



Parasha *Vayetze*

November 29, 2025

*Torah:* Genesis 28:10-32:2

*Haftarah:* Hosea 12:12-14:10

*Ketuvim Shlichim:* John 1:35-51

*Shabbat shalom mishpocha!* Psalm 118 is very familiar to Jews worldwide, and to us in Messianic Judaism, because it is part of “the *Hallel*,” the Hebrew word meaning “the Praise.” Jews recite Psalms 113-118 during *Pesach*, *Shavuot*, and *Sukkot*, as well as during *Chanukkah* and *Rosh Chodesh*, for a total of up to 21 times per year. As we are told in the Gospels, it was sung by Yeshua and His disciples after their Passover *Seder* before heading out to the Mount of Olives to pray. It has been a vital prayer for the Jews for thousands of years, and it is for us, the Messianic Jews and Gentiles of *Beit Shalom*. One portion of it speaks of the Messiah: <sup>19</sup>*Open the gates of righteousness for me; I will enter them and thank Yah.* <sup>20</sup>*This is the gate of Adonai; the righteous can enter it.* <sup>21</sup>*I am thanking you because you answered me; you became my salvation.* <sup>22</sup>*The very rock that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone!* <sup>23</sup>*This has come from Adonai, and in our eyes it is amazing.* <sup>24</sup>*This is the day Adonai has made, a day for us to rejoice and be glad.* (Psalm 118:19-24 CJB). The “gates of righteousness” *sha’ar tzedek* שַׁעֲרַת צְדָקָה, the entryway through which we become righteous in ADONAI’s eyes, is the “stone the builders rejected.” The “stone” rejected by the leaders of the faith in Yeshua’s day was the most important, and has become the “cornerstone,” the stone upon which everything above it rests. Yeshua, the Cornerstone, is the only way to righteousness. This vivid image of Yeshua has been visible to Jews whenever this prayer was recited since the time of Yeshua’s life on earth in the first century, nearly two thousand years ago. Some Jews, the first fruits of salvation, have recognized Him through this and other Scriptures, and responded with faith, trusting in Him as Savior. But the majority, “all Israel,” spoken of by *Sha’ul*, remain partially blinded to the truth. But their day of understanding is coming soon.

We see the start of this promise in our *parasha* today. In last week’s reading, Isaac told his son, Jacob, to go back to the family’s homeland to find a wife. Jacob is now on his way to Haran and is spending the night at a specific place in Canaan. During the night, he had a vivid dream. *12 He dreamed: All of a sudden, there was a stairway set up on the earth and its top reaching to the heavens—and behold, angels of God going up and down on it!* (Genesis 28:12 TLV). In his dream, Jacob saw ADONAI standing at the top of a ladder. Ladder in Hebrew is *sulam* סָלָם. In Judaism, this ladder is referred to as *Sulam Ya’akov*, the ladder of Jacob. What ADONAI said to Jacob is our first focus today: *13.....He said, “I am Adonai, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your seed. 14 Your seed will be as the dust of the land, and you will burst forth to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed—and in your seed. 15 Behold,*

*I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you.*” 16 Jacob woke up from his sleep and said, “Undoubtedly, Adonai is in this place—and I was unaware.” 17 So he was afraid and said, “How fearsome this place is! This is none other than the House of God—this must be the gate of heaven” (Genesis 28:13b-17 TLV)! While the author of Psalm 118 isn’t named, most believe King David saw “the gate,” a consistent picture of ADONAI’s coming salvation, hundreds of years after his ancestor, Jacob dreamed about it, when he wrote: *This is the gate of Adonai* (v. 20). Jacob was told that the land on which he was lying was to be his family’s, and that he would be returned to it from Haran.

“*And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed—and in your seed*” is underlined because we are focusing on ADONAI’s promise to Abraham and to Isaac, a promise which He passed on to Abraham’s grandson Jacob, the father of the twelve fathers of the tribes of Israel. ADONAI said:

בָּךְ כָּל-מַשְׁפָּחָהּ הַאֲדָמָה, וּבָךְ עֲצָרֶךָ, *venivrechu vecha kol-mishpehot ha'adamah uvezar'echa*, “And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed—and in your seed” (Genesis 28:14). Going back eleven verses, we find that ADONAI had said to Avram: *3 My desire is to bless those who bless you, but whoever curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed* (Genesis 12:3 TLV). We’re not emphasizing the “curse,” but it remains true. Yeshua will judge those who are cursing the Jews today on the final *Yom Kippur*. Our emphasis is on how ADONAI will bless all the families of the earth through Abraham.

One way is through individual Jews. They have been remarkably productive in ways that have benefited the people of the earth, and we find that more than 20 % of Nobel Prizes have been awarded to Jews, a group comprising about 0.2% of the world’s population. Established by Albert Nobel, the purpose of these awards is to honor individuals who have conferred the greatest benefit to humankind in fields like physics, chemistry, physiology, medicine, literature, and peace. What these percentages mean is extraordinary! They show that based on world population, 100 times more prizes are awarded to Jews than to Gentiles. This is because ADONAI chose the Jews to be a blessing to the other nations and gifted them with these capabilities. This doesn’t mean that Jews are more intelligent than the people of the other nations, but that they use their gifts more. However, don’t forget that within the Jews are also just as many criminals as there are in the Gentile population. They include the father of Marxism, Carl Marx, and the promoter of Communism, Vladimir Lenin, as well as Bugsy Siegel, the American mob boss, the founder of “Murder, Inc.,” and the murderer of more than 30 men. Let’s not forget George Soros, a major financier of antisemitism today, and also a major promoter of Marxism and terrorism. But these individuals don’t negate the blessing brought by the Jews as a group, including scientific and medical innovations that have continued to be developed by scientists in the modern Nation of Israel. And a disproportionate number of Jews are found in the arts: radio, comedy, television, and movies. Yet, many people from the nations of the earth, including even some followers of Yeshua, continue to curse Israel. Antisemitism is growing. The Anti-Defamation League reports a 344% increase in Antisemitism in the last five years, and recorded 9,354 antisemitic incidents in 2024, the highest number since it began tracking data in 1979. But ADONAI knows, and He will

deal with it. All of today's chaos is here because we are in the period Yeshua called the "birth pains" in Matthew 24:8. The Greek word is *ōdinōn*, meaning labor pains, or pains of giving birth. Yeshua's return to Earth is like a coming birth, and all the evil happening today is the pain leading up to the actual birth, His return. And the pregnancy is much further along than many assume today.

There is another significant way in which Abraham's descendants bless the nations of the earth, and you, His followers, know what it is. *Sha'ul* explains it in his letter to the Galatians: *6 Just as Abraham "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," 7 know then that those who have faith are children of Abraham* (Galatians 3:6-7 TLV). We will be studying Daniel Gruber's book, *Children of Abraham*, soon when Michael King brings us lesson one. Being a child of Abraham is of utmost significance for both traditional Jews and followers of Yeshua today. The relationship with him not only unites us as commonwealth members but also shows us to be children of faith. Additionally, we believe that in the future, many of the Arabs—who are also "Children of Abraham"—will turn to Abraham's descendant, Yeshua, and become children of faith. *Sha'ul* continued: *8 The Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the Good News to Abraham in advance, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed through you."* *9 So then, the faithful are blessed along with Abraham, the faithful one* (Galatians 3:8-9). Abraham heard the "Good News" in advance and received it by faith. For us to be blessed, we must also have faith, just as Abraham did. What is the blessing? It is the Good News, the *Besorah*, the Gospel: *16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It doesn't say, "and to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "and to your seed," who is the Messiah* (Galatians 3:16 TLV). The promise to bless the nations was through Abraham's seed, Messiah Yeshua. If the promises were made to Abraham and his descendants, Abraham must have known and trusted ADONAI for his salvation, and for a future that would come through his descendant, Yeshua. *Sha'ul* used the exact words that ADONAI used in *Genesis 12*. He said, *"All the nations shall be blessed through you"* (Galatians 3:8). "The Blessing" is the gift of salvation, made available to every person ADONAI created. But we must choose it. It is available, but we must decide whether to accept it.

The Scriptures indicate that ADONAI told Abraham how the nations would be blessed through his seed. We have discussed one way in which Abraham's seed, his descendants, are a blessing to the nations of the earth: through the individual Jews of the world. But the blessing we're discussing now relates to the coming of Yeshua and the salvation He offers. But there is another way to understand the phrase: *"All the nations shall be blessed through you."* In Hebrew, this phrase is *v'nivrechu vecha kol mishpechot ha'adamah*. The word *v'nivrechu* is the key to understanding it. While it is usually translated as "blessed," it can also have a different meaning. The Babylonian *Talmud* offers insight into *v'nivrechu*. Just to be clear, we don't believe the *Talmud* is inspired or equal to Scripture, but we can learn from it, and it can sometimes help us understand the deeper Hebraic meaning of certain points in the *Torah*. *Mishnah Tractate Sotah 43* states that *v'nivrechu* is derived from the Hebrew infinitive *mavrich*, meaning "to graft." Understanding this, we can read the phrase this way: *"All the nations shall be grafted in through you."* But that's not the only evidence for this conclusion, because there is another place in the *Talmud* that discusses *v'nivrechu*. In *Mishnah Kilayim 1*, *v'nivrechu*

is a word related to mixing, as in “mixing plant stock,” or, in other words, grafting. While we recognize that Abraham’s seed, Yeshua, is ‘the blessing of Abraham,’ we also understand that even before Yeshua created the earth and its inhabitants, ADONAI had already decided to graft those of the nations who would accept Yeshua into Abraham’s family.

But grafting also reminds us of *Sha’ul*’s metaphor about the olive tree of Israel in Romans 11. Did ADONAI tell Abraham that “the blessing of the Gentiles” was that they would be grafted into the Nation of Israel in the future, and is it possible that ADONAI explained all this to Abraham? Did Abraham understand that through G-d’s Son, his future descendant Yeshua, the Gentiles would be grafted into the olive tree of Israel? Years before it happened, did Abraham realize that non-Jews around the world would become a part of the nation that ADONAI was beginning to prepare through his descendants, the future Jews of the world? I believe *Sha’ul* is telling us that Abraham did understand it, and that his salvation came from seeing it from a distance and trusting in “his seed Yeshua” from afar. And *Sha’ul* likely understood this too when he wrote his Olive Tree Metaphor (Romans 11:11-24), which illustrates how Gentiles are grafted into Israel’s Olive Tree.

In our *parasha* this week, we saw that ADONAI reaffirmed to Jacob the promise that He made to Abraham, his grandfather. Understanding the Scriptures correctly, we see that G-d’s blessings to the nations come through and from the Jews. Yeshua said to the woman at the well: 21 ..... “*Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews*” (John 4:21b-22 TLV). By telling her this, Abraham’s seed, Yeshua, explained to this woman from the Nations that He is a Jew and that salvation comes not only from the Jews, but also through Him. He said, “Worshipping the Father doesn’t happen only on this mountain in Samaria or in Jerusalem, but wherever a person is in the world.” Then, He said: 26 ..., “*I—the One speaking to you—I Am.*” (John 4:26b TLV). Yeshua said: “I AM, and we know that He is the Messiah.” For us, that is the mystery of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!

Salvation is the most crucial step in a person’s life. It’s a necessary beginning, but if a person stops there, their spiritual life is severely limited, and they never reach their full potential in Yeshua. One of the last things which Yeshua said to His disciples was spoken on a mountain in the Galilee some time before He ascended to His Father. 18 *And Yeshua came up to them and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Ruach ha-Kodesh, 20 teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:18-20 TLV). The three plus years Yeshua spent with His disciples were a training period, preparing them to go and make more disciples, who would then continue to make more disciples. It began with Jews who, after a few years, made disciples of the Gentiles who began to trust in Yeshua. And then Gentiles began making more Gentile disciples. The complete picture of ADONAI’s love for all the people that He created started with the Jews. Because of Abraham’s belief and faithfulness, his descendants were chosen to become a nation of priests, priests who were to take the knowledge of ADONAI

to the people of other nations. Because of Abraham's faithfulness, ADONAI chose him to be the ancestor of Yeshua, His Son, who would bring salvation to the world. Yeshua, G-d's Son, was born to a virgin of the Tribe of Judah, a Jew. Yeshua lived as a man on the earth for about three and one-half years and, during that time, made disciples, teaching them everything they were to teach His future disciples.

In our *parasha*, *Ya'acov* dreams of a ladder ascending into heaven: *12 He dreamed: All of a sudden, there was a stairway set up on the earth and its top reaching to the heavens—and behold, angels of God going up and down on it! 13 Surprisingly, Adonai was standing on top of it and He said, “I am Adonai, the God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac”* (Genesis 28:12-13 TLV). Ladder, or stairway, is *sulam*. Yeshua also referred to the *sulam*, the ladder Jacob dreamed about: *47 Yeshua saw Nathanael coming toward Him. He said, “Look, a true Israelite! There’s nothing false in him.” 48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do you know me?” Yeshua answered, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” 49 “Rabbi,” Nathanael answered, “You are Ben-Elohim! You are the King of Israel!” 50 “Because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree, you believe?” Yeshua replied to him. “You will see greater things than that” 51 And He said, “Amen, amen I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man”* (John 1:47-51 TLV)! Yeshua used *remez*, the Hebraic way of alluding to something in the *Torah*, to connect His words to Nathaniel to Jacob's dream. Jacob saw ADONAI אֱלֹהִים, the Father, at the top of the ladder. We don't know in what form he saw ADONAI, what His appearance was, because ADONAI is Spirit and does not have a physical body. But we also know that He sometimes appeared in human form, as He did with Abraham near the Oaks of Mamre. Nathaniel had said to Yeshua: “You are *Ben Elohim*,” “You are the Son of G-d.” Nathaniel's expression of belief opened the door for Yeshua to teach him and to connect these two events—one in the *Torah* depicting the Father and the other, His words recorded by John, depicting Himself, the Son—to use them to reveal a spiritual truth. Yeshua's reply to Nathaniel was a declaration that He, Yeshua, is the ladder, the connection, between heaven and earth; *“Amen, amen I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man.”* Yeshua used allegory to reveal a spiritual truth, referring to a spiritual ladder. He is the spiritual ladder of life established through His sacrifice on the cross, and He is the only way to the Father in heaven. Trusting in the Son leads to the Father, as Yeshua Himself said: *6 ... , “I am the way, the truth, and the life! No one comes to the Father except through Me.* (John 14:6b TLV). Trusting in His life, death, and resurrection are the only “way” to ADONAI, the Father. As the “truth,” he is the source of all truth, the “Living Word,” of John chapter 1. As the “life,” He is the source of both spiritual and eternal life for those who believe in Him. But He is also the Creator who made heaven and earth, and He commands the angels who serve Him. As “the Way, the Truth, and the Life,” Yeshua offers a path that leads us to the Father and eternal life.

But, unless we go beyond the *Besorah*, the Good News about salvation, we are not fully obeying Yeshua's commands. He wants us to be more than just saved; more than simply receiving the promise of eternal life. We are to become His *talmidim*, His disciples, those who not only learn from Him, but also serve Him in the ways He has taught us. And we can't achieve that without personal sacrifice. Discipleship requires study, dedication,

and devotion to G-d. But discipleship is not just for the few; it is for everyone. Yeshua said: *19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,...* (Matthew 28:19a TLV). What Yeshua taught is essential, and we also recognize that the Torah is truth, and we must not dissect it by picking what we want to believe and rejecting what we don't.

We are the body of Messiah, Yeshua's ecclesia, His worldwide assembly of believers, a group comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, who have been grafted into the olive tree—*Sha'ul's* metaphor representing the Israel of the Messiah. Whether we are Jew or Gentile, we are grafted in; Jews are grafted back into their natural olive tree, and Gentiles, the wild olive branches, are grafted into the Jewish tree. But let's not forget that there is also a greater Israel, the Commonwealth of Israel, the nation that includes everyone who has a spiritual relationship with ADONAI. Those of us who follow Yeshua are a part of it, along with the Jews of the world. ADONAI is in covenant with them through the Abrahamic Covenant, an everlasting agreement (Genesis 17:7-8), granting them the Land of Israel. Today, as a group, they are unbelievers—Jews who have not trusted in Yeshua but will soon, when "all Israel" is saved, as *Sha'ul* tells us in Romans 11. 25 *For I do not want you, brothers and sisters, to be ignorant of this mystery—lest you be wise in your own eyes—that a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer shall come out of Zion. He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. 27 And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."* (Romans 11:25-27 TLV). Another promise from ADONAI found in our *parasha* is also being fulfilled for the Jews around the world today. 15 "*Behold, I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you*" (Genesis 28:15 TLV). Many of Jacob's descendants have been brought back to the promised land of Israel, the modern nation, and many more will ultimately go. Can the Messiah be far behind?

Our witness as a Messianic Jewish Congregation is vital, and what we do every *Shabbat* is a statement of our belief that ADONAI has called us together as witnesses of Yeshua's coming kingdom on earth. While we usually don't think of it this way, our weekly *Torah* Service is one statement of our belief that Yeshua is coming back to earth, and that His return is near. Each *Shabbat*, when we process our *Torah* scroll, the words on its mantle proclaim our belief. Look closely at it when it passes by you today. In an arc across the top, just under the fringe, are the words:

בַּיּוֹם הַמִּרְשָׁלָיִם קְצָא תֹּרַה וְקַבָּר ה' Ki mi'Tziyon teitzei Torah u'd'var ADONAI mi'rushalayim, with "Heh apostrophe" representing "ADONAI." We recite these words every week during our *Torah* Service, a statement from Isaiah: 3 *Then many peoples will go and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of Adonai, to the House of the God of Jacob! Then He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths." For Torah will go forth from Zion and the word of Adonai from Jerusalem.* (Isaiah 2:3 TLV). We proclaim this every *Shabbat* as we remove our *Torah* from the Ark and process it among the congregation. These words are also found on traditional Jewish *Torah* mantles, as rabbinic Jews proclaim, and we have copied them accordingly.

But our *Beit Shalom* mantle's witness does not end there. Just under these words is a crown with a letter on either side. Some traditional mantles have the Hebrew letter

*kaf* (כ) to the right and *tav* (ת) to the left of the crown, while others have the word *Keter* (כתר) to the right and *Torah* (תורה) to the left. Both refer to the “Crown of the Torah,” symbolizing the Torah’s majesty and importance, representing the majesty of God and the authority of His Torah. While we also recognize the Torah’s tremendous importance, we had chosen to place the letters, *Alef* (א) and *Tav* (ת) alongside our crown, as a representation of our King Yeshua, who is the beginning and the end, the Creator, but also the Finisher, the King over heaven and earth, who will restore the earth to its original condition and then bring forth *Torah* from Jerusalem. But that didn’t happen because the person we ordered through in Jerusalem didn’t comply. When we received it, it was the traditional *Kaf* and *Tav*. Even though our mantle states *Kaf* and *Tav*, our original intent of *Alef* and *Tav* remains. Yeshua is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end. However, *Beit Shalom* was placed lower on the mantle as requested. Our reason for being here is to proclaim that Yeshua, our Messiah, is *HaSha’ar Tzedek*, the “Gate of Righteousness,” the only way to the Father, and also *HaSulam*, the “Ladder,” the connection between physical earth and spiritual life in ADONAI’s New Covenant. We look forward to the day when some of us will see these words coming to pass: “For from Zion shall come forth the Torah, and the word of the L-rd from Jerusalem.” Until then, let us continue to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and for the salvation of “All Israel.” *Shabbat shalom!*