

January 7, 2023

## Ya'akov, The Blessings and The Alef Tav

There is much to glean from in this week's Parshah yet there is only one thing I want to focus on and that is chapter 49 and a father blessing his sons. Though we understand them as blessings in some way as verse one conveys they are more about prophecy.

**Gen 49:1** Then Ya`akov called for his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the acharit-hayamim.

**Gen 49:2** Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Ya`akov; pay attention to Isra'el your father.

I will tell you what happens to you in the acharit hayamim, in the end of days. To me this statement is more about prophecy, yet some are blessed while others are told their fate. The eldest are most certainly not blessed as we read...

**Gen 49:3** "Re'uven, you are my firstborn, my strength, the firstfruits of my manhood.

**Gen 49:4** Though superior in vigor and power you are unstable as water, so your superiority will end, because you climbed into your father's bed and defiled it—he climbed onto my concubine's couch!

**Certainly not a blessing I would want to receive, would you?**

**Gen 49:5** "Shim`on and Levi are brothers, related by weapons of violence.

**Gen 49:6** Let me not enter their council, let my honor not be connected with their people; for in their anger they killed men, and at their whim they maimed cattle.

**Gen 49:7** Cursed be their anger, for it has been fierce; their fury, for it has been cruel. I will divide them in Ya`akov and scatter them in Isra'el.

If that is what blessing looks like I would say..."Dad, thank you, but no thank you." He is conveying, I don't trust you.

Yet there is something in verse one that tells me these words coming from Ya'akov are prophetic. The Alef Tav is found in verse one and this is how it reads...

**Gen 49:1** Then Ya`akov called for his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, and I will tell you (Alef Tav) what will happen to you in the acharit-hayamim.

**Gen 49:2** Assemble yourselves and listen, sons of Ya`akov; pay attention to

Isra'el your father.

Ya'akov is inspired by the Words of Adonai, Yeshua the Alef Tav...

**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 'Alef Tav', the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."

Everything that comes from Ya'akov's mouth from verse one forward is referenced by the divine marker of the Alef Tav whom we know is Yeshua.

The one who is about to reveal through Ya'akov to his son Y'udah, who has been given the authority to rule over the children of Israel, the nation, is where all prophetic insight originates.

**Gen 49:8** "Y'udah, your brothers will acknowledge you, your hand will be on the neck of your enemies, your father's sons will bow down before you.

**Gen 49:9** Y'udah is a lion's cub; my son, you stand over the prey. He crouches down and stretches like a lion; like a lioness, who dares to provoke him?

**Gen 49:10** The scepter will not pass from Y'udah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes to whom [*obedience*] belongs; [*or: until Shiloh comes*] and it is he whom the peoples will obey.

**Gen 49:11** Tying his donkey to the vine, his donkey's colt to the choice grapevine, he washes his clothes in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes.

**Gen 49:12** His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.

### ***Judah's Name***

*There is a beautiful picture in the Hebrew spelling of Judah's name. Judah consists of the Hebrew letters **yod, hey, vav, dalet,** and **hey** = יהודה. The first two letters of his name are **yod, hey.** The third and fifth letters of his name are **vav, hey.***

*Put those letters together by removing the **dalet** and do you know what you have? **Yod, hey, vav, hey** = YHVH – the Divine Name given to Moses at the burning bush. In between the **vav** and **hey** at the end of Judah's name is a **dalet**, which is a Hebrew pictograph of a door, or portal, or passageway.*

*Judah was divinely commissioned to be the door/portal/passageway of God, and His Divine Light, the Messiah (the Light of the World) into all the world.*

***"Until Shiloh Comes"***

*It is written in Genesis 49:8-10, Y'hudah, your brothers will acknowledge you, your hand will be on the neck of your enemies, your father's sons will bow down before you.*

*Y'hudah is a lion's cub; my son, you stand over the prey. He crouches down and stretches like **a lion**; like a lioness, who dares to provoke him? **The scepter** will not pass from Y'hudah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes (some versions say until **Shiloh** comes) to whom [obedience] belongs; and it is he whom the peoples will obey.*

*There are three key words describing Judah. Jacob uses the words "Lion," "Scepter," words "**Lion**", "**Scepter**", and "**Shiloh**." If it was important for Jacob, it should be important for us.*

Rabbis teach, based on this prophecy and its apparent reference to Shiloh that Genesis 49:10 should read, "until Messiah comes to whom belongs the throne."

The Talmud refers to the Messiah as "**Shiloh**" in Sanhedrin 98b. The Midrash considers this as a Messianic passage according to Bereishit Rabbah 98.7. Rashi, in the Middle Ages, says that verse 10 means "until Messiah will come whose will be the Kingdom"

This messianic meaning to the word "**Shiloh**" is that it is another name for the Messiah. It is a proper noun, and in this case, a name.

It is prophesied that the Messiah will come from the nation of Israel, the tribe of Judah, the family of David.

*With our hindsight, knowing who the Messiah is, it would be correct to read Genesis 49:10 as fulfilled prophecy "The scepter shall not pass from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs until it is handed over to Yeshua the Messiah."*

### **Lion**

*Judah is the lion, an ancient symbol of regal status. He is the new leader of Israel. True to his name, Judah, which means "praised" will have the praise of his brothers, and eventually the whole world. **Why?***

*Out of him would come God's anointed Kings of Israel, and the Messiah. The royal line of David will come from Judah, and the right to rule Israel will remain with the tribe of Judah "**until Shiloh comes.**"*

*The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah) states that the symbol of the tribe of Judah was the lion, combining the courage of youth and maturity. The lion, a symbol of majesty and might, adds nobility to the tribe of Judah and his offspring. **Why is this important?***

*It is written in Revelation 5:5, One of the elders said to me, "Don't cry. Look, **the Lion of the tribe of Y'hudah**, the Root of David, has won the right to open the scroll and its seven seals."*

*The adversaries of Judah are shown as being in retreat: "**Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.**" We're also told that Jacob's sons will bow down to Judah. This was fulfilled when the eleven other tribes acknowledged Judah's superiority in David as king of Israel, and ultimately in Yeshua, of the lineage of David.*

*In blessing his sons, Jacob clearly foreshadows the coming Messiah who will be known as "**the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.**" Reread Genesis 49:8-10 (Y'hudah, your brothers will acknowledge you, your hand will be on the neck of your enemies, your father's sons will bow down before you. Y'hudah is a lion's cub; my son, you stand over the prey. He crouches down and stretches like **a lion**; like a lioness, who dares to provoke him? **The scepter** will not pass from Y'hudah, nor the ruler's staff from between his legs, until he comes (some versions say until **Shiloh** comes) to whom [obedience] belongs; and it is he whom the peoples will obey.), and ask this question: **What do we see about Judah in this text?***

### **Consider this:**

- 1. His brothers shall praise him. His father's sons will bow down to him—he will have superiority over all Israel.*
- 2. His hand will be on the neck of his enemies—he will be victorious and supreme even in the middle of resistance to his authority.*
- 3. He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah—spoken of here as "**a lion's whelp**," and "**the king of beasts.**"*
- 4. He is one you do not want to mess with, just as you would not disturb a feeding lion: "**He crouches, lies down like a lion, Like the king of beasts — who dare rouse him?**" Don't mess with this Lion. Don't chuck him under the chin and say "**kitchie kitchie koo.**"*
- 5. He is the ruler whom the people [actually, "**peoples**" "**amim**"—the other people groups besides Israel] will obey and do homage.*

*This picture of the Messiah, the essence and climax of rulership in the tribe of Judah as the ruler was over all, mighty, intimidating, even dangerous.*

*Yeshua is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Son of David. As such He will rule*

over his people Israel, and the nations.

### Scepter

This word is a reference to a "**scepter-bearer**", which implies kingship. Every king to rule Israel, with the exception of Israel's first king, King Saul, came from the tribe of Judah.

Scripture does give a hint that this will end or have a drastic change. Consider the words, "**until Shiloh comes.**" This connection must be understood to interpret scripture correctly.

*The scepter held by the tribe of Judah is a symbol of royal authority, kingdom power, dominion and might. There were many kinds of scepters in ancient days; they were a kind of rod or staff.*

*In addition to the scepter it is written "The scepter will not pass from Y'hudah nor the rulers staff from between his legs."*

The staff that resides between Y'hudah's legs I believe refers to the Covenant Adonai made with Avraham where in part it is stated "I will be your God and you will be my people"

We have seen other allusions to the Covenant such as when Avraham required his servant El'iezer to swear to him that he will not select a wife for Yitzchak from the women of Kena'ani.

**Gen 24:2** Avraham said to the servant who had served him the longest, who was in charge of all he owned, "Put your hand under my thigh;

**Gen 24:3** because I want you to swear by Adonai, God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not choose a wife for my son from among the women of the Kena`ani, among whom I am living;

**Gen 24:4** but that you will go to my homeland, to my kinsmen, to choose a wife for my son Yitz'chak."

When Adonai makes a Covenant He does not go back on His word. We see this too in the promise of the New Covenant

**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.

**Jer 31:33** No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, 'Know Adonai'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more."

**Jer 31:34** This is what Adonai says, who gives the sun as light for the day, who ordained the laws for the moon and stars to provide light for the night, who stirs up the sea until its waves roar—Adonai-Tzva'ot is his name:

**Jer 31:35** "If these laws leave my presence," says Adonai, "then the offspring of Isra'el will stop being a nation in my presence forever."

**Jer 31:36** This is what Adonai says: "If the sky above can be measured and the foundations of the earth be fathomed, then I will reject all the offspring of Isra'el for all that they have done," says Adonai.

*What we have seen in Bereshit 49 is comparable to what Adonai shared with Moshe when it comes to blessing the children of Isra'el.*

**Num 6:22** Adonai said to Moshe,

**Num 6:23** "Speak to Aharon and his sons, and tell them that this is how you are to bless the people of Isra'el: you are to say to them,

**Num 6:24** 'Y'varekh'kha Adonai v'yishmerekha. [*May Adonai bless you and keep you.*]

**Num 6:25** Ya'er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka. [*May Adonai make his face shine on you and show you his favor.*]

**Num 6:26** Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v'yasem l'kha shalom. [*May Adonai lift up his face toward you and give you peace.*]

**Num 6:27** "In this way they are to put my name on the people of Isra'el, so that I will bless them."

The name of Adonai through the Alef Tav was placed upon Ya'akov's children when he offered his fatherly blessing over each child. Some were blessings while some were not what we would construe as blessing but as verse two conveys, what would happen to them in the acharit hayamim, in the end of days.

One final thing, should you read the Torah study this week you will see the author Ron Warren make reference to the Alef Tav. For this I will not give you any further information because I want you to discover it yourself. I will not tell you where it is found, what page, so you will have to read and discover for yourself where it is and what he shares.