

November 5, 2022

Avraham and the Aleph Tav

In this week's Parshah, we are introduced to Avraham in a rather prominent way. Parshah Noach is Avraham's actual introduction or first appearance when Adonai conveys the descendants of Noach, or more specifically, the descendants of Shem, whom we will later learn in Luke 3 is the line of Messiah.

Adonai takes time to reveal more about the son of Terah...

Gen 11:27 Here is the genealogy of Terach. Terach fathered Avram, Nachor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.

Gen 11:28 Haran died before his father Terach in the land where he was born, in Ur of the Kasdim.

Gen 11:29 Then Avram and Nachor took wives for themselves. The name of Avram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milkah the daughter of Haran. He was the father of Milkah and of Yiskah.

Gen 11:30 Sarai was barren—she had no child.

Gen 11:31 Terach took his son Avram, his son Haran's son Lot, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Avram's wife; and they left Ur of the Kasdim to go to the land of Kena'an. But when they came to Haran, they stayed there.

Gen 11:32 Terach lived 205 years, and he died in Haran.

Thus we are introduced to Avram and his wife Sarai. We are told that Sarai is barren and without children. We are also introduced to Avram's nephew Lot, the son of his father's brother. We notice that they are already on their way to Kena'an, yet their journey pauses as they come to Haran and stay there. At the time Adonai introduces himself to Avram, we don't know how many years they have been living in Haran, yet the first instruction Avram hears is to leave his kinsmen and the land where they are residing.

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

What we do know is that Avram was 75 when he left his father's home, making his father 145. Thus Terah would live an additional 60 years in the land of Haran until his death. We know this because Avram is listed as the first born...

Gen 11:26 Terach lived seventy years and fathered Avram, Nachor and Haran.

So when Avram went he took his wife and his nephew and journeyed to the land

for which they were originally intending to travel. There is no reason given in Scripture why Terah decided to stay in Haran, yet the distinction is made by Adonai that Avram is to leave and his final destination will be the land of Kena'an.

Gen 12:4 So Avram went, as Adonai had said to him, and Lot went with him. Avram was 75 years old when he left Haran.

Gen 12:5 Avram took his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, as well as the people they had acquired in Haran; then they set out for the land of Kena`an and entered the land of Kena`an.

In my studies I find it interesting to see where the stand alone Aleph Tav is not located. In my mind I have anticipated seeing it in certain scriptures yet it is not. One expectation for me was to find it somewhere in Genesis 12:1 – 3,

Gen 12:1 Now Adonai said to Avram, "Get yourself out of your country, away from your kinsmen and away from your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you.

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

For this is a pivotal time in the history of the world, some 2000 years removed from Adam and creation. Though these 2000 years are condensed into 11 chapters of Scripture, it is a significant amount of time that has passed. It is after 2000 years that we are introduced to Avram for which the focus of Scripture changes from that which is universal to that which is non-universal. The focus of Scripture will now be on one individual and his family.

Thus I find it interesting that the Aleph Tav is not found in this most important and impactful passage. Likewise, it is not found in Bereshit (Genesis) 15 either, a place where the covenant is ratified...

Gen 15:17 After the sun had set and there was thick darkness, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch appeared, which passed between these animal parts.

Gen 15:18 That day Adonai made a covenant with Avram: "I have given this land to your descendants—from the Vadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates River—

Yet, the Aleph Tav is found in the third part of the Covenant revealed to us. We have shared with you that Bereshit 15 and 17 are not separate and distinct. They are not two covenants but the same covenant promised by Adonai to Avram in Bereshit 12. It is here that we see the Aleph Tav, one on seven occurrences.

Gen 17:8 I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you are now foreigners, all the land of Kena`an, as a permanent possession; and I will be their God."

It is here in the promise associated with the land and the seed of Avraham who will be the beneficiary of this promise. Hence the Aleph Tav actually appears twice in Bereshit 17:8, not once.

וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֶךָ אֶת־אֶרֶץ מִגְרִיךָ אֶת־כָּל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לְאֻחֲזֵת עוֹלָם וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהֵי

Now let me read this to you again inserting the Aleph Tav...

Gen 17:8 I will give you and your descendants after you (Aleph Tav) the land in which you are now foreigners (Aleph Tav), all the land of Kena`an, as a permanent possession; and I will be their God."

The Aleph Tav, Yeshua is part of the covenant promise Adonai is making with Avraham that will impact his descendants, for which the promise will come through one of his descendants.

Kefa conveys in one of his most prominent messages to those who are there, the Jewish people his audience...

Act 3:24 Indeed, all the prophets announced these days, starting with Sh'mu'el and continuing through all who followed.

Act 3:25 "You are the sons of the prophets; and you are included in the covenant which God made with our fathers when he said to Avraham, 'By your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.'

Act 3:26 So it is to you first that God has sent his servant whom he has raised up, so that he might bless you by turning each one of you from your evil ways."

Yeshua is embedded into that promise made by Adonai in Bereshit 17:8. He is the embodiment of the promise to the descendants of Avraham. Yet, there is more...

The seed represents those physically descended from Avraham, yet Sha'ul makes this connection which is further established by the presence of the Aleph Tav in Bereshit 17:8, when writing to believers in Galatia.

Gal 3:15 Brothers, let me make an analogy from everyday life: when someone

swears an oath, no one else can set it aside or add to it.

Gal 3:16 Now the promises were made to Avraham and to his seed. It doesn't say, "and to seeds," as if to many; on the contrary, it speaks of one—"and to your seed"—and this "one" is the Messiah.

Gal 3:17 Here is what I am saying: the legal part of the Torah, which came into being 430 years later, does not nullify an oath sworn by God, so as to abolish the promise.

Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance comes from the legal part of the Torah, it no longer comes from a promise. But God gave it to Avraham through a promise.

Gal 3:19 So then, why the legal part of the Torah? It was added in order to create transgressions, until the coming of the seed about whom the promise had been made. Moreover, it was handed down through angels and a mediator.

Gal 3:20 Now a mediator implies more than one, but God is one.

Gal 3:21 Does this mean that the legal part of the Torah stands in opposition to God's promises? Heaven forbid! For if the legal part of the Torah which God gave had had in itself the power to give life, then righteousness really would have come by legalistically following such a Torah.

Gal 3:22 But instead, the Tanakh shuts up everything under sin; so that what had been promised might be given, on the basis of Yeshua the Messiah's trusting faithfulness, to those who continue to be trustingly faithful.

Gal 3:23 Now before the time for this trusting faithfulness came, we were imprisoned in subjection to the system which results from perverting the Torah into legalism, kept under guard until this yet-to-come trusting faithfulness would be revealed.

Gal 3:24 Accordingly, the Torah functioned as a custodian until the Messiah came, so that we might be declared righteous on the ground of trusting and being faithful.

Gal 3:25 But now that the time for this trusting faithfulness has come, we are no longer under a custodian.

Gal 3:26 For in union with the Messiah, you are all children of God through this trusting faithfulness;

Gal 3:27 because as many of you as were immersed into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with the Messiah, in whom

Gal 3:28 there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female; for in union with the Messiah Yeshua, you are all one.

Gal 3:29 Also, if you belong to the Messiah, you are seed of Avraham and heirs according to the promise.

What does this mean?

If you have come to trust in Yeshua, the Aleph Tav embedded in the promise made to Avraham and his physical descendants, then you become not a seed of his physical descendants but a seed by faith that Avraham is your father for whom Adonai made this covenant that would become the foundation for the New Covenant that would be ratified by the blood of Yeshua.

This makes those who are not the physical seed co heirs with the physical seed in the promises associated with the New Covenant. The same promise made here in Bereshit 17...

Gen 17:8 I will give you and your descendants after you (Aleph Tav) the land in which you are now foreigners (Aleph Tav), all the land of Kena`an, as a permanent possession; and **I will be their God.**"

Jer 31:30 "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

Jer 31:31 It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

Jer 31:32 "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says Adonai: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; **I will be their God, and they will be my people.**

It is Yeshua, the Aleph Tav that is the conduit to the promise and it is supported by the presence of the Aleph Tav in the midst of this one verse where the physical seed is stated, yet it would be revealed that through faith in Yeshua a spiritual seed would be revealed. The spiritual seed are co heirs to the promise of Messiah, meaning, that this promise, this inheritance, this heritage would not be merely passed down from generation to generation of the physical seed but also made available to the descendants of the spiritual seed. The distinction is that each individual would have to claim their inheritance of salvation in Messiah Yeshua. This is the inheritance granted and thus made available to all of mankind for Yeshua...

Joh 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed.

Joh 3:17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but rather so that through him, the world might be saved.

Joh 3:18 Those who trust in him are not judged; those who do not trust have been judged already, in that they have not trusted in the one who is God's only and unique Son.

This is a promise to both the physical seed and the spiritual seed. Thus, the writer of Hebrews draws this conclusion...

Heb 2:14 Therefore, since the children share a common physical nature as human beings, he became like them and shared that same human nature; so that by his death he might render ineffective the one who had power over death (that is, the Adversary)

Heb 2:15 and thus set free those who had been in bondage all their lives because of their fear of death.

Heb 2:16 Indeed, it is obvious that he does not take hold of angels to help them; on the contrary, "He takes hold of the seed of Avraham."

Heb 2:17 This is why he had to become like his brothers in every respect—so that he might become a merciful and faithful cohen gadol in the service of God, making a kapparah for the sins of the people.

Heb 2:18 For since he himself suffered death when he was put to the test, he is able to help those who are being tested now.

I don't want to burst anyone's bubble here as this promise of Messiah is greater than any riches the world may offer thus truly a more valuable inheritance anyone can truly possess. We must be careful to combine the physical seed and the spiritual seed in an aspect such as the land. The appearance of the Aleph Tav here when talking about the land, does not convey that the spiritual seed inherit the land Adonai had promised to Avraham's descendants. We must use discernment in addition to understanding the context of Scripture.

We have seen that the promise of Messiah is made available to the nations of the world and thus are associated with the physical seed of Avraham. I believe the occurrence of the next Aleph Tav will shed some additional light. For its next occurrence is found in Bereshit 17:11

Gen 17:11 You are to be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; this will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

וּנְמִלֶתֶם אֹתָם בְּשָׁר עֶרְלַתְכֶם וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם

Now, let me read this and reveal where the Aleph Tav resides in this verse.

Gen 17:11 You are to be circumcised (Aleph Tav) in the flesh of your foreskin; this will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

The sign of the covenant made between Adonai and Avraham and thus his seed, his physical descendants is circumcision. Thus it is the physical seed that this sign belongs to, remains with and is still valid to this day.

Gen 17:12 Generation after generation, every male among you who is eight days old is to be circumcised, including slaves born within your household and those bought from a foreigner not descended from you.

Gen 17:13 The slave born in your house and the person bought with your money must be circumcised; thus my covenant will be in your flesh as an everlasting covenant.

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male who will not let himself be circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin—that person will be cut off from his people, because he has broken my covenant."

Circumcision was then and is today a sign of the Avrahamic covenant that is the foundation for the Mosaic covenant and yes the New Covenant for the New Covenant is still made with the physical seed of Avraham...

Jer 31:30 "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

The physical descendants of Avraham.

Jer 31:31 It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; (The Exodus) because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

Jer 31:32 "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says Adonai: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; **I will be their God, and they will be my people.**

There is no denying who this new Covenant is made with, yet just as with the revelation of the spiritual seed of Avraham, the seed of faith, so to there is a circumcision for both the physical seed and spiritual seed when one embraces the inheritance, the promise Adonai makes to Avraham...

Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, but I will curse anyone who curses you; and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Eze 36:22 "Therefore tell the house of Isra'el that Adonai Elohim says this: 'I am not going to do this for your sake, house of Isra'el, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have been profaning among the nations where you went.

Eze 36:23 I will set apart my great name to be regarded as holy, since it has been profaned in the nations—you profaned it among them. The nations will know that I am Adonai,' says Adonai Elohim, 'when, before their eyes, I am set apart through you to be regarded as holy.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you from all the countries, and return you to your own soil.

Eze 36:25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and from all your idols.

Eze 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them.

What is this new heart of flesh Adonai promises? Sha'ul provides us with more insight regarding this gift that is given in relation to the promise of the New Covenant.

Rom 2:23 You who take such pride in Torah, do you, by disobeying the Torah, dishonor God?—

Rom 2:24 as it says in the Tanakh, "For it is because of you that God's name is blasphemed by the Goyim."

Rom 2:25 For circumcision is indeed of value if you do what Torah says. But if you are a transgressor of Torah, your circumcision has become uncircumcision!

Rom 2:26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the Torah, won't his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

Rom 2:27 Indeed, the man who is physically uncircumcised but obeys the Torah will stand as a judgment on you who have had a b'rit-milah and have Torah written out but violate it!

Rom 2:28 For the real Jew is not merely Jewish outwardly: true circumcision is not only external and physical.

Rom 2:29 On the contrary, the real Jew is one inwardly; and true circumcision is of the heart, spiritual not literal; so that his praise comes not from other people but from God.

Everything that Sha'ul conveyed in this passage aligns with what I have said as it pertains to the physical seed of Avraham and the spiritual seed of faith of Avraham. He is not saying that circumcision is done away because of Yeshua yet remains for the Jewish people because it is a sign of the covenant that is passed down from Generation to generation of the physical seed of Avraham.

1Co 7:17 Only let each person live the life the Lord has assigned him and live it

in the condition he was in when God called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the congregations.

1Co 7:18 Was someone already circumcised when he was called? Then he should not try to remove the marks of his circumcision. Was someone uncircumcised when he was called? He shouldn't undergo b'rit-milah.

1Co 7:19 Being circumcised means nothing, and being uncircumcised means nothing; what does mean something is keeping God's commandments.

1Co 7:20 Each person should remain in the condition he was in when he was called.

In the past, I have shared with you that the promise of the New Covenant, the Ruach Ha Kodesh was not dependent upon circumcision in that Adonai poured out His Spirit equally, in Acts 2 to the physical seed and in Acts 10 to the first of the spiritual seed who were not circumcised.

I have given you much today regarding these two verses in Bereshit and the Aleph Tav whom we know to be Yeshua. He is the one who revealed this to us and it is up to us to search the Scriptures deeper and find where the Aleph Tav is. Where the Aleph Tav is, Yeshua is.

Rev 22:12 "Pay attention!" [*says Yeshua,*] "I am coming soon, and my rewards are with me to give to each person according to what he has done.

Rev 22:13 I am the Aleph Tav, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

Rev 22:14 How blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they have the right to eat from the Tree of Life and go through the gates into the city!