

# THE TESTAMENT OF YAHUDAH

## CHAPTER 1

- 1 The copy of the words of Yahudah, what things he spoke to his sons before he died.
- 2 They gathered themselves together, therefore, and came to him, and he said to them:
- 3 Hearken, my children, to Yahudah your father. I was the fourth son born to my father Ya'aqob; and La'ah my mother named me Yahudah, saying, I give thanks to אלהים, because He has given me a fourth son also.
- 4 I was swift in my youth, and obedient to my father in everything.
- 5 And I honoured my mother and my mother's sister.
- 6 And it came to pass, when I became a man, that my father barak me, saying, You will be a king, prospering in all things.

## CHAPTER 2

- 1 And אלהים showed me favour in all my works both in the field and in the house.
- 2 I know that I raced a hind, and caught it, and prepared the meat for my father, and he did eat.
- 3 And the roes I used to master in the chase, and overtake all that was in the plains. A wild mare I overtook, and caught it and tamed it.
- 4 I slew a lion and plucked a kid out of its mouth. I took a bear by its paw and hurled it down the cliff, and it was crushed.
- 5 I outran the wild boar, and seizing it as I ran, I tore it in sunder.
- 6 A leopard in Hebron leaped upon my dog, and I caught it by the tail, and hurled it on the rocks, and it was broken in two.
- 7 I found a wild ox feeding in the fields, and seizing it by the horns, and whirling it round and stunning it, I cast it from me and slew it.

## CHAPTER 3

- 1 And when the two kings of the Kanaanites came, sheathed in armour, against our flocks, and much people with them, single-handed I rushed upon the king of Chatzor, and smote him on the greaves and dragged him down, and so I slew him.
- 2 And the other, the king of Tappuah, as he sat upon his horse, I slew, and so I scattered all his people.
- 3 Achor, the king, a man of giant stature, I found, hurling javelins before and behind as he sat on horseback, and I took up a stone of sixty pounds weight, and hurled it and smote his horse, and killed it.
- 4 And I fought with this other for two hours; and I cleaved his shield in two, and I chopped off his feet, and killed him.
- 5 And as I was stripping off his breastplate, behold nine men, his companions, began to fight with me.
- 6 And I wound my garment on my hand; and I slung stones at them, and killed four of them, and the rest fled.

7 And Ya'aqob my father slew Beelesath, king of all the kings, a giant in strength, twelve cubits high.

8 And fear fell upon them, and they ceased warring against us.

9 Therefore my father was free from anxiety in the wars when I was with my brethren.

10 For he saw in a vision concerning me that a malak of might followed me everywhere, that I would not be overcome.

#### **CHAPTER 4**

1 And in the south there came upon us a greater war than that in Shekem; and I joined in battle array with my brethren, and pursued a thousand men, and slew of them two hundred men and four kings.

2 And I went up upon the wall, and I slew four mighty men.

3 And so we captured Chatzor, and took all the spoil.

#### **CHAPTER 5**

1 On the next day we departed to Aretan, a city strong and walled and inaccessible, threatening us with death.

2 But I and Gad approached on the east side of the city, and Re'uben and Lewi on the west.

3 And they that were upon the wall, thinking that we were alone, were drawn down against us.

4 And so my brothers secretly climbed up the wall on both sides by stakes, and entered the city, while the men knew it not.

5 And we took it with the edge of the sword. And as for those who had taken refuge in the tower, we set fire to the tower and took both it and them.

6 And as we were departing the men of Tappuah seized our spoil, and seeing this we fought with them.

7 And we slew them all and recovered our spoil.

#### **CHAPTER 6**

1 And when I was at the waters of Kozeba, the men of Yobel came against us to battle.

2 And we fought with them and routed them; and their allies from Shiloh we slew, and we did not leave them power to come in against us.

3 And the men of Makir came upon us the fifth day, to seize our spoil; and we attacked them and overcame them in fierce battle: for there was a host of mighty men amongst them, and we slew them before they had gone up the ascent.

4 And when we came to their city their women rolled upon us stones from the brow of the hill on which the city stood.

5 And I and Shimeon hid ourselves behind the town, and seized upon the heights and destroyed this city also.

#### **CHAPTER 7**

1 And the next day it was told us that the king of the city of Ga'ash with a mighty host was coming against us.

2 I, therefore, and Dan feigned ourselves to be Amorites, and as allies went into their city.  
3 And in the depth of night our brethren came and we opened to them the gates; and we destroyed all the men and their substance, and we took for a prey all that was theirs and their three walls we cast down.  
4 And we drew near to Thamna, where was all the substance of the hostile kings.  
5 Then being insulted by them, I was therefore wroth, and rushed against them to the summit; and they kept slinging against me stones and darts.  
6 And had not Dan my brother aided me, they would have slain me.  
7 We came upon them, therefore, with wrath, and they all fled; and passing by another way, they besought my father, and he made peace with them.  
8 And we did to them no hurt, and they became tributary to us, and we restored to them their spoil.  
9 And I built Thamna, and my father built Raba'AL.  
10 I was twenty years old when this war befell.  
11 And the Kanaanites feared me and my brethren.

## **CHAPTER 8**

1 And I had much cattle, and I had for chief herdsman Iram the Adullamite.  
2 And when I went to him I saw Barsaba, king of Adullam; and he spoke unto us, and he made us a feast; and when I was heated he gave me his daughter Bathshua to wife.  
3 She bare me Er, and Onan, and Shelach; and two of them אָנָן smote: for Shelach lived, and his children are you.

## **CHAPTER 9**

1 And eighteen years my father abode at shalum with his brother Esau, and his sons with us, after that we came from Aram, from Laban.  
2 And when eighteen years were fulfilled, in the fortieth year of my life, Esau, the brother of my father, came upon us with a mighty and strong people.  
3 And Ya'aqob smote Esau with an arrow, and he was taken up wounded on Mount Se'ir, and as he went he died at Anoniram.  
4 And we pursued after the sons of Esau. Now they had a city with walls of iron and gates of brass; and we could not enter into it, and we encamped around, and besieged it.  
5 And when they opened not to us in twenty days, I set up a ladder in the sight of all, and with my shield upon my head I went up, sustaining the assaults of stones, upwards of three talents weight; and I slew four of their mighty men.  
6 And Re'uben and Gad slew six others.  
7 Then they asked from us terms of shalum; and having taken counsel with our father, we received them as tributaries.  
8 And they gave us five hundred cors of wheat, five hundred baths of oil, five hundred measures of wine, until the famine, when we went down into Mitsrayim.

## **CHAPTER 10**

1 And after these things my son Er took to wife Tamar, from Aram, a daughter of Aram.  
2 Now Er was wicked, and he was in need concerning Tamar, because she was not of the land of Kanaan. And on the third night a malak of אֱלֹהִים smote him.  
3 And he had not known her according to the evil craftiness of his mother, for he did not wish to have children by her.  
4 In the days of the wedding-feast I gave Onan to her in marriage; and he also in wickedness knew her not, though he spent with her a year.  
5 And when I threatened him he went in unto her, but he spilled the seed on the ground, according to the command of his mother, and he also died through wickedness.  
6 And I wished to give Shelach also to her, but his mother did not permit it; for she wrought evil against Tamar, because she was not of the daughters of Kanaan, as she also herself was.

## CHAPTER 11

1 And I knew that the race of the Kanaanites was wicked, but the impulse of youth blinded my mind.  
2 And when I saw her pouring out wine, owing to the intoxication of wine was I deceived, and took her although my father had not counselled it.  
3 And while I was away she went and took for Shelach a wife from Kanaan.  
4 And when I knew what she had done, I cursed her in the anguish of my soul.  
5 And she also died through her wickedness together with her sons.

## CHAPTER 12

1 And after these things, while Tamar was a widow, she heard after two years that I was going up to shear my sheep, and adorned herself in bridal array, and sat in the city Enaim by the gate.  
2 For it was a law of the Amorites, that she who was about to marry should sit in fornication seven days by the gate.  
3 Therefore being drunk with wine, I did not recognise her; and her beauty deceived me, through the fashion of her adorning.  
4 And I turned aside to her, and said: Let me go in unto you. And she said: What will you give me? And I gave her my staff, and my girdle, and the diadem of my kingdom in pledge. And I went in unto her, and she conceived.  
5 And not knowing what I had done, I wished to slay her; but she secretly sent my pledges, and put me to shame.  
6 And when I called her, I heard also the secret words which I spoke when lying with her in my drunkenness; and I could not slay her, because it was from אֱלֹהִים.  
7 For I said, Lest haply she did it in subtlety, having received the pledge from another woman.  
8 But I came not again near her while I lived, because I had done this abomination in all Yashar'al.  
9 Moreover, they who were in the city said that there was no harlot in the gate, because she came from another place, and sat for a while in the gate.  
10 And I thought that no one knew that I had gone in to her.  
11 And after this we came into Mitsrayim to Yahusaph, because of the famine.  
12 And I was forty and six years old, and seventy and three years lived I in Mitsrayim.

## CHAPTER 13

1 And now I command you, my children, hearken to Yahudah your father, and keep my sayings to perform all the ordinances of אֲנִי, and to obey the commands of אֲנִי.

2 And walk not after your lusts, nor in the imaginations of your thoughts in haughtiness of heart; and do not esteem in the deeds and strength of your youth, for this also is evil in the eyes of אֲנִי.

3 Since I also esteemed that in wars no comely woman's face ever enticed me, and reproved Re'uben my brother concerning Bilhah, the wife of my father, the ruachim of jealousy and of fornication arrayed themselves against me, until I lay with Bathshua the Kanaanite, and Tamar, who was espoused to my sons.

4 For I said to my father-in-law: I will take counsel with my father, and so will I take your daughter. And he was unwilling, but he showed me a boundless store of gold in his daughter's behalf; for he was a king.

5 And he adorned her with gold and pearls, and caused her to pour out wine for us at the feast with the beauty of women.

6 And the wine turned aside my eyes, and pleasure blinded my heart.

7 And I became enamoured of her and I lay with her, and transgressed the commandment of אֲנִי and the commandment of my fathers, and I took her to wife.

8 And אֲנִי rewarded me according to the imagination of my heart, inasmuch as I had no joy in her children.

## CHAPTER 14

1 And now, my children, I say unto you, be not drunk with wine; for wine turns the mind away from amat, and inspires the passion of lust, and leads the eyes into error.

2 For the ruach of fornication has wine as a minister to give pleasure to the mind; for these two also take away the mind of man.

3 For if a man drinks wine to drunkenness, it disturbs the mind with filthy thoughts leading to fornication, and heats the body to carnal union; and if the occasion of the lust be present, he works the sin, and is not ashamed.

4 Such is the inebriated man, my children; for he who is drunken reverences no man.

5 For, lo, it made me also to err, so that I was not ashamed of the multitude in the city, in that before the eyes of all I turned aside unto Tamar, and I wrought a great sin, and I uncovered the covering of my sons' shame.

6 After I had drunk wine I revered not the commandment of אֲנִי, and I took a woman of Kanaan to wife.

7 For much discretion needs the man who drinks wine, my children; and herein is discretion in drinking wine, a man may drink so long as he preserves modesty.

8 But if he goes beyond this limit the ruach of deceit attacks his mind, and it makes the drunkard to talk filthily, and to transgress and not to be ashamed, but even to esteem in his shame, and account himself honourable.

## CHAPTER 15

1 He that commits fornication is not aware when he suffers loss, and is not ashamed when put to dishonour.

2 For even though a man be a king and commit fornication, he is stripped of his kingship by becoming the slave of fornication, as I myself also suffered.

3 For I gave my staff, that is, the stay of my tribe; and my girdle, that is, my power; and my diadem, that is, the esteem of my kingdom.

4 And indeed I repented of these things; wine and flesh I ate not until my old age, nor did I behold any joy.

5 And the malak of אֱלֹהִים showed me that forever do women bear rule over king and beggar alike.

6 And from the king they take away his esteem, and from the valiant man his might, and from the beggar even that little which is the stay of his poverty.

## CHAPTER 16

1 Observe, therefore, my children, the right limit in wine; for there are in it four evil ruachim—of lust, of hot desire, of profligacy, of filthy lucre.

2 If you drink wine in gladness, be modest with the fear of אֱלֹהִים. For if in your gladness the fear of אֱלֹהִים departs, then drunkenness arises and shamelessness steals in.

3 But if you would live soberly do not touch wine at all, lest you sin in words of outrage, and in fightings and slanders, and transgressions of the commandments of אֱלֹהִים, and you perish before your time.

4 Moreover, wine reveals the mysteries of אֱלֹהִים