

THE TWO HOUSES OF ISRAEL

NOTE: All **red lettering** in this teaching is that which was spoken by either Yahweh our Father or His Son Yeshua our Savior.

There is a general error among most Christians, some Messianic Jewish Believers and a lot of Jews regarding the identity of the children of Israel. Because of a general “*lack*” of historical understanding, most Christians believe that the Jews are ALL of the people chosen by Almighty Yahweh in the Old Testament. Additionally, many Christians believe that they belong to an unrelated group known biblically as “Gentiles.” In this teaching, we are going to show from the Scriptures that both of these conclusions are founded on incorrect assumptions.

First, let’s examine the Scriptures to see who Yahweh chose as His own special people:

Exodus 19:3-6 “³And Mosheh went up to Elohim (God), and יהוה (Yahweh) called to him from the mountain, saying, “**This is what you are to say to the house of Ya’aqob (Jacob), and declare to the children of Yisra’el (Israel):** ⁴**‘You have seen what I did to the Mitsrites (Egyptians), and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself. ⁵And now, if you diligently **obey My voice**, and shall guard (keep/do/obey) My covenant, then you shall be My treasured possession above all the peoples – for all the earth is Mine – ⁶and you shall be to Me a reign of priests and a set-apart (Holy) nation.’** Those are the words which you are to speak to **the children of Yisra’el.**’ ”
(The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Who were and who **are** the children of Israel? Here are two passages about the exodus from Egypt: one from a Christian source, and one from a Jewish source. They share a common problem, as the following comments will show:

From the Christian web site EndTimes.org:

Moses - Great prophet of God called to lead the **Jews** out of Egypt to the land that God promised his forefather Abraham. . . . Moses led the **Jews** through the desert for 40 years while God purged out the unbelievers. [Emphasis mine]

From the Jewish web site Meir Panim:

The Passover is a **Jewish** holiday which is celebrated on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of *Nisan*. This month usually falls around March or April. The first and the last day of the Passover are considered as a major Jewish holidays where the rules of *Shabbat* apply. It is celebrated for 7 days in Israel but typically 8 days in other parts of the world. [Emphasis mine]

Pesach or *Pesah* as it is called in Hebrew, has become one of the most well known **Jewish** holidays. It is a commonly held belief that the name “Passover” is taken from the story of the Israelites escape from Egypt, which can be found in the Bible in the Book of Exodus. [Emphasis mine]

Do you see the problem with both of these comments? They reflect a common misconception about WHO the children of Israel really are. The Scriptures tell us very specifically who comprises the “children of Israel.” They are listed in several places in the book of Genesis.

The children of Jacob, who was renamed Israel (Genesis 32:28), were:

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|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Reuben | 7. Dan |
| 2. Simeon | 8. Gad |
| 3. Levi | 9. Asher |
| 4. Judah | 10. Naphtali |
| 5. Zebulun | 11. Joseph |
| 6. Issachar | 12. Benjamin |

Jacob was the son of Isaac and also the grandson of Abraham. Jacob was the recipient of the same promises that were made to his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham by Yahweh (Genesis 12:1-3; 26:3-5; 27:28-29 and 28:14-15). In the Genesis Chapter 49, we see Jacob prophesying about the future of his 12 sons, who were the forefathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. It was the descendants of these sons of Jacob that Moses led out of Egypt. The tribe of Judah (later called “Jews”) was just **one** of the 12 tribes that came out of Egyptian slavery.

SIDE NOTE: Joseph had two sons, Manasseh (Literally his name means *Making Forgetful*) the older son and Ephraim (Literally his name means *Fruitfulness*) the younger son, in Egypt before Jacob and all his clan came to Egypt. I want to make note here that because of Jacob’s deathbed adoption of Joseph’s two sons Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons which are recorded in Genesis 48:1-6, Jacob effectively gave a double inheritance to his favorite son Joseph. Therefore, the Scriptures sometimes lists 13 tribes, with the duo of Ephraim and Manasseh replacing their father Joseph. Also Ephraim and Manasseh were at least 19 years old when Joseph brought them to Jacob his father. We know this because Joseph had his two sons two years before Jacob and his clan moved to Egypt and Jacob lived in Egypt 17 years before he died. Thus, both boys were at least 19 years old if not a little more. (See Genesis 41:50-52; 45:11; 47:28)

Now let’s look at the history of the children of Israel, from the time of the Exodus until their captivity many centuries later. The 12 tribes, from the time of their wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt, were called the “children of Israel” or the “House of Israel” (Exodus 16:31; 40:38; Leviticus 10:6; Numbers 20:29; Joshua 21:45). **SIDE NOTE:** There are 662 verses from Genesis to Revelation that use the term “children of Israel” and 282 verses using the term “House of Israel.”

After coming into the Holy Land (Joshua 1:10), a series of judges ruled over Israel for a period of about 450 years (Acts 13:20). Then Israel asked for a king to rule over them, just as all the surrounding nations had (1 Samuel 8:1-5). Yahweh chose Saul (1 Samuel 9:15), of the tribe of Benjamin, to rule over Israel; he was anointed by Samuel (1 Samuel 10:1-8). But Saul displeased Yahweh and was rejected from being king (1 Samuel 15:10). He was replaced as king by David, who was from the tribe of Judah (1 Samuel 16:1-13). David’s son Solomon followed him on the throne of Israel (1 Kings 1:28-35; 2:12).

With the exception of 7½ years at the beginning of David’s reign when he ruled only over the House of Judah (2 Samuel 2:11), these three kings (Saul, David and Solomon) reigned over the united 12 tribes of Israel as one nation. However, because later in the life of King Solomon, he worshiped other gods and did not keep Yahweh’s covenant and statutes, God told him that He would split the kingdom into two nations after his death (1 Kings 11:9-13). This occurred about 960 BCE at the beginning of the reign of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam:

1 Kings 12:1-16 “¹And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. ²So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was still in Egypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), ³that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole

assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ⁴“Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.” ⁵So he said to them, “Depart for three days, then come back to me.” And the people departed. ⁶Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, “How do you advise me to answer these people?” ⁷And they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” ⁸But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. ⁹And he said to them, “What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?” ¹⁰Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us’ – thus you shall say to them: ‘My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s waist! ¹¹And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!’ ” ¹²So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, “Come back to me the third day.” ¹³Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; ¹⁴and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!” ¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the LORD (Yahweh), that He might fulfill His word, which the LORD (Yahweh) had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. ¹⁶Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: “What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!” So Israel departed to their tents.” (NKJV)

The 10 tribes, led by Jeroboam who was from the tribe of Ephraim (1 Kings 11:26; 12:25), withdrew from Rehoboam’s kingdom because of taxation. Let’s follow the story a little further:

2 Kings 12:17-24 ¹⁷But Rehoboam reigned over the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the revenue; but all Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. ²⁰Now it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all Israel. There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only. ²¹And when Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled **all the House of Judah with the tribe of Benjamin**, one hundred and eighty thousand chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the **House of Israel**, that he might restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. ²²But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, ²³“Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to **all the House of Judah and Benjamin**, and to the rest of the people, saying, ²⁴“Thus says the LORD: “You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the **children of Israel**. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me.” ’ ” Therefore they obeyed the word of the LORD (Yahweh), and turned back, according to the word of the LORD (Yahweh).” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Yahweh told Rehoboam that the split was divinely ordained, and that he was not to fight the 10 tribes of Israel that had broken away from him. To his credit, Rehoboam heeded Yahweh's word and sent his troops home. The separation resulted in a northern kingdom in Samaria and a southern kingdom in Judea. The northern kingdom was known by several names, including: Israel, the House of Israel, Samaria, Joseph, the House of Joseph, and Ephraim. The southern kingdom was generally called Judah or the House of Judah.

From the very beginning of this split, the northern kingdom perverted and outright broke Yahweh's Torah/Laws (Teachings and Instructions). King Jeroboam immediately began to change Yahweh's Torah/Law by removing the Levites from the priesthood, which caused most of them to return to the southern kingdom of Judah (1 Kings 13:33; 2 Chronicles 11:13-14). He also set up calf idols at Bethel and Dan, set up shrines on high places, and changed the time and place for observing the Feasts of Yahweh (1 Kings 12:26-33). All these sinful innovations plagued the House of Israel throughout their existence.

Several decades before the fall of the House of Israel, the prophet Hosea preached the message of Almighty Yahweh to the separated tribes of Israel. While he addressed both the House of Judah and the House of Israel in his prophecies, Hosea's primary message is directed at the House of Israel, or Ephraim:

Hosea 1:1-11 ¹"The word of the LORD (Yahweh) that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. ²When the LORD (Yahweh) began to speak by Hosea, the LORD (Yahweh) said to Hosea: **"Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD (Yahweh)."** ³So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴Then the LORD (Yahweh) said to him: **"Call his name Jezreel, for in a little while I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, and bring an end to the kingdom of the House of Israel."** ⁵It shall come to pass in that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel." ⁶And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then God said to him: **"Call her name Lo-Ruhamah, for I will no longer have mercy on the House of Israel, but I will utterly take them away."** ⁷**Yet I will have mercy on the House of Judah, will save them by the LORD (Yahweh) their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword or battle, by horses or horsemen."** ⁸Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. ⁹Then God said: **"Call his name Lo-Ammi, for you are not My people, and I will not be your God."** ¹⁰**Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' there it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.'** ¹¹**Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and appoint for themselves one head; and they shall come up out of the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel!"** (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

To graphically illustrate the House of Israel's rebellion against Yahweh, He commanded Hosea to take a prostitute for a wife (Hosea 1:2). The reason for this was because Yahweh's wife, the House of Israel, had prostituted herself spiritually with the surrounding nations. As we go through these prophecies, it's important to realize that the Elohim/God (Mighty One) of Israel who was married to the House of Israel (and also the House of Judah) was the One who later came in the flesh as Yeshua of Nazareth.

The harlot Gomer bore Hosea three children. Yahweh had Hosea name them symbolically to show how He was going to deal with the House of Israel, which had committed harlotry by worshiping strange gods. These three children were named *Jezreel*, *Lo-Ruhamah*, and *Lo-Ammi*.

All three of these names described Yahweh's punishment on the House of Israel, as He explained to Hosea. **JEZREEL** (which literally means "The Mighty One sows" in Hebrew) represented Yahweh's sowing of the House of Israel among the Gentile nations of the earth after they were carried away into captivity by the Assyrians (Hosea 8:8; Zechariah 10:7-10). **LO-RUHAMAH** (which is Hebrew for "no mercy") indicated that Yahweh would no longer have mercy upon the House of Israel, allowing them to be taken captive because of their sins (Hosea 1:6). The name **LO-AMMI** (literally "no people" in Hebrew) pictured the gradual loss of national identity by the House of Israel. They were prophesied to lose the knowledge of who they were. Scattered throughout the nations of the world, the House of Israel forgot that they were part of Yahweh's chosen people (Hosea 1:9) and eventually came to view themselves as part of those nations where they were living. Essentially, they came to believe that they were Gentiles.

The sins instituted by Jeroboam, based on his corruption of Yahweh's Torah/Law, caused the House of Israel grief throughout its history. Just as Hosea prophesied, Yahweh finally had enough of the sins of Ephraim. He allowed the nation of Assyria to capture and deport the House of Israel in 722 BCE:

2 Kings 17:16-18 ¹⁷"So they left all the commandments of the LORD (Yahweh) their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. ¹⁷And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD (Yahweh), to provoke Him to anger. ¹⁸Therefore the LORD (Yahweh) was very angry with **Israel**, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of **Judah** alone." (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Because of Israel's continual spiritual harlotry, the prophet Jeremiah tells us that Yahweh divorced the House of Israel and sent her away:

Jeremiah 3:6-10 ⁶"And יהוה (Yahweh) said to me in the days of Yoshiyahu (Josiah) the sovereign, **"Have you seen what backsliding Yisra'el has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there committed whoring. ⁷And after she had done all these, I said 'Return to Me.' But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Yehudah (Judah) saw it. ⁸And I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Yisra'el had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Yehudah (Judah) did not fear, but went and committed whoring too. ⁹And it came to be, through her frivolous whoring, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and wood. ¹⁰And yet for all this her treacherous sister Yehudah (Judah) has not turned to Me with all her heart, but falsely," declares יהוה (Yahweh)."** (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Jeremiah wrote this passage over a hundred years after Yahweh had divorced Israel and sent her away into captivity by the hand of Assyria. About the same time, the prophet Ezekiel also wrote about the spiritual adultery of both Israel and Judah:

Ezekiel 23:1-10 ¹"The word of the LORD (Yahweh) came again to me, saying: ²**"Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. ³They committed harlotry in Egypt, they committed harlotry in their youth; their breasts were there embraced, their virgin bosom was there pressed. ⁴Their names: Oholah the elder and Oholibah her sister; they were Mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, **Samaria****

is Oholah, and Jerusalem is Oholibah. ⁵Oholah played the harlot even though she was Mine; and she lusted for her lovers, the neighboring Assyrians, ⁶who were clothed in purple, captains and rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses. ⁷Thus she committed her harlotry with them, all of them choice men of Assyria; and with all for whom she lusted, **with all their idols, she defiled herself.** ⁸She has never given up her harlotry brought from Egypt, for in her youth they had lain with her, pressed her virgin bosom, and poured out their immorality upon her. ⁹Therefore I have delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians, for whom she lusted. ¹⁰They uncovered her nakedness, took away her sons and daughters, and slew her with the sword; she became a byword among women, for they had executed judgment on her.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

As the passage above symbolically details, the House of Israel played the harlot with the gods of the surrounding nations. Yahweh had told Hosea that He was going to cast the House of Israel away because of their sins (Hosea 1:6), and He was true to His word. The House of Israel was carried away captive by Assyria into the surrounding nations:

Ezekiel 23:11-18 “¹¹**And her (Israel) sister Oholibah (Judah) saw this, yet she (Judah) became more corrupt in her lust than she (Israel), and in her whorings more corrupt than her (Israel) sister’s whorings.** ¹²**She (Judah) lusted for the sons of Ashshur (Assyrians), officers and rulers, the ones near, perfectly dressed, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.** ¹³**And I saw that she (Judah) was defiled, they both (Israel and Judah) took the same way.** ¹⁴**But she (Judah) increased her whorings, and she (Judah) looked at men carved on the wall, images of Chaldeans portrayed in red,** ¹⁵**girded with belts around their loins, flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, like the Babelians (Babylonians) of Chaldea, the land of their (Israel and Judah) birth.** ¹⁶**As soon as her (Judah) eyes saw them, she (Judah) lusted for them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.** ¹⁷**And the Babelians came to her (Judah), into the bed of love, and they defiled her (Judah) with their whorings. And she (Judah) was defiled by them, and her (Judah) being turned from them in disgust.** ¹⁸**And she (Judah) uncovered her (Judah) whorings and uncovered her (Judah) nakedness. Then I turned My being from her (Judah) in disgust, as My being had turned from her (Judah) sister (Israel) in disgust.**” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Because the House of Judah followed in Israel’s footsteps, Yahweh eventually gave Judah into captivity also. In 586 BCE, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, burned Solomon’s Temple, and took the majority of Jews to Babylon. However, about 50 years later, when Medo-Persia defeated Babylon, many of the Jews were allowed to begin returning to Jerusalem (starting around 536 BCE). This return was in fulfillment of Yahweh’s promise to not utterly cast away the House of Judah (Hosea 1:7), even though their sins became worse than those of the House of Israel (Ezekiel 23:11). Unlike Judah, the House of Israel never returned to their homeland.

Although Yahweh punished both houses, the Jews have always been recognized as His people for ONE reason. Unlike the assimilated House of Israel, they have strived to keep the sign that He said would forever identify the children of Israel:

Exodus 31:16-17 “¹⁶And the children of Yisra’el shall guard (keep/do/obey) the Sabbath, to observe (be obedient to keeping) the Sabbath throughout their generations as an everlasting covenant. ¹⁷**Between Me and the children of Yisra’el it is a sign forever.** For in six days ׀׀׀׀ (Yahweh) made the heavens and the earth, and on the

seventh day He rested and was refreshed.’ ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

The reunion of the House of Israel and the House of Judah are frequently mentioned in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament). Some, including many Messianic Jews, try to make the case that the northern tribes were reconciled to the House of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. Let’s take a look at a few passages used by those who hold this opinion to see if they do, in fact, show that the two houses have already been reunited. The first passage we’ll examine is from 2 Chronicles 11:

2 Chronicles 11:16 “And after the Lēwites (Levites) left, those from **all the tribes of Yisra’ēl**, such as set their heart to seek יהוה (Yahweh) Elohim (Mighty One/God) of Yisra’ēl, came to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) to offer to יהוה Elohim of their fathers.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

From this one verse, it sounds like those from all the northern tribes who wanted to obey Yahweh left the north and returned to Judah. However, if we read one more verse, we find out that this reunion was short-lived:

2 Chronicles 11:17 “And they strengthened the reign of Yehudāh (Judah), and made Rehāb’am (Rehoboam) son of Shelomoh (Solomon) strong for **three years**, for they walked in the way of Dawid (David) and Shelomoh for **three years**.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

We see here that this reunion was short-lived, lasting only three years. Therefore, this cannot be the reunification of Israel and Judah prophesied in Scripture. Next, let’s examine another supposed reunion during the reign of King Asa of Judah:

2 Chronicles 15:8-10 “⁸And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had taken in the mountains of Ephraim; and he restored the altar of the LORD (Yahweh) that was before the vestibule of the LORD (Yahweh). ⁹Then he gathered **all Judah and Benjamin**, and those who dwelt with them from **Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon**, for they came over to him in great numbers from Israel when they saw that the LORD (Yahweh) his God was with him. ¹⁰So they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

There was no reunion of all 12 tribes noted here; only the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon are mentioned as having joined Judah to worship Yahweh properly. It makes sense that some from these tribes would join with King Asa of Judah; their tribal territories bordered on the parcels of land belonging to Judah and Benjamin.

In reality, there is no evidence in the Scriptures or history that Judah and Israel were reunited during this time period.

Some try to use the book of Ezra, who wrote about the return to Judea from the Babylonian captivity, to make the case that all 12 tribes returned. They generally cite the following verse as their proof text:

Ezra 2:70 “And the priests and the Lēwites (Levites), and some of the people, and the singers, and the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and **all Yisra’ēl** (Israel) in their cities.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

SIDE NOTE: Nethinim Defined -- the name given to the hereditary temple servants in all the post-Exilian books of Scripture. The word means given, i.e., "those set apart",

viz., to the menial work of the sanctuary for the Levites. The name occurs seventeen times, and in each case in the Authorized Version incorrectly terminates in "s", "Nethinims;" in the Revised Version, correctly without the "s" (Ezra 2:70; 7:7, 24; 8:20, etc.). The tradition is that the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:27) were the original caste, afterwards called Nethinim. Their numbers were added to afterwards from captives taken in battle; and they were formally given by David to the Levites (Ezra 8:20), and so were called Nethinim, i.e., the given ones, given to the Levites to be their servants. Only 612 Nethinim returned from Babylon (Ezra 2:58; 8:20). They were under the control of a chief from among themselves (2:43; Nehemiah 7:46). No reference to them appears in the New Testament, because it is probable that they became merged in the general body of the Jewish people.

This Scripture does say that "all Israel" dwelt in their cities. Can it be clearly stated that Ezra here is speaking about all 12 tribes of Israel? Those who seek to prove a reunion of Israel and Judah argue this to be the case. However, could Ezra just be speaking of "all Israel" that had been taken captive by the Babylonians (those from Judah, Benjamin and Levi)? Let's allow Ezra to answer this question for us by looking at Chapter 4:

Ezra 4:1 "And when the adversaries of **Yehudah** (Judah) and **Binyamin** heard that the sons of the exile were building the Hēkal (Temple) of יהוה (Yahweh) Elohim (Mighty One/God) of Yisra'el (Israel)," (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Ezra clearly tells us that it was only Judah and Benjamin, along with the Levites and priests, that were present in Judea when the rebuilding of the Temple took place. Again, it is evident that the reuniting of Judah and Ephraim had not taken place by the time the Jews came back to Judea and Jerusalem after 70 years captivity in Babylon. When we examine the text objectively, we see there is NO Scriptural basis for "assuming" that the two houses were reunited before the Babylonian captivity.

When Yahweh divorced the House of Israel and cast them away in 722 BCE, all the children afterward born in the 10 tribes became spiritually illegitimate. The **Torah** (Yahweh's Teachings and Instructions. Also known as the "Law.") states that illegitimate children are banned from being part of the assembly ("church") of **Yahweh** for a period of TEN generations:

Deuteronomy 23:2 "No one of illegitimate birth does enter the assembly of יהוה (Yahweh), even a **tenth generation** of his does not enter the assembly of יהוה (Yahweh)." (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

In the Bible, a generation is defined as being 70 years (Psalm 90:10). A small number from the northern kingdom were likely assimilated into the House of Judah before and during the conquest of Samaria. But according to the **Torah**, no descendant of the northern kingdom of Samaria afterward would have been eligible to be part of Yahweh's people for at least 700 years after Yahweh divorced their mother, the House of Israel (Jeremiah 3:8).

Yet the Scriptures show us that Yahweh does plan on bringing these wayward offspring back into the fold. The prophet Ezekiel, who was one of the Jews taken captive to Babylon before the destruction of Jerusalem, wrote vividly about the eventual reconciliation of the northern and southern kingdoms:

Ezekiel 37:15-28 ¹⁵"The word of the LORD (Yahweh) came to me: ¹⁶"**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.'** ¹⁷And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. ¹⁸And when your people say to you, 'Will you not tell us what you mean by these?' ¹⁹Say to them, Thus says the Lord (Master) **GOD**

(Yahweh): 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. ²⁰When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, ²¹then say to them, Thus says the Lord (Master) GOD (Yahweh): 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. ²²And **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**. ²³They 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. ²⁴My Servant David (Yeshua) shall be King over them, and they shall all have One Shepherd (Yeshua). They shall walk in My rules and be careful to obey My statutes. ²⁵They shall dwell in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children shall dwell there forever, and David (Yeshua) My Servant shall be their prince forever. ²⁶I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will set them in their land and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. ²⁷My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ²⁸Then the nations will know that I am the LORD (Yahweh) who sanctifies Israel, when **My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.**" (ESV—English Standard Version) [Emphasis mine]

This prophecy, recorded by Ezekiel during the years of the Babylonian captivity, makes it pretty clear that the two houses had not YET been reunited at that time. We are told that the split will be repaired when the House of Judah (led by the tribe of Judah) is reunited with the House of Israel (led by the tribe of Ephraim) under the offspring of David, the Messiah. But we also know from the **Torah** that this reunion could not have occurred until at least 700 years had passed from the beginning of Ephraim's captivity.

If we count forward the prescribed amount of time from the captivity of Samaria by the Assyrians, we arrive at the general time that Yeshua the Nazarene was born. Since many Old Testament prophecies proclaim that it will be the Messiah who reconciles the two houses, it is no coincidence that Yeshua came just after the 700-year time span of Ephraim's illegitimacy was completed. However, most did not (and have not) realized that the prophesied reconciliation would be a process that would last some 2,000 years.

Ezekiel's prophecy of the two sticks is one of the most important, and unfortunately, one of the most overlooked, prophecies in the Scriptures. Although it is probably the most graphic picture of the reunifying of the two houses, there are many other similar prophecies in the **Tanakh** (Old Testament). Let's look at some of these prophecies:

Isaiah 11:11-16 ¹¹"It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD (Yahweh) shall set His hand again **the second time** to recover the remnant of His people who are left, from Assyria and Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam and Shinar, from Hamath and the islands of the sea. ¹²He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble **the outcasts of Israel**, and gather together **the dispersed of Judah** from the four corners of the earth. ¹³Also the envy of **Ephraim** shall depart, and the adversaries of **Judah** shall be cut off; **Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not harass Ephraim**. ¹⁴But **they** shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west; together

they shall plunder the people of the East; they shall lay their hand on Edom (South-Jordan) and Moab (Central Jordan); and the people of Ammon shall obey them. ¹⁵The LORD (Yahweh) will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt; with His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River, and strike it in the seven streams, and make men cross over dry-shod. ¹⁶There will be a highway for the remnant of His people who will be left from Assyria, as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

SIDE NOTE: “Tongue of the Sea of Egypt.” What is this? The Egyptians called the Nile el-Bahr, the sea, because before the blocking of the river by the Aswan High Dam its waters at the time of overflow resembled a sea. The “Egyptian sea” therefore identifies the tongue to be the fertile delta land that was formed by the annual flooding of the Nile.

Since the tongue of the Egyptian sea refers to the 8,500 square-mile Nile Delta, the prophecy predicts the complete destruction of Egypt's vital delta farmland in the years leading up to Messiah's Yeshua's Return.

Zechariah 10:3-12 “³My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds. For the LORD (Yahweh) of hosts will visit His flock, the **House of Judah**, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle. ⁴From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together. ⁵They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the LORD (Yahweh) is with them, and the riders on horses shall be put to shame. ⁶I will strengthen the **House of Judah**, and I will save the **House of Joseph**. I will bring them back, because I have mercy on them. They shall be as though I had not cast them aside; for I am the LORD (Yahweh) their God (Mighty One), and I will hear them. ⁷Those of **Ephraim** shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as if with wine. Yes, their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD (Yahweh). ⁸I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased. ⁹I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live, together with their children, and they shall return. ¹⁰I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt (bondage/slavery), and gather them from Assyria (North Iraq). I will bring them into the land of Gilead (Hill of testimony) and Lebanon, until no more room is found for them. ¹¹He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: all the depths of the River (Nile) shall dry up. Then the pride of Assyria (North Iraq) shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. ¹²So I will strengthen them in the LORD (Yahweh), and they shall walk up and down in His name,” says the LORD (Yahweh). (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Jeremiah 23:3-8 “³But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. ⁴I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the LORD (Yahweh). ⁵“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD (Yahweh), “that I will raise to David a Branch of Righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute Judgment and Righteousness in the earth. ⁶In His days **Judah** will be saved, and **Israel** will dwell safely; now this is His name by which He will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS (YAHWEH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS)**. ⁷Therefore, behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD (Yahweh), “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the

LORD (Yahweh) lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’⁸ but, ‘As the LORD (Yahweh) lives who brought up and led the descendants of the House of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ And they shall dwell in their own land.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Jeremiah 50:1-5 “¹The word that the LORD (Yahweh) spoke against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans (Iraq) by Jeremiah the prophet. ²“**Declare among the nations, proclaim, and set up a standard; proclaim — do not conceal it — say, ‘Babylon is taken, Bel is shamed. Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are humiliated, her images are broken in pieces.’** ³For out of the north a nation comes up against her, which shall make her land desolate, and no one shall dwell therein. They shall move, they shall depart, both man and beast. ⁴In those days and in that time,” says the LORD (Yahweh), “**the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah (united) together; with continual weeping they shall come, and seek the LORD (Yahweh) their God (Elohim/Mighty One).** ⁵They shall ask the way to Zion (Jerusalem), with their faces toward it, saying, ‘Come and let us join ourselves to the LORD (Yahweh) in a perpetual covenant that will not be forgotten.’ ” ” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

These prophecies are for the end of the age, the time when Messiah Yeshua will return from Heaven and establish the Kingdom of Yahweh here on earth. As the Scriptures clearly show, the **House of Israel** and the **House of Judah** are not finally joined together into one stick until that time. While there are even more prophecies about the reunion of Judah and Ephraim in the Old Testament, these should suffice to show how central this teaching is to the theme given to us in the Scriptures. The second great exodus of all Israel consisting of the house of Israel and the house of Judah is a study in and of itself. We have only lightly made mention of this grand event that will take place in the very near future.

A couple of passages from the *Tanakh* speak of Yahweh once again being married to Israel at the time of their national salvation:

Jeremiah 3:11-18 “¹¹Then the LORD (Yahweh) said to me, “**Backsliding Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah.** ¹²Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: ‘Return, backsliding Israel,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I am merciful,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not remain angry forever. ¹³Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have transgressed against the LORD your God, and have scattered your charms to alien deities under every green tree, and you have not obeyed My voice,’ says the LORD. ¹⁴Return, O backsliding children,” says the LORD; “**for I am married to you.** I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. ¹⁵And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days,” says the LORD, “that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. ¹⁷At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. ¹⁸In those days the **House of Judah** shall walk with the **House of Israel**, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.” ” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Hosea 2:13-23 “¹³I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers; but

Me she forgot,” says the LORD. ¹⁴“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. ¹⁵I will give her her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. ¹⁶**And it shall be, in that day,” says the LORD, “that you will call Me ‘My Husband,’** and no longer call Me ‘My Master,’ ¹⁷for I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more. ¹⁸In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and with the creeping things of the ground. Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth, to make them lie down safely. ¹⁹**I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me** in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; ²⁰**I will betroth you to Me** in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD (Yahweh). ²¹It shall come to pass in that day that I will answer,” says the LORD; “I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth. ²²The earth shall answer with grain, with new wine, and with oil; they shall answer Jezreel. ²³Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; then I will say to those who were not My people, ‘You are My people!’ and they shall say, ‘You are my God!’ ” ” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Remember previously when it was stated that it would be important to remember that the Elohim/Mighty One/God of Israel who was married to the House of Israel and the House of Judah was the one who became Yeshua the Messiah. As we read earlier (Jeremiah 3:8), Yahweh divorced the House of Israel. However, in Jeremiah 3:14 and Hosea 2:16, we see that it is prophesied that both houses of Israel would once again be married to *‘Elohim’* and would call him “my husband.”

These prophecies present a serious problem, for the *Torah* specifically outlaws such a remarriage:

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 ¹“When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce (this is called a “get” in Hebrew), puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, ²when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man’s wife, ³if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, ⁴then **her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled**; for that is an abomination before the LORD (Yahweh), and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD (Yahweh) your God (Hebrew: Elohim) is giving you as an inheritance.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Yahweh is true and just; He does not change (Malachi 3:6), and He does not break His own Torah/Law. Therefore, how can these prophecies be fulfilled? There is a legal way for this to occur, as Paul tells us in the book of Romans:

Romans 7:1-3 ¹“Or do you not know, brothers – for I speak to those knowing the Torah (Law) – that the Torah rules over a man as long as he lives? ²For the married woman has been bound by Torah to the living husband, but **if the husband dies, she is released from the Torah concerning her husband.** ³So then, while her husband lives, she shall be called an adulteress if she becomes another man’s. But if her husband dies, she is free from that *part of the* Torah, so that she is not an adulteress, having become another man’s.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

As Paul clearly states, this Torah Instruction/Law ceases to apply if the husband dies. Therefore, Yeshua's death on the cross caused this law against remarriage to no longer be applicable. Now, after his resurrection, Yeshua the Messiah is legally able to marry the House of Israel once again.

The New Testament carries forward the theme of the reconciliation of Judah and Ephraim. It is surprising how frequently this topic appears in the writings of the apostles and how integral it is to the gospel message.

After the seeming "disappearance" of the House of Israel into the nations, the House of Judah (the Jews) once again became known biblically as "Israel." They were the only visible portion of Yahweh's people left. The House of Judah was and is Yahweh's lawgiver (Genesis 49:10; Psalms 60:7; 108:8); they had, and continue to have, a major part in the plan the Almighty is accomplishing even through they for the most part do not acknowledge Yeshua as their Messiah.

As a whole, only the House of Judah has continued to keep Yahweh's Sabbaths, which we saw in Exodus 31 is the sign He gave to distinguish His people from the rest of the nations (or "Gentiles"). That "sign" has not changed since Yahweh gave it to us in His Word. Because of this sign, the Jews alone have been recognized as Yahweh's covenant people down to this very day. However, Ephraim and the tribes associated with him lost their identity. They were absorbed into the nations to which they were scattered. But these so-called "lost tribes" were not lost to Yahweh. He knew then, and knows now, EXACTLY where they are, as the prophet Amos tells us:

Amos 9:8-9 “⁸**Look, the eyes of the Master יהוה (Yahweh) are on the sinful reign** (see Isaiah 34:2; Jeremiah 30:11, 46:28; Daniel 2:44; Zephaniah 3:8; Haggai 2:22 and Luke 4:5-6.), **and I shall destroy it from the face of the earth, except that, I do not completely destroy the house of Ya'aqob (Jacob),**” declares יהוה (Yahweh). ⁹**For look, I am commanding, and I shall sift the house of Yisra'el among all the gentiles [b'kal hagoyim], as one sifts (or shakes) with a sieve, yet not a grain falls to the ground.**” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Most people don't realize that the Bible is only written TO, ABOUT and FOR Israel. Other nations are discussed only as they come into contact with or effect Yahweh's chosen people. According to Yeshua himself, he was only sent to Israel when he came the first time:

Matthew 10:5-6 “⁵יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) sent these twelve out, having commanded them, saying, **“Do not go into the way of the gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Shomeronites (Samaritans),** ⁶**but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Yisra'el.**” ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Matthew 15:24 “And He answering, said, **“I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Yisra'el.**” ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

In the 10th chapter of John's Gospel, Yeshua states that part of his duties included gathering another “flock” besides the Jews:

John 10:16 “**And other sheep I have which are not of this fold – I have to bring them as well, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one shepherd.**” (see Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24 for One Shepherd.) (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Here Yeshua tells his disciples that he had other sheep that He was responsible for, in addition to the targeted Jews. Because most Christians are not familiar with the large number of Old Testament prophecies which speak of the Messiah's responsibility in reuniting the two houses (Israel and Judah), they assume that He was referring to those unrelated people from the nations (“Gentiles”) who would thereafter come into the “church.”

But to properly understand the Bible, one must base their understanding of the New Testament on the foundation of the Old Testament. (**SIDE NOTE:** The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed. The Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed. Most in the Church do not realize that 80% to 85% of the New Testament is actually the Old Testament. If we stop and think here and ask ourselves “What Bible did Yeshua and His disciples use?” We have to say He did not have the New Testament at that time. It did not exist for many years after he ascended to Heaven. All He had was the Old Testament Scriptures. The Old Testament Scriptures is our base foundation. We cannot get away from it. We need it because it gives us our Heavenly Father’s Teachings and Instructions for daily living. That has never been done away with and never will.) When this is done, it is clear that Yeshua was speaking of those who were at that time still scattered among the nations, the lost sheep of Ephraim. These sheep had forgotten their identity and thought they were Gentiles. But Yeshua knew who (and where) they were, and as the Old Testament prophecies show over and over again, it was His Divinely sanctioned job to retrieve them for His Father.

A prophetic passage in the next chapter of John confirms this:

John 11:47-54 “⁴⁷So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? Because this Man does many signs. ⁴⁸If we let Him alone like this, they all shall believe in Him, and the Romans shall come and take away from us both our place and nation.” ⁴⁹And one of them, Qayapha (Caiaphas), being high priest that year, said to them, “You know naught, ⁵⁰neither do you consider that it is better for us that one man die for the people than that the entire nation should perish.” ⁵¹But he did not say this from himself, but being high priest that year he prophesied that יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) was about to die for the **nation** (Judah), ⁵²and **not for the nation only, but to gather together into one the children of Elohim who were scattered abroad** (i.e., the northern kingdom of Israel). ⁵³So from that day on they plotted to kill Him. ⁵⁴יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) therefore no longer went openly among the Yehudim (Jews), but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called **Ephrayim**, and remained there with His taught ones.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Yeshua didn’t just die for the Jews, but also for those “children of Yahweh who were scattered abroad.” Anyone who knows the history of Israel as revealed in the Old Testament knows that those children who were scattered abroad (by Yahweh Himself) were the lost House of Israel. It is interesting (and prophetic) that right after this prophecy was given, Yeshua went into a city called Ephraim, which is also the symbolic name for the children of Yahweh who had been scattered into all nations.

Earlier, we read in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament) from the prophetic book of Hosea about how Yahweh would punish the House of Israel (Samaria) for their sins. We saw that Hosea’s three children born to him by Gomer were symbolically named to describe the fate of Ephraim: **Jezreel** (“Yah sows”) described Yahweh’s future sowing of the House of Israel throughout all the nations; **Lo-Ruhamah** (“no mercy”) showed that Yahweh was not going to have mercy on Israel for a period of time; and **Lo-Ammi** (“not my people”) revealed that those from the House of Israel would not be known as Yahweh’s people for a time.

But the prophecies from Hosea also show that a time would come when Yahweh would regather His children and have mercy on them once again. Just to set the stage, let’s recap a few of the pertinent passages from Hosea that speak of this time of forgiveness:

Hosea 1:10 “Yet the number of the children of Yisra’el shall be as the sand of the sea, which is not measured nor counted. And it shall be in the place where it was said to

them, ‘**You are not My people,**’ they shall be called, ‘**You are the sons of the living Ēl.**’ ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Hosea 2:19-23 “¹⁹And I shall take you as a bride unto Me forever, and take you as a bride unto Me in righteousness, and in right-ruling, and kindness and compassion.

²⁰And I shall take you as a bride unto Me in trustworthiness, and you shall know יהוה (Yahweh). ²¹And it shall be in that day that I answer,” declares יהוה (Yahweh), “that I answer the heavens, and they answer the earth, ²²and the earth answer the grain and the new wine and the oil, and they answer Yizre’el (Jezreel). ²³And I shall sow her for Myself in the earth, and **I shall have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion.** And I shall say to **those who were not My people,** ‘**You are My people,**’ while they say, ‘My Elohim!’ ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Now that we have reacquainted ourselves with the principle prophecy about the restoration of the House of Israel (Ephraim), let’s look at a few passages from the New Testament that speak of this event. We’ll start in the introduction to Peter’s first general epistle. It is addressed to an interesting group:

1 Peter 1:1 “Kēpha (Peter), an emissary of יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) Messiah, **to the chosen, strangers of the dispersion** in Pontos, Galatia, Kappadokia (Cappadocia), Asia, and Bithunia (Bithynia),” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Who was Peter writing to? Most scholars interpret his introduction to mean that he was writing to messianic Jews who remained outside the Holy Land. However, these Jews could not rightfully be considered “exiles” at the time Peter wrote. The legal decrees of Persian kings Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes (recorded in the book of Ezra), issued some five centuries earlier, meant that these Jews were no longer officially exiled from Judea. However, the Israelites who were conquered and taken into captivity by Assyria were never formally released from their exile. Therefore, we see that Peter was not speaking here to Diaspora Jews, as the common interpretation of this verse assumes, but rather to Israelite exiles dispersed throughout Asia Minor who had accepted Yeshua as the Messiah!

Now let’s look at a very revealing passage in 1 Peter 2:

1 Peter 2:1-10 “¹Having put aside, then, all evil, and all deceit, and hypocrisies, and envyings, and all evil words, ²as newborn babes, desire the unadulterated milk of the Word, in order that you grow by it, ³if indeed you have tasted that the Master is good. ⁴Drawing near to Him, a living Stone – rejected indeed by men, but chosen by Elohim and precious – ⁵you also, as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a set-apart (Holy) priesthood, to offer up spiritual slaughter offerings acceptable to Elohim through יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) Messiah. ⁶Because it is contained in the Scripture, “See, I lay in Tsiyon a chief corner-stone, chosen, precious, and he who believes on Him shall by no means be put to shame.” (see Isaiah 28:16) ⁷This preciousness, then, is for you who believe; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner-stone,” (see Psalm 118:22) ⁸and “A stone of stumbling and a rock that makes for falling,” (see Isaiah 8:14) who stumble because they are disobedient (see John 3:36, Hebrews 3:18) to the Word, to which they also were appointed. ⁹But **you are a chosen race (generation), a royal priesthood, a set-apart (Holy) nation, a people for a possession,** that you should proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light, ¹⁰**who once were (Lo-Ami) Not a People, but now the people of Elohim (God); who (Lo-Ruchamah) Had**

Not Obtained Compassion (Mercy), **but now obtained compassion** (rachamim).”
(The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

SIDE NOTE: In the “Restoration Scriptures-True Name Edition” Bible, I captured a footnote on Lo-Ami from 1 Peter 2:10 as follows:

In times past, Efrayim-Yisrael alone was called Lo-Ami by YHWH. Today the non-Jews in the exile who now believe in Yisrael’s Messiah, are called the former Lo-Ami, or “Not My People” pronounced in Hosea 1:9 and Hosea 2:23. Peter quotes Hosea directly and attributes these prophecies about the ten tribes as finding full fulfillment in the non-Jewish Yisraelite believers in the exile, who are coming to the faith, in order to form a royal priesthood. This answers the rhetorical question of whether Peter knew about the two houses being restored.

In verse 9, Peter paraphrases Yahweh’s words to Israel (Exodus 19:6) and applies them to those Gentiles in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia who were accepting Yeshua. In the original passage, Yahweh told Moses that the House of Jacob, the children of Israel, would be “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” **IF** they obeyed Him. In verse 10, Peter again uses a scriptural reference from the book of Hosea originally meant for the House of Israel that had become “not a people” and to whom Yahweh showed “no mercy.”

There are really only two ways to understand what Peter says here. He was either implying that the Gentiles who were coming into the 1st-century Church were “replacing” the lost Israelites and inheriting the promises of Yahweh in their stead (a form of replacement theology), OR he was showing that those who were coming into the Church in these areas were actually members of the “lost tribes” who were then being regathered into Israel through Messiah Yeshua.

The writings of Paul show that the second option is the most likely. Let’s look at Paul’s comments to the Romans to support this understanding:

Romans 9:22-26 “²²And if Elohim, desiring to show wrath, and to make His power known, with much patience tolerated the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³and that He might make known the riches of His esteem on vessels of compassion, which He had prepared beforehand for esteem, ²⁴even whom He called, **not only us of the Yehudim (Jews), but also of the gentiles?** ²⁵As He says in Hoshēa too, “**I shall call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved, who was not beloved.**” ²⁶**And it shall be in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not My people,’ there they shall be called sons of the living Elohim.**” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

In this passage, Paul quotes from the prophecy of Hosea that we read earlier about the eventual recovery of the Israelites (Ephraim and the tribes associated with him) who were cast away by Yahweh for their sins (Hosea 1:10). Unless Paul too was using this prophetic Scripture to show that Yahweh was replacing the lost Israelites spoken of by Hosea, the Gentiles he referred to must have been descendants of those 10 lost tribes.

There are other Scriptures which indicate Paul understood that most of the Gentiles he was preaching to were, in fact, descendants of the House of Israel who had been scattered 800 years earlier and had intermingled with all the nations round about Judea. To prove this assertion, let’s first look at a telling statement by Paul found in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10:

1 Corinthians 10:1-5 “¹For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, that **all our fathers** were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were immersed

into Mosheh in the cloud and in the sea,³ and all ate the same spiritual food,⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed, and the Rock was Messiah.⁵ However, with most of them Elohim was not well pleased, for they were laid low in the wilderness.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

We see here where Paul was writing to a Gentile group primarily composed of former pagans (1 Corinthians 12:2) in Corinth, Greece. Yet in using the example of the Israelites that had been delivered from Egypt by Yahweh during the Exodus, he calls them “**all OUR fathers**” (1 Corinthians 10:1). He certainly wasn’t referring to them as “fathers” in a spiritual sense, because these people had been wholly carnal; as a group they rebelled against Almighty Yahweh and died while wandering in the desert for 40 years. So logic dictates that Paul must have been speaking of them as the Corinthians’ **PHYSICAL fathers!**

Let’s return to Romans and continue with Paul’s comments about Israel (Judah):

Romans 10:11-21 “¹¹Because the Scripture says, “Whoever puts his trust in Him shall not be put to shame.” (see Isaiah 28:16) ¹²Because there is no distinction between Yehudite (Jew) and Greek, for the same Master of all is rich to all those calling upon Him. ¹³For “everyone who calls on the Name of יהוה (Yahweh) shall be saved.” (see Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21) ¹⁴How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without one proclaiming? ¹⁵And how shall they proclaim if they are not sent? As it has been written, “How pleasant are the feet of those who bring the Good News of peace, who bring the Good News of the good!” (see Isaiah 52:7) ¹⁶However, not all obeyed the Good News. For Yeshayahu (Isaiah) says, “יהוה (Yahweh), who has believed our report?” (see Isaiah 53:1) ¹⁷So then belief comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Elohim. ¹⁸But I ask, Did they not hear? Yea indeed, “Their voice went out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” (see Psalm 19:4) ¹⁹But I ask, Did Yisra’el not know? First Mosheh says, “**I shall provoke you (Judah/Jews) to jealousy by those who are not a nation (Gentile), I shall enrage you (Judah/Jews) by an unwise nation (Gentile).**” (see Deuteronomy 32:21) ²⁰And Yeshayahu (Isaiah) boldly says, “I was found by those (Gentiles) not seeking Me, I was made manifest (known) to those not asking for Me.” (see Isaiah 65:1) ²¹And to Yisra’el He says, “**All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and back-talking people.**” (see Isaiah 65:2) (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

First, we have to understand that Paul uses “Israel” in Romans 10:19 (and throughout his letter to the Romans) as a reference to JUDAH, since the House of Israel had been dissolved and was no longer identifiable as a specific people. Simply put, the Jews were the only recognizable remnant of Israel at that time. Quoting Deuteronomy 32:21, Paul tells us that Yahweh would provoke Israel (i.e., Judah) to jealousy by those who are “**not a people**” (Hebrew *lo-am*), a clear allusion to the *Lo-Ammi* mentioned by Hosea. But the quote goes on to say that Yahweh would provoke the Jews with a “**foolish nation**” (Hebrew *goy nabal*). Not foolish **NATIONS** (plural), but a **single** nation. Samaria was indeed a foolish nation; they did not appreciate the honor of being Yahweh’s people and lost those benefits through disobedience.

Paul next quotes a very pertinent passage from the prophet Isaiah. Notice at the end of verse 1 who it was who found Him, although they did not seek Him:

Isaiah 65:1-2 “**¹I have let Myself be inquired of, not by those who asked; I was found, not by those who sought Me. I said, ‘Here I am, here I am,’ to a nation (goy) not calling on My Name. ²I have held out My hands all day long to a stubborn people, who**

walk in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts;” (The Scriptures Translation)
[Emphasis mine]

Isaiah’s prophecy is similar to that of Hosea which we read earlier. Again, the “nation” (*goy*) not called by Yahweh’s name that He would speak to is **singular**. It is almost certainly a reference to Samaria (the House of Israel), the nation that Yahweh cast away.

Now let’s examine the conclusion of Paul’s commentary on the fate of Yahweh’s chosen people in Romans Chapter 11:

Romans 11:1-6 “¹I say then, has Elohim rejected His people? Let it not be! For I also am a Yisra’elite (Israelite), of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Binyamin. ²Elohim has not rejected His people whom He knew beforehand. (see Psalm 94:14) Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Ēliyahu (Elijah), how he pleads with Elohim against Yisra’el, saying, ³“יהוה” (Yahweh), they have killed Your prophets and overthrown Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”? (see 1 Kings 19:10,14) ⁴But what does the answer of Elohim say to him? “**I have left for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Ba’al.**” (see 1 Kings 19:18) ⁵So therefore also, at this present time a remnant according to the choice of favour has come to be. ⁶And if by favour, it is no longer of works, otherwise favour is no longer favour. And if it is of works, it is no longer favour, otherwise work is no longer work.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Here Paul tells the Romans that Yahweh has not cast away the Jews. He uses the story of Elijah to make the point that there were Jews who, through Yahweh’s favour/grace, had accepted Yeshua as the prophesied Messiah. Even though most Jews had not accepted Yeshua, Yahweh had selected a remnant of Judah to believe. They were not called due to their works, but because of Yahweh’s divine mercy and grace.

Romans 11:7-14 “⁷What then? **Yisra’el** (i.e., Judah) has not obtained what it seeks, but **the chosen** (Jews) did obtain it, and the rest were hardened. ⁸As it has been written, “יהוה” (Yahweh) has given them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes not to see and ears not to hear, unto this day.” (see Deuteronomy 29:4) ⁹Dawid also says, “Let their table become for a snare, and for a trap, and for a stumbling-block and a recompense to them, (see Psalm 69:22) ¹⁰let their eyes be darkened, not to see, and bow down their back always.” (see Psalm 69:23) ¹¹I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Let it not be! But by their fall deliverance has come to the **gentiles**, to provoke them to jealousy. ¹²And if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the **gentiles**, how much more their completeness! ¹³For I speak to you, the **gentiles**, inasmuch as I am an emissary to the **gentiles**, I esteem my service, ¹⁴if somehow I might provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

The “Gentiles” in Romans 11:11 have traditionally been defined as unrelated peoples from various surrounding nations who were added to the early Jewish Church. But the “jealousy” that the apostle Paul says these “Gentiles” will provoke within Judah is a clear reference to the “foolish nation” he mentioned earlier in Romans 10:19-21. Therefore, these “Gentiles” were part of the “foolish nation” that Moses was told was “**not a nation**” (see Deuteronomy 32:21). These “Gentiles” were members of **the lost House of Israel who had been sown in all nations**, but had not been forgotten by Yahweh.

Romans 11:15-24 “¹⁵For if their casting away is the restoration to favour of the world, what is their acceptance but life from the dead? ¹⁶Now if the first-fruit is set-apart

(Holy), the lump is also. And if the root is set-apart, so are the branches. ¹⁷And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a **wild olive tree**, have been grafted in among them, and came to share the root and fatness of the **olive tree**, ¹⁸do not boast against the branches. And if you boast, remember: you do not bear the root, but the root bears you! ¹⁹You shall say then, “The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Good! By unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by belief. Do not be arrogant, but fear. ²¹For if Elohim did not spare the natural branches, He might not spare you either. ²²See then the kindness and sharpness of Elohim: on those who fell sharpness, but toward you kindness, if you continue in His kindness, otherwise you also shall be cut off. ²³And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, shall be grafted in, for Elohim is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you were cut out of the **olive tree which is wild by nature**, and were grafted contrary to nature into a **good olive tree**, how much more shall these who are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

In this passage of Scripture from Paul, we see two olive trees mentioned: one that is cultivated, and one that is wild. Who or what do these two olive trees represent? We find the answer to that question in Jeremiah 11:

Jeremiah 11:16-17 “¹⁶**יהוה (Yahweh) has named you, ‘Green Olive Tree, Fair, of Goodly Fruit.’** (see Psalm 52:8) With the noise of a great sound He has set it on fire, and its branches shall be broken. ¹⁷“**And יהוה (Yahweh) of hosts, who planted you, has spoken evil against you for the evil of the house of Yisra’el and of the house of Yehudah (Judah), which they have done against themselves to provoke Me, by burning incense to Ba’al.**” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Here we see that both houses (Israel and Judah) are called a “green olive tree.” They were planted and named by Yahweh Himself. So we can be certain from Scripture that both the House of Judah and the House of Israel are symbolically labeled as olive trees. But is there any further evidence? Yes, there is! Hosea, the prophet who spoke of the eventual regathering of the House of Israel from exile, also symbolizes Israel as an olive tree:

Hosea 14:5-6 “⁵I will be like the dew to **Israel**; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. ⁶His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an **olive tree**, and his fragrance like Lebanon.” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

The cultivated olive tree depicts the House of Judah, which provided the foundation for the early Church (see Acts 2:41; 21:20). This is the olive tree of salvation, for Yeshua said that “**salvation is of the Jews**” (see John 4:22). Paul, harkening back to what Jeremiah said earlier (see Jeremiah 11:16), portrays those Jews who rejected Yeshua as branches which were broken off from this cultivated olive tree. They were removed because they did not believe in the Messiah Yahweh sent to His people.

Romans 11:25-36 “²⁵For I do not wish you to be ignorant of this secret, brothers, lest you should be wise in your own estimation, that hardening in part has come over Yisra’el (the Jews), until the **completeness of the gentiles** has come in. ²⁶And so all Yisra’el (Ephraim and Judah) shall be saved, as it has been written, “The Deliverer (Yeshua) shall come out of Tsiyon, and He shall turn away wickedness from Ya’aqob (Jacob), (see Isaiah 59:20; Psalm 14:7) ²⁷and this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” (see Isaiah 59:20-21) ²⁸Truly, as regards the Good News they (the Jews) are enemies for your sake, but concerning the choice they (the Jews) are beloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹For the gifts and the calling of Elohim are not to be repented of. ³⁰For as you (gentiles) also at one time disobeyed Elohim, but now have

obtained compassion through their (Jews) disobedience,³¹ so also these (the Jews) have now disobeyed, that through the compassion shown you they (the Jews) also might obtain compassion.³² For Elohim has shut them (the Jews) all up to disobedience, in order to have compassion on all.³³ Oh, the depth of riches, and wisdom and knowledge of Elohim! How unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways!³⁴ For who has known the mind of יהוה (Yahweh)? Or who has become His counsellor?”³⁵ “Or who first gave to Him, and it shall be given back to him?”³⁶ Because of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all, to whom be esteem forever. Amēn.” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

Here Paul tells us that Israel (specifically the House of Judah, the only part of Israel that remained identifiable at that time) has been blinded to the truth for a period of time. However, he says that wild olive branches will continue to be grafted in to the cultivated olive tree to replace those branches broken off until “the fullness of the Gentiles” has been added.

What is meant by the phrase “the fullness of the Gentiles”? Does the Bible tell us who this group is? Absolutely! Let’s go back to the beginning and look at some of Israel’s history:

Genesis 48:1-19 “¹Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father is sick”; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. ²And Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph is coming to you”; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. ³Then Jacob said to Joseph: “God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ⁴and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.’ ⁵And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. ⁶Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. ⁷But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).” ⁸Then Israel saw Joseph’s sons, and said, “Who are these?” ⁹And Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God (Yahweh) has given me in this place.” And he said, “Please bring them to me, and I will bless them.” ¹⁰Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. ¹¹And Israel said to Joseph, “I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God (Yahweh) has also shown me your offspring!” ¹²So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. ¹³And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near him. ¹⁴Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn. ¹⁵And he blessed Joseph, and said: “God (Yahweh), before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God (Elohim/Mighty One) who has fed me all my life long to this day, ¹⁶the Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.” ¹⁷Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. ¹⁸And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.”

¹⁹But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a **multitude of nations** [melo hagoyim].” (NKJV) [Emphasis mine]

Here we see the deathbed blessing of Israel upon Ephraim when he adopted him and his brother Manasseh. Israel prophesied that Ephraim would become “a multitude of nations.” In Hebrew, this phrase is *melo hagoyim*, which literally means “fullness of the Gentiles.” The tribe of Ephraim was the leader of the northern House of Israel, and Ephraim came to be representative of all 10 lost tribes. It seems clear when the Old Testament references are understood properly that Paul had the descendants of these tribes in mind when he spoke of the “fullness of the Gentiles” and the “wild olive tree” in Romans 11!

In Romans 11:25, Paul told us that partial blindness has happened to the Jews until the “fullness of the Gentiles” comes in. He goes on to say in verse 26, “**And so** all Israel will be saved.” The Greek phrase *kai houtos*, translated “and so” here, is very important for us to understand. Literally, these words mean “and in this manner.” A better translation of this passage would be “blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles (i.e., Ephraim) has come in. And in this manner all Israel will be saved.”

Paul tells us that it is through this very process of grafting lost Israelites back into the cultivated olive tree that all of Israel (all 12 tribes) would be saved. This is a clear indication that many (if not most) of those so-called Gentiles who are being grafted into the olive tree are actually lost Israelites being brought back into the fold. The “fullness of the Gentiles” (Ephraim) coming back to reunite with those from Judah who are not blinded to the identity of their Messiah is the foundation for the eventual salvation of ALL of Israel!

Please do not misunderstand me here. I am not saying that ONLY physical Israelites are being called by Yahweh into the “church.” The *Tanakh* (Old Testament) shows clearly that Gentiles NOT of Israelite stock have been included in Yahweh’s congregation (see Exodus 12:38; Isaiah 56:3-8). The Eternal has always made a way for godly foreigners to become part of His chosen people. But Scripture seems to indicate that, for the most part, those who have been called by Yahweh to His son Yeshua (John 6:44, 65) are physical Israelites, both from the House of Judah (the cultivated olive tree) and the House of Israel (the wild olive tree).

One of the pivotal prophecies given to us in the Scriptures is the prophecy of the New Covenant which clearly shows that this understanding is correct. The original prophecy is given in the Old Testament book of Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 31:31-34 “³¹**See, the days are coming,**” declares יהוה (Yahweh), “**when I shall make a new covenant with the house of Yisra’el and with the house of Yehudah** (see Hebrews 8:8-12, 10:16-17). ³²**not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim (Egypt), My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,**” declares יהוה (Yahweh). ³³**“For this is the covenant I shall make with the house of Yisra’el after those days,”** declares יהוה: “**I shall put My Torah (Law/Teachings and Instructions) in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts. And I shall be their Elohim (Mighty One), and they shall be My people.** ³⁴**And no longer shall they teach, each one his neighbour, and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know יהוה,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,**” declares יהוה. “For I shall

forgive their crookedness, and remember their sin no more.” ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

This prophecy plainly states that Yahweh will make the New Covenant with two specific entities: (1) The House of Israel, and (2) the House of Judah. In his letter to the Messianic Jews of the early Church, the author of Hebrews cites this passage:

Hebrews 8:7-12 “⁷For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. ⁸For finding fault with **them**, He says, “**See, the days are coming,**” says יהוה (Yahweh), “**when I shall conclude with the house of Yisra’el and with the house of Yehudah a renewed covenant,**” ⁹not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Mitsrayim (Egypt), because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them,” says יהוה. ¹⁰“Because this is the covenant that I shall make with the house of Yisra’el after those days, says יהוה, giving My laws in their mind, and I shall write them on their hearts, and I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people. ¹¹And they shall by no means teach each one his neighbour, and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know יהוה,’ because they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. ¹²Because I shall forgive their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall no longer remember.” ” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

The author of Hebrews reiterates Yahweh’s promise to make a new covenant with the two houses of Israel in the New Testament. His citation is a second witness to this fundamental aspect of Yahweh’s plan. Yet how many myriads of believers have read this prophecy and missed the plain statement that the New Covenant would be made with the House of Israel and the House of Judah? There are no other people groups He has made the New/Renewed Covenant with. Obviously, just as many Jews have been blinded to the identity of their Messiah, so too have many Christians been blinded to their own identity. There are no telling how many Israelites in different Christian Churches all around the world and they do not know “who” they really are. If they understood “who” they are, then when they read the Scriptures/Bible and they come across the term “Israel/Israelite/House of Israel/House of Judah,” it is speaking directly to them and no one else. This will be a rude awakening for many in the Christian Churches once they learn this hidden truth kept from them by our enemy, Satan the Deceiver. Make no mistake about it, Satan goes to Church also along with his followers. He knows how to deceive the Body of Messiah Yeshua. He has had centuries of practice.

People do not understand the Biblical Teaching on the reunification of the two houses for a variety of reasons. The traditional teaching of the Church for centuries now has been that the Gentiles, who have no ties to Israel, have replaced Yahweh’s chosen people (whether it be simply for a time, or permanently). In fact, the “Gentile” nature of the Church has been cited as one of the reasons that the Law, Yahweh’s Teachings and Instructions, no longer applies to Christian believers. What a tremendous change of attitude it would require if those Christian believers came to understand that they were probably descendants of those who stood before Mount Sinai and heard the voice of Almighty Yahweh! It sure would change their “attitude.”

But there are also those who reject this understanding for the same reason that the Pharisees and Sadducees rejected Yeshua: they are afraid it will “take away” their perceived position(s). Many Messianic Jewish groups and organizations reject this understanding of the reunification of the two houses because they see it as an attack on the position that Yahweh gave the Jews. They see this doctrine as simply Gentile envy of the Jewish status. They have the “attitude” that the “gentiles” coming into the Hebrew Roots of the Christian faith are second class citizens of Israel and that they,

the gentiles, should cow-tow to their Jewish brother. This is NOT of Yahweh. This is a man-made fabricated dream/system to control gentiles. Yahweh will deal with the Jews be they Messianic or non-Messianic in the very near future.

In the introduction to James' epistle, we see a reference to the group James was addressing:

James 1:1 "Ya'aqob (Jacob), a servant of Elohim and of the Master יהושע (Yeshua or Yahshua) Messiah, **to the twelve tribes who are in the dispersion**: Greetings. (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

I want to restate here that ALL Scripture is addressed "**To Israel, For Israel and About Israel.**"

In an attempt to refute the two house doctrine, the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA) has published an extensive paper entitled *The Ephraimite Error*. Regarding the introduction to the book of James, this paper says:

James (Ya'akov), the apostle sent to the circumcision, according to Paul (Galatians 2:9), that is, to the Jewish people, not to the gentiles, addresses his epistle "to the 12 tribes who are dispersed abroad" (James 1:1). . . . **Ya'akov considered the Jewish people of his day to represent all 12 tribes.** (p. 15) [Emphasis mine]

This paper also definitively states:

The apostolic record is reinforced by the later rabbinic evidence that **the Jewish people in the rabbinic period also saw themselves as comprising "all Israel."** (p. 15) [Emphasis mine]

MJAA's position is that the reunification of the tribes had already taken place by the time Yeshua came in the 1st century. As we saw earlier in this study, this position ignores the large number of *Tanakh* prophecies that speak of this awesome regathering and shows that it will not occur until the second coming of the Messiah. But setting aside for the moment the numerous Biblical contradictions to this position, let us look at what the Jews in the 1st and 2nd centuries of the Common Era (CE) actually said about the lost tribes to see if it supports the MJAA's position. Scripture is our "Plum Line" and if man's words/teachings/doctrines do not line up with Scriptures, it is a "bone." Spit it out and move on.

First, let's look at what the 1st-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote about the lost tribes:

"So he [Ezra] read the epistle at Babylon to those Jews that were there; but he kept the epistle itself, and sent a copy of it to all those of his own nation that were in Media. And when these Jews had understood what piety the king had towards God, and what kindness he had for Ezra, they were all greatly pleased; nay, many of them took their effects with them, and came to Babylon, as very desirous of going down to Jerusalem; but then the entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country; wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans [Judah & Benjamin], while **the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now**, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers." (Book 11, Ch. 5, Sec. 2, Antiquities of the Jews) [Emphasis mine]

Josephus, writing toward the end of the 1st century CE, stated that in his day the 10 tribes were still located beyond the Euphrates River in great numbers. Clearly, Josephus did not think that the reunification of the two houses had taken place.

What did the Jewish rabbis after the time of Messiah think about the disposition of the 10 tribes? When researching the rabbinic writings, we find that this was a question that was taken seriously by the great

rabbis and sages of Israel. This question was so important that discussion of it is recorded in *Sanhedrin*, a very early section of the *Mishnah* (probably written at the beginning of the 2nd century CE).

MISHNAH. THE TEN TRIBES WILL NOT RETURN [TO PALESTINE], FOR IT IS SAID, “AND CAST THEM INTO ANOTHER LAND, AS IS THIS DAY” [Deuteronomy 29:27 (v. 28)]: JUST AS THE DAY GOES AND DOES NOT RETURN, SO THEY TOO WENT AND WILL NOT RETURN: THIS IS R. AKIBA’S VIEW. R. ELIEZER SAID: “AS THIS DAY” – JUST AS THE DAY DARKENS AND THEN BECOMES LIGHT AGAIN, SO THE TEN TRIBES – EVEN AS IT WENT DARK FOR THEM, SO WILL IT BECOME LIGHT FOR THEM.

GEMARA. Our Rabbis taught: The ten tribes have no portion in the world to come, as it says, “And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation”: “And the Lord rooted them out of their land,” refers to this world; and cast them into another land – to the world to come: this is R. Akiba’s view. R. Simeon b. Judah, of the Kefar of Acco, said on R. Simeon’s authority: If their deeds are as this day’s, they will not return; otherwise they shall. Rabbi said: They will enter the future world, as it is said, “[And it shall come to pass] in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, [and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem]” [Isaiah 27:13].

Rabbah b. Bar Hana said in R. Johanan’s name: [Here] R. Akiba abandoned his love, for it is written, “Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, ‘Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger for ever’” [Jeremiah 3:12]. (*Sanhedrin* 110b, Babylonian Talmud)

The *Mishnah* portion of this debate was between the famous 2nd-century CE Rabbi Akiva and his opponent, Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus. According to Rabbi Akiva, just as a certain day ends in darkness and then never returns, the 10 northern tribes of Israel that had been taken into exile by Assyria would never return. However, Rabbi Eliezer disagreed. Using Rabbi Akiva’s analogy of the day ending with night, he said that indeed the day had darkened for the 10 tribes. However, he taught that there was still the light of the coming morning ahead for them.

Echoing Rabbi Eliezer’s position, Rabbi Simeon ben Judah later said that if their deeds remained sinful (as they were at the time of their exile), then the 10 tribes would not return. However, he further stated that if they were to repent, they would be allowed to return.

It is important to note here that the context of this rabbinic discussion, set at least a century after the appearance of Messiah Yeshua, assumes that the northern 10 tribes of the House of Israel had NOT previously returned and rejoined the Jewish people. The question considered by the Jewish sages was whether they EVER would return, **NOT** whether they had ALREADY returned.

This distinction is critical. It shows the MJAA’s position that the Jewish people in the rabbinic period saw themselves as comprising all the tribes of Israel to be in error. Clearly, there were several respected rabbis who recognized that the House of Israel had never been reconciled to the House of Judah in the manner described in the *Tanakh* (Old Testament).

There is considerably more evidence, both Scriptural and historical, that shows the reunion of the two houses is yet in the future. There is a time coming very soon when the lost 10 tribes will recognize who they are, and they will seek to be reconciled with their brothers from the House of Judah. This process

has already started. More and more Christians are coming to understand that they are Israelites and they are gaining the true understanding that the “Law” has not been done away with. After all, if one looks at the Ten Commandments, which one(s) have need done away with? None of them have. Neither have the other Teachings and Instructions given to us in the Torah been nullified which instruct us on “true” justice and give us instructions for daily living. There are instructions in the Torah that do not apply to all people. Some of those instructions are for the High Priests ONLY. Some apply to the Levites ONLY. Some apply to women ONLY. Some apply to men ONLY and others apply to men, women and children.

I’ll end with one final prophecy of this awesome future event:

Zechariah 8:23 “Thus said יהוה (Yahweh) of hosts, ‘**In those days TEN men from all languages of the nations** (hagoyim) **take hold, yea, they shall take hold of the edge of the garment of a man, a Yehudite** (see Psalm 147:19; Isaiah 2:3, 14:1, 56:6-8; Ezekiel 47:22-23; Zechariah 2:10-11, 8:23; John 4:22; Romans 2:20, 3:2, 9:4; Revelation 21:12, 24), **saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that Elohim is with you.” ’**” (The Scriptures Translation) [Emphasis mine]

The number 10 in this prophecy was not randomly picked by Zechariah. It was specifically inspired by Yahweh to show us that the lost 10 tribes will once again be rejoined with their Jewish brethren when Messiah Yeshua rules the world from Jerusalem!

CONCLUSION

The prophesied regathering of all the tribes of Israel is a process, not a singular event. This process began after the resurrection of Messiah Yeshua, and has slowly but surely been taking place for nearly 2,000 years. At this time, most Jews (the House of Judah) do not accept Yeshua as their Messiah. Conversely, most Christians (the House of Israel) do not accept the necessity of keeping **Torah** (the Law/Yahweh’s Teachings and Instructions).

However, the Israel of Yahweh (see Galatians 6:16), made up of those from both houses who are standing in the gap, accept both Yeshua and the **Torah** (see Revelation 12:17; 14:12). Yahweh will use those He has called to help reunite Judah and Ephraim under the Messiah in the land of Israel. Soon, Jews and Christians will recognize the respective flaws in their belief systems. Both houses of Israel will repent and be joined together once again, as Ezekiel foretold some 2,600 years ago (Ezekiel 37:15-28).

The simple Biblical truth is that Yahweh will soon bring Israelites from every nation on this earth back to the land He gave their ancestors long ago. While these people may physically look like the nations among whom they have long been scattered, they are still Yahweh’s chosen people. What a glorious event this “second exodus” will be when it is fully realized at the return of Yeshua the Messiah.

May that wonderful day come quickly!

It is my hope that this study has been helpful to you, the reader. The “goal” is to bring forth His Truths from His Word because His Word is Absolute.

Let us all do as Timothy has instructed us to do:

2 Timothy 2:15 “Do your utmost to present yourself approved to Elohim, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly handling the Word of Truth.”

Shalom!