

The King Messiah

This weeks reading, from Parashat Vayechi (*Bereshit / Genesis 47:28-50:26*), contains the final chapters of the book of Genesis. The opening verses tell us that Jacob (Israel) lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years and the total years of his life were 147 years. Before Jacob died he asked Joseph saying *47:30 but when I lie down with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place.* And he said, *'I will do as you have said.'* (NASB) Joseph takes his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim and has Jacob bless them (*48:1-2*). Jacob tells Joseph that these two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) will be his (*48:5*) and declares that Joseph's descendants after him shall be called after their names (*48:6*). Jacob recounts the death of his wife Rachael (*48:7-9*). He blesses Joseph's children placing Ephraim (second born) before Manasseh (first born) saying the younger will be greater than the older (*48:10-20*). Jacob then proceeds to make statements against his sons on account of what they had done while in the land of Canaan (*49:1-26*). In the midst of giving the blessing over his sons he provides us with a Messianic expectation in his statements to Judah *49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.* (NASB) Jacob dies and Joseph and his brothers bury him in the land of Canaan (*49:29-50:14*). Joseph's brothers seek forgiveness and ask that he have mercy on them for their transgressions. He assures them that they need not fear. The final verses of the book of Genesis tell of the death of Joseph, He lived 110 years and then he died, was embalmed and placed in an Egyptian coffin (*50:15-26*).

כתבי הקודש / The Holy Scriptures	
<p style="text-align: center;">ספר בראשית פרק לו</p> <p>א וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל-בְּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֶסְפוּ וְאֶגִּידָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֶתְכֶם בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים: ב הַקְבִּצוּ וּשְׁמְעוּ בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם:</p> <p>א וקרא יעקב לבניו ואמר להם איכנסו מסובותא ואיחיו לכונו רזייתא סתימא קיצא גניזא ומתן אגרהון דצדיקיא ופורענותהון דרשיעיא ושלויתא דעדן מה הוא כחדא מת-כנשין תריסר שבטי ישראל מקפין דרגשא דדהבא דרביע עלה ומן דאיתגלי איקר שכינתא דיי קיצא דעתיד מלכא משיחא למיתי איתכסי מיניה ובכין אמר איתו ואיתני לכונו מה דיארע יתכונו בסוף יומיא ב אתכנשו ושמעו בני יעקב וקבילו אולפן מן ישראל אבוכון</p>	<p><i>Bereshit / Genesis 49:1-249:1 Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, 'Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come. 49:2 'Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father. (NASB)</i></p> <p>Targum Pseudo Jonathan <i>And Jakob called his sons and said to them, Purify yourselves from uncleanness, and I will show you the hidden mysteries, the ends concealed, the recompense of reward for the righteous, the retribution of the wicked, and the bower of Eden, what it is. And the twelve tribes of Israel gathered themselves together around the golden bed whereon he reclined, and where was revealed to him the Shekina of the Lord, (though) the end for which the king Mashiakh is to come had been concealed from him. Then said he, Come, and I will declare to you what shall befall you at the end of the days. Gather yourselves together and hear, ye sons of Jakob, and receive instruction from Israel your father.</i></p>

Reading through the weekly Torah portion, it is nice to read through the Aramaic Targums to see the rabbinic perspective on the Scriptures. What is interesting about the Aramaic Targums are the messianic allusions that are put forth by the rabbis regarding the meaning of the Hebrew text. Take for example the Targum Onkelos introduces the Messiah in *Bereshit / Genesis 49:10-12* and *Bamidbar / Numbers 24:17-20, 23-24*, where other Targums such as Pseudo Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum find messianic references everywhere. Here in *Bereshit / Genesis 49:1-2* from Targum Pseudo Jonathan the rabbis make a reference that Jacob called all of his children together because knew he was about to speak to his sons regarding the messiah. In the blessing that Jacob made over Judah, he says *49:10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.* (NASB) According to these Scriptures, the scepter or staff (שֵׁבֶט) will not depart from Judah or from between his feet (מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו) until Shiloh comes (עַד כִּי-יָבֹא שִׁילֹה) and to him will be the obedience of the people (וְלוֹ יִקְהַת עַמִּים). In standard Christian commentaries, Shiloh (שִׁילֹה) is understood as a reference to the Messiah, where the word Shiloh signifies the way in which he will come, "the peaceful one." (*Easton's Dictionary*) The Targum Onkelos states *"until the Messiah comes."* Comparing Aramaic translations on this verse, it is interesting to note that Targum Pseudo-Jonathan says *"until the time when the King Messiah will come, the youngest of his sons, and because of him nations shall melt away."* In each of the Aramaic translations, the one who is coming (Shiloh, שִׁילֹה) is the "king Messiah" (מלכא דמשיחא). Targum Onkelos: *"until the time the King Messiah comes"* (עַד זְמַן דִּי יִתִּי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא), Pseudo Jonathan: *"until the time the King Messiah comes"* (עַד זְמַן דִּי יִתִּי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא), Neofiti: *"until the King Messiah comes"* (עַד זְמַן דִּי יִתִּי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא), FTP Genesis: *"until the King Messiah comes"* (עַד זְמַן דִּי יִתִּי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא), and FTV Genesis: *"until the King Messiah comes"* (עַד זְמַן דִּי יִתִּי מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא). The main interpretation that may be taken from the Aramaic literature is that these verses are messianic in nature. According to the Scriptures and the Aramaic translations, the Messiah will have "kingly authority" and this authority will be given from the Lord so that the Messiah will rule and reign over all. Throughout the Scriptures, the Bible stresses the nature of the "King Messiah," that He will redeem and rule Israel and that He is the instrument by which the kingdom of God will be established. The Apostolic Writings reveal that Yeshua is the "King Messiah" spoken of in the Torah and the Prophets and that He is the instrument by which the "kingdom of God" is established. Praise the Lord!