

## *In David's Throne*

*"I have made a covenant with My chosen one. ♪ I have sworn to David My servant: ♪<sup>5</sup> Forever I will establish your seed, and will build your throne from generation to generation. 'Selah.'" (Psalm. 89:4-5)*

Biblical scholars have noted a pattern within *the Book of Genesis* that apparently Moses intended to use to indicate his own divisions within the book. These indications usually take the form of the phrase *"these are the generations of"* which in Hebrew is the word *tol'dot* (תולדות). This word suggests a movement from a starting point to a finishing point, from cause to effect, from progenitor to progeny (a key individual in *Adonai's* plan). This is the eight (new beginning) *tol'dot*: (1) Genesis 1:1-2:4: the history/origin of the universe; (2) Genesis 2:5-5:2: the history/origin of Adam/mankind; (3) Genesis 5:3-6:9a: the history/origin of Noah; (4) Genesis 6:9b - 10:1: the history/origin of Noah's sons; (5) Genesis 10:2-11:10a: the history/origin of Shem; (6) Genesis 11:10b-27a: the history/origin of Terah, Abraham's Father; (7) Genesis 11:27b - 25:12: the history/origin of Ishmael; (8) Genesis 25:13-19a: the history/origin of Isaac; and (9) Genesis 25:19b - 26:1: the history/origin of Esau and Jacob.

Like his father Abraham, Isaac was faced with a **barren** wife. It is interesting to note that the Almighty's purpose for mankind as given in Scripture was to *"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the land"* (*Gen. 9:1b*) and when parents are unable to have children (i.e., when there is **barrenness**) there is great sorrow in a marriage. Our society does not value life but people who are barren (even in today's society) feel uncompleted. But unlike his father, Isaac did not take matters into his own hands (trying to bring offspring by human effort) but Scripture tells us that he *entreated Adonai*: *"And Isaac entreated Adonai for his wife, because she was barren: and Adonai was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived (Gen 25:21)."* The Hebrew word for entreated, *vayeter* (ויעתר), means that he was *continually seeking* the Almighty about the matter (righteous pestering). After about 20 years of marriage Isaac is *not resigned to his lot* in life and he is not giving up on his and his father's promises. The text indicates that he *prayed earnestly* for *Adonai* to fulfill His promise. And *Adonai* did it in a way that once again would prove forever that this was **His divine doing**. It is clear then that during the time of waiting for children, the patriarch Isaac developed a close personal relationship with *Adonai*. Scripture does not elucidate on Rebekah during this time, but it does indicate that she prayed after she conceived. Obviously, the Almighty got her attention when there was *agitation* inside of her. The Hebrew verb used here is in the *hitpalel* tense indicating a continual, vigorous action of *crushing and thrusting and striking* one another inside the womb. The generations of these twins have been fighting ever since! The result was that Rebekah, like Isaac, was driven to her knees and to seek *Adonai*. When there are intense pressures on your marriage will husbands entreat *Adonai* for His promises in particular or will they do nothing or take matters into their own hands? Our father Isaac entreated *Adonai*. Shouldn't we?

*Adonai* chose to begin the exposition of the Good News with: *"The book of the genealogy of Yeshua ha-Mashiach, Ben-David, Ben-Avraham"* (*Matt. 1:1*). This is almost the identical beginning to this week's *Torah Portion*. Genealogy is not a very important concept to us in America these days, that is, unless you are Jewish! In the melting pot that is our United States, genealogy, ethnicity, distinctions, and lineage are almost taboo. The socialist agenda proposed by the US Democratic party would have us all ignore such distinctions, but we are not all exactly the same, are we? The old campaign was tolerance and celebration of diversity. Wow! You mean we can be different and have different ethnicity, but this is not OK now?

The ethnicity, the lineage, diversity, and culture of *Messiah Yeshua* counts! Matthew tells us that He is *Ben David* (בן־דוד) and *Ben Avraham* (בן־אברהם). In the beginning, Scripture gives us the generations (*tol'dot*) of Abraham and Isaac, but in Matthew we are given the *tol'dot* of *Yeshua HaMashiach*: *"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, from David until the Babylonian exile are fourteen generations, and from the Babylonian exile until the Messiah are fourteen generations."* (*Matt. 1:17*)

What is so significant about the number fourteen? Why does Matthew purposely omit *Adam* and others and starts with *Abraham* (not *Adam* and not *Noah*, for example)? Obviously, he was not trying to be literally accurate with his account and so, he must have had another purpose. When he used the number fourteen (14) he was giving us a Biblical code – the numerical value of דוד is 4+6+4, i.e., 14! Thus, he was saying *David! David! David!*

The long-awaited *Ben David!* Not only that His earthly father is also *Ben David* (“*But while he was thinking about this, an angel of Adonai appeared to him in a dream saying, "Joseph son of David..." Matt. 1:20*), and His earthly mother is also *Bat David* (“*Yeshua was about thirty years old when He began his ministry. He was the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli, ..., the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God" Luke 3:23-38*).

In both Luke 3:27 and Matthew 1:12 Scripture mentions "*Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel*", who was this person? When you discover this, you will rejoice with me! At the time our people returned from the Babylonian captivity (≈520 B.C.E.), Zerubbabel was the heir to the throne of David and was referred to in Scripture as the **Governor of Judah.**” We read about him in Haggai and Zechariah. Zerubbabel had the plum-line, and he is almost always mentioned together with *Joshua son of Jehozadak* the *cohen gadol*: “*In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of Adonai came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, kohen gadol.*” (Haggai 1:1)

If we consider ourselves in **prophetic times**, then we are in the times of the **rebuilding of the temple**, elucidated in the minor prophets, especially *Haggai* and *Zechariah*. These two books, more than any others, describe our times until the Book of Revelation passages take over. In one of the most oft-quoted Biblical passages ever we once again meet Zerubbabel. This time, the *Angel of Adonai (Yeshua?)* tells us the work of Zerubbabel will indeed be completed: “*Then he responded to me by saying, 'This is the word of Adonai to Zerubbabel saying: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Ruach!" says Adonai-Tzva'ot... "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this House. His hands will also finish it. Then you will know that Adonai-Tzva'ot has sent me to you."* (Zech. 4:6, 9)

Matthew reminds us that the Judean monarchy ended with Babylonian captivity. But the prophet Isaiah nevertheless tells us that it will spring forth again: “*Then a shoot will come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch will bear fruit out of His roots*” (Isaiah 11:1). 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. However, a new branch (**The Branch**) will grow from the old stump of David. This **Branch** will be a fruitful one, *Yeshua!* Since that time, no descendant of David has sat on the throne of David reigning over the Children of Israel. Coincidence? 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 BCE two Hasmonian 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 Hasmonians) and had his sons strangled. He also had the Sanhedrin murdered. Josephus writes about the calamities of Herod’s reign. Perhaps this explains why descendants of King David settled in Nazareth (*Joseph & Mary*, for one). They knew that Isaiah prophesied: “*For to us a child is born, a son will be given to us, and the government will be upon His shoulder. His Name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God My Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and shalom there will be no end – on the throne of David and over His kingdom – to establish it and uphold it through justice and righteousness from now until forevermore. The zeal of Adonai-Tzva'ot will accomplish this*” (Isaiah 9:5,6; 6,7 in the KJV).

The angel told Joseph that the child conceived in Mary’s womb was of the Holy Spirit. The Rabbis make an interesting observation on the above cited prophesy of Isaiah 9:6,7. In the Hebrew of verse 7 there is a small, seemingly insignificant spelling error in the word translated as **increase**. The misspelled word is לַמַּרְבֵּה, **Lemarbeh**. In that word, the letter מ (**mem**) appears in its **sofit** form ם, a form ordinarily appearing only at the end of a word. The Rabbis teach that the closed ם of Isaiah 9:6 indicates that the promised child will be born from a closed womb. The Talmud explains that a closed **mem** indicates mystical and hidden teaching, but in another place, it relates the closed **mem** of Isaiah 9 to the sealing up of Messiahs identity. The angel further told Joseph that the child was to be named שׁוּעָ. *Yeshua* means salvation. In his announcement of the name, the angel makes a play on words (Hebrew pun) saying: “*And you will call his name Yeshua, for he will save (yoshia) his people.*” Matthew 1 ends by quoting *Isaiah 7:14*: “*Therefore Adonai himself will give you people a sign: the young woman will become pregnant, bear a son and name him 'Immanu El'.*” *Shabbat Shalom!*