesied events the veil will be lifted from the eyes of ALL

of us, so that we can clearly see the Messiah for who He really is! I think there will be some surprises and some humbling experiences for all of us!

Let's move on. Joseph has now revealed his true identity to his brothers. The brothers are reunited and Joseph sends them back home to share the good news with their father:

Bereshith 45:26 And they told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them.²⁷ But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.

It is understandable that Jacob's initial reaction was disbelief! As his sons relate the story to him, Jacob begins to believe them, however, the text indicates that it was not until "he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him" that his "spirit revived." Let's think about this for a moment. Do you think a man like Jacob, whose life revolved around the covenantal promises would have been completely elated that his son was now an Egyptian ruler? Some parents might have been extremely proud of the fact that their son was the governor of Egypt. But Jacob wasn't interested in whether his son had become rich, famous, or successful. He was more interested in whether he still knew Torah!

And what is it about seeing the "carts" that caused his spirit to be "revived?" These carts were not simple wagons. They belonged to the Egyptian government and would have been emblazoned with Pharaoh's royal insignia. In fact it was Pharaoh who initially commanded for the carts to be sent out:

Bereshith 45:16 Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Joseph's brothers have come." So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.¹⁷ And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan.'¹⁸ 'Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'¹⁹ 'Now you are commanded -- do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come.

Yet in Bereshith 45:27, Torah tells us that Jacob saw the carts that "Joseph had sent." Apparently, Joseph had done something in order to express his "ownership" on these carts. They became the carts that "Joseph sent" because of some secret, encoded message. Joseph sent some sort of sign to his father, and this is the reason why Jacob's spirit "revived." The sages give us insight into this. It is based on a word play of two similar words:

- Cart (agala) עֲגָלָה
- Heifer (egla) עֵגְלָה

As the teaching goes, before Joseph had been sold, Jacob and Joseph spent a lot of time studying Torah. Both Jacob and Joseph remembered their last Torah conversation. Thus, when Joseph wished to assure his father that he had not only survived physically, but also that he had remained faithful to his Torah beliefs, he sent him a clue. It comes from the law of the decapitated calf (egla arufa - עֵרֶוּפָה עֵגְלָה), found in Devarim/Deuteronomy 21:1-9. This is a situation where a corpse is found lying in a field with his killer unknown. In such a situation, the elders of the city which is closest to the crime scene, take a young heifer (egla - עֵגְלָה) to a barren valley where they break its neck and recite:

Devarim 21:7 ... 'Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen it. ⁸ 'Provide atonement, O יהוה', for Your people Israel, whom You have redeemed, and do not lay innocent blood to the charge of Your people Israel.' And atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the blood. ⁹ "So you shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you when you do what is right in the sight of יהוה'.

The people of the city are asking יהוה' to **forgive the people**, so they will not **bear the guilt** for **what has happened to the victim**. This is the **same point Joseph** attempted to **convey to his brothers** from the moment he **revealed himself**:

Bereshith 45:5 "But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for Elohim sent me before you to preserve life.

Bereshith 45:8 "So now it was not you who sent me here, but Elohim; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and adonai of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Joseph wants to get the **message across to his father** that **no one is to be held responsible** for the **strange events** that led to his **disappearance**. He transmits a **message** to his **father** through **subtle means**...by referring to the **decapitated calf** (implied through the carts). In other words, he is saying, **"I do not wish to divulge the circumstances in which I went missing...let us simply say that nobody bears the guilt. Elohim has atoned for it all, because it was all part of His plan."**

Now, I know that **Torah** was **not yet given** from **Mount Sinai**. Yet, we know that **Torah** is **eternal** and the **patriarchs** had **already implemented much of Torah** into their lives. It is hard to know exactly what had **been given to them** by the Almighty and was **already being taught** in the **"tents of Shem."** This is what makes this teaching plausible to me.

We are not surprised that **Israel intends to go to Egypt to see his son**:

Bereshith 45:28 Then Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

We wonder what **Jacob's plans** were. Did he **intend to return to Canaan** after his visit with his son? We do know that **Joseph** had **already told his brothers** what they were to do:

Bereshith 45:9 "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "Elohim has made me adonai of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. ¹⁰ "You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ "There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine." ' "

It still must have been a bit of a **quandary** for **Jacob**. He would have **remembered** that his **father, Isaac**, was **not allowed to leave the land** during **times of famine**:

Bereshith 26:1 There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar. ² Then יהוה' appeared to him and said: "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ³ "Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father.

Therefore, it is **understandable** that **Jacob** would want to stop at **Be'er Sheva** and **pray to the Elohim of "his father Isaac"...**the one who was not allowed to leave the land:

Bereshith 46:1 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Be'er Sheva, and offered sacrifices to the Elohim of his father Isaac.

Be'er Sheva is also the place where **Isaac** had received **confirmation of the covenant**:

Bereshith 26:23 Then he went up from there to Be'er Sheva.²⁴ And אלהים appeared to him (Isaac) the same night and said, "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 My servant Abraham's sake."²⁵ So he built an altar there and called on the name of אלהים, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

Jacob himself had **travelled through Be'er Sheva** the **first time he left the Promised Land**, thus he is **paralleling his exit** from the land with the **path taken decades earlier**:

Bereshith 28:10 Now Jacob went out from Be'er Sheva and went toward Haran.

The **Almighty** provides **Israel** with **what he needs to hear**:

Bereshith 46:2 Then Elohim spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am (הנה אנכי)." ³ So He said, "I am El, the Elohim of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of 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 put his hand on your eyes."

The **calling out of Jacob's name** and his **response (Here I am – Hineini - הנה אנכי)** can be **paralleled** with **two other significant events**. One takes us back to the **Akeida (binding of Isaac)** and one takes us forward to the **burning bush**:

Bereshith 22:1 Now it came to pass after these things that Elohim tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am (Hineini - הנה אנכי)."

This event also **ended** with the **reassurance of the covenant**. We also find a **similar parallel** in the event of **Moses** and the **burning bush**:

Shemot/Exodus 3:4 So when אלהים saw that he turned aside to look, Elohim called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am (Hineini - הנה אנכי)."

The interesting thing about **this call to Moses** is that it is **Elohim's first revelation to man** since **Jacob's departure to Egypt in Bereshith 46**. **Menachem Leibtag** picks up on the **similarities between the two events**:

| | |
|--|--|
| Jacob (leaving Canaan) Bereshith 46:2-4 | Moses (at the burning bush) Shemot/Exodus 3:4-8 |
|--|--|

Elohim calls out to Jacob in a vision,
"Jacob, Jacob"

Elohim calls out to Moses,
"Moses, Moses"

And he said, “Here am I”

וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי

I am the Elohim of your fathers...

אֲנֹכִי הָאֱלֹהִים אֲלֵהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ

Do not fear going down to Egypt for I will make you there a great nation...

I will go **DOWN** with you to Egypt and I will also surely **BRING YOU UP** again...
the land flowing with....

And he said, “Here am I”

וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִּי

I am the Elohim of your fathers...

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי אֲלֵהֵי אֲבֹתֶיךָ

I have seen the suffering of My people in Egypt and I have heard their crying

I have come **DOWN** to rescue them from Egypt in order to **BRING YOU UP** from that land to

Do you see that the **Almighty is picking up with Moses, right where He left off with Jacob?** He is **fulfilling the promises that He made with our forefathers.** The children of Israel will be **brought out of bondage, established as a sovereign nation and brought back to the Promised Land!**

As Joseph makes preparations for his family, he tells them what he will be **telling Pharaoh:**

Bereshith 46:31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.³² 'And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'

We are also told **how Egypt feels about shepherds:**

Bereshith 46:34 "that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

It appears that the **Israelites will be set-apart in Egypt as “shepherds.”** This is the **Hebrew** for “shepherd”:

Shepherd - רֹעֵה (ro'aye)

Sometimes it seems that **Joseph and his brothers placed more emphasis on their flocks than on their families (46:32).** What **significance** did the **flock of sheep** have to the **sons of Jacob** who were **shepherds?** **Shepherds care for and protect their sheep.** They are willing to **give up their lives for their sheep.** **Shepherding is what Israelites do.** **Do you consider yourself to be an Israelite?** Then you also should be **nourishing and protecting the flock.** **Joseph played the shepherd role in his position as he tended to and nourished his family:**

Bereshith 45:11 "There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine." '

We are told that the **first shepherd** was **Abel:**

Bereshith 4:2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now **Abel** was a **keeper** (רֹעֵה - רֹעֵה) of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

A **shepherd** (רֹעֵה - רֹעֵה) is often translated as **one who “feeds”** (רָעָה - רָעָה). **יהוה Elohim** is spoken of as the **“Shepherd”** (רֹעֵה - רֹעֵה) who **“feeds”** (רָעָה - רָעָה) and **provides for His people:**

Bereshith 48:15 And he blessed Joseph, and said: "Elohim, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, **The Elohim who has fed** (רָעָה) me all my life long to this day,

Psalms 23:1 A Psalm of David. יהוה is my **shepherd** (רֹעֵה); I shall not want.

Isaiah 40:11 He will **feed** (רָעָה) His flock like a **shepherd** (רֹעֵה); He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

King David’s claim to the throne is based upon יהוה’s **command** that he **feed/shepherd** the people:

2 Samuel 5:2 "Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and יהוה said to you, '**You shall feed** (רָעָה) **My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.**' "

Failure of the leaders of Israel to feed (רָעָה) **the people, either physical or spiritual nourishment** was deemed a **severe sin:**

Ezekiel 34:2 "Son of man, prophesy against the **shepherds** (רֹעֵה) of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says יהוה Elohim to the **shepherds** (רֹעֵה): "Woe to the **shepherds** (רֹעֵה) of Israel who **feed** (רָעָה) themselves! Should not the **shepherds** (רֹעֵה) **feed** (רָעָה) the flocks?"

The theological idea of the **good shepherd** (רֹעֵה) who **feeds** (רָעָה) **his flock with truth** becomes **prominent** in the **Renewed Covenant Scriptures:**

Jeremiah 3:15 "And I will give you **shepherds** (רֹעֵה) according to My heart, **who will feed** (רָעָה) you with **knowledge and understanding.**

John 10:11 "I am the **good shepherd** (רֹעֵה). The **good shepherd** (רֹעֵה) gives His life for the sheep.

Now, let’s return to the parasha and read the **reason** that the **brothers give for coming to Egypt:**

Bereshith 47:4 And they said to Pharaoh, "**We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen.**"

In the time of **famine**, the **priority of the faithful of the family of Israel is taking care of the flocks.** The **Father is always concerned** for His **sheep.** The **brothers** have come a long way since the time when **Joseph** brought back a **negative report** to Jacob **concerning their shepherding.** Let’s review what happened:

Bereshith 37:16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are **feeding (רָעָה)** - **shepherding**) their flocks." ¹⁷ And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to **Dothan**.' " So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in **Dothan**.

Dothan means "two wells". We know that when **Joseph** found his **brothers** that they ended up **throwing him into a well**. It was a **well** that had **NO WATER**. They were **shepherding their flocks** in an area **DEVOID OF WATER**. Remember that a **well** is a place of "seeing" and **water** is symbolic of the "Word". No wonder **Joseph** had to take back a **negative report!** His **brothers** weren't being **very good shepherds!**

Shepherds and **pastors** are often the same **Hebrew word (רָעָה)**. יהוה has **harsh words** for **shepherds/pastors** who do not **feed (רָעָה)** their **flocks**:

Ezekiel 34:1 And the word of יהוה came to me, saying, ² "Son of man, prophesy against **the shepherds (רָעָה)** of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says יהוה Elohim to the **shepherds (רָעָה)**: "**Woe to the shepherds (רָעָה)** of Israel who **feed (רָעָה)** themselves! **Should not the shepherds (רָעָה)** **feed (רָעָה)** the flocks? ³ "You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but **you do not feed (רָעָה)** the flock. ⁴ "The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with **force and cruelty you have ruled them.** ⁵ "So they were scattered because there was **no shepherd (רָעָה)**; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶ "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them." ⁷ ' Therefore, you **shepherds (רָעָה)**, hear the word of יהוה: ⁸ "as I live," says יהוה Elohim, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was **no shepherd (רָעָה)**, nor did My shepherds (רָעָה) search for My flock, but the **shepherds (רָעָה)** fed (רָעָה) themselves and did not feed (רָעָה) My flock" -- ⁹ ' therefore, O **shepherds (רָעָה)**, hear the word of יהוה! ¹⁰ ' Thus says יהוה Elohim: "Behold, **I am against the shepherds (רָעָה)**, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease **feeding (רָעָה)** the sheep, and the **shepherds (רָעָה)** shall **feed (רָעָה)** themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them." ¹¹ ' **For thus says יהוה Elohim: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.** ¹² "As a **shepherd (רָעָה)** seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. ¹³ "And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; **I will feed (רָעָה)** them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴ "I will feed (רָעָה) them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed (רָעָה) in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ "I will feed (רָעָה) My flock, and I will make them lie down," says יהוה Elohim.

Taking special note of **Ezekiel 34:11**, read **Yeshua's** words:

Matthew 15:24 *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to **the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"*

John 10:14 *"I am the good **shepherd**; and I know **My sheep**, and am known by My own.¹⁵ "As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and **I lay down My life for the sheep.**¹⁶ "And **other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.***

According to **Ezekiel 34:12**, this **regathering** will happen on a "**cloudy and dark day**". This is of course the time of the **tribulation**.

Let's also read **Yeshua's** words to His **disciples** on "**how to love Him**":

John 21:15 *So when they had eaten breakfast, **Yeshua** said to **Simon Peter**, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Adonai; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Feed My lambs.**"¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Adonai; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Tend My sheep.**"¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Adonai, You know all things; You know that I love You." **Yeshua** said to him, "**Feed My sheep.***

So I hope you've caught the thread of **the shepherd and his sheep** that runs from **Bereshith** to **Revelation**. **Yeshua** is the **good Shepherd**, but He's also the **lamb of Elohim**. **We are the sheep** of his pasture, but **we're also shepherds who care for the flock**. **Joseph** was a **shepherd**; likewise all his **brothers** were **shepherds**. In fact just about **everyone seeking the Father** seems to be a **shepherd**! Even **Rachel, Rebecca and Moses' wife** were **shepherds**! The point I am trying to make, and you've probably gotten it by now is that if **Joseph** is a picture of the **body of Messiah in exile**, then it is **our job to also be shepherds**. We should be about the business of **feeding, tending, and looking after the flock**. **It is our job to be feeding the flock with truth.**

The family of **Israel** went to **Egypt as shepherds**, but the implied message is that they became **tempted** by the **wealth of Egypt**:

Bereshith 47:27 *So **Israel** dwelt in the land of **Egypt**, in the country of **Goshen**; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly.*

"**They had possessions there**"...these **possessions** may have become a "**blessing**" and a "**curse**" for them. They went down **into Egypt** with their "**own possessions.**" They **ended up acquiring** some of "**Egypt**". Their **wealth** would **unfortunately** begin to **change their identity**. The book of **Yasher** says they **allowed themselves to be gradually sold into slavery because they became indebted in order to grow wealthy**. And so we see again that there is "**nothing new under the sun**".

Let's end with **Peter's** words to the **shepherds of the flocks**:

1 Peter 5:2 ***Shepherd the flock of Adonai** which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;⁴ and when the **Chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

Shabbat Shalom!

Ardelle