



## Vayigash

(and came)

### B'reshit [Genesis] 44:18-47:27

#### Yehudah Came Near

*B'reshit [Genesis] 44:18-19*

**18 Then Yehudah (Judah) came near to him, and said, "My master please let your servant speak a word in my master's ears, and let not your anger burn against your servant; for you are even as Pharaoh.**

**19 My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father, or a brother?'"**

To help us understand where this Parasha picks up, let us look back for a brief synopsis.

Yoseph's brothers have returned a second time to Egypt to get more food and they have brought with them their youngest brother, Benyamin. Ya'aqov reluctantly let Benyamin accompany them and only after much bargaining and begging on the part of his sons.

They eat a meal with Yoseph in which Yoseph sets them at the table according to their birth order (this astonishes them). Yoseph then serves Benyamin a portion five times the size as the rest of them receive. He seems to have been testing them to see if they were jealous of Benyamin (a son of Rachel as he himself was).

Yoseph then gives them their grain, returns their money in their sacks (again) and has his silver cup placed in the sack of Benyamin.

Yoseph then has them pursued and overtaken and the head steward arrests Benyamin for having Yoseph's silver cup in his possession. They all return back to Yoseph's court and this is where we pick up the story.

Yehudah begins to speak to Yoseph reminding him of his questions and requests.

Yoseph had fully recognized his brothers. He knew full well the makeup of the family. What he was probably asking and seeking information on, was if his father and brother were still living.

As Yoseph tests his brothers he probably wanted to know if they still were jealous towards the sons of Rachel; i.e., Yoseph and Benyamin. They had already eliminated him and he may have asked about Benyamin to see if they had eliminated him as well. And if they had not, were they jealous towards Benyamin as they had been towards him? After all, we can most likely safely assume that Benyamin took Yoseph's place as the favorite son. We can know this because when Ya'aqov sent his sons into Egypt the first time he did not send Benyamin with them. He was being protective. And when he sent them a second time it was only with great reluctance that he allowed Benyamin to go with the rest of his sons.

## **A Lie**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:20***

***20 "And we said to my master, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loves him.'"***

As Yehudah described and then re-described the family makeup, in his brevity he was not quite truthful concerning what had happened to their brother Yoseph.

Of course, Yoseph, the supposedly dead brother, knows full well this is not the truth. Yoseph shows a lot of control and restraint towards his brothers both during their first visit and now in this second visit.

When we read this, a question comes to our mind. If his brothers had told him the truth about their family; i.e., what they had done to Yoseph, and had shown true remorse for what they had done, then would Yoseph have revealed himself to them on the very first visit? Perhaps he would have revealed himself to them at that time. But they were still trying to cover up their sin after all these years. Yoseph needed to draw out and deal with this sin for them to be healed (forgiven) of this sin.

## **Yoseph's Request**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:21***

***21 "And you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.'"***

When one considers what Yoseph did in orchestrating all of this with his brothers, one wonders how much of it he already knew before his brothers ever set foot in his court the first time. After all, Yoseph was one to whom YHWH gave dreams, and YHWH gave Yoseph understanding of those dreams.

In order to get his brothers, his father and all their families to come down into Egypt, Yoseph followed a carefully laid out plan and the beginning of that plan was getting Benjamin before him.

## Reminder of a Stern Warning

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:22-23***

***22 "And we said to my master, 'The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, his father would die.'***

***23 And you said to your servants, 'Except your youngest brother come down with you, you shall see my face no more.'"***

Yehudah is beside himself with fear here. He knows that he cannot return to their father without Benjamin. He is carefully explaining the situation to the man who now has the power of life and death over them. And Yehudah is pleading with this man and trying to show to him that their brother is there only at his request. And if it had not been for this particularly strong warning, they would not have brought him.

He is implying that if it had not been for the request and the warning they would not be in this predicament right now. He seems to be (not too subtly) pointing the finger at the man in front of him and placing the blame for their predicament on him, not realizing that these ten brothers themselves were the direct cause of their being in this predicament. How many times do we get ourselves into a predicament and look elsewhere to point the finger when we should be looking to ourselves?

## Yehudah Relates the Words of Ya'aqov

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:24-29***

***24 "And it came to pass when we came up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my master.***

***25 And our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food.'***

***26 And we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.'***

***27 And your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons.***

***28 And the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces." And I have not seen him since;***

***29 and if you take this one also from me, and harm befall him, you will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol.'"***

Yehudah desperately needs for this man to understand that there is more at stake here than just their younger brother's life or even his own life. Yehudah is pleading with the man in front of him to have mercy and compassion towards their father, all the while not knowing that it is Yoseph he is speaking to.

## Yehudah's Mounting Desperation

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:30-31***

***30 "Now therefore when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;***

***31 it will come to pass, when he sees that the lad is not (with us), that he will die: and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol."***

After Yehudah (as well as the rest of his brothers) saw the reaction of their father, Ya'aqov, upon hearing the news of Yoseph, and then witnessing his father's despair all these many years, he feels certain that if he returned home now without Benyamin, his father would die.

It seems that Yehudah (and probably the rest of his brothers as well) is feeling some guilt for their sin against Yoseph and what it had done to their father. Now faced with the possibility of being the cause of their father's death, it seems that Yehudah (and his brothers) are near to despair and panic. They desperately need for this man to understand fully their predicament.

## Surety

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:32***

***32 "For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I bring him not to you, then shall I bear the blame to my father forever.'"***

Yehudah had made a bargain with Ya'aqov; feeling sure that he could bring Benyamin home to him again, he offered his own life as a guarantee to his father that he would do everything possible to bring Benyamin home again.

To understand fully the significance of this passage we need to look more closely at the Hebrew word that is translated as *surety*. The Hebrew word is אָרַב ('arav), which also means "to give or be security for." The root word that this word comes from literally means *to braid* or *intermix*.

This brings us to the prophetic significance of this passage. When we come much later to the rebellion of the ten tribes of the north against the tribe of Yehudah, we see that one tribe stayed with Yehudah, the tribe of Benyamin.

Basically, when Yehudah became surety (עֲרַב) for Benjamin, he forever bound these two tribes together. This is so true today that these two tribes have virtually become one tribe; i.e., YHWH has braided them together or intermixed them. Yehudah and Benjamin are עֲרַב.

## Yehudah's Offer

***B'reshit [Genesis] 44:33-34***

***33 "Now therefore, please let your servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my master; and let the lad go up with his brethren.***

***34 For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me, lest I see the evil that shall come on my father?"***

Yehudah asks the man if he will allow for him to stand in his brother's place. If only he would have had the same compassion towards Benjamin's brother Yoseph so many years before this! Perhaps Yehudah has grown and matured through all these years, watching his father languish away for his favorite son.

This also has prophetic significance as it relates to Yeshua our Mashiach.

Yeshua our Mashiach was born of the tribe of Yehudah and He also stood in our place. We were the ones deserving of imprisonment and death for our crimes (sin) that we have committed against YHWH (the Man). Yeshua took upon Himself the penalty of those crimes so that we could go home to our Father (YHWH).

This is such a wonderfully prophetic picture of what Yeshua did for us. Whereas Yehudah only offered to do this, Yeshua actually did die in our place. HalleluYah for His wonderful love towards us, before we even knew about it!

## Revelation

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:1-3***

***1 Then Yoseph [Joseph] could not refrain himself before all them that stood before him; and he cried, "Cause every man to go out from me." And there stood no man with him, while Yoseph [Joseph] made himself known to his brethren.***

***2 And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard.***

***3 And Yoseph [Joseph] said to his brethren, "I am Yoseph [Joseph]; is my father still alive?" And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.***

Can you imagine the thoughts going through their minds when this man told everyone to get out? Of course it would have been in the Egyptian language and they would not have understood what was said.

Furthermore, as they stood there and everyone was leaving, including their interpreter, it must have been a frightening moment.

Has this man had enough? Have all these others left only to send in the guards? What is happening?

As everyone was leaving, their hearts must have just sunk!

Then when only these twelve men were left (all brothers) the man begins speaking to them in their own language. The realization that he could understand their speech must have been rather unnerving and perhaps even frightening. They had spoken freely among themselves thinking that they were having a private conversation, now they realized that this man had understood them.

But wait, what is this man saying? They were reeling from the emotions. Their heads were spinning. What was this man saying about their brother Yoseph? Did he say that he himself was Yoseph? How could that be?

Can you imagine the flood of emotions that Yoseph's brothers experienced at this moment?

Many years before this, they had sold their brother into slavery and deceived their father into thinking that he was dead. Then they come down into Egypt to buy food for their families and Yoseph repeatedly confronts them with their sin of many years ago.

Suddenly, the harshness of this man made sense.

Suddenly, this man accusing them of being spies made sense.

Suddenly, their money mysteriously appearing in their sacks on both the first and second journeys made sense.

Suddenly, the request for Benjamin to come before this man made sense.

Suddenly, they understood how he was able to sit them according to their birth order.

Suddenly, all these things that were a mystery to them came into a whole new light, a light that was quite frightening to them. This man before them, who had just revealed himself as their brother Yoseph, whom they had badly mistreated, had the power of life and death over them now. Surely they were all doomed!

They also suddenly realized that the dreams of Yoseph had come true.

They were very scared as they were not sure what Yoseph's intentions were at this point. After all, he had been deceiving them up to this point. He had not spoken kindly to them through all of this, in either their first or second trip to buy food.

They stood in silence.

## **Convincing Proof**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:4***

***4 And Yoseph [Joseph] said to his brethren, "Please come near to me." And they came near. And he said, "I am Yoseph [Joseph] your brother, whom you sold into Egypt."***

Yoseph had to tell his brothers more than once who he was.

Why did Yoseph ask his brothers to come near to him? One possibility that the sages pretty well universally teach, is that he showed to them that he was circumcised. That fact, along with the knowledge that only these eleven brothers had any knowledge that they had sold him into slavery fairly well proved that he was their brother, Yoseph.

Not even Benjamin knew what had happened to his brother Yoseph – until now. Only Yoseph and his ten older brothers knew what really had happened.

We also need to be willing to prove that we too are circumcised to one another and to our brother Yehudah, just as Yoseph did.

Circumcision is one of the signs of being part of Yisrael. If a person is not circumcised he may not eat of the Pesach (Passover lamb).

Now here is the thing that we must understand during these days of the first resurrection: we must once again come into a covenant relationship with YHWH and we must be circumcised.

If you are not now circumcised and you desire to partake of a true Pesach celebration, then you need to make arrangements to be circumcised. Therefore, we need to start making plans for that very important appointment with our Creator.

## **Comforting Words**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:5***

**5 “And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that you sold me here; for Elohim did send me before you to preserve life.”**

Yoseph could probably see that his brothers were upset. He spoke these words to them because they were true and his brothers needed to understand this reality.

When we understand that YHWH is Sovereign over His creation, then we can know with great certainty that nothing happens to us without His say-so! The years that Yoseph spent in prison, YHWH may have taught him this important lesson.

There are many times that people do not understand what they are doing, but YHWH may allow it to further His Kingdom. While someone may mean something for harm, YHWH will not allow these types of things to come into the lives of those that belong to Him unless they will somehow further the building of His Kingdom in our own personal lives and/or in the lives of those around us.

**Romans 8:28**

***And we know that to them that love Elohim all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose.***

When we can come to this understanding, then His shalom can and does dwell in us no matter what happens in our lives. The truth of the matter is this, nothing “bad” happens to us. It is really just a matter of perspective. When we begin to see this truth, then we can walk in peaceful confidence before Him at all times and in all circumstances!

Yoseph’s brothers needed to understand this truth and so do we!

Just because something like this happens and YHWH ultimately works it out for good, apologies still need to be made. I am sure that Yoseph’s brothers apologized to him many times that day, as well they should. Likewise, when we are responsible for something happening to others and even when YHWH causes it to work for good, we still have a responsibility to make it right with those we may have wronged! We cannot allow sinful pride to stand in our way of getting this done.

## **Yoseph’s Instructions**

***B’reshit [Genesis] 45:6-13***

**6 “For these two years the famine has been in the land; and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest.**

**7 And Elohim sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance.**



**8 So now it was not you that sent me here, but Elohim; and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and master of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.**

**9 Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Yoseph [Joseph], Elohim has made me master of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry;**

**10 and you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you, and your children, and your children's children, and your flocks, and your herds, and all that you have;**

**11 and there will I nourish you; for there are yet five years of famine; lest you come to poverty, you, and your household, and all that you have.**

**12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benyamin, that it is my mouth that speaks to you.'**

**13 And you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring down my father here."**

Yoseph gives instructions to his brothers. They are to return home to their father and then bring him and all their families back to Egypt.

In doing so, Yoseph would give them the best of the land.

Please note Yoseph's instructions in verse twelve. He states that it is by the eyes of Benyamin, his brother, that their father Ya'aqov can believe that Yoseph is still alive and well. It seems apparent that Yoseph needed to bring his brother Benyamin down to Egypt because he needed a credible witness. It was his other ten brothers that were responsible for him being sold into slavery because of their unbounded jealousy. Yoseph was not convinced that if only his ten older brothers knew that he was alive that they would even tell their father. After all, they were still trying to hide their sin. As far as Yoseph knew they may conspire further to hide their sin from their father.

This is the truth of this matter, when trust is destroyed, then it takes a lot of time for that trust to be restored. And all the evidence that was before Yoseph at this time gave him no reason to begin trusting his ten older brothers. He needed someone to witness for him who was not involved in the conspiracy and deception of his disappearance. The only person available was Benyamin.

## **Pharaoh's Instructions**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:14-20***

**14 And he fell upon his brother Benyamin's neck, and wept; and Benyamin wept upon his neck.**

**15 And he kissed all his brothers, and wept upon them: and after that his brothers talked with him.**

**16 And the report was given in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Yoseph's [Joseph] brothers have come." And it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.**

**17 And Pharaoh said to Yoseph [Joseph], "Say to your brothers, 'You do this: load your beasts, and go to the land of Canaan;**

***18 and take your father and your households, and come to me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and you shall eat the fat of the land.***

***19 Now you are commanded, you do this; you take wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.***

***20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.”***

Verse fifteen tells us something that was probably true for the first time in all their lives: these brothers and Yoseph talked with each other. There was no animosity or jealousy or anything else of that nature, just love and respect between reunited brothers.

Pharaoh then basically gives the very same instructions to Yoseph's brothers as Yoseph had given to them. This seems to indicate a couple of things to us. First, that Pharaoh was very grateful to Yoseph for basically saving Egypt from the famine.

Secondly, if we will notice verse eight, Pharaoh may have been a child ruler; and if this was the case, Yoseph may have actually instructed Pharaoh as his own son; and Yoseph would have instructed him in Torah. So the similarity between Yoseph's instructions and Pharaoh's instructions would not be surprising at all.

## **The Provisions**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:21-23***

***21 And the sons of Yisrael did so: and Yoseph [Joseph] gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.***

***22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.***

***23 And to his father he sent after this manner: ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with grain and bread and provision for his father by the way.***

It seems that Yoseph was being quite generous in the provisions that he sent back to Ya'aqov. It was more than enough to get them back into the land of Egypt. So why send so much when they would just have to bring it right back with them?

Perhaps, this was Yoseph's way of sending a message to his father even if his father did not believe the report from his brothers. Surely when Ya'aqov would see such a great caravan, he would know something wonderful had happened.

## **Ya'aqov is revived**

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:24-28***

***24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said to them, "See that you do not quarrel on the journey."***

***25 And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan to Ya'aqov [Jacob] their father.***

***26 And they told him, saying, "Yoseph [Joseph] is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." And his heart fainted, for he believed them not.***

***27 And they told him all the words of Yoseph [Joseph], which he had said to them: and when he saw the wagons which Yoseph [Joseph] had sent to carry him, the spirit of Ya'aqov [Jacob] their father revived:***

***28 and Yisrael said, "It is enough; Yoseph [Joseph] my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."***

These wagons that Yoseph sent to his father Ya'aqov seem to have had a message in them that he seems to be sure that his father would have understood.

This seems to be the case, for when these sons of Ya'aqov told him that his son Yoseph was alive and was the ruler of Egypt, he did not believe them. However, verse 27 above tells us that when he saw those wagons that Yoseph had sent, his spirit revived in him and he knew that his son was alive.

So what could have been the significance to those wagons?

There are a couple of aspects as to why these wagons could have been significant. Let us look at them now.

The first aspect that we would like to examine is the Hebrew word for wagons, which is **הַעֲגָלוֹת** (ha'agalot). The root word is **עגלה** (agalah). This word can mean either a wagon ('agalah) or it can mean a heifer ('eglah), depending on how it is pointed. And it is possible that heifers (**עֲגָלוֹת**) were pulling these wagons (**עֲגָלוֹת**). The sages teach that this was how Ya'aqov knew that Yoseph was alive; because the last thing they were discussing was the sign of Eglah Arufah (the heifer whose neck was broken in expiation of an unsolved murder, see Deuteronomy 21:1-9).

While we know that the Torah is eternal, to say that Ya'aqov and Yoseph were discussing this particular commandment seems to be a little bit too far on the side of conjecture for us.

Let us consider some other possibilities.

The first place that the word heifer occurs is in B'reshit 15:9 in which Avraham cut in half three heifers at YHWH's command. Since Avraham (Yoseph's great grandfather) is the one who did this, is this a possibility that this could somehow bring to Ya'aqov's mind that Yoseph was alive? Few people but family would know of this incident at this time. This is something to consider.

Let us now go back to B'reshit [Genesis] 37 and look at the last words exchanged between Ya'aqov and Yoseph.

***B'reshit [Genesis] 37:13-14***

***13 Yisrael said to Yoseph (Joseph), "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." And he said to him, "I will go."***

***14 Then he said to him, "Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock, and bring word back to me."***

Please note that Yoseph was sent to check on his brothers and the flocks and bring back word of their welfare, literally – their shalom. He had never returned to give a report to his father.

Perhaps part of the message of these wagons was fulfilling that report that was long overdue.

Let us now carefully reconsider the verse in question.

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:37***

***27 And they told him all the words of Yoseph [Joseph], which he had said to them: and when he saw the wagons which Yoseph [Joseph] had sent to carry him, the spirit of Ya'aqov [Jacob] their father revived:***

Please note that it was in verse 26 that Scripture records that Ya'aqov did not believe his sons concerning the fact that Yoseph was still alive. However, when we come to this verse we see that Yoseph's brothers then reported to Ya'aqov the message that Yoseph had sent to their father.

Please read that message again.

***B'reshit [Genesis] 45:9-12***

***9 Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Yoseph, Elohim has made me master of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry;***

***10 and you shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you, and your children, and your children's children, and your flocks, and your herds, and all that you have;***

***11 and there will I nourish you; for there are yet five years of famine; lest you come to poverty, you, and your household, and all that you have.***

***12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaks to you.'***

We see that Yoseph's brothers told this message to Ya'aqov. It seems that Benjamin was to be the key eyewitness in getting Ya'aqov to believe that Yoseph was alive. When he heard this message and saw those wagons that Yoseph had sent to carry him down to Egypt (for he was a man of many years now), this revived him, for he knew his son Yoseph, was alive.

Ya'aqov is now ready to go to Egypt and live the rest of his days near his son.

## Something to Consider

***Hoshea 10:11-12***

***11 And Ephrayim is a heifer that is taught, that loves to tread out the grain; but I have passed over upon her fair neck: I will set a rider on Ephrayim; Yehudah shall plow, Ya'aqov shall break his clods.***

***12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap according to kindness; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek YHWH, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.***

It is interesting to note the above passage in relation to our Parasha this week. The wagons that Yoseph sent to Ya'aqov, may very well have been drawn by heifers, giving the word we looked at earlier double significance.

We note that Ephrayim was the son of Yoseph and the grandson of Ya'aqov. In this passage of Scripture YHWH likens Ephrayim to a heifer that has received instruction. This is very encouraging, because as we enter into the phase of the first resurrection this instruction is just beginning.

Please note that YHWH is admonishing us to break up our fallow ground (ground that we have not plowed for a long time). We are to prepare the soil to receive the good seed of His word.

May YHWH cause each and every one of us to break up any and all fallow ground that is in our hearts so that we may receive all the instruction that He desires to give to us.

ABBA YHWH, please give us Your strength to break up our fallow ground so that we may receive Your instruction; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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