



# B'NAI CHAYIM

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## CHILDREN OF LIFE

4 Tevet, 5781 (19/12/20) **Sermon: The New Testament is Torah Observant** J. M. Terrett

**Miketz**                      **At The End of**                      **They Begin to Get Their Comeuppance**  
**Torah:**                      Genesis 41:1-44:17  
**Haftarah:**                      I Kings 3:15-28  
**Brit Chadashah:**                      Matthew 27:15-46

After two Years of silent waiting, Joseph is about to realize that the persistent blessing of G-d is greater than all the suffering of his exile. He has no way of contacting his family to let them know that he is still alive. The guilt of their crime must have weighed heavily on his brothers.

At the beginning of the portion, Pharaoh a pair of double trouble dreams involving two cows and two sheaves of wheat. Now the religious authorities knew they had to give Pharaoh a satisfactory answer of be jailed or even executed. They did not know what the dreams meant, but well knew that a faked answer could be fatal. They we likely6 both stalling for time and looking around for a fall guy to take the blame.

The cup bearer remembered Joseph's ability to interpret dreams and probably felt that if Joseph was unsuccessful, it would mean that no member of Pharaoh's useless entourage would perish. Joseph was cleaned up and took charge of the situation. In no way did he tremble before Pharaoh. He gave G-d the credit for his abilities and said G-d would give Pharaoh a favorable response.

With simple clarity he said that the two dreams were two versions of the same dream. He identified it as a divine warning to Pharaoh about the nature of the next 14 years. There would be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. He advises Pharaoh to build large numbers of storage facilities and to collect 20% of the grain harvest during the years of plenty.

He does not directly put himself forward for the job, but Pharaoh selects the best, Spirit filled man for the job and elevates Joseph to the number two man in Egypt. I wonder if Potiphar's wife was afraid of reprisals because of her false accusation. Wasting time getting even means we waste time that could better be used for the purposes of G-d.

The portion says that Joseph was 30 when he was elevated and since we know that he was 17 when he was sold into slavery and had to wait silently for two more years in prison, there are 11 years which are unaccounted for. They were either spent in Potiphar's house or in the prison.

During the seven years of plenty, they ran out of numbers to count for the massive amount of grain. Without a zero, Egyptians could not count to infinity. The Greeks and Romans had the same problem. His sons, Manasseh (forget) and Ephraim (plenty) were likely born during the years of plenty. Once the years of famine came, Egypt soon became a major wheat broker for the entire region.

The passage deals with two annual visits of Joseph's brothers, probably after each failed harvest. Wheat was likely not the people's only food source, but it was a staple of their diet.

Other crops may not have also failed, if their roots were deep enough to access the underground water table. When Jacob asked them to go to Egypt and buy wheat, they were reluctant, because of their crime. Once in Egypt, they joined the line which Joseph was overseeing. Their comeuppance is going to start in a major way.

As they bow and scrape before their brother, he remembers his dreams and accuses them of being spies and throws them in jail for three days. This was probably the length of time between his own arrival in Egypt and being sold into Potiphar's house. They did not know that Joseph understood Hebrew, and when they were released, they began to understand that they were being punished for what they did to Joseph long ago.

They are invited to Joseph's home for a meal and he encourages them to talk about how their extended families are doing. Their chickens were coming home to roost. Once they leave, at the first stopping place they notice their money had somehow been returned to them. They begin to realize that the hand of G-d is working on them. They knew they could not return unless they brought Benny with them. Simeon had been left behind as a hostage.

Jacob initially refuses to send Benny and declares that Simeon is lost to him. Once all the grain is eaten and the annual wheat crop had failed, he agrees to send them back with Benny, only because Judah says he will forever be guilty if something happens to papa's new favorite.

They again are invited to eat a meal with Joseph, who not only seats them according to their birth order, but gives Benny five times as the rest of them. Their offer to return the first set of silver is refused and the happy group now prepares for their departure. Joseph has his divining cup put into Benjamin's sack and they go on their way. An angry servant overtakes them and asks why they had stolen Joseph's divining cup. This may have been a cover story to explain his divining ability or it may also have been some residual paganism which Joseph was yet to deal with.

Judah says that the person in whose bag the cup is found will die. It is found in Benny's bag and the brothers go back to Joseph with their tails between their legs. It was them who had pronounced the death sentence and not Joseph. Judah admits their guilt for which they are now apparently paying for. He offers to stay as a slave on behalf of his youngest brother, but Joseph does not take him up on his offer. He says that Benjamin will now become his slave.

Joseph may have gone all these apparent games, not only to show them the reality of his dreams, but also to ensure that they did bolt and scatter. With the one son, they had betrayed their father's trust. They want to do a better job with the youngest son, which may have irked Joseph or made him smile inwardly. They were demonstrating their repentance in fine form

and Joseph must have been enjoying the show.

Right to the end of the story, they did not know Joseph could understand them, so none of their plans and deliberations were secret and Joseph was his own mole in their camp. It must have been hard to stay away from the imprisoned Simeon, but he could let nothing ruin his plans. Joseph was not astounded by the provision of G-d, but he must have been impressed how easy it was to manipulate his unsuspecting brothers. When you walk in faith with G-d, none of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune can do you any harm. No matter what, He will never leave you nor forsake you.

### **Sermon: The New Testament is Torah Observant**

As we go through this holiday season, it should not be seen as a kind of battle between the two holidays. In their original forms, they both talk about the Messiah and about His coming kingdom and despite the cold, the noise and all the materialism, it is still a good time of the year to celebrate our faith in our amazing Messiah. Isn't it amazing that the most popular piece of Christmas music is called the Messiah? The composer actually claimed it had come to him as a vision because it was all Scripture and spoke of the holiest intervention of G-d into the affairs of mankind.

Now, I often get impatient with those who want to turn the Torah against the New Testament or claim that the New Testament actually cancels the Old Testament. They both speak with great clarity about the purposes of G-d, which is why I selected my title. Mishpocha, the New Testament is Torah observant and both documents tell the same story.

In fact, when early believers were sharing their faith, they used the Torah as their main document. Now, you all know that I believe that both parts of the Bible are equally inspired, but can I prove it.

The entire Old Testament is built on the foundation of the Ten Commandments and the entire New Testament is based both on the Torah and on the Beatitudes, which are life application principles taken from the Torah. At the end of the Beatitudes, Yeshua affirms that He has not come to abolish or cancel the Commandments (Matt. 5:17-20) and He warns His hearers about the folly of such stupidity.

The Beatitudes are nine blessings (which is what beatitude means) and one simchah (rejoicing). I won't keep you long today, but I want to review both the ten commandments and also examine the beatitudes as life applications of the Ten.

- 1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of G-d.** Those who feel they are somehow worthy of the Kingdom, will never see it. We are to worship G-d alone and never ourselves. Self-idolatry is forbidden by the Torah. We are ordered to do good and make the Lord and His Word, the foundation of our lives, but we to never forget we are merely His servants and nobody's master.
- 2. Blessed are the afflicted, because they shall be comforted.** When we see the spread of worldwide idolatry and immorality, our souls should be afflicted. Evolution is the most heinous form of idolatry the enemy of our souls has ever come up with and too many believers are being swallowed up by its lies. It is a form of pseudo-scientific idolatry

which fools have wrongly formed with their own hands.

- 3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth.** People who try to swindle their way into fame and fortune, will never gain they are seeking to dominate. They swear and make false promises and will say and do anything to get their own way. They do not gain the whole world, but they lose their souls in the process.
- 4. Blessed are those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.** Having a strong commitment to holiness is the source of the greatest happiness for believers and there is no greater commitment to holiness than keeping the Sabbath. It keeps us centered in both His Word and in His purposes. Paying our temporal tithe to the Messiah satisfies our spiritual thirst and our spiritual hunger better than anything else we can bring into our lives.
- 5. Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.** As a young person, I would often get impatient for older people who seemed so stuck in their ways and did not consider change as a blessing for their lives. Well guess what, G-d has a sense of humour and here I am in the same boat. I accept change, but I do not like new clothes and the tried and true are usually what I believe and how I live. I honoured my parents and now my kids are doing the same thing. When Patti's grandmother was alive, we had four generations living in one house for an entire summer. And as generation number three, I told generation number two, I was watching how they were treating generation number one, because we intended to treat them the same way. Things got way better for generation number one and when generation number two became generation number one, we did treat them the same way – with honour and respect.
- 6. Blessed are those who have a pure heart, for they shall see G-d.** You know people often annoy to the point that I begin to have homicidal thoughts. I lose my primarily and singular devotion to G-d and wrongly want to end someone's life at my discretion. A pure heart loves G-d and forgives its enemies. People continue to transgress both the sixth commandment and the sixth beatitude. You cannot love and serve the everlasting G-d, if you hate, harm and kill mankind which is made in His image. You have to learn to see G-d in everyone, no matter how horrible and hateful they have become. They did not start out that way and we should never follow suit.
- 7. Blessed are those who obtain peace, for they shall be called the children of G-d.** Our world is driven by wars on the best of days, both on the battlefields and in the bedrooms and in some cases the battle is between two members of the same gender who have brought their sexual dysfunction into a place where it never belongs. Bringing peace to the nations and to our marriages, we follow in the footsteps of our Master and what He did on the cross. As homosexuality is becoming more acceptable in our politically correct world, we must never give in to these troubled people and help them find peace and release as they quit fighting against G-d and let His Word set them free and heal them (whether or not they are released from their criminal same sex attraction).
- 8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for the kingdom of G-d is theirs.** Over the centuries different peoples have conquered other peoples and both chased them from their land and slaughtered them in the process. Every year, more people die at each other's hands than who die naturally – and don't get me started about

the horrendous slaughter of babies in their mother's womb. Theft of any kind is a violation of G-d's laws. From the earliest of times, the righteous have been slaughtered and violently removed from this world. But, as believers our primary citizenship is from the world to come. We are merely strangers and pilgrims passing through this veil of tears. If I am persecuted for being homeward bound, they are really getting our message. The enemy of our souls is both a thief and a murderer. I will never let myself become either one.

**9. Blessed are you when you are abused and persecuted and when you are falsely accused of all manner of evil is because of your faith in Yeshua.** I have heard it said that the more malicious the gossip, the faster it travels and some people, even some believers, love making up lies and like spreading them even more. A false witness is always an enemy of the L-rd and of both His Torah and His Gospel. All kinds of defamation of character will have eternal consequences. In the Proverbs there is a curse leveled against someone who does or says something horrible and then says that he was just kidding (Prov. 26:18, 19). Never use your tongue as a weapon and never use a lie so that it appears to be the truth. The Nazis and the communists were good at this. So are all those who perpetrated genocide of any kind.

**10. Rejoice and be very glad, for your reward will be great in Heaven – for this is also how the prophets were persecuted before you.** This is kind of an extension of the last blessing, just as the tenth commandment is an extension of the ninth. We should never let anything or anyone require that we act in ways they want us to act. We should never want their possessions or their servants or coworkers. We need to reject the treasures of this world, for the treasures of the world to come. When people reject us and mistreat us, we need to know that they did the same to the prophets who came before us. Instead of anger, fear or resentment, we need to focus on the world to come and we can begin our next world rejoicing as we pass through the shadows of this fading world.

I know that some of the connections which I have made between the Commandments and the Beatitudes may seem tenuous, but it is the process which I want you to understand. Nothing in the New Testament stands in contradiction or opposition with anything in the Old Testament. They are but two versions of the same story and the New Testament is really a Messianic commentary of the Old Testament.

Being Torah observant is the calling for all believers in the New Testament. It has always been people who have become antisemitic, but never the New Testament. It is a superlative Jewish document. They are two sides of the same coin, inseparable pieces of the puzzle of the ages that tell us all that it is possible to know about G-d, His Universe and the World to Come.

The two holidays do not fight against each other and if you try to use one against the other, you will fail and either delude yourself away from the intentions of G-d's Word or you will compose lies and extensions that have no real place in the simple truth we are called to believe and to obey.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov.

Chanukah 5781 is over and if I do not see you until after Christmas day, have a Merry Christmas,

however you choose to observe this cosmic birth.