

THE TESTAMENT OF ZABULUN

CHAPTER 1

- 1 The copy of the words of Zabulun, which he enjoined on his sons before he died in the hundred and fourteenth year of his life, two years after the death of Yahusaph.
- 2 And he said to them: Harken to me, sons of Zabulun, attend to the words of your father.
- 3 I, Zabulun, was born a good gift to my parents. For when I was born my father was increased very exceedingly, both in flocks and herds, when with the straked rods he had his portion.
- 4 I am not conscious that I have sinned all my days, except in thought.
- 5 Nor yet do I remember that I have done any iniquity, except the sin of ignorance which I committed against Yahusaph; for I covenanted with my brethren not to tell my father what had been done.
- 6 But I wept in secret many days on account of Yahusaph, for I feared my brethren, because they had all agreed, that if any one would declare the secret, he would be slain.
- 7 But when they wished to kill him, I adjured them much with tears not to be guilty of this sin.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 For Shimeon and Gad came against Yahusaph to kill him, and he said unto them with tears:
- 2 Pity me, my brethren, have racham upon the bowels of Ya'aqob our father: lay not upon me your hands to shed innocent blood, for I have not sinned against you.
- 3 And if indeed I have sinned, with chastening chastise me, my brethren, but lay not upon me your hand, for the sake of Ya'aqob our father.
- 4 And as he spoke these words, wailing as he did so, I was unable to bear his lamentations, and began to weep, and my liver was poured out, and all the substance of my bowels was loosened.
- 5 And I wept with Yahusaph, and my heart sounded, and the joints of my body trembled, and I was not able to stand.
- 6 And when Yahusaph saw me weeping with him, and them coming against him to slay him, he fled behind me, beseeching them.
- 7 But meanwhile Re'uben rose and said: Come, my brethren, let us not kill him, but let us cast him into one of these dry pits, which our fathers dug and found no water.
- 8 For this cause אַרְבָּע forbade that water would rise up in them, in order that Yahusaph would be preserved.
- 9 And they did so, until they sold him to the Yishma'alites.

CHAPTER 3

- 1 For in his price I had no share, my children.
- 2 But Shimeon and Gad and six other of our brethren took the price of Yahusaph, and bought sandals for themselves, and their wives, and their children, saying:
- 3 We will not eat of it, for it is the price of our brother's blood, but we will assuredly tread it under foot, because he said that he would be king over us, and so let us see what will become of his dreams.

4 Therefore it is written in the writing of the Torah of Moshah, that whosoever will not raise up seed to his brother, his sandal will be unloosed, and they will spit into his face.
5 And the brethren of Yabusaph wished not that their brother would live, and אָנְחָם loosed from them the sandal which they wore against Yabusaph their brother.
6 For when they came into Mitsrayim they were unloosed by the servants of Yabusaph outside the gate, and so they made obeisance to Yabusaph after the fashion of King Pharaoh.
7 And not only did they make obeisance to him, but were spit upon also, falling down before him forthwith, and so they were put to shame before the Mitsriym.
8 For after this the Mitsriym heard all the evils that they had done to Yabusaph.

CHAPTER 4

1 And after he was sold my brothers sat down to eat and drink.
2 But I, through pity for Yabusaph, did not eat, but watched the pit, since Yahudah feared lest Shimeon, Dan, and Gad would rush off and slay him.
3 But when they saw that I did not eat, they set me to watch him, till he was sold to the Yishma'alites.
4 And when Re'uben came and heard that while he was away Yabusaph had been sold, he rent his garments, and mourning, said: How will I look on the face of my father Ya'aqob?
5 And he took the money and ran after the merchants, but as he failed to find them he returned grieving. But the merchants had left the broad road and marched through the Troglodytes by a short cut.
6 But Re'uben was grieved, and ate no food that day. Dan therefore came to him and said:
7 Weep not, neither grieve; for we have found what we can say to our father Ya'aqob.
8 Let us slay a kid of the goats, and dip in it the coat of Yabusaph; and let us send it to Ya'aqob, saying: Know, is this the coat of your son? And they did so.
9 For they stripped off from Yabusaph his coat when they were selling him, and put upon him the garment of a slave.
10 Now Shimeon took the coat, and would not give it up, for he wished to rend it with his sword, as he was angry that Yabusaph lived and that he had not slain him.
11 Then we all rose up and said unto him: If you give not up the coat, we will say to our father that you alone did this evil thing in Yashar'al.
12 And so he gave it unto them, and they did even as Dan had said.

CHAPTER 5

1 And now, my children, I bid you to guard the commands of אָנְחָם, and to show racham to your neighbours, and to have compassion towards all, not towards men only, but also towards beasts.
2 For this thing's sake אָנְחָם barak me, and when all my brethren were sick, I escaped without sickness, for אָנְחָם knows the purposes of each.
3 Have, therefore, compassion in your hearts, my children, because even as a man does to his neighbour, even so also will אָנְחָם do to him.
4 For the sons of my brethren were sickening and were dying on account of Yabusaph, because they showed not racham in their hearts; but my sons were preserved without sickness, as you

know.

5 And when I was in the land of Kanaan, by the sea-coast, I made a catch of fish for Ya'aqob my father; and when many were choked in the sea, I continued unhurt.

CHAPTER 6

1 I was the first to make a boat to sail upon the sea, for אֱלֹהִים gave me understanding and wisdom therein.

2 And I let down a rudder behind it, and I stretched a sail upon another upright piece of wood in the midst.

3 And I sailed therein along the shores, catching fish for the house of my father until we came to Mitsrayim.

4 And through compassion I shared my catch with every stranger.

5 And if a man were a stranger, or sick, or aged, I boiled the fish, and dressed them well, and offered them to all men, as every man had need, grieving with and having compassion upon them.

6 Wherefore also אֱלֹהִים satisfied me with abundance of fish when catching fish; for he that shares with his neighbour receives manifold more from אֱלֹהִים.

7 For five years I caught fish, and gave thereof to every man whom I saw, and sufficed for all the house of my father.

8 And in the summer I caught fish, and in the winter I kept sheep with my brethren.

CHAPTER 7

1 Now I will declare unto you what I did. I saw a man in distress through nakedness in wintertime, and had compassion upon him, and stole away a garment secretly from my father's house, and gave it to him who was in distress.

2 Do you, therefore, my children, from that which אֱלֹהִים bestows upon you, show compassion and racham without hesitation to all men, and give to every man with a good heart.

3 And if you have not the wherewithal to give to him that needs, have compassion for him in bowels of racham.

4 I know that my hand found not the wherewithal to give to him that needed, and I walked with him weeping for seven furlongs, and my bowels yearned towards him in compassion.

CHAPTER 8

1 Have, therefore, yourselves also, my children, compassion towards every man with racham, that אֱלֹהִים also may have compassion and racham upon you.

2 Because also in the last days אֱלֹהִים will send His compassion on the aratz, and wheresoever He finds bowels of racham He dwells in him.

3 For in the degree in which a man has compassion upon his neighbours, in the same degree has אֱלֹהִים also upon him.

4 And when we went down into Mitsrayim, Yabusaph bore no malice against us.

5 To whom taking heed, do you also, my children, approve yourselves without malice, and love one another; and do not set down in account, each one of you, evil against his brother.

6 For this breaks unity and divides all kindred, and troubles the soul, and wears away the countenance.

CHAPTER 9

1 Observe, therefore, the waters, and know when they flow together, they sweep along stones, trees, earth, and other things.

2 But if they are divided into many streams, the aratz swallows them up, and they become of no account.

3 So will you also be if you are divided.

4 Be not you, therefore, divided into two heads, for everything which אלהים made has but one head, and two shoulders, two hands, two feet, but all the remaining members.

5 For I have learnt in the writing of my fathers, that you will be divided in Yashar'al, and you will follow two kings, and will work every abomination.

6 And your enemies will lead you captive, and you will be evilly treated among the nations, with many infirmities and tribulations.

7 And after these things you will remember אלהים and repent, and He will have racham upon you, for He is merciful and compassionate. And He sets not down in account evil against the sons of men, because they are flesh, and are deceived through their own wicked deeds.

8 And after these things there will arise unto you אלהים Himself, the light of righteousness, and you will return unto your own land. And you will see Him in Yarushalayim, for His name's sake.

9 And again through the wickedness of your works you will provoke Him to anger, and you will be cast away by Him unto the time of consummation.

CHAPTER 10

1 And now, my children, grieve not that I am dying, nor be cast down in that I am coming to my end.

2 For I will rise again in the midst of you, as a ruler in the midst of his sons; and I will rejoice in the midst of my tribe, as many as will guard the Torah of אלהים, and the commandments of Zabulun their father.

3 But upon the unrighteous will אלהים bring eternal fire, and destroy them throughout all generations.

4 But I am now hastening away to my rest, as did also my fathers.

5 But do you fear אלהים your AL'uah with all your strength all the days of your life.

6 And when he had said these things he fell asleep, at a good old age. And his sons laid him in a wooden coffin.

7 And afterwards they carried him up and buried him in Hebron, with his fathers.