

THE TESTAMENT OF YISSACHAR

CHAPTER 1

1 The copy of the words of Yissachar. For he called his sons and said to them: Hearken, my children, to Yissachar your father; give ear to the words of him who is beloved of .אֵלֶּיךָ

2 I was born the fifth son to Ya'aqob, by way of hire for the mandrakes.

3 For Re'uban my brother brought in mandrakes from the field, and Rachel met him and took them.

4 And Re'uban wept, and at his voice La'ah my mother came forth.

5 Now these mandrakes were sweet-smelling apples which were produced in the land of Haran below a ravine of water.

6 And Rachel said: I will not give them to you, but they will be to me instead of children. For אֵלֶּיךָ has despised me, and I have not borne children to Ya'aqob.

7 Now there were two apples; and La'ah said to Rachel: Let it suffice you that you have taken my husband: will you take these also?

8 And Rachel said to her: You will have Ya'aqob this night for the mandrakes of your son.

9 And La'ah said to her: Ya'aqob is mine, for I am the wife of his youth.

10 But Rachel said: Boast not, and vaunt not yourself; for he espoused me before you, and for my sake he served our father fourteen years.

11 And had not craft increased on the earth and the wickedness of men prospered, you would not now see the face of Ya'aqob.

12 For you are not his wife, but in craft were taken to him in my stead.

13 And my father deceived me, and removed me on that night, and did not suffer Ya'aqob to see me; for had I been there, this had not happened to him.

14 Nevertheless, for the mandrakes I am hiring Ya'aqob to you for one night.

15 And Ya'aqob knew La'ah, and she conceived and bore me, and on account of the hire I was called Yissachar.

CHAPTER 2

1 Then appeared to Ya'aqob a malak of אֵלֶּיךָ, saying: Two children will Rachel bear, inasmuch as she has refused company with her husband, and has chosen continency.

2 And had not La'ah my mother paid the two apples for the sake of his company, she would have borne eight sons; for this reason she bore six, and Rachel bore the two: for on account of the mandrakes אֵלֶּיךָ visited her.

3 For He knew that for the sake of children she wished to company with Ya'aqob, and not for lust of pleasure.

4 For on the morrow also she again gave up Ya'aqob. Because of the mandrakes, therefore, אֵלֶּיךָ hearkened to Rachel.

5 For though she desired them, she ate them not, but offered them in the house of אֵלֶּיךָ, presenting them to the priest of the Most High who was at that time.

CHAPTER 3

1 When, therefore, I grew up, my children, I walked in uprightness of heart, and I became a husbandman for my father and my brethren, and I brought in fruits from the field according to their season.

2 And my father barak me, for he saw that I walked in rectitude before him.

3 And I was not a busybody in my doings, nor envious and malicious against my neighbour.

4 I never slandered anyone, nor did I censure the life of any man, walking as I did in singleness of eye.

5 Therefore, when I was thirty-five years old, I took to myself a wife, for my labour wore away my strength, and I never thought upon pleasure with women; but owing to my toil, sleep overcame me.

6 And my father always rejoiced in my rectitude, because I offered through the priest to אלהים all first-fruits; then to my father also.

7 And אלהים increased ten thousandfold His benefits in my hands; and also Ya'aqob, my father, knew that אלהים aided my singleness.

8 For on all the poor and oppressed I bestowed the good things of the earth in the singleness of my heart.

CHAPTER 4

1 And now, hearken to me, my children, the single-minded man covets not gold, he overreaches not his neighbour, he longs not after manifold dainties, he delights not in varied apparel.

2 He does not desire to live a long life, but only waits for the will of אלהים.

3 And the ruachim of deceit have no power against him, for he looks not on the beauty of women, lest he should pollute his mind with corruption.

4 There is no envy in his thoughts, nor does a malicious person make his soul to pine away, nor worry with insatiable desire in his mind.

5 For he walks in singleness of soul, and beholds all things in uprightness of heart, shunning eyes made evil through the error of the world, lest he should see the perversion of any of the commandments of אלהים.

CHAPTER 5

1 Keep, therefore, my children, the Torah of אלהים, and get singleness, and walk in guilelessness, not playing the busybody with the business of your neighbour.

2 But love אלהים and your neighbour, have compassion on the poor and weak.

3 Bow down your back unto husbandry, and toil in labours in all manner of husbandry, offering gifts to אלהים with thanksgiving.

4 For with the first-fruits of the earth will אלהים bless you, even as He blessed all the consecrated ones from Habel even until now.

5 For no other portion is given to you than of the fatness of the earth, whose fruits are raised by toil.

6 For our father Ya'aqob blessed me with barakoth of the earth and of first-fruits.

7 And Lewi and Yahudah were glorified by אלהים even among the sons of Ya'aqob; for אלהים gave them an inheritance, and to Lewi He gave the priesthood, and to Yahudah the kingdom.

8 And do you therefore obey them, and walk in the singleness of your father; for unto Gad has it been given to destroy the troops that are coming upon Yashar'al.

CHAPTER 6

1 Know you, therefore, my children, that in the last times your sons will forsake singleness, and will cleave unto insatiable desire; and leaving guilelessness, will draw near to malice; and forsaking the commandments of אֱלֹהִים, they will cleave unto Beliar (Baal).

2 And leaving husbandry, they will follow after their own wicked devices, and they will be dispersed among the nations, and will serve their enemies.

3 And do you therefore give these commands to your children, that, if they sin, they may the more quickly return to ;אֱלֹהִים

4 For He is merciful, and will deliver them, even to bring them back into their land.

CHAPTER 7

1 Behold, therefore, as you see, I am a hundred and twenty-six years old and am not conscious of committing any sin.

2 Except my wife I have not known any woman. I never committed fornication by the uplifting of my eyes.

3 I drank not wine, to be led astray thereby; I coveted not any desirable thing that was my neighbour's.

4 Guile arose not in my heart; a lie passed not through my lips.

5 If any man were in distress I joined my sighs with his, and I shared my bread with the poor. I wrought righteousness, all my days I kept amat.

6 I loved אֱלֹהִים; likewise also every man with all my heart.

7 So do you also these things, my children, and every ruach of Beliar (Baal) will flee from you, and no deed of wicked men will rule over you; and every wild beast will you subdue, since you have with you the AL of shamayim and earth, and walk with men in singleness of heart.

8 And having said these things, he commanded his sons that they should carry him up to Hebron, and bury him there in the cave with his fathers.

9 And he stretched out his feet and died, the fifth son of Ya'aqob, at a good old age; with every limb sound, and with strength unabated, he slept the eternal sleep.