

Vayechi 5781: A vessel to hold blessing at the end

Bereshit 47:28-31

וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׁבַע עָשָׂר שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יָמָיו יַמֵּי־יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חֲמִיּוֹן שְׁבַע שָׁנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּמֵאֹת שָׁנָה: וַיִּקְרָבוּ יָמָיו וַיִּשְׁרָאֵל לְמוֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו לְבָנָיו לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מְצָאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי תְּסֻד וְאָמַת אֶל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם: וְשִׁכַבְתִּי עִם־אֲבֹתַי וְנִשְׂאֵתְנִי מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּקְבְּרֵתְנִי בְּקִבְרֵתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֲעֲשֶׂה כְּדַבְּרֶךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר הַשְּׁבַע לִי וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־רֹאשׁ הַמֶּטֶה: (פ)

Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt, so that the span of Jacob's life came to one hundred and forty-seven years. And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt. When I lie down with my fathers, take me up from Egypt and bury me in their burial-place." He replied, "I will do as you have spoken." And he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. Then Israel bowed at the head of the bed.

Mishna Oketzin 3:12

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי, עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להנחיל לכל צדיק וצדיק שלש מאות ועשרה עולמות, שנאמר (משלי ח, להנחיל אהבי יש ואצרתיהם אמלא. אמר רבי שמעון בן חלפתא, לא מצא הקדוש ברוך הוא כלי מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום, שנאמר) תהלים כט, (ה) עז לעמו יתן ה' ברוך את עמו בשלום :

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: In the world to come the Holy One, Blessed be He, will make each righteous person inherit three hundred and ten worlds, for it is written: "That I may cause those that love me to inherit yesh (numerical value of; and that I may fill their treasuries)" (Proverbs 8:21. Rabbi Shimon ben Halafta said: the Holy One, Blessed be He, found no vessel that could contain blessing for Israel save that of peace, as it is written: "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace" (Psalms 29:11).

Bereshit 48:8-11

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־בְּנֵי יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר מִי־אַלֶּה: וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל־אָבִיו בְּנֵי הֵם אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן־לִי אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵה וַיֹּאמֶר קָהֵם־נָא אֵלַי וְאֲבָרְכֵם: וַעֲיָנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבָדוֹ מֵדָקָן לֹא יוּכַל לְרַאֲוֹת וַיִּגַּשׁ אֹתָם אֵלָיו וַיִּשָּׂק לָהֶם וַיְחַבֵּק לָהֶם: וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יוֹסֵף רְאֵה פָנֶיךָ לֹא פָלַתִּי וְהִנֵּה הִרְאָה אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים גַּם אֶת־זַרְעֶךָ: וַיּוֹצֵא יוֹסֵף אֹתָם מֵעַם בְּרָכָיו וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לְאֲפִי אֶרְצָה:

Noticing Joseph's sons, Israel asked, "Who are these?" And Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." "Bring them up to me," he said, "that I may bless them." Now Israel's eyes were dim with age; he could not see. So [Joseph] brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. And Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see you again, and here God has let me see your children as well."

Bereshit 48:15-16,20

וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְכִי אֲבֹתַי לִפְנֵי אַבְרָהָם וַיְצַחֵק הָאֱלֹהִים הַרְעֵה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדֵי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃
הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגָּאֹל אֹתִי מִכָּל־רָע וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקְרָא בְהֵם שְׁמֵי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי אַבְרָהָם וַיְצַחֵק וַיִּדְגֵּוּ לְרֹב בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ׃ ...
וַיְבָרְכֵם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא לֵאמֹר בְּךָ יְבָרֵךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר יִשְׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־אַפְרַיִם לִפְנֵי מְנַשֶּׁה׃

And he blessed Joseph, saying, “The God in whose ways my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd from my birth to this day— The Angel who has redeemed me from all harm— Bless the lads. In them may my name be recalled, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, And may they be teeming multitudes upon the earth.” ...So he blessed them that day, saying, “By you shall Israel invoke blessings, saying: God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.” Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

Bereshit 49:1-2

וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶל־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאִסְפוּ וְאִגְיְדָה לָכֶם אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא אֲתֶכֶם בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים׃ הִקְבְּצוּ וְשִׁמְעוּ בְנֵי יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁמְעוּ אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲבִיכֶם׃

And Jacob called his sons and said, “Come together that I may tell you what is to befall you in days to come. Assemble and hearken, O sons of Jacob; Hearken to Israel your father:

Bereshit 49:28-33

כָּל־אֵלֶּה שְׁבֹטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁנִים עָשָׂר וְזֹאת אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר לָהֶם אֲבִיהֶם וַיְבָרֵךְ אוֹתָם אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר כְּבָרְכֵתוּ בְרַךְ אֹתָם׃ וַיְצַו אוֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵהֶם אֲנִי נֹאסֵף אֶל־עַמִּי קְבְּרוּ אֹתִי אֶל־אֲבֹתַי אֶל־הַמַּעְרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשֵׂדֵה עֶפְרָוֹן הַחֲתִי׃ בַּמַּעְרָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשֵׂדֵה הַמַּכְפֵּלָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי־מַמְרָא בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר קָנָה אַבְרָהָם אֶת־הַשְּׂדֵה מֵאֵת עֶפְרָוֹן הַחֲתִי לְאַחֲזֵת־קֶבֶר׃ וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־אַבְרָהָם וְאֵת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וְשָׁמָּה קָבְרוּ אֶת־יִצְחָק וְאֵת רַבֵּקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וְשָׁמָּה קָבַרְתִּי אֶת־לֵאָה׃ מִקְנֵה הַשְּׂדֵה וְהַמַּעְרָה אֲשֶׁר־בוּ מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵת׃ וַיְקַל יַעֲקֹב לְצִוֹת אֶת־בָּנָיו וַיֹּאסֵף רַגְלָיו אֶל־הַמַּטָּה וַיַּגִּיעַ וַיֹּאסֵף אֶל־עַמּוּ׃

All these were the tribes of Israel, twelve in number, and this is what their father said to them as he bade them farewell, addressing to each a parting word appropriate to him. Then he instructed them, saying to them, “I am about to be gathered to my kin. Bury me with my fathers in the cave which is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, the cave which is in the field of Machpelah, facing Mamre, in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site— there Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried; there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried; and there I buried Leah— the field and the cave in it, bought from the Hittites.” When Jacob finished his instructions to his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and, breathing his last, he was gathered to his people.

Bereshit 50:24-26

וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-אֶחָיו אֲנֹכִי מֵת וְאֱלֹהִים פֶּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֶתְכֶם וְהֶעֱלָה אֶתְכֶם מִן-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלִיַּעֲקֹב: וַיִּשְׁבַּע יוֹסֵף אֶת-בְּנָי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר פֶּקֹד יִפְקֹד אֱלֹהִים אֶתְכֶם וְהֶעֱלֵתֶם אֶת-עֲצָמֹתַי מִזֶּה: וַיָּמָת יוֹסֵף בֶּן-מָאָה וָעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָיִם וַיַּחַטְטוּ אֹתוֹ וַיִּישָׂם בְּאֲרוֹן בְּמִצְרָיִם:

At length, Joseph said to his brothers, “I am about to die. God will surely take notice of you and bring you up from this land to the land that He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” So Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, “When God has taken notice of you, you shall carry up my bones from here.” Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Shemot 3:16-18

לֵךְ וְאַסְפֹּף אֶת-זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נִרְאָה אֵלַי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר פֶּקֹד תִּפְקֹד אֶתְכֶם וְאֶת-הַעֲשׂוֹי לָכֶם בְּמִצְרָיִם: וְאָמַר אֶעֱלֶה אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנִזִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי אֶל-אֶרֶץ נֹבַת חֶלֶב וּדְבָשׁ: וְשָׁמְעוּ לְקֹלְךָ וּבֵאתָ אִתָּהּ וְזִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-מִלְךָ מִצְרַיִם וְאָמַרְתָּם אֵלָיו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הָעִבְרָיִים נִקְרָה עָלֵינוּ וְעַתָּה גִלְכֶה-נָּא דְרָךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים בְּמִדְבָר וְנִזְבַּחָה לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

“Go and assemble the elders of Israel and say to them: the LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me and said, ‘I have taken note of you and of what is being done to you in Egypt, and I have declared: I will take you out of the misery of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.’ They will listen to you...