Nation is Family

1. Call for Unity

Jeremiah 31:14-17

(15) Thus said the LORD: A cry is heard in Ramah— Wailing, bitter weeping— Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted For her children, who are gone. (16) Thus said the LORD: Restrain your voice from weeping, Your eyes from shedding tears; For there is a reward for your labor —declares the LORD: They shall return from the enemy's land. (17) And there is hope for your future —declares the LORD: Your children shall return to their country.

ירמיהו ל״א:ט״ו–י״ז

(טו) כֹּה ו אָמַר יְהוָה קוֹל בְּרָמָה
נִשְׁמָע֙ נְהִי֙ בְּכִ֣י תַמְרוּרִ֔ים רָחֵ֖ל
מְבַכָּ֣ה עַל־בָּנֶ֑יהָ מֵאֲנָ֥ה לְהִנָּחֵ֖ם
עַל־בָּנֶ֥יהָ כִּי אֵינֶֽנּוּ׃ {ס} (טז)
כֹּה ו אָמַר יְהוָ֗ה מִנְעִ֤י קוֹלֵךְ֙ מִבֶּ֔כִי
וְעֵינַ֖יִךְ מִדִּמְעָ֑ה כִּי֩ יֵ֨שׁ שָׂכָ֜ר לִפְעֻלָּתֵ֗ךְ
נְאֻם־יְהוָ֔ה וְשָׁ֖בוּ מֵאֶ֥רֶץ אוֹיֵֽב׃
(יז)וְיֵ֥שׁ־תִּקְוָ֛ה לְאַחֲרִיתֵ֖ךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָ֑ה
וְשָׁ֥בוּ בָנִ֖ים לִגְבוּלָֽם׃

2. Dissolution of Family

a. Abraham and Yishmael

Genesis 21:9-10

(9) Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing. (10) She said to Abraham, "Cast out that slave-woman and her son, for the son of that slave shall not share in the inheritance with my son Isaac."

בראשית כ״א:ט׳-י׳

(ט) וַתֵּ֣רֶא שָׂרָ֔ה אֶת־בֶּן־הָגָ֖ר
הַמִּצְרִ֑ית אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָ֥ה לְאַבְרָהָ֖ם
מְצַחֵֽק׃ (י) וַתֹּ֣אמֶר֮ לְאַבְרָהָם֒ גָּרֵ֤שׁ
הָאָמָה֙ הַזֹּ֣את וְאֶת־בְּנָ֔הּ כִּ֣י לֹֽא יִירַ֗שׁ
בֶּן־הָאָמָ֥ה הַזֹּ֛את עִם־בְּנִ֖י עִם־יִצְחָֽק׃

b. Jacob and Esau

Genesis 27:41

(41) Now Esau harbored a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing which his father had given him, and Esau said to himself, "Let but the mourning period of my father come, and I will kill my brother Jacob."

בראשית כ"ז:מ"א

(מא) וַיִּשְׂטֹם עֵשָׂו אֶת־יַעֲקֹב עַל־הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרְכוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו בְּלִבּוֹ יִקְרְבוּ יְמֵי אֵבֶל אָבִי וְאַהַרְגָה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב אָחִי׃

c. Joseph and his brothers

Genesis 37:24

(24) and took him and cast him into the pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

בראשית ל"ז:כ"ד

(כד) וַיִּקָּחֻהוּ וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ אֹתוֹ הַבֹּרָה וְהַבּוֹר רֵק אֵין בּוֹ מָיִם׃

3. Reunification of Family

a. Judah and Benjamin

Genesis 43:9

(9) I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible: if I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, I shall stand guilty before you forever.

בראשית מ"ג:ט'

(ט) אָנֹכִי אֶעֶרְבֶּנּוּ מִיָּדִי תְּבַקְשֶׁנּוּ אִם־לֹא הֲבִיאֹתִיו אֵלֶיךָ וְהִצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְךָ כָּל־הַיָּמִים׃

Genesis 44:32

(32) Now your servant has pledged himself for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, I shall stand guilty before my father forever.'

בראשית מ"ד:ל"ב

(לב) כִּי עַבְדְּךָ עָרַב אֶת־הַנַּעַר מֵעִם אָבִי לֵאמֹר אִם־לֹא אֲבִיאֶנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְחָטָאתִי לְאָבִי כָּל־הַיָּמִים׃

b. Ephraim and Menashe

Genesis 48:14

(14) But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, though he was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head—thus crossing his hands—although Manasseh was the first-born.

בראשית מ״ח:י״ד

(יד) וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח יִשְׂרָאֵל֙ אֶת־יְמִינ֔וֹ וַיָּ֖שֶׁת עַל־רֹ֣אשׁ אֶפְרַ֑יִם וְה֣וּא הַצָּעִ֔יר וְאֶת־שְׂמֹאל֖וֹ עַל־רֹ֣אשׁ מְנַשֶּׁ֑ה שִׂכֵּ֥ל אֶת־יָדָ֖יו כִּי מְנַשֶּׁ֥ה הַבְּכֽוֹר׃

c. Judah and Joseph (Ephraim)

Genesis 50:15

(15) When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrong that we did him!"

בראשית נ׳:ט״ו

(טו) וַיִּרְא֣וּ אֲחֵי־יוֹסֵ֗ף כִּי־מֵ֤ת אֲבִיהֶם֙ וַיֹּ֣אמְרוּ֔ לוּ֙ יִשְׂטְמֵ֣נוּ יוֹסֵ֔ף וְהָשֵׁ֥ב יָשִׁ֖יב לָ֑נוּ אֵ֚ת כָּל־הָרָעָ֔ה אֲשֶׁ֥ר גָּמַ֖לְנוּ אֹתֽוֹ׃

3. Unravelling

a. Benjamin and Judah

I Samuel 18:9

(9) From that day on Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

שמואל א י״ח:ט׳

(ט) וַיְהִ֥י שָׁא֖וּל (עוֹיֵ֑ן) [עוֹיֵן] אֶת־דָּוִ֕ד מֵהַיּ֥וֹם הַה֖וּא וָהָלְאָֽה׃ {ס}

b. Ephraim and Menashe

Judges 12:5-6

(5) The Gileadites held the fords of

שופטים י״ב:ה׳-ו׳

(ה) וַיִּלְכֹּד גִּלְעָד אֶת־מַעְבְּרוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן
לְאֶפְרָיִם וֶֽהָיָה כִּי יֹאמְרוּ פְּלִיטֵי
אֶפְרַיִם אֶֽעֱבָרָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ
אַנְשֵׁי־גִלְעָד הַאֶפְרָתִי אַתָּה
וַיֹּאמֶר ו לֹֽא׃ (ו) וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אֱמָר־נָא
שִׁבֹּלֶת וַיֹּאמֶר סִבֹּלֶת וְלֹא יָכִין לְדַבֵּר
כֵּן וַיֹּאחֲזוּ אוֹתוֹ וַיִּשְׁחָטוּהוּ
אֶל־מַעְבְּרוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן וַיִּפֹּל בָּעֵת הַהִיא
מֵאֶפְרַיִם אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנַיִם אָֽלֶף׃

the Jordan against the Ephraimites. And when any fugitive from Ephraim said, "Let me cross," the men of Gilead would ask him, "Are you an Ephraimite?"; if he said "No," (6) they would say to him, "Then say shibboleth"; but he would say "sibboleth," not being able to pronounce it correctly. Thereupon they would seize him and slay him by the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites fell at that time.

c. Judah and Joseph (Ephraim)

I Kings 11:26

מלכים א י"א:כ"ו

(כו) וְיָרָבְעָם בֶּן־נְבָט אֶפְרָתִי
מִן־הַצְּרֵדָה וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ צְרוּעָה אִשָּׁה
אַלְמָנָה עֶבֶד לִשְׁלֹמֹה וַיָּרֶם יָד
בַּמֶּלֶךְ׃

(26) Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, the son of a widow whose name was Zeruah, was in Solomon's service; he raised his hand against the king.

4. The Challenge

a. Ezekiel 37:16

יחזקאל ל"ז:ט"ז

(טז) וְאַתָּה בֶן־אָדָם קַח־לְךָ עֵץ אֶחָד
וּכְתֹב עָלָיו לִיהוּדָה וְלִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
חֲבֵרָו וּלְקַח עֵץ אֶחָד וּכְתוֹב עָלָיו
לְיוֹסֵף עֵץ אֶפְרַיִם וְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
חֲבֵרָו׃

(16) And you, O mortal, take a stick and write on it, "Of Judah and the Israelites associated with him"; and take another stick and write on it, "Of Joseph—the stick of Ephraim—and all the House of Israel associated with him."

Ezekiel 37:19

(19) answer them, “Thus said the Lord GOD: I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in the hand of Ephraim—and of the tribes of Israel associated with him, and I will place the stick of Judah upon it and make them into one stick; they shall be joined in My hand.”

יחזקאל ל״ז:י״ט

(יט) דַּבֵּר אֲלֵהֶם כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יֱהוִה הִנֵּה אֲנִי לֹקֵחַ אֶת־עֵץ יוֹסֵף אֲשֶׁר בְּיַד־אֶפְרַיִם וְשִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבֵרָו וְנָתַתִּי אוֹתָם עָלָיו אֶת־עֵץ יְהוּדָה וַעֲשִׂיתִם לְעֵץ אֶחָד וְהָיוּ אֶחָד בְּיָדִי׃

b. Jeremiah 31:15-17

(15) Thus said the LORD: A cry is heard in Ramah— Wailing, bitter weeping— Rachel weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted For her children, who are gone. (16) Thus said the LORD: Restrain your voice from weeping, Your eyes from shedding tears; For there is a reward for your labor —declares the LORD: They shall return from the enemy’s land. (17) And there is hope for your future —declares the LORD: Your children shall return to their country.

ירמיהו ל״א:ט״ו-י״ז

(טו) כֹּה ו אָמַר יְהוָה קוֹל בְּרָמָה נִשְׁמָע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים רָחֵל מְבַכָּה עַל־בָּנֶיהָ מֵאֲנָה לְהִנָּחֵם עַל־בָּנֶיהָ כִּי אֵינֶנּוּ׃ {ס} (טז) כֹּה ו אָמַר יְהוָה מִנְעִי קוֹלֵךְ מִבֶּכִי וְעֵינַיִךְ מִדְּמָעָה כִּי יֵשׁ שָׂכָר לִפְעֻלָּתֵךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְשָׁבוּ מֵאֶרֶץ אוֹיֵב׃ (יז)וְיֵשׁ־תִּקְוָה לְאַחֲרִיתֵךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְשָׁבוּ בָנִים לִגְבוּלָם׃

Jeremiah 31:20

Truly, Ephraim is a dear son to Me, A child that is dandled! Whenever I have turned against him, My thoughts would dwell on him still. That is why My heart yearns for him; I will receive him back in love —declares the LORD.

ירמיהו ל״א:כ

(כ) הֲבֵן יַקִּיר לִי אֶפְרַיִם אִם יֶלֶד שַׁעֲשֻׁעִים כִּי־מִדֵּי דַבְּרִי בּוֹ זָכֹר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד עַל־כֵּן הָמוּ מֵעַי לוֹ רַחֵם אֲרַחֲמֶנּוּ נְאֻם־יְהוָה׃ {ס}

c. Malachi 3:23-24

(23) Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD. (24) He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction. Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD.

מלאכי ג׳:כ״ג-כ״ד

(כג) הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֵת אֵלִיָּה
הַנָּבִיא לִפְנֵי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל
וְהַנּוֹרָא׃ (כד) וְהֵשִׁיב לֵב־אָבוֹת
עַל־בָּנִים וְלֵב בָּנִים עַל־אֲבוֹתָם
פֶּן־אָבוֹא וְהִכֵּיתִי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ חֵרֶם׃
הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה
הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה הגדול
והנורא

Ben Sira, 48

9–11 You were taken on high by a whirlwind, by fiery legions to heaven. Ready, it is written, for the time to put [divine] wrath to rest, before the Day of the Lord, to turn back the hearts of fathers to their children, and to re-establish the tribes of Israel.

ט-יא הנלקח בסערה מעלה
ובגדודי אש מרום הכתוב נכון
לעת להשבית אף לפני חרון
להשיב לב אבות על בנים ולהכין
שבטי ישראל.

5. The Application

- Boundaries soften
- Civil discourse
- Inclusivity
- Increased responsibility