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The Lost Sheep

Regardless of one’s background, Jew or gentile, our goal in this teaching is to show how there is ONE God, ONE body, ONE faith! The time will soon come when He will gather us all together as ONE flock, and He will be our Shepherd.

Because we believe this teaching is so important and vital to understand, we will walk through this teaching in a systematic form. Our goal is to reveal the overlooked Biblical history and prophecy-surrounding Israel.

Matthew 15:24

[He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.”](#)

There have been many assumptions as to the nature of Israel. Many would say it's a small country in the Middle East. Others say it's another name for the Jews. Yet still others say that it's now the Christian church. While these answers may have an element of truth to them, they are still lacking the full picture as to what the Scriptures give us as recognizing the true Biblical Israel.

Many fail to understand or realize that just like the US, Israel ended up being divided in two with a northern and southern kingdom. Yet unlike the US, Israel never came back together. In fact, after some time, these two kingdoms were both banished from their land and taken into captivity. The northern kingdom was taken into Syria and the southern kingdom into Babylon. Then, only the southern kingdom, the majority of it anyway, returned to the land. The Scriptures normally define the *Northern Kingdom* as the "House of Israel" and the *Southern Kingdom* as the "House of Judah". However, at times, "House of Israel" or just "Israel" can refer to both.

As we read the Scriptures concerning the House of Israel and the House of Judah, we simply assume that it is in reference to all 12 tribes of Israel every time. Yet, this is not always the case.

The Scriptures are quite clear in distinguishing these divisions of Israel as two separate entities, kingdoms or nations. The question is ... How is this related to us today? And the answer? ...More than you can imagine.

Understanding the division of Israel is paramount and absolutely foundational. When one comes to this understanding, the Bible becomes self-explanatory and their comprehension of the Scriptures will go beyond what has ever been imagined. Even illustrations like that of the prodigal son will reveal what has been missed for all these years. Even the two sticks that come together in Ezekiel 37 just comes to life.

Before we begin to examine this topic of the division of Israel in the Scriptures, let's look at one verse in Isaiah chapter 1.

Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD [YHWH]. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

(FYI: In this teaching we reinsert the name of God in place of LORD, just like in ancient manuscripts)

So ask yourselves the question ... *"Am I willing to reason with the Scriptures or am I wanting to debate my perspective?"*

This is imperative that we answer this question now:

Are you willing to examine the Scriptures from the view point that some of your existing beliefs COULD be wrong? Could you actually entertain the thought that something you have believed in for years ... may not be true? This is difficult, especially for pastors, but something that needs to be honestly addressed.

So again I say, ask yourself ... *"Am I willing to reason with the Scriptures or am I wanting to debate my perspective?"* You, and only you, can answer this question.

Isaiah 1:18

“Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD [YHWH]...

During the early days of the New Testament times, only the Old Testament existed. So, when the New Testament was being written, they only had one source to explain themselves. One source to give the definitions to the words and phrases they were using. One source to put to the test all that was being written, the Old Testament, also referred to as the *TANAKH*.

Just as the Bereans tested everything Paul said to the Scriptures, we need to do the same to our own beliefs.

In order for us to truly understand the full context of the New Testament, we have to obtain a firm foundation and understanding, that which can only be grounded in the Old Testament.

It is the Old Testament that serves as the road map to guide us through all that came to be called the New Testament and that which is still yet to come. If we are holding to something that does not line up in agreement with the Old Testament, then we are saying that God's Word contradicts itself and it shows that we are off the map and going in our own direction.

So let us begin examining the Scriptures to enable us to honestly determine where we are with our understanding concerning the full context of the Scriptures.

For us to best understand why and how this topic of Israel being divided is SO relevant to us today, let's go back to Abraham, the one noted as the "father of the faith." Starting with Abraham, we'll begin a broad overview of history through the Scriptures to show us how we arrived to where we are today. In so doing, we'll better understand what lies ahead of us in the future.

God said to Abraham...

Genesis 22:17-18

I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.

Here we see that Abraham's descendants will be as numerous as the stars in the sky. Not too hard to grasp.

Let's continue forward with what was promised to his son Isaac. We must note here that Isaac was the second born to Abraham, yet he received the first born blessing...

To Isaac, God said...

Genesis 26:4-5

I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws.

Here we see virtually the same promise given to Isaac as Abraham. Again, not too hard to grasp. Let's move forward with Isaac's son Jacob. We must note here, like with Isaac, that Jacob was the second born, yet received the first born blessing...

To Jacob, God said...

Genesis 28:13-15

And behold, the LORD [YHWH] stood above it and said, "I am the LORD [YHWH], the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Again, we see virtually the same promise continuing down the line of Abraham. And we see here, in the text, that Jacob started in the land of Canaan. He and all his sons first lived in Canaan.

Jacob's name was eventually changed to Israel.

Genesis 35:10

And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel.

The name "Israel" means "*He that strives with God.*" Not striving with God in the sense of opposing God but rather in the sense of serving and assisting God.

It was through Israel's twelve sons that the promise given to him, his father Isaac, and grandfather Abraham, began to take root.

The twelve sons of Israel are: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph, and Benjamin.

Because of a famine, Israel moves all of his family FROM the land of Canaan to the land of Goshen, just outside of Egypt.

It is here where Israel blesses the sons of Joseph. Israel even declares that Joseph's sons are to be treated as his...

Genesis 48:5

And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are.

When blessing the two boys, as the pattern has shown, his first-born blessing goes to the second born Ephraim and not to the first-born Manasseh...

Genesis 48:17-19

When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. And Joseph said to his father, “Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head.” But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become **a multitude of nations.**”

And so here is where things begin to get interesting. Israel said that Ephraim will become a “*multitude of nations.*” The Hebrew for “multitude of nations” is “*melo ha' goyim,*” meaning “the fullness of the nations.”

From a Greek mindset, “nations” means “gentiles.” The name “gentile” simply means “*of the nations*” or “not of the ONE nation – Israel.” From God's perspective, you are either of His nation (singular) or you are of the nations (plural).

So even though Ephraim received the first-born blessing, he was also prophesied to be the fullness of those not belonging to God. We'll come back to this a little while later.

While in Egypt, the Israelites continued to increase...

Genesis 47:27

Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.

And after Joseph died they were enslaved...

Exodus 1:8-11

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses.

The rest of the book of Exodus details how YHWH delivers His people from Egypt through Moses and uses Moses to lead them.

It was at this time that the Law was given in written form to His people on Mt. Sinai. His people being all twelve tribes of Israel and the aliens who had left and joined with them.

Yet they rebelled against God and did not have the faith to take the promised land. Thus, they were not allowed to enter into it...

Numbers 14:20-23

Then the LORD [YHWH] said, "I have pardoned, according to your word. But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it.

It was only the children of this generation that was to enter the promise land under Joshua. Just before entering the promise land we see God adding a NEW covenant to that which was given to the generation before. What exactly is this NEW covenant?

The covenant that came to the first generation under Moses was not so much the instructions but rather the blessings and curses that would result, pending the obedience or disobedience to those instructions. And we see that this NEW covenant is simply an expansion of those blessings and curses.

First, compare what Moses says to this next generation...

Deuteronomy 4:7-8

For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD [YHWH] our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

In this same chapter he gives a brief summary of the added covenant being given to them.

Deuteronomy 4:25-27

“When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD [YHWH] your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD [YHWH] will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the Lord will drive you.

Toward the end of Deuteronomy we see him giving another view, the blessings...

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD [YHWH] your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the LORD [YHWH] your God.

Then after he gives the blessings that would come from the obedience, he then gives curses that would come resulting from disobedience...

Deuteronomy 28:15

“But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD [YHWH] your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.

After explaining the curses, He THEN explains how this is an added covenant with them...

Deuteronomy 29:1

These are the words of the covenant that the LORD [YHWH] commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

So we see that this was a covenant that was added to the previous covenant. Not doing away with the previous covenant, just adding a NEW covenant along with it.

As a part of the curse in this new covenant we see that the Father declares he will literally spread His people into the nations if they choose to disobey...

Again

Deuteronomy 4:27

And the LORD [YHWH] will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD [YHWH] will drive you.

Deuteronomy 28:36-37

“The LORD [YHWH] will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone. And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD [YHWH] will lead you away.

Yet immediately following, He mentions what will happen when they choose to return to His ways...

Deuteronomy 30:1-5

“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD [YHWH] your God has driven you, and return to the LORD [YHWH] your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the LORD [YHWH] your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD [YHWH] your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD [YHWH] your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. And the LORD [YHWH] your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.

We'll cover this more a little later.

Some have said that the covenant was made too difficult for them to follow - on purpose. Could that be true? Was it an impossibility to follow these commands in complete obedience? Of course not.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14

“For this commandment that I command you today **is not too hard for you**, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, **so that you can do it**.

These are the verses Paul quoted in Romans chapter 9. For a further study on these verses, please see our “[The Prayer of Salvation](#)” teaching at TestEverything.net

Yet to whom does it say that this new covenant was given?

Deuteronomy 29:14-15

It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn covenant, but with whoever is standing here with us today before the LORD [YHWH] our God, and with whoever is not here with us today.

So this covenant was given not only to that generation, but also to ALL generations who would come after them.

After receiving this added covenant, the Israelites began taking back the land of Canaan and eventually desired to have a king over them.

First there was Saul.

Then David. And then Solomon.

It must be noted that all twelve tribes and the aliens, (or gentiles) who joined them, were governed by all three of these three kings.

But then Solomon began leading the people of Israel to follow other gods. Remember, God said he would scatter them among the nations if they didn't follow His instructions.

So after Solomon died, God gave ten tribes of Israel to Solomon's servant Jeroboam.

Thus, the beginning of the spreading of Israel across the nations would begin.

1 Kings 11:31-33

And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD [YHWH], the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did.

So Jeroboam was given ten tribes of Israel. It's interesting to note that Jeroboam was actually from the tribe of Ephraim...

1 Kings 11:26

Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king.

Just a few verses later we also learn that he was also in charge of the whole labor force of the house of Joseph.

We must remember here that it was Ephraim, son of Joseph, that was promised to become the fullness of the nations ... the gentiles. The fullness of those NOT belonging to - God's nation. And so, here we see the prophecy to Ephraim beginning to manifest.

It is here that Israel is divided in to two divisions. A northern and a southern kingdom:

The northern kingdom, that being the ten tribes that left with Jeroboam, often referred in Scripture as the *"House of Israel"*, *"House of Joseph"* or *"Ephraim"*.

And

The southern kingdom, that being Judah and Benjamin - with Benjamin eventually assimilating into Judah, referred to in the Scriptures as the *"House of Judah."*

The northern kingdom eventually established their capitol in Samaria. And yet for over 200 years the northern kingdom did nothing different than that of Solomon in the eyes of YHWH. They disobeyed God's instruction and followed after other gods. It came to the point that God no longer called them His people...

Hosea 1:9

Then the LORD [YHWH] said, “Call him Lo-ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.”

In 721 BCE, God had Assyria conquer Samaria and take the northern kingdom captive to Assyria.

2 Kings 17:6

In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

The king of Assyria then brought in foreign people into the land of Samaria. He later sent a priest back to teach them the ways of God.

2 Kings 17:28-34

So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel and taught them how they should fear the LORD [YHWH].

But every nation still made gods of its own and put them in the shrines of the high places that the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities in which they lived. The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, the men of Cuth made Nergal, the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. They also feared the LORD [YHWH] and appointed from among themselves all sorts of people as priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the shrines of the high places. So they feared the LORD [YHWH] but also served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away.

To this day they do according to the former manner. They do not fear the LORD [YHWH], and they do not follow the statutes or the rules or the law or the commandment that the LORD [YHWH] commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel.

God had warned Israel, just before crossing the Jordan, with the added covenant, that this would happen if they didn't obey. But they ignored the covenant of God that said...

Deuteronomy 28:36

“The LORD [YHWH] will bring you and your king whom you set over you to a nation that neither you nor your fathers have known. And there you shall serve other gods of wood and stone.

And so now we see in 721 BCE this Scripture in Deuteronomy beginning to unfold. We see the people of Israel no longer remain a people but begin assimilating into the nations. Even Isaiah said...

Isaiah 7:8

For the head of Syria is Damascus,
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.
And within sixty-five years
Ephraim will be shattered from being a people.

They were no longer a people. They were no longer God's people.

In sending the northern kingdom off to Assyria, God declared he divorced her through Jeremiah. ...

Jeremiah 3:8

She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce.

Let us remember that the reason God divorced the ten tribes of the northern kingdom was because they hardened their hearts and rejected Gods' law in *pursuing other gods*. As a result of this divorce, they were truly no longer Israel - His people.

It is because they are no longer his people that we see in the New Testament, and modern day as well, that Israel, *as a whole*, is only known by the southern kingdom of Judah. The northern Kingdom was no longer Israel. Only the southern kingdom of Judah could truly go by that name anymore.

And in all of this, we see the unfolding of that which was spoken over 1,100 years earlier to Joseph's son Ephraim by Jacob himself.

Genesis 48:19

But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations."

In the midst of the northern kingdom's turmoil, you would think that Judah would make it a lesson learned for themselves. But they didn't. As the last half of Jeremiah 3:8 says...

Jeremiah 3:8

She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. **Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore.**

2 Kings 17:18-19

Therefore the LORD [YHWH] was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. None was left but the tribe of Judah only. Judah also did not keep the commandments of the LORD [YHWH] their God, but walked in the customs that Israel had introduced.

Since the kingdom of Judah did not learn their lesson from the northern kingdom, it wasn't much longer that they were taken captive as well. Yet they were taken to Babylon...

2 Kings 20:17

Behold, the days are coming, when all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored up till this day, shall be carried to Babylon. Nothing shall be left, says the LORD [YHWH].

2 Kings 24:20

For because of the anger of the LORD [YHWH] it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that he cast them out from his presence.

So Jerusalem and the first temple are both destroyed and the people of Judah are taken captive to Babylon in approximately 586 BCE. The Scriptures tell us it would be for 70 years.

Daniel 9:2

...in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord [YHWH] to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

Jeremiah 29:10

“For thus says the LORD [YHWH]: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.

We find 70 years later that the return is recorded in the book of Nehemiah and Ezra. It is at this time we actually see some of those who the King of Assyria sent to live in Samaria...

Ezra 4:1-3

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD [YHWH], the God of Israel, they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of fathers' houses and said to them, “Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria who brought us here.” But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses in Israel said to them, “You have nothing to do with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the LORD [YHWH], the God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us.”

These were the ancestors of the Samaritans of Yeshua's day. This should shed some light on why the Jews were so at odds with those of Samaria during the time of Yeshua.

It is only because of this return of the southern kingdom to the land, that we see the Jews in the land of Israel today. The very name "Jew" became slang for those who were of the house of Ju-dah and lived in the land of Judah, which later became known as Judea. Thus, as a construct of the name of the tribe, and the name of the land they lived, those who lived in Ju-dea were considered "Jews." The northern Kingdom, or House of Israel of course, were not referred to as Jews.

Judah had every intent of returning to God's ways found in his law when they returned to the land of Judah. However, Judah ended up adding "barriers" or "fences" around the law of God in order to keep from breaking it. They did this because they were so concerned about breaking the law of God, that they made extra commandments around God's commandments to try and make sure they never even came close to breaking God's law.

In fact, we see this mentality beginning during the return of Judah in the book of Nehemiah...

Nehemiah 13:15-19

In those days I saw in Judah people treading winepresses on the Sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys, and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of loads, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. And I warned them on the day when they sold food. Tyrians also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all kinds of goods and sold them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah, in Jerusalem itself! Then I confronted the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day? Did not your fathers act in this way, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Now you are bringing more wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath.”

As soon as it began to grow dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day.

So here we see Nehemiah commanding the gates to be shut so no one could sell at the market place in the city. Was this a bad thing? Of course not. But they should have just obeyed. There should have been no need to do something to prevent disobedience. However, this mentality eventually grew, not only in adding more fences to keep from breaking God's law, but the fences themselves became equated TO God's law. Thus elevating man's law equal to or even higher than God's. We can witness some of the rabbis elevating their decrees higher than God's commandments in the Talmud, which originated from the "oral law" of the Jews.

Consider...

"My son! Be careful concerning rabbinical decrees even more than the Torah...the Torah contains prohibitions...But anyone who violates a rabbinic decree is worthy of death"
(Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin, 21b)

And

"if there are 1000 prophets, all of them the stature of Eliyah and Elisha, giving a certain interpretation, and 1001 rabbis, not according to the 1000 prophets, Elohim did not permit us to learn from the prophets, only from the rabbis who are men of logic and reason." - Rambam's
Introductions to the Mishnah

So that which started out with a good motive and intent to keep from breaking God's law, developed into disobedience to God's law.

Compare...

Deuteronomy 4:2

Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD [YHWH] your God that I give you.

And

Deuteronomy 12:32

See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.

So, although Judah had God's law, as opposed to the northern kingdom, they eventually held their own law in equal or higher value. It was this very sin that Yeshua rebuked the Pharisees for.

Mark 7:8-9

You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men." And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition!"

Mark 7:13

thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.” (see also Matthew 23:1,2)

So although Judah returned, they soon started adding their own laws to follow, which as we mentioned earlier, would later become known as the "Talmud." So, although Judah returned, their heart was not after YHWH's Word, but after man's traditions.

Jeremiah 3:10

Yet for all this her treacherous sister **Judah did not return to me with her whole heart**, but in pretense, declares the Lord. [YHWH]"

Pretense: it's an attempt to make something that is not the case appear true.

The northern kingdom, on the other hand, never returned. Esar Haddon, king of Assyria, finished what his predecessor had started in taking the northern kingdom into captivity. After this, the northern kingdom is rarely, if ever, acknowledged as a unified entity in Scripture again. This is because they were eventually dispersed and never returned to Samaria - like the Southern kingdom returned to the land of Judah.

So where did these tribes go? No one really knows. There is no doubt that fragments did return to the area, but as a whole, they became truly lost, at least in the eyes of man.

Though in the New Testament, not all of those in the northern ten tribes had fully been lost just yet. Eventually they became scattered and fully assimilated amongst all the nations. They were truly lost in the eyes of man. The Scriptures even prophetically referring to them with a new name...

Jeremiah 50:6

My people have been **lost sheep**. Their shepherds have led them astray, turning them away on the mountains. From mountain to hill they have gone. They have forgotten their fold.

Ezekiel 34:6

they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My **sheep** were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

Ezekiel 34:11-12

For thus says the LORD [YHWH] God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my **sheep** and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my **sheep**, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.

Here is where we begin seeing an issue that needs to be understood. God says that He will rescue the sheep He scattered. Yet, how can this be?

God said in Jeremiah that He divorced Israel. The northern kingdom.

Again...

Jeremiah 3:8

She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce.

This may seem like a non-issue to many, but let's consider what God's own law says about one who divorces a woman and the command given regarding remarrying her.

Deuteronomy 24:4

then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD [YHWH].

YHWH's own Law forbids him to remarry the one He has divorced. So, are we looking at a "Do as I say, not as I do" type of situation? Surely not.

Sin is defined as breaking the law of God (1 John 3:4), and we know YHWH does not sin.

For we know that the northern kingdom did indeed defile herself...

Ezekiel 20:43

And there you shall remember your ways and all your deeds with which you have defiled yourselves, and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed.

The mere fact that they did not return to YHWH right away shows that they continued in their rebellious ways of fornication with other gods.

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols;
leave him alone.

Hosea 5:11

Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth.
(Ephraim had no heart of returning but continuing after the idols)

Hosea 6:10

In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing;
Ephraim's whoredom is there; Israel is defiled.

This verse alone shows that Ephraim is defiled and thus cannot return according to Deuteronomy 24.

Remember, Deuteronomy 24:4 says "is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled"

It also states that once the woman becomes joined with another, she cannot remarry her former husband...

Deuteronomy 24:2-4

and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, **then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take**

her again to be his wife, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the LORD [YHWH].

We find that Ephraim joined with another after being divorced...

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is **joined to idols**;
leave him alone.

We also have Hosea 8:9

Hosea 8:9

For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey wandering alone. **Ephraim has sold herself to lovers.**

There is little doubt that this was Ephraim's intent. And it obviously continued as such even after the years of banishment to Assyria...

Isaiah 7:8

for the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is only Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people.

There was no repentance to return and they continued in their ways.

So, it is in all of this that we see God cannot bring Ephraim back.

However, we see elsewhere that bringing Ephraim back is definitely His intent...

Ezekiel 34:15

I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the LORD [YHWH] God.

Micah 2:12

I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;
I will gather the remnant of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture,
a noisy multitude of men.

This was a great mystery to all the prophets and rabbis. They wondered how He could remarry the very one he divorced and declared to have given herself over to prostitution.

God cannot break the very righteous laws that define his own righteousness.

Breaking the law of God is sin, the law defines sin according to God's own words!

God CANNOT sin!

How, then, can God remarry the lost sheep of Israel without breaking his own law (Deuteronomy 24), without sinning?

You are now understanding the GREAT MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL that Paul wrote about. The way God was going to accomplish this was hidden from his people for so long. So many do not even understand Paul's teachings on this matter today.

How could God remarry who he divorced, when God says it was a sin to do so?

For there was only one way he could be released from that particular commandment of the law...

Death.

Paul himself expounds on this, in solving this mystery of the gospel.

Romans 7:2

... For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage...

Likewise, Paul goes on to say, that we die in Christ when we come into the faith, releasing both us, and God, from the requirement of the law, as it relates to divorce and remarriage.

So Christ, came down and died for the lost sheep in order to bring them back into the fold.

It is really the "greatest love story, NEVER told"

And just as many Egyptians joined the Hebrews in leaving Egypt in the Exodus by way of the Passover lamb, Christ has opened the door that whosoever shall call upon him can be saved.

He came as the Word to die in our place. The only way the covenant could be annulled was through death of either partner. This was his goal. To die as the Son of God to restore that which was lost.

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

What was lost? His people.

Thus the words of Jesus, his Hebrew name being Yeshua, in John 15.

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

So when you die in him, you are dead to the sins of our disobedience.

If you live in him, you can be reunited with the YHWH, but if you are not in him you are still in the divorced state. Considered dead in your sins and cannot be united back to YHWH.

Even Hosea 13 mentions this...

Hosea 13:1

When Ephraim spoke, men trembled; he was exalted in Israel. But he became guilty of Baal worship and died.

Notice that Ephraim was declared dead by the Baal worship. Spiritually dead. Declared dead before even being divorced.

So, would that not be enough to annul the covenant? No. This spiritual death just left them dead in their sins and now out of covenant with the Father because of those sins.

At the point of their rebellion, they were no longer considered God's son anymore....

Hosea 1:9

And the LORD [YHWH] said, "Call his name Not My People, for you are not my people, and I am not your God."

Thus, in the eyes of God, they were dead because they were no longer his.

And this is why we see Paul's writings say...

Colossians 2:13

And you, who were **dead in your trespasses** and the **uncircumcision of your flesh**, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

"dead in your trespasses" and "uncircumcision of your flesh" meaning, out of covenant.

Circumcision represents covenant here.

Ephesians 2:1

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins...

This is what the story of the prodigal son is all about...

Luke 15:24

For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

Remember, Israel was considered the first born of God...

Exodus 4:22-23

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD [YHWH], Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'

Israel was called the first born of God. The son of God. But as a whole they rebelled and were no longer considered the son of God. Yeshua was called the Son of God because he obeyed perfectly.

When he died on the cross, the marriage covenant was made void because he died ... as the true son... Israel. So now the House of Israel is enabled to be united again to YHWH...

Some have said... "How can Yeshua be the bridegroom then? Isn't there a law saying that a man is not to marry his father's wife?"

The verse that is often referred to here is...

Deuteronomy 22:30

A man shall not take his father's wife, so that he does not uncover his father's nakedness.

We must understand that we are dealing with metaphors here. Metaphors are all over the Scriptures.

The problem that we believe is an issue for some is that, metaphorically speaking, Yeshua had several roles to fill. Many could be trying to force one metaphorical role over another. When, in reality, he is truly filling all these roles, but one is not necessarily "over" another.

We hope that makes sense.

Metaphors are metaphorical...for example, he is mentioned as the ...Good Shepherd. Yet at the same time... he's the lamb of God. So is he shepherding himself? Of course not. They're just metaphors.

He's also our bridegroom, the son of God, the Word of God and even the Cornerstone (or capstone) and much more.

So, is one more important than another? Is one metaphor to be stressed over another? We don't think so. So when one person says "He's the good shepherd." and another says "No. He's the bridegroom." and still another says "No. He's the first born son." We simply respond with..... "Yes."

Psalms 91:4 says that He will protect us with His feathers and wings.

Psalms 91:4

He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

And Yeshua said in Matthew...

Matthew 23:37

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

Does this make him a big chicken? Of course not! It's a *metaphor*.

Even though Israel is the son of God, YHWH sometimes refers to Israel with a feminine article added. Other times it is very definitive that he is referring to Israel as a female.

For example...

Jeremiah 3:8

She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous **sister** Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore.

The word in Hebrew for sister is very clear that she would be considered a sister, thus, a feminine gender.

Amos 5:2

“Fallen, no more to rise,
is the **virgin** Israel;
forsaken on **her** land,
with none to raise **her** up.”

Jeremiah 3:20

Surely, as a treacherous **wife** leaves her husband,
so have you been treacherous to me, O house of Israel, declares the LORD [YHWH].”

So with Israel, the son of God, being referred to as such, we see how Yeshua, the son of God, can easily fulfill the sacrifice of the female lamb for the unintentional sin in Numbers 15:27-35 as well.

The thing is this, forcing one metaphor over another can truly be counter-productive. The bottom line is that they are all right in their given context.

Speaking of metaphors, both the Father and the Son, are defined as the Word of God, and most already understand this.

The Word of God is our marriage contract, stating who we serve, which is YHWH. We are to become one with YHWH by obeying his Word, the marriage contract.

The metaphor of marriage, in this case, is to represent our commitment to the marriage contract, which is the Word of God. Our marriage to Yeshua is to metaphorically represent us coming back into covenant with the Father through our commitment to the Word of God...and of course, Yeshua is the Word of God.

This is NOT a literal marriage, and problems will occur of course, if one attempts to make this a literal marriage.

For example, I am a male. The Father is a male. Yeshua is a male. We are not entering into a marriage relationship that is forbidden by the Torah.

If we keep the usage of the metaphor within the boundaries of its intent, then there are no problems. However, as soon as someone crosses metaphors or hyper-literalizes metaphors, problems will surface. This is not due to a problem with the Scriptures, but due to a poor application of the intent of the metaphors at hand.

And in this case, we see how he came as the son of God for those who were lost.

Matthew 15:24

He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Redeeming the divorced northern kingdom was the mystery that the prophets could not understand.

Matthew 13:17

For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

The mystery was revealed in the living Word of God coming to die in order to rise from the dead to bring us back to him - and his eternal law.

Romans 16:25-27

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua], according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua]! Amen.

Ephesians 3:1-9

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] on behalf of you Gentiles— assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] through the gospel.

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,

And ...

Ephesians 6:19

and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the **mystery of the gospel**,

Colossians 1:25-27

of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, **the mystery hidden for ages and generations** but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of **this mystery**, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christ came to bring his people back into the relationship that was established in his covenant.

Matthew 5:17

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

He came to redeem his people so they can come back in covenant with him, living in obedience to his Law. Our messiah knew the Psalm that said

Psalms 103:17-18

But the steadfast love of the LORD [YHWH] is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

And the prophet Isaiah...

Isaiah 24:5

The earth lies defiled
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed the laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.

During the time of Christ the Jews were centrally located in the land of Judea but there were still others who were living in other nations.

John 7:35

The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to **go to the Dispersion among the Greeks** and teach the Greeks?"

These are those who would make their pilgrimage for the feast days as we see here in Acts.

Acts 2:5

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout **men from every nation** under heaven.

These are the ones to whom Peter said in the same chapter...

Acts 2:39

For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who **are far off**, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Who were those who were far off that Peter was referring to?

Ezekiel 11:15

"Son of man, your brothers, even your brothers, your kinsmen, the whole **house of Israel**, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Go far from the LORD [YHWH]; to us this land is given for a possession.'

Our Messiah's focus was the regathering of the lost sheep of Israel. At the time of Messiah's ministry, though, the assimilation of the northern kingdom into the nations abroad was well in progress yet not completed.

Not all of the northern kingdom had yet forgotten who they were. In fact, there were some who still recognized and acknowledged who they were. One example could be Anna the prophetess...

Luke 2:36

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin,

Knowing that there were these living in the surrounding areas, Christ's focus centered on them.

Consider...

Matthew 10:5-6

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, **but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

We see several times that the New Testament addresses those sheep scattered in the nations. Consider...

1 Peter 1:1

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua],

To those who are **elect exiles of the Dispersion** in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

And Peter later says...

1 Peter 1:22-25

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for

"All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The grass withers,

and the flower falls,

but the word of the Lord remains forever."

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

He then confirms who he is talking to by these next verses...

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Exodus 19:6

and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

1 Peter 2:10

Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Peter here uses the same language as found in the Scriptures regarding the lost sheep of Israel.

Isaiah 7:8

For the head of Syria is Damascus,
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.
And within sixty-five years
Ephraim will be shattered from being a people.

Hosea 1:9

And the LORD [YHWH] said, "Call his name **Not My People**, for you are not my people, and I am not your God."

Even James says...

James 1:1

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua],
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:
Greetings.

Yet we know that the word spoken over Ephraim was indeed, again...

Genesis 48:19

But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations."

As mentioned earlier, Israel said that Ephraim will become a multitude of nations. Not that he would just become scattered amongst them. Though they definitely would be scattered amongst them, the fullness of the prophecy is that Ephraim would BECOME a multitude of nations (not just scattered).

Remember, the Hebrew for "multitude of nations" is "*melo ha' goyim*", meaning "*the fullness of the nations*".

From a Greek mindset, "nations" means "gentiles." The name "gentile" simply means "*of the nations*".

Though there were those who still remembered who they were and where they had come from within the northern kingdom, there were still many who had already begun assimilating into the nations. And so to reach those who had already assimilated into the nations, God gave Paul the ministry of reconciliation to the Gentiles...

1 Timothy 2:7

For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

AND

Romans 5:8-11

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Colossians 1:20

and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

It was in the ministry of reconciliation that Paul was to bring the northern kingdom back into unity with the southern kingdom. This was no easy task as the Jews had done a pretty good job in widening the existing gap with their added laws. Again, these laws later became known as the Talmud.

Along with these laws, the Jews actually created a physical barrier in the temple court. Gentile proselytes were not allowed past this wall.

In addressing this topic of uniting the two kingdoms in the book of Ephesians, Paul refers to this wall as a metaphor in addressing the law of the Jews...

Ephesians 2:11-16

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— remember that you were at that time separated from Christ [Messiah], alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ [Messiah]. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh **the dividing wall of hostility** by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might **reconcile us both to God in one body** through the cross, thereby killing the **hostility**.

Their hostility? What hostility? And where did it originate?

Leviticus 26:21

“Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins.

Christ removed their hostility and rebellion towards the Father, and one another, through the cross, enabling the two to become one again.

This happens to be the same law Paul refers to in the book of Colossians...

Colossians 2:15

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him

As we noted earlier, God's law says...

Deuteronomy 12:32

Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.

The southern kingdom added to it and the northern kingdom took away from it. Either way, it's rebellion against God's law.

This is why Isaiah said to the **southern** kingdom...

Isaiah 53:6

All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD [YHWH] has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Incidentally, it just so happens to be the same pattern today as it was in the day of Paul's ministry. The Jews add to the law and the gentiles take away from it, both groups violating Deuteronomy 4:2, just in their own way.

Deuteronomy 4:2

You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD [YHWH] your God that I command you.

And today we see some of the same issues that Paul struggled with in his ministry.

For there are some who still remain hostile to God's law just as those that did in Paul's day.

Romans 8:6-8

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

And

Romans 9:30-32

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness (they rebelled against it), have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not

pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. (not from a heart to obey but rather out of duty and that of works of man) They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,

And again in Romans 11 he says...

Romans 11:25-27

Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

“The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;
“and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”

Two key phrases must be noted here. First, "the fullness of the gentiles". This is a direct reference of the prophecy spoken over Ephraim in Genesis.

Genesis 48:19

But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations.”

The "*melo ha' goyim*," the multitude of the nations, the *fullness of the nations... the fullness of the gentiles*.

And second, "**ALL Israel will be saved**". Meaning the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom. The Jew and the gentile all coming together.

Romans 11:26

And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written...

Romans 11 is all about the two olive trees, the cultivated and the wild, representing the two kingdoms. The emphasis being that the kingdom or olive tree that was broken is now coming back together. For it was said...

Jeremiah 11:16

The LORD [YHWH] once called you ‘a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit.’ But with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed.

But now we see as spoken in Ezekiel...

Ezekiel 37:15-24

The word of the LORD [YHWH] came to me: “Son of man, take a stick and write on it, ‘For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him’; then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.’ And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. And when your people say to you, ‘Will you not tell us what you mean by these?’ say to them, Thus says the LORD [YHWH]

God: Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand. When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, then say to them, Thus says the LORD [YHWH] God: Behold, I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. And one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no longer two nations, and no longer divided into two kingdoms. They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. But I will save them from all the backslidings in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

“My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.

The focus of the Messiah was to bring his Kingdom back together as one. One in the faith of Abraham, obedience.

Our Messiah was not concerned with what one's physical lineage was or the boasting that came with it. His concern was obedience.

Compare...

John 8:39

They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus (Yeshua) said to them, “If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did,

This is HUGE. Yeshua is saying here that ANYONE who does what Abraham did is considered the children of Abraham. Well, what did Abraham do?

Genesis 26:4-5

I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (Torah).**”

According to the words of the Messiah, those who obey God's commandments are those who can truly call Abraham their father.

Think about what he said later to the Jews ... the physical descendants of Abraham...

John 10:24-27

So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus (Yeshua) answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Even of those who may be actual descendants of Abraham, if they do not obey God's commandments, then they are not considered children of Abraham.

Again, the focus of Christ was to bring his kingdom back together as one. One in the Faith of Abraham. Not just together as one, but one in obedience to the Father.

It truly makes no difference what tribe one may be from ... or if they have any Hebrew heritage at all.

This is what Paul is saying in

1 Timothy 1:4

nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.

The faith that produces the obedience of Abraham.

James 2:21-24

Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that **faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works**; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

One's genealogy did not guarantee salvation. For even when they left Egypt there were foreigners who came along with Israel:

Exodus 12:38

A **mixed multitude** also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds.

Numbers 11:4

Now the **mixed multitude** who were among them yielded to intense craving; so **the children of Israel** also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat?"

This mixed multitude, is defined by God himself, to be as the Children of Israel.

And, all are to follow the same law of God.

Numbers 15:15-16

For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before the LORD [YHWH]. **One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you.**"

Consider also Ruth, she was a Moabite, yet in coming into the faith, she considered Israel's God to be her God, and his ways to be her ways.

What mattered then, and still today, is that we are walking in the faith of Abraham.

The faith that produces the obedience of Abraham.

Obedience to God's Law.

It was in **this** that Paul saw many struggle. The question then becomes, "Why did they struggle with this?"

As Paul says...

2 Corinthians 3:13-16

...not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the LORD [YHWH], the veil is removed.

They struggled because of the veil. Exactly what veil though? The same veil that covered Moses' face? Did that veil keep them from understanding the law that Moses gave at that time?

Of course not. The law was given **at the time his face shone!**

Exodus 34:29-35

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of **his face shone**, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the Lord [YHWH] had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.

Whenever Moses went in before the Lord [YHWH] to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

And we know they obeyed for some time after that.

Verse 14 here shows their minds were hardened...

2 Corinthians 3:14-15

But their **minds were hardened**. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ [Messiah] is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.

It wasn't Moses' veil that made their minds hardened or covered their hearts as verse 15 says. Paul here is showing that when the law was read, that the same veil came over their hearts as it did when it first began covering them in 721 BCE.

Lamentations 3:65

Put a veil over their hearts, and may your curse be on them! (the curse of the law)

Paul, who knew the law and the prophets, is explaining the veil mentioned by Jeremiah here in Lamentations and the curse of the law...the curse of sin and death. It is in Messiah only that this veil and curse is taken away as the verse says.

Thus, only in the Messiah is the Kingdom reunited.

Uniting Israel back together was and still is a huge issue. The mere fact that Israel was divided should say **something** to us. Remember that Yeshua said...

Luke 11:17

...“Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls..”

This is why the disciples asked him...

Acts 1:6-7

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority.

The disciples were under the impression that the Messiah was going to restore the Kingdom of Israel as it was before it was divided. But the prophecy of Hosea was still to come...

Hosea 6:1-2

“Come, let us return to the LORD [YHWH];
for he has torn us, that he may heal us;
he has struck us down, and he will bind us up.
After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.

Though we know the Messiah made it possible for the return to begin, the restoration would not fully come to fruition until we were in the 3rd day of the punishment that was given.

Is there a way for us to know where we are in the grand scheme of this timeline? We believe so...

Again, the work of the Messiah started the restoration but it's in this 3rd day that He completes the restoration.

As Hosea says...

Hosea 6:2

After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence.

The phrase "that we may live in his presence" actually points us toward the time of the millennium.

THIS is the revival that needs to be preached today. That he is bringing his people back to his ways, back to his decrees, and back to his Law.

This actually brings us to a Scripture that we said we would come back to.

Deuteronomy 30:1-5

“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD [YHWH] your God has driven you, and return to the LORD [YHWH] your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the LORD [YHWH] your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD [YHWH] your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the LORD [YHWH] your God will gather you, and from there he will take you. And the LORD [YHWH] your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers.

This is not regarding the Exodus from Egypt. This was spoken 40 years after Egypt to the second generation of those who left there. This prophecy of another exodus has yet to take place! The time is coming when the Father will bring ALL of Israel, both the southern AND northern kingdom back to the land.

Even as Micah said...

Micah 2:12

I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob;
I will gather the remnant of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture,
a noisy multitude of men.

Also

Ezekiel 20:34, 41)

(34) I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out.

(41) As a pleasing aroma I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered. And I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations.

And

Jeremiah 23:7-8

“Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD [YHWH], when they shall no longer say, ‘As the LORD [YHWH] lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but ‘As the LORD [YHWH] lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.’ Then they shall dwell in their own land.”

As for the possible timing of the next Exodus leading to the culmination of the restoration and regathering of Israel, we would recommend our teaching, [The Creation Prophecy](#).

In conclusion, when we referred to the added covenant given in Deuteronomy at the beginning of this teaching, we left a small part off that we'd like to share now...

Deuteronomy 4:25-30

After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time — if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing evil in the eyes of the LORD [YHWH] your God and provoking him to anger, I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you this day that you will quickly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess. You will not live there long but will certainly be destroyed. The LORD [YHWH] will scatter you among the peoples, and only a few of you will survive among the nations to which the LORD [YHWH] will drive you. There you will worship man-made gods of wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or eat or smell. But if from there you seek the LORD [YHWH] your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in *later days* you will return to the LORD [YHWH] your God and obey him.

We are truly in the latter days as his people are returning to him in obedience.

The day is coming when ALL 12 tribes, AND those who have joined in becoming citizens of Israel, will be back as one, prepared and ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

As mentioned at the beginning, understanding the division of Israel is paramount and absolutely foundational. When one comes to this understanding, the Bible becomes self-explanatory and their comprehension of all the Scriptures will go beyond what has ever been imagined.

We hope you have enjoyed this study. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom.

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverthing.net & www.ExaminaloTodo.net

TWITTER: www.twitter.com/119Ministries#