

## Parashat Toledot - In the Lineage of Z'rubavel

### ואלה תולדת יצחק

*“Now these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son...” (Gen 25:19a)*

#### **The Toledot of Y'shua - In the Lineage of Z'rubavel—the Builder of the Second Temple**

Who was Z'rubavel? When you discover this, you will rejoice with me! At the time our people returned from the Babylonian captivity (≈520 B.C.E.), Z'rubavel was the heir to the throne and was referred to in Scripture as the “Governor of Judah.” We read about him in Hagai and Z'kharyah. Z'rubavel had the plum line. Z'rubavel is almost always mentioned together with Yehoshua the *Cohen Gadol*.

- 1. In the second year of Daryavesh the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the following word of ADONAI came through Hagai the prophet to Z'rubavel the son of Sh'alti'el, governor of Y'hudah, and to Y'hoshua the son of Y'hotzadak, the cohen hagadol*
- 2. Here is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot says: 'This people is saying that now isn't the time - the time hasn't yet arrived for ADONAI's house to be rebuilt.'"*
- 3. Then this word of ADONAI came through Hagai the prophet:*
- 4. "So is now the time for you to be living in your own paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?"*
- 5. Therefore here is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot says: 'Think about your life!*
- 6. You sow much but bring in little; you eat but aren't satisfied; you drink but never have enough; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who works for a living earns wages that are put in a bag full of holes.'"*
- 7. "Here is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot says: 'Think about your life!*
- 8. Go up into the hills, get wood, and rebuild the house. I will be pleased with that, and then I will be glorified,' says ADONAI.*
- 9. 'You looked for much, but it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?' asks ADONAI-Tzva'ot. 'Because my house lies in ruins, while every one of you runs to take care of his own house.*
- 10. This is why the sky above you has withheld the dew, so that there is none, and the land withholds its yield.*
- 11. In fact, I called for a drought on the land and on the hills, on the grain, the wine and the olive oil, on what the ground brings up, on men, animals and on all that hands produce.'"*
- 12. Then Z'rubavel the son of Sh'alti'el and Y'hoshua the son of Y'hotzadak, the cohen hagadol, with all the rest of the people, paid attention to what ADONAI their God had said and to the words of Hagai the prophet; since ADONAI their God had sent him; and the people were filled with fear in the presence of ADONAI.*
- 13. Hagai the messenger of ADONAI conveyed this message of ADONAI to the people: "'I am with you,' says ADONAI."*
- 14. ADONAI roused the spirit of Z'rubavel the son of Sh'alti'el, governor of Y'hudah, and the spirit of Y'hoshua the son of Y'hotzadak, the cohen hagadol, and the spirits of all the rest of the people; so that they came and began to work on the house of ADONAI-Tzva'ot their God.*
- 15. This was on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of the second year of Daryavesh the king .(Haggai 1)*

If we were to consider where we are in “prophetic times” I would suggest that we are in the times of the “rebuilding of the temple”, that is, in the minor prophets, especially *Hagai* and *Z'kharyah*. These two books, more than any others, describe a similitude to our time until the Book of Revelation passages kick in. Let me read for you the rest of *Hagai*:

- 1. On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, this word of ADONAI came through Hagai the prophet:*
- 2. "Speak now to Z'rubavel the son of Sh'alti'el, governor of Y'hudah, and to Y'hoshua the son of Y'hotzadak, the cohen hagadol, and to the rest of the people; say this to them:*
- 3. "'Who among you is left that saw this house in its former glory? And how does it look to you now? It seems like nothing to you, doesn't it?"*

4. Nevertheless, Z'rubavel, take courage now," says ADONAI; "and take courage, Y'hoshua the son of Y'hotzadak, the cohen hagadol; and take courage, all you people of the land," says ADONAI; "and get to work! For I am with you," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot.
5. "This is in keeping with the word that I promised in a covenant with you when you came out of Egypt, and my Spirit remains with you, so don't be afraid!"
6. For this is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot says: "It won't be long before one more time I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land;
7. and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasures of all the nations will flow in; and I will fill this house with glory," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot.
8. "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot.
9. "The glory of this new house will surpass that of the old," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot, "and in this place I will grant shalom," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot.'
10. On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month in the second year of Daryavesh, this word of ADONAI came through Hagai the prophet:
11. "Here is what ADONAI-Tzva'ot says: 'Ask the cohanim what the Torah says about this:
12. if someone carries meat that has been set aside as holy in a fold of his cloak; and then he lets his cloak touch bread, stew, wine, olive oil or any other food; does that food become holy too?'" The cohanim answered, "No."
13. Then Hagai asked, "If someone who is unclean from having had contact with a corpse touches any of these <food items>, will they become unclean?" The cohanim answered, "They become unclean."
14. Hagai then said, "'That is the condition of this people, that is the condition of this nation before me,' says ADONAI, 'and that is the condition of everything their hands produce; so that anything they offer there is unclean.
15. Now, please, from this day on, keep this in mind: before you began laying stones on each other to rebuild the temple of ADONAI,
16. throughout that whole time, when someone approached a twenty-measure pile <of grain>, he found only ten; and when he came to the winepress to draw out fifty measures, there were only twenty.
17. I struck you with blasting winds, mildew and hail on everything your hands produced; but you still wouldn't return to me,' says ADONAI.
18. 'So please keep this in mind, from this day on, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day the foundation of ADONAI's temple was laid, consider this:
19. there's no longer any seed in the barn, is there? and the vine, fig tree, pomegranate tree and olive tree have produced nothing yet, right? However, from this day on, I will bless you.'
20. The word of ADONAI came a second time to Hagai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, as follows:
21. "Tell Z'rubavel, governor of Y'hudah, 'I will shake the heavens and the earth,
22. I will overturn the thrones of kingdoms, I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and I will overturn the chariots and the people riding in them; the horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother.
23. When that day comes,' says ADONAI-Tzva'ot, 'I will take you, Z'rubavel, my servant, the son of Sh'alti'el,' says ADONAI, 'and wear you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you,' says ADONAI-Tzva'ot."

(Haggai 2:1-23)

Z'kharyah continues the prophecy. In one of the most oft-quoted Biblical passages we once again meet Z'rubavel. This time, the Angel of Adonai (Y'shua?) tells us the work of Z'rubavel will indeed be completed:

1. Then the angel that had been speaking with me returned and roused me, as if he were waking someone up from being asleep,
2. and asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I've been looking at a menorah; it's all of gold, with a bowl at its top, seven lamps on it, and seven tubes leading to the lamps at its top.
3. Next to it are two olive trees, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left."
4. I then asked the angel speaking with me, "What are these, my Lord?" The angel speaking with me said,
5. "Don't you know what these are?" I said, "No, my Lord."

6. Then he answered me, "This is the word of ADONAI to Z'rubavel: 'Not by force, and not by power, but by my Spirit,' says ADONAI-Tzva'ot.
7. 'What are you, you big mountain? Before Z'rubavel you will become a plain; and he will put the capstone in place, as everyone shouts, "It's beautiful! Beautiful!"
8. This message from ADONAI came to me:
9. 'The hands of Z'rubavel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will also finish it.' Then you will know that ADONAI-Tzva'ot sent me to you.
10. For even someone who doesn't think much of a day when such minor events take place will rejoice at seeing the plumbline in the hand of Z'rubavel. So these seven are the eyes of ADONAI that range about over all the earth."
11. I replied by asking him, "What are those two olive trees on the right and left sides of the menorah?"
12. Then I asked the question again: "What are those two olive branches discharging gold<-colored oil> through the two gold spouts?"
13. He replied, "Don't you know what they are?" I answered, "No, my Lord."
14. He said, "Those are the two who have been anointed with oil; they are standing with the Lord of all the land."

*Mattityahu* reminds us that the Judean monarchy ended with Babylonian captivity. Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) nevertheless reminds us that it will spring forth again. Once a mighty tree possessing the throne and the crown of Israel, the prophet foretells of the time that it would be shorn to nothing but a stump. But a new branch (THE BRANCH) one day would grow up from the old stump of the Davidic dynasty. This Branch will be a fruitful one. {Note the KJV capitalizes the word Branch.}

*But a Branch will emerge from the trunk of Yishai, a shoot will grow from his roots. (Is. 11:1)*

Since that time, no descendant of David has sat on the throne of David reigning over the Children of Israel. Coincidence, isn't it? Herod was not a descendant of David. In fact, he was not even Jewish! (He was an Edomite, a descendant of Esau!). The Maccabees (Hasmoneans) were not descendants of David. Their so-called kingdom did not last very long. About 60 B.C.E. two Hasmonean brothers waged a bloody civil war. An Edomite noble called Antipater called upon Rome to intervene and the Roman general, Pompey, marched on the land of Israel and settled the civil war by force installing Antipater as governor. When Antipater died, Caesar Augustus raised Antipater's son Herod over the position of "king of Israel." Herod murdered his wife (a descendant of the Hasmonean family) and had his sons strangled. He also had all of the Sanhedrin murdered. Even Josephus writes about the calamities of Herod's reign. Perhaps this explains why descendants of *David HaMelech* settled in *Netzeret* (*Yosef & Miryam*, for one). They knew that Isaiah prophesied that (Is. 9:6,7):

לְסִרְיָהּ [לְמַרְיָהּ] הַמְשָׁרָה וּלְשָׁלוֹם אֵין-קֶץ עַל-כִּסֵּא דָוִד וְעַל-מַמְלַכְתּוֹ לְהָכִין  
אֹתָהּ וּלְסִיעָדָהּ בְּמִשְׁפָּט וּבְצַדִּיקָה מִעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם קִנְיַת יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת תִּעֲשֶׂה-יְהוָה:

- (6) *For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; dominion will rest on his shoulders, and he will be given the name Pele-Yo'etz El Gibbor Avi-'Ad Sar-Shalom <Wonder of a Counselor, Mighty God, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace>,*
- (7) *in order to extend the dominion and perpetuate the peace of the throne and kingdom of David, to secure it and sustain it through justice and righteousness henceforth and forever. The zeal of ADONAI-Tzva'ot will accomplish this.*