



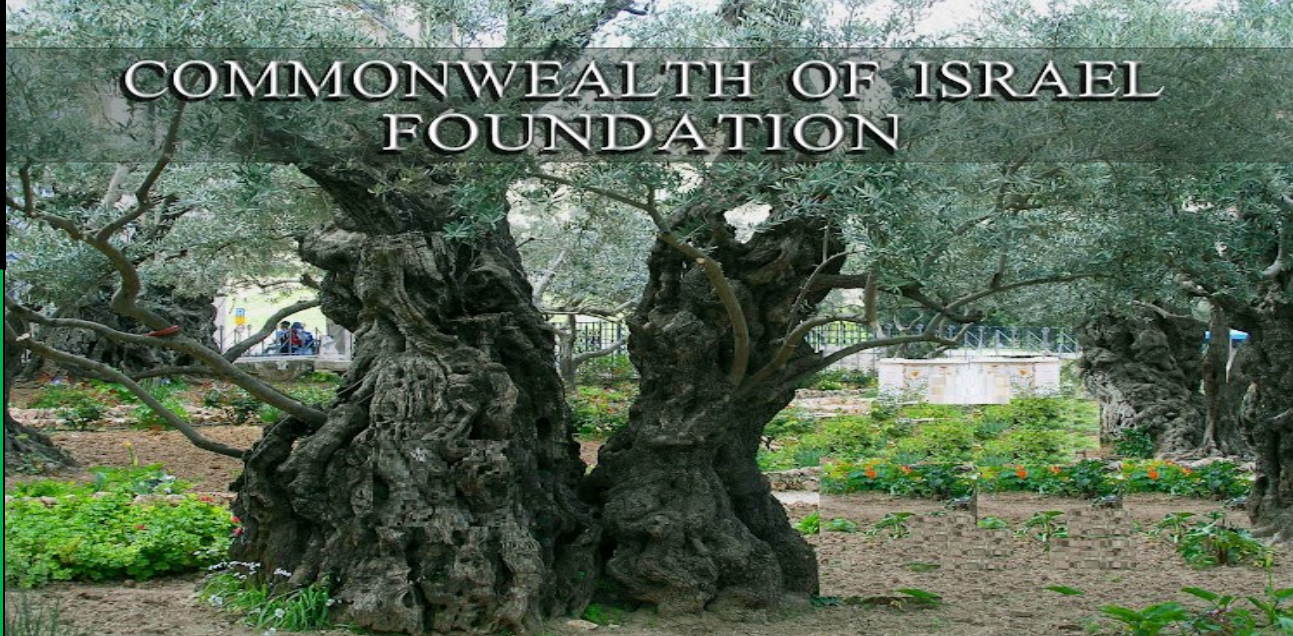
COMMONWEALTH
OF ISRAEL FOUNDATION

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"THE KING IS AT THE GATE"

Two Houses
CITIZENS OF THE
COMMONWEALTH

COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL FOUNDATION



Doug Krieger
Chair, COIF

THE ORACLE OF DAMASCUS

The ambiguity of Jesus' statements in Matthew 24 concerning *"wars and rumors of wars . . . but the end is not yet"* (vs. 6) provides enough exegesis for every eschatologist this side of heaven! However, given the present distress now (Oct. 2023) unfolding in the Middle East, I would delve into this maelstrom of speculation in that there is additional credence that *"Nation will rise against nation"* has to do with *ethnos* vs. *ethnos* (i.e., ethnic-racial wars) and *"kingdom against kingdom"* or ideological confrontations (socialism vs. capitalism) (vs. 7).

Coupled with this misery within the same verse (vs. 7) are *"famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places"*—hardly the gospel of "peace and prosperity" we often hear these days from far too many pulpits. But it is certain—*"All these are the beginning of sorrows"* (vs. 8)—i.e., as Dr. Arno Fruchtenbaum contends—we are living in "The Birth Pangs of the Messiah."

And that is precisely why I'll be accused of warmongering as I "prophetically gas light" my candid speculations regarding [THREE PROPHETIC WARS](#) which shall befall this lawless generation prior to the Second Coming of Messiah! Yes, this and these are "religious wars."

What we are witnessing, I affirm, are the final death throes of the **Oracle of Damascus** descending upon the Middle East. Then why is it that Zechariah 9:1-8 leads us to vss. 9-10 of that chapter? *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey . . . He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth."* The 1st and 2nd Coming of Messiah—recorded in all 4 gospels—is PRECEDED BY THE ORACLE OF DAMASCUS--THE MESSIAH IS AT THE GATE!!

Now, for us who claim to be citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel—and have a foundation with that same name—one would presume that we are rooting for the winner of this present "Burden of Damascus" . . . and one would be right for the winner is God Almighty who shall bring about world peace, justice and righteousness through *"Your King is coming to YOU"*—and that would be for both Jerusalem (Judah—*"the horse from Jerusalem"*) and Ephraim—*"I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim"* (Zech. 9:10).

Since "Ephraim" alludes to Israel's 10 Northern Tribes swallowed up among the nations—then you might see where I'm going with this—and you would be correct. Wars are awful—Jesus knew this but, nevertheless, He warned us concerning the "end of days." **Continue to P. 2**

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At the Breach of Jeroboam, Ephraim (aka Israel, Samaria, Jezreel) divided from Judah and some 200+ years later (cir. 745-712 BC) was deported/assimilated throughout the Assyrian Empire—“Aliens would swallow it up. Israel is swallowed up; now they are among the Gentiles (the Nations) like a vessel in which is no pleasure. For they have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey alone by itself; Ephraim has hired lovers . . . for Israel has forgotten his Maker, and has built temples; Judah (the Jewish people) also has multiplied fortified cities; but I will send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his palaces” (Hosea 8:8-9, 14--NKJV).

What I am saying here is that today’s Israel is comprised of Judah—the Jewish people/Jewish State, but Ephraim is “dried up” (Hos. 9:16-17); both Judah and Ephraim experienced either deportation/assimilation (Ephraim by Assyria) or captivity (Judah by Babylon)—Hosea speaks of both under God’s immediate judgment; however, Ephraim-Israel was given a “writ of divorce” (Jer. 3:8) and “My God will cast them away, because they did not obey Him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations” (Hosea 9:15-17, excerpt). On the other hand, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah” (Gen. 49:10). Judah-Israel was “sent away” but “Where is your mother’s certificate of divorce?” (Isa. 50:1) indicates Judah was “put away” but never divorced (akin to when Joseph put Mary away but never divorced her—Matthew 1:19 “Put her away privily” (KJV).

Indeed, Ephraim has been wandering among the nations—even “swallowed up” and utterly assimilated among the Gentiles—but God in His great mercy found a way to bring them/her back—for were they not the “Lost sheep of the House of Israel”? The Prodigal Son has returned to the Father’s House (Matt. 15:24; Luke 15:11-32) and “. . . she (Ephraim-Israel) is married to another, even to Him Who is raised from the dead” (Rom. 7:1-4).

Thus the outcome of “The Oracle” at Messiah’s intervention: “Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, Zion . . . and make you like a warrior’s sword” (Zech. 9:12-13). Judah awaits Messiah’s Coming again in glory and Judah’s bow will be bent and filled with Ephraim—talk about arrows in the quiver!

But getting from the first prophetic war to the Second Coming is, frankly, horrendous—but again, the “time of the end” (Dan. 11:35) cannot be compromised insofar as God’s dealings with His people: “Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.”

Moreover, and at the heart of the King’s entry in Zechariah 9:9-10 we find: “I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken” (vs. 10). Yes, this is when Isaiah 2:4-5 is fulfilled:

“He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

Notwithstanding this glorious outcome prophesied by Isaiah, the same author unveils to us the result of the present conflict and its debilitating, less than glorious, outcome for today’s Israel:

“In that day the glory of Jacob will fade; the fat of his body will waste away. It will be as when reapers harvest the standing grain, gathering the grain in their arms—as when someone gleanes heads of grain in the Valley of Rephaim (west of Jerusalem). Yet some gleanings will remain, as when an olive tree is beaten, leaving two or three olives on the topmost branches, four or five on the fruitful boughs,” declares the LORD, the God of Israel.” (Isaiah 17:4-7)

A Silver Lining for the Jewish State and their Adversaries

“In that day people will look to their Maker and turn their eyes to the Holy One of Israel. They will not look to the altars, the work of their hands, and they will have no regard for the Asherah poles and

the incense and the incense altars their fingers have made. In that day their strong cities, which they left because of the Israelites, will be like places abandoned to thickets and undergrowth. And all will be desolation. You have forgotten God your Savior; you have not remembered the Rock, your fortress. Therefore, though you set out the finest plants and plant imported vines, though on the day you set them out, you make them grow, and on the morning when you plant them, you bring them to bud, yet the harvest will be as nothing in the day of disease and incurable pain” (Isaiah 17:7-12).

Carefully read, both those nations within the constellation of belligerents opposed to Israel and those of the Jewish State will be exhausted in the aftermath of the Oracle; yet, here is where it gets most encouraging--“In that day people will look to their Maker and turn their eyes to the Holy One of Israel.” Yes, the Valley of Dry Bones spoken of in Ezekiel 37:1-14 commences at this time when we hear: “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live . . . Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel” (both Ephraim and Judah based on Ezk. 37:15-16-NKJV)—this, just prior to the Gog-Magog Conflagration of Ezekiel 38-39 . . . when we read:

“Woe to the many nations that rage—they rage like the raging sea! Woe to the peoples who roar—they roar like the roaring of great waters! Although the peoples roar like the roar of surging waters, when He rebukes them they flee far away, driven before the wind like chaff on the hills, like tumbleweed before a gale. In the evening, sudden terror! Before the morning, they are gone! This is the portion of those who loot us, the lot of those who plunder us” (Isaiah 17:12-14).

The “Burden of Damascus” finds Israel without allies upon her soil—she has NOT asked for any; although, the USS Gerald R. Ford and the USS Eisenhower flotillas abide off her shores ready to pounce on Hezbollah-Lebanon’s 130,000 missiles aimed at the Beautiful Land.

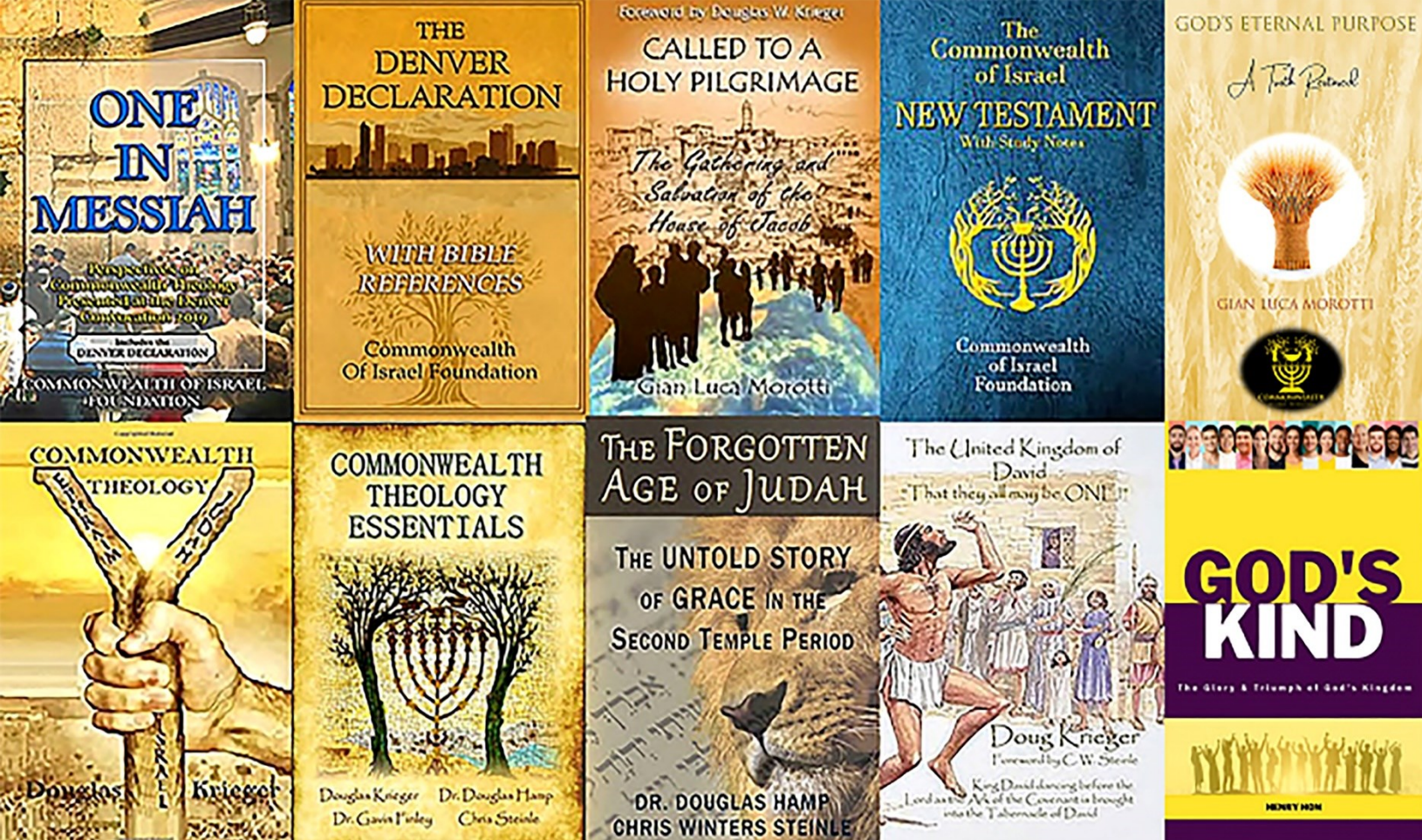
No, it is not until Gog-Magog (Ezk. 38-39; Dan. 11:40-45) that we see Sheba/Dedan (nations of the Saudi Arabian Peninsula) and the Willful King of Daniel 11, along with the “Merchants of Tarshish” (the West) express their interest in confronting the King of the North (Turkey-Persia-the Levant) and the King of the South (Egypt, Put-Libya or the North African tier of Islamic States). These terrestrial forces, led by this chief principality and his rebellious allies (Magog) will be resoundingly defeated . . . for:

“When Gog attacks the land of Israel, my hot anger will be aroused, declares the Sovereign LORD . . . I will execute judgment on him with plague and bloodshed; I will pour down torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur on him and on his troops and on the many nations with him. And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord” (Ezk. 38:19-23, excerpts).

It is not until Ezekiel 39:17-29 that we witness, after Gog-Magog the infamous “Armageddon Campaign” wherein this passage concerning “My Sacrificial Meal” bears remarkable resemblance to “The supper of the Great God” in Revelation 19:17-21: “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army . . . Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs . . . These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Rev. 19:17-21, excerpts).

Finally, at “the time of the end” the prophetic finale: “I will display my glory among the nations...Then they will know that I am the LORD their God...I will pour out my Spirit on the people of Israel” (Ezk. 40:21-29-Excerpts). Moreover : “I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim’s hand—and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah’s stick. I will make them into a single stick...they will become one in my hand...My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd.” (Ezk. 37:15-28—excerpts).





The Lost House of Israel—Saved on a Technicality?

Part 1 of 2



Chris Winters Steinle is the lead Editor of the COI's New Testament w/Study Notes, and prolific author/co-author

Folks, the world appears to be careening out of control—it's like watching a major crash in slow motion with bodies plummeting about and injuries witnessed in real time . . . while tragically, there's nothing we can do about it! Why are we as citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel so deeply moved by the present distress taking place in Judah's Oracle of Damascus, if you would? Why? Because their "crash" playing out before us directly impacts our own prescient destiny—we cannot divorce ourselves from the current catastrophe in that *"After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree! . . . in that "God is able to graft them in again"* (Rom. 24, 23).

Our attachment with this CULTIVATED OLIVE TREE in what is happening elicits a profound spiritual awakening within us. What's unfolding in Israel today deeply affects us as citizens of their-our Commonwealth. We're in this together; therefore, as I write this piece I wish to attach this preface—which is both spiritual and physical—to a previous accounting which makes even more sense than ever before; given events now unfolding . . . for out of this death and destruction there shall be a resurrection—a new birth—a bringing together of the two branches. *"Do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you"* (Rom. 11:18). It is from this common root that Judah-Israel and we, the wild branch of the nations, find our common LIFE.

So allow me to expand on this most essential prophetic theme which pertains to our "Life Source"—our common resurrection . . .

Whose Wife in the Resurrection?

The Apostle John noted that such a voluminous body of words and deeds had been generated during Christ's first advent that *"if they were written one by one... even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written"* (John 21:25). What *"would be written"* was, nevertheless, limited by the size of practical portability and the affordability of the first-century codex. So when we come to a passage like the Sadducees' question about the resurrection—a question that seems pretentious if not downright whimsical—we must be aware that dozens of other questions about the resurrection could have been framed, but were never recorded. Yet, this particular question was presented and documented. WHY?

Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, and leaves his wife behind, and leaves no children, his brother should take his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife."

Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living" (Mark 12:18-27a). Luke's account adds: *"For to him all are alive"* (Luke 20:38).

Rather than assuming the Sadducees were making up "any wild story" by which to confound Jesus and refute the resurrection, what if these elements—a husband's decease, an unfruitful wife (thus a discontinued family line), and the resurrection—were genuine components of an ongoing conversation among the Jewish scholars of Jesus' day? Going a

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step further, and assuming that this whole discussion had also struck a chord within the Apostolic Church, the door is then opened to a serious exploration of the Sadducees' question and the Lord's unexpected answer.

The Sadducees' scenario, although exaggerated, contains elements of Jeremiah 31:32; "...though I was a husband to them, says the Lord." Here the antecedent of "them" is given in the 31st verse: "the House of Israel and the House of Judah." But the most extensive correlative passage is found at the opening of Isaiah 54, immediately following—and logically the immediate result of—Messiah's atoning sacrifice of Isaiah 53.

Key elements associating the Sadducees' hypothetical question about the House of Israel's being cut off (disinherited) are underlined below:

Isaiah 54

1 "Sing, O barren,
You who have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud,
You who have not labored with child!
For more are the children of the desolate [**widowed no less—see v.4]**
Than the children of the married woman," says the Lord.
2 "Enlarge the place of your tent,
And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings;
Do not spare; lengthen your cords,
And strengthen your stakes.
3 For you shall expand to the right and to the left,
And your descendants will inherit the nations,
And make the desolate cities inhabited.
4 "Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed;
Neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame;
For you will forget the shame of your youth,
And will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore.
5 For your Maker is your husband,
The Lord of hosts is His name;
And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel;
He is called the God of the whole earth.
6 For the Lord has called you
Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit,
Like a youthful wife when you were refused,"
Says your God.
7 "For a mere moment I have forsaken you,
But with great mercies I will gather you.
8 With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But
with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,"
Says the Lord, your Redeemer.
9 "For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; [NOTE this **metaphor**] For as I have sworn
That the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth,
So have I sworn
That I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you.
(Emphasis added)

Unfinished Business

The following passage from Ephesians 4 provides a good starting point from which to understand the "mechanics" involved in the redemption of the "Old Testament saints," and particularly, the Lost House of Israel.

Ephesians Ch. 4

4 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."

9 Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.

In order to appreciate this passage's bearing on the future of "Israel past," it will be necessary to settle confusion over the interpretation of "the lower parts of the earth"; and, to correct the mistranslation of the phrase, "fill all things."

Some commentaries assert that "descended into the lower parts" refers merely to Christ's earthly incarnation. This interpretation may be offered as an alternative to the notion that Jesus descended into the flames, or to battle Satan. The "incarnation" assumption was historically invalidated by several Early Church Fathers:

St. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5, 31, 2 (C. 180 AD):

"For since the Lord went away into the midst of the shadow of death where the souls of the dead were..."

St. Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 4, Chap. 27, Para. 2:

"The Lord descended into the regions beneath the earth, announcing there the good news of His coming and of the remission of sins conferred upon those who believe in Him."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures 4, 11 (C. 350 AD):

"(Christ) descended into the subterranean regions so that He might ransom from there the just..."

Another reason why English readers would tend to miss the meaning of Christ's descent is the mistranslation of the phrase, "that He might fill all things." The correct translation is, "that He might fulfill all things." One can only speculate the motivation of the translators. It is simple enough to conclude that if, at the cross, "it is finished," then there remained nothing left to be finished after the cross. But from the passage above it is obvious that the bestowal of gifts was not associated with the cross, but with the ascension. This would imply that something was also left to be accomplished by Christ's descent εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς (into the lower parts of the earth).

A better reading of the last phrase of verse ten is, "that He might fulfill all things. (ἵνα πληρώσῃ [plērōsē] τὰ πάντα.) According to Strong's 4137. πληρόω (plēroō) means: accomplish, complete, fulfill. The same word, plērōsē, appears in the same form in 2 Thessalonians 1:11 and is translated "fulfill" in the NAS, KJV, and INT.

Now we see that Christ's descent and ascent were both necessary to complete all things; and specifically, according to the context of the Ephesians 4 passage, to accomplish what was prophesied concerning CAPTIVITY, and GIFTS. We can further deduce since the outpouring of the Spirit (and spiritual gifts) was connected to Christ's ascension by His own words: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart [to the Father], I will send Him to you" (John 16:7), the work to be completed regarding the captivity, likewise, had everything to do with Christ's descent to the lower parts.

Although leading "captivity captive" would seem to be some kind of double negative, the expression has to do with leading those who had been in exile back to their homeland; in effect, reversing the march into exile. The following verse expresses the "captivity of captivity" as the taking of those who were already in captivity away.

"Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, Or the captives of the righteous be delivered?" But thus says the Lord: "Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible be delivered" (Isa. 49:24-25a).

(NOTE: **Part 2** in Winter 2023-2024 Edition)



LAW and GRACE

Has GRACE really “done away with” the LAW of God? If not, then how is the Law, the righteous rule of God to be successfully fulfilled in the unfolding history of the covenant people of God? Because as Western people it does not look like we are doing too well in that department of late. Things are getting pretty wild out there.

The LAW, the righteous rule of God, the teachings have been given to us as a divine provision. This sanctification process begins when we are saved and born again into new life in Messiah.

The Law and teachings, and the precepts of righteousness, are not to be considered an onerous burden, nor an impossible religious directive. The Law has been given to us for our own protection, an edification, and happiness. The Law was never “done away with.” Nor was the LAW “nailed to the cross.”

The LAW will eventually come to its glorious conclusion, and brought to completion. Right there, at the end of the saga, the Law, is destined to be showcased in a Holy Spirit filled company, before angels and men.

This witness to the righteousness of God in His Law is part of the manifest destiny of the Elect. The fulfillment of the LAW will be showcased before angels and men, every bit as much as the fulfillment of God’s saving GRACE.

In Revelation 7 the apostle John saw the full company of the remnant Elect, people gathered from every nation, race, and tribe. All of them are seen dressed in white linen, which, we are told, is the righteousness of the saints.

This showcasing of the Law, brought to completion by God within His Elect is very purposeful. It is not just an afterthought on God’s part. The demonstration of a righteous company of believers, under the Law, is one of the two elements of the end-time witness. The end-time ekklesia are seen to have become a FULLY JUSTIFIED company. They are a righteous nation with its global commonwealth, citizens of the Kingdom of God, bearing witness to His righteous rule and LAW, as well as being a redeemed company bearing witness to His mercy and GRACE.

The Elect are presenting this dual witness to Messiah through an inner empowerment in the Order of Melchizedek. The indwelling Messiah is both High Priest of God Most High and King of righteous rule and Law.

So how is this wonder to happen? The LAW, will be established in a Holy People, by their involvement of surrender to God, and not by their own strivings. This is an inner Holy Spirit operation, brought in by means of the NEW COVENANT, which by a divine authority, a new and living Way, activates an internal process of sanctification, guidance, and spiritual empowerment. The end of the story will see the LAW fully manifest in a Holy People, and also at the climax of the story, a great salvation in a Holy Place, even the deliverance of the Holy City as well as the salvation of a Holy people. John saw the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven. Heaven and earth await this future vision of splendor.

The entire universe is standing on tiptoe, yearning to see the unveiling of God’s glorious sons and daughters! For against its will the universe itself has had to endure the empty futility resulting from the consequences of human sin.

Romans 8:19-22 (The Passion Translation—TPT)



Dr. Gavin Finley
Retired MD
Author & Blogger

There have been two covenants applied to this high calling of the LAW. The first to administer the Law was the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant. That Old Covenant was brokered through a third party—Moses. He acted on behalf of a collective, the nation-congregation of Israel gathered at Mount Sinai. The Law, administered in this way, was not personal per se, although we can be sure that many cried out to God at Mount Sinai and were saved. But the Law administered by the Old Covenant from that thundering mountain has been called our schoolteacher, introducing us to the righteous rule of God.

So then, how well did that Old Covenant fair? Apparently not too well at all. The prophet Jeremiah reports on its progress here in this passage:

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the (Old) Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my (OLD) COVENANT THEY BROKE, although I was a husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this shall be the (new) covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I WILL PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS AND WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

(Jeremiah 31:31-33)

As we see, Jeremiah tells us that the Old Covenant made at Mount Sinai was BROKEN. It is kaput. It cannot be resurrected, re-engineered, refurbished, picked up again and dusted off, to be re-used in its broken state. Nor can it be “renewed.” It is done. It is toast. To try to fix it is Judaizing in the rabbinical tradition.

The royal Jewish house of Judah deserve better than that. As we read in Zechariah 12 we see that they are destined to be saved in the great end-time revival. That awesome future Harvest comes in the days of the Latter Rain Holy Spirit outpouring. Our Jewish friends will be rising up to cross-link with us, aid us, and complement us in the righteousness so needful for us in the church. They will be joining the remnant Elect to assume a vital part of the end-time witness.

Jeremiah goes on to tell us how a second COMPLETELY AND TOTALLY NEW administration of the Law is so necessary. He tells us how this NEW COVENANT will be written on tablets of flesh, written in human hearts, being activated there to bring the Law to perfection or completion. He says in Jeremiah 31:33-34:

I WILL PUT MY LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS AND WRITE IT IN THEIR HEARTS, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, (wagging the finger as it were, and), saying, “Know the LORD!” . . . for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

So, Jeremiah introduces us to the New Covenant, which is the personal visitation of God’s Law as well as the personal visitation of God’s Grace, through the BORN-AGAIN reality, and an ongoing work of sanctification administered personally in the real-time power of the Holy Spirit. All these wonders are going on successively within the hearts of the redeemed.

As we saw among the saints of old, and as we see today, the righteous rule of God issues from the throne of David, installed in the NAOS, or the temple of human hearts. His Presence there by His Holy Spirit becomes their guiding light. This wonder, this full manifestation of what our apostle Paul calls, the “Law of the Spirit”, was, is, and will in a future time, power up marvelously to perform exploits. This is no seminarian’s pipe dream, nor a rabbi’s reverie. This is what the Holy One of Israel has PROMISED! He gives us His Word, His oath, on that!

Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for a light by day, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar, (The Lord of hosts is His name): "If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever." (Jeremiah 31:35-36)

The writer of the book of Hebrews picks up the story.

For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. (Hebrews 8:8)

There is no mention here of any covenant with heathen Gentiles, nor any holy covenant with the nations outside of the covenant cutting redeemed company of God. Many within the increase of the Elect WERE formerly Gentiles. But now, in Christ, they are no longer Gentiles. By God's grace they were gloriously saved. In that salvation they entered by a transition into a higher holy virtue, transforming their souls, their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This was not just a new birth as a legal and existential experience of personal salvation. This new birth transformed them into a new, upgraded, eternal citizenship in the cross-linking and combined Congregation-Nation and Commonwealth of Israel.

Both Moses and the apostle Peter affirm this truth. They speak of a cross-linked "royal priesthood and holy nation," not a royal nation, (Judah of the scepter), and a holy priesthood, (Joseph of the birthright and congregational increase). Herein comes the double anointing that is destined to bring in the final triumphal victory of the saints. God is doing a NEW THING here!

In that he saith, A NEW COVENANT, he hath made the first old. Now that (OLD COVENANT), which decayeth and waxes old, is ready to VANISH AWAY. (Hebrews 8:13—KJV)

And to Jesus the mediator of the NEW COVENANT, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh BETTER things than that of Abel. (Hebrews 12:24-KJV)

But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a BETTER COVENANT, which was established upon BETTER PROMISES. (Hebrews 8:6)

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in NEWNESS of SPIRIT, and NOT in the OLDNESS of the LETTER (of the law). (Romans 7:6)

For the LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2—KJV)

Yes, the externally policed law of Moses, while it was a wonderful beginning, only leads to increased awareness of our failure to measure up, and to the terrible guilt and self-condemnation that leads to more sin. This leads on to the righteous judgment of death and a new acute awareness of the need for God's mercy. So that is why there MUST be another Way—another covenant. And so there is. The New Covenant is enacted within the hearts by the indwelling Christ. He sends us His Holy Spirit to guide and empower us to do good.

That the righteousness of the LAW might be FULFILLED in us, who WALK not after the flesh, but AFTER the SPIRIT. (Romans 8:4-KJV)

This great wonder is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

This eventual reality will be ushered in big time in the blowout Latter Rain Harvest-time HOLY SPIRIT OUTPOURING. This peak of the Holy Spirit outpouring is spoken of by the prophet Joel.

And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the remnant whom the Lord calls." (Joel 2:28-32)

This I say then, WALK IN THE SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be LED OF THE SPIRIT, ye are not under the (wagging finger) of the Moses brokered, externally policed, Old Covenant), law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we LIVE IN THE SPIRIT, let us also WALK IN THE SPIRIT. (Galatians 5:16-25)

This is, and always will be a voluntary action on the part of the saints. It is a devotional matter of the heart. They obey their Messiah, and walk with Him not just out of a cold obedience or just a sense of duty, but rather, because they love Him. The Holy One of Israel told Moses that this devotion to Him and attention to His precepts was a vital avenue to His discovering and realizing His mercy.

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Jesus said pretty much the same. (Exodus 20:6-KJV)

If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15-KJV)

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (1 John 5:3-KJV)

King David also affirms this and speaks prophetically of how this love of a God of righteousness will unlock the wonders that will be seen in times to come.

"Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth." (Psalm 110:3)

This matter of walking with God in holiness and in righteousness is, and always will be a devotional matter. And so in Matthew 25, we are given the poetic imagery of the end-time ekklesia as a Bride, with her lamp lit by an inner divine provision that comes from beyond her self-life. And so, in Matthew 25 she is seen going out into the darkness to meet the Bridegroom.

Even as the moonlight is reflecting the sun, the Bride of the Lamb is a vital witness to the Father of Lights who brings His good and perfect gifts to us from above. But John the apostle, there in exile on the Island of Patmos, sees her in an even more glorious light.

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed in the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. (Rev. 12)

So the Bride of Christ is a vital witness, to be sure. But she is also party to the end-time glory, and the consummation of all things.



The Oracle of Damascus, Jacob, the Called Out From Among the Nations, Rescued at the Point of Weakness!

By Gian Luca Morotti

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. (Genesis 28:15)



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In the genesis account God promised Jacob to bring him back to his land after dealing with him according to his promises. Little did Jacob know of what would happen in the way of his pilgrimage that would grant him to become the person God intended him to be. Similarly, the God of Israel has been calling the House of Jacob to the promised land since then, yet in the final stage of their pilgrimage, a corporate and glorious transformation awaits them.

Whatever it is, the wandering Jacob resembles much of the story of the people and nation he stands as a representative. After receiving a mighty revelation from God at a place he named Bet-El (or Bethel—House of God) where he received promises about a land and of numerous offspring that would prove to be the blessing of the entire earth:

“May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly of peoples, and give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and your descendants with you, that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham” (Genesis 28:3 NKJV).

He sets forth on a long journey that turned his life upside down, taking him from being a supplanter and pretender to *he who strives with God* so as to become a man through whom God could reign.

In the case of the children of Israel, their collective pilgrimage, it is about a story of a travelling community that finds itself in an epic journey that culminates in the formation of a sovereign nation in a promised land. In the end, right when many thought that the Jewish people had lost hope of a national restoration, Israel inherited the Land and became the recipient of God’s promises, just for that very purpose, simply because their exile didn’t break the covenant or signal divorce.

When we consider the wrestling of Jacob at Peniel, the original Hebrew hints that the struggle was in the rolling on the ground which involves getting some dirt and dust until the struggling was over.

“Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day” (Gen. 32:24 NKJV). Do we get the picture? Until Jacob wrestled with God, he couldn’t get his transformation, so we’re witnessing a similar transition from Jacob to Israel going on right now within the Jewish people, for it is in the wrestling that their eyes will be opened to be prepared to have a revelation of Messiah, a disclosure that will come in the midst of times of tribulation:

“For thus says the LORD: ‘We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it’” (Jeremiah 30:5-7).

To the Jewish community it is all about a journey that started from the Exodus out of Egypt, and from the return from Babylon, then, of an ongoing adventure story comprising defeats and triumphs, but of divine miracles of preservation as well. The climactic moment of struggle will find Israel resembling Jacob in his/their moment of weakness. Now, while the House of Jacob at large has not come to a revelation of Yeshua the Messiah, we are to believe that this is going to be a future eschatological moment, boosted by a series of events that have their starting point in a scenario of a future demise of Damascus (Syria) according to Isaiah 17 (viz. “The Oracle of Damascus”), which says that *“In that day it shall come to pass the glory of Jacob will wane and the fatness of his flesh grow lean.”*

Several commentators, including Doug Krieger who wrote the lead article of this newsletter, see the upcoming war between Israel and the forces of Damascus, which shall result in Syria’s complete destruction with the city of Damascus being uninhabitable (*“Damascus will cease from being a city”*) as the final phase of the Arab-Israeli war since 1948 in which Israel will be greatly diminished in her capacity to wage war and to defend herself—in that *the glory of Jacob will wane*. (Isaiah 17:4). This might be due to a conflict that will be so intense to the detriment of Israel that this will be the moment that could be climactic in the struggle of the House of Jacob in anticipation to meet the Messiah.

The same scenario of Isaiah 17 regarding the demise of Damascus is depicted in the book of Zechariah Chapter 9 which highlights Messiah’s intervention and Israel’s struggle to be ultimately saved by God Almighty. Please note that in the ensuing Chapter 10 the prophet speaks about the restoration of Judah and Israel gathered back in the land at the end of days where it is very clearly delineated as the diaspora (world-wide) and then the regathering in the last days.

“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 their God, and I will hear them” (Zechariah 10:6).

“For the deliver shall come out of Zion, and he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob, ‘for this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins’” (Romans 11:26; Isaiah 59:20-21; 27:9).

We need to understand that the Deliverer/Redeemer will come out of Zion to deliver and to save Israel. Messiah is the Deliverer who shall roar out of Zion—*“I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory”* (Isaiah 46:13). It is right there in a place of intense struggle that the Deliverer will come out of Zion.

What does it have to do with us as co-members of the Commonwealth of Israel (Eph. 2:12) with those of Jacob, Judah, the Jews? Well, more than you might think, in fact, in the Genesis account, we read that Isaac blesses Jacob with these words: *“May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly of peoples”* (Gen. 28:3). It is the *assembly of peoples* (lit. company or congregation: קָהָל עַמִּים) that depicts the called out from the nations, *“even us, whom He [God] has called not only out from the Jews, but also out from the Gentiles”* (Romans 9:24 Berean Bible). (Continued on Page 8)

Brethren, do you see it? Both Jews, the descendants of Jacob and the Gentiles are a people called out by God to be a special people, a holy nation unto Him. Now, do you remember when at the end of Jacob's life Joseph brought both Manasseh and Ephraim near to Jacob for the blessing? Then Jacob stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh and gave the blessing saying, *"And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth"* (Genesis 48:16).

Displeased about the reversal of his sons' birthright, Joseph attempted to manipulate his father's hands, but eventually the seed of **Ephraim** (which in Hebrew means fruitful) was destined to become that fruitful multitude of nations. *"I know my son, I know. He [Manasseh] also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother [Ephraim – fruitful] shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations"*—from the Hebrew מְלִצְיָהוּ - *melo Hagoyim* (Genesis 48:19). Eventually, Ephraim was destined to inherit the rights of the firstborn and is blessed with populousness. This extended blessing would become the **fullness [i.e., "completeness"] of the Gentiles** (Romans 11:25); the *"completion gospel"* (Rom. 15:29).

Suffice it to say that disassociating Ephraim from the Nations/Gentiles is theologically incorrect, for they were assimilated and lost among the nations but now through the blood of His Cross those who were *afar off* have been brought nigh and are no longer strangers but are considered *"members of the Household of faith!"* They are *"Citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel"* and are, therefore, no longer aliens. Moreover, the original promise of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-36; Ezekiel 36:26-27) and its spiritual blessings were and still are committed to both Houses of Israel (the Twelve Tribes of Israel), and all the more in that Ephraim's dispersion among the nations was God's ultimate intention of expressing the entry of the Gentiles into the Commonwealth of Israel.

Let me conclude by saying that Jacob's trouble is our trouble too (Ref. Jer. 30:5-7)!

Let's look at what the prophet Daniel had to say: *"... when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered"* (Daniel 12:7. See also Deuteronomy 36:26). I believe that here Daniel is speaking about a corporate entity at the end of the age that sees us believers in Yeshua, called out from among the Nations, His elect, together with the Jewish people. However, there it is, that's where Christ is revealed, at the end of our natural strength and power. That is where the dead are quickened and nowhere else. He alone knows how to take us and them there, as He will also take His elect from among the Gentiles which will manifest His strength that lies at the end of our strength! (Revelation 12:10).

"Sing, Daughter Zion; shout aloud, Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. On that day they will say to Jerusalem, 'Do not fear, Zion; do not let your hands hang limp.' The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing." (Zephaniah 3:14-17)



"Gaza will be abandoned and Ashkelon left in ruins. At midday Ashdod will be emptied and Ekron uprooted. Woe to you who live by the sea, you Kerethite (lit. "executioners") people; the word of the Lord is against you, Canaan, land of the Philistines. He says, 'I will destroy you, and none will be left.' The land by the sea will become pastures having wells for shepherds and pens for flocks. The land will belong to the remnant of the people of Judah; there they will find pasture. In the evening they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon. The LORD their God will care for them; he will restore their fortunes. . . Then I will purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder"

(Zephaniah 24-7; 3:9)



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Dr. Douglas Hamp
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Introduction: We've asked members of our BoD to insert article of interest that enhance the theological understanding which parallels our convictions here at the Commonwealth of Israel Foundation—this is one of those papers which certainly fits that bill. We would like to extend our appreciations to Dr. Doug Hamp for bringing this document to our attention compliments of the Hebraic Heritage Ministries International. Its content involves a meeting held in Jackson, Florida in 2003 between Monte Judah (Lamb and Lion Ministries) and Eddie Chumney (Hebraic Heritage Ministries) with Daniel Juster of Tikkun International, all of whom are deeply involved in ministry with a special emphasis in understanding unity within the Body of Messiah—especially, between Jewish people and those “from among the nations.” This will be a two-part series (Fall-Winter 2023-2024). (NOTE: The paper will be present in two parts with the first part being three of our pages and the second part several pages.)

MAY BRETHREN DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY

The God of Israel hates those who sow discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:16, 19). It is the heart of the God of Israel that His family dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1). By dwelling together in unity, the God of Israel promised that HE would command a blessing (Psalm 133:3). In John 17:21-22, Messiah prayed that His body would be one. When we become one body and show love for one another (John 15:12), it will be a witness to the entire world that Yeshua / Jesus is the Messiah (John 17:23). It is with the heart and spirit for a greater unity within the Messianic / Hebraic roots movement in the body of Messiah that a meeting was held on March 27, 2003 in Jacksonville, Florida between Messianic / Hebraic roots leaders. The time has come for men of goodwill and a heart for the entire sheepfold of Messiah to stand up, lead and be counted. It is our prayer that other leaders within the Messianic / Hebraic roots movement will follow in our efforts for unity among the brethren. Pastor Paul Zink hosted the meeting.

Today, the Messianic / Hebraic roots movement is divided over a variety of issues. One of the most heated areas of contention within this movement is the controversy surrounding the teaching of the two houses of Israel (house of Israel / Ephraim and the house of Judah / Judah). Monte Judah of Lion and Lamb Ministries and Eddie Chumney of Hebraic Heritage Ministries International actively teach that Yeshua / Jesus, the Messiah, died on the tree (John 10:14-17, 11:49-52) to redeem and restore both houses of Israel (Ephraim and Judah). In doing this, Yeshua / Messiah made salvation available to the entire world (John 3:16, Romans 5:8, I John 4:9). Currently, disagreement over the issue has eroded and become an issue of fellowship within the Messianic / Hebraic roots movement. As a result, Messianic / Hebraic roots ministries and individual brethren are being harmed by this behavior. In order to try to bring about a more positive situation and bring healing to those who are harmed, Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney expressed a desire to meet with Dan Juster of Tikkun Ministries about the subject matter. Dan Juster has been a pioneer of the Messianic Jewish movement over the years and was a former General Secretary of the UMJC (Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations). Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney would like to formally recognize the efforts of Dan Juster and express our appreciation for his positive influence within the Messianic Jewish movement over the years.

Dan Juster agreed to meet with Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney. This meeting was made possible by the efforts of internationally recognized Messianic song leader, Paul Wilbur, through his friendship with all parties. Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney would like to personally thank Paul Wilbur for his efforts to make this meeting possible and his heart of love and compassion for the unity of the brethren.

The meeting basically lasted from 9AM-5PM with a break for lunch. The meeting was conducted in a professional manner. All parties came with a spirit of humility and a desire to listen, learn and understand. The dialogue was inquisitive, explanatory, productive and fruitful. As a result, a common understanding was reached. All parties expressed a desire to communicate the results of our meeting to the rest of the body of Messiah and especially to the Messianic / Hebraic roots movement so that there can be a greater unity among the brethren. It is our prayer that through these efforts that misunderstandings and misinformation can be clarified. We pray that where division over this issue has caused misbehavior that one will ask for forgiveness and it will be granted so that our wounds can be healed.

The following represents what Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney were able to affirm to Dan Juster regarding our understanding and our teaching on the two houses of Israel (Ephraim and Judah). Much of the information in this paper was discussed at the meeting in a general manner. It is the prayer of Monte Judah and Eddie Chumney that from the affirmations presented in this paper that the teaching of the two houses of Israel will no longer be labeled as being "heretical". We pray that the following affirmations listed below will enhance the understanding for those who have been opposed or misunderstand the teaching. Hopefully, these affirmations will create an environment so that there can be a greater dialogue and closer fellowship among all Messianic / Hebraic roots brethren in the future.

THE NAME OF THE COVENANT FAMILY OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL

The God of Israel including Yeshua / Jesus made a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3, 15:1-18, 17:1-7, John 8:56, Galatians 3:16). Through the redemptive work of the Messiah, all members of the body of Messiah from all the nations regardless of physical descent are heirs of this covenant (Genesis 12:1-3, Galatians 3:8, 29). Physically, this covenant was made with the promised seed of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 26:1-4, 28:10-14). The God of Israel told Abraham that his promised seed would sojourn in

Egypt and be redeemed (Genesis 15:12-16). After the children of Israel went to Egypt (Genesis 46:1-27) and went into bondage, the God of Israel remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and redeemed the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage when they cried out to Him (Exodus 2:23-25). Those who were redeemed from Egypt were required to put the blood of the Passover lamb upon their doorpost (Exodus 12:1-14). Those who put the blood of the Passover lamb upon their doorpost consisted of two groups of people. They were the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the mixed multitude (Exodus 12:37-38). The mixed multitude were not physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob but were from native born Egyptian families and other slaves. Together, the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob along with the mixed multitude are called the house of Jacob (Exodus 19:3).

The mixed multitude had a Torah status of being strangers, aliens and sojourners. They were grafted into the covenant made with the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The mixed multitude from the historical Egyptian redemption foreshadowed those from among the nations (Isaiah 2:3, Isaiah 11:10, Romans 15:8-13) who could become adopted into the new covenant made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31, Hebrews 8:8) through the redemptive work of the Messiah. The name of the redemptive family in Messiah is also called the house of Jacob (Luke 1:33). Among the redeemed house of Jacob are those who are physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and those who are grafted in from among the nations. Therefore, the God of Israel has a covenant with the physical house of Jacob (descendants from Mount Sinai) (Exodus 19:3) and the redeemed house of Jacob (Luke 1:33) and their companions (Ezekiel 37:16-17). The Apostle Paul makes a distinction between the physical house of Jacob and the redeemed house of Jacob in Romans 9:1-8. The unredeemed physical house of Jacob still has a plan and a purpose in the redemptive plan of the God of Israel (Romans 11:11).

THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE PHYSICAL HEIRS OF THE COVENANT MADE WITH ABRAHAM

It was Jacob's name that was changed to Israel (Genesis 32:24-28). Those who are physically descended from Jacob are all Israelites. In the history of the physical descendants of the house of Jacob (Exodus 19:3), they were divided into Northern Kingdom (house of Israel / Ephraim) and Southern Kingdom (house of Judah / Judah). We believe that the Jewish people (the house of Judah) are the legitimate heirs of the promise made by the God of Israel to the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We believe that the house of Judah is composed of primarily physical descendants of the tribes of Judah, Levi and Benjamin. There may be other physical descendants from the other tribes sojourning with the house of Judah; however, they are on an individual basis and are a minority within the house of Judah. There also are Gentile companions in the house of Judah; however, they have been joined to and integrated with to such an extent that they can no longer be distinguishable for purposes of separation from the house of Judah. All Jews (house of Judah) are Israelites (members of the house of Jacob) but not all Israelites (those from the Northern Kingdom / house of Israel / Ephraim) are Jews (house of Judah). There have been Jews in every generation who have accepted the redemptive work of Yeshua / Jesus, the Messiah.

WHO IS THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (HOUSE OF ISRAEL)?

We believe that the physical descendants of the Northern Kingdom (house of Israel / Ephraim) who was taken captive by the Assyrians are still alive in the earth and that the God of Israel knows where every descendant has been scattered (Amos 9:9). We believe that this house of Israel is not so easily distinguishable. They are primarily physical descendants of the tribes of Israel not associated with the house of Judah, the Jews. These include the tribes of Ephraim, Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, and Dan. They also may be physical descendants of the other tribes sojourning with the house of Israel / Ephraim; however, they are on an individual basis and a minority within the house of Israel / Ephraim. We believe there are also Gentile companions in the house of Israel / Ephraim. Whereas the house of Judah is somewhat distinguishable by custom and tradition, the house of Israel appears to be assimilated within the Gentile world. They, too, are legitimate heirs of the promise of the God of Israel by the fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We further believe that the greater group in physical number of the two houses is the house of Israel. There are physical descendants from the Northern Kingdom who have accepted the redemptive work of Yeshua / Jesus, the Messiah, in every generation. However, the exact percentage that has done so is unknown. Their percentage within the entire body of Messiah is also unknown.

THOSE WHO ARE SAVED FROM AMONG THE NATIONS

We believe that the body of Messiah includes those from among the nations who are not physically descended from the twelve tribes of Israel. As it relates to being a member of Messiah's kingdom, we believe that being a physical descendant from any tribe of Israel carries no special status or merit within Messiah's Kingdom. We believe that those from among the nations who are not physically descended from any of the tribes of Israel carry no special status or merit within His Kingdom. We also believe that being Jewish, Israelite, or Gentile carries no handicap either. We believe that the true heirs of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are descendants by promise of and faith in the God of Israel (Romans 9:6-8). Therefore, whether a person is physically born Jewish, Israelite, or Gentile is of no matter within the Messiah's Kingdom. We are all co-heirs with Messiah (Romans 8:15-17, Galatians 3:8, 16, 29)

THE ROLE OF JEWISH CUSTOM AND TRADITION FOR JEWISH BELIEVERS

We believe that Jewish custom and tradition is rich in history and heritage. Many of its practices go deep into our faith and are

very expressive of our faith in Messiah. We believe honor and respect is due where honor and respect is, and therefore, Jewish observance, custom, and community is important and worthy for Jewish brethren. Therefore, those joining with Judah in the Messianic movement should observe the custom and culture with proper protocol rendering no disrespect to anyone. We also believe there is a difference between commandment and custom and teaching the observance of commandment while honoring custom. Most of all, we teach Yeshua / Jesus is the Messiah and we are to be His bond servants.

THE ROLE OF BELIEVERS WITHIN THE BODY OF MESSIAH


The new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31, Hebrews 8:8) was only made with the house of Israel / Ephraim and the house of Judah / Jews. Those from among the nations may choose to believe in the redemptive work of the Messiah and be grafted into this covenant. The entire body of Messiah consisting of believers who are physically descended from both houses of Israel and those from among the nations should see themselves as one body and one faith (Ephesians 4:4-6). The redeemed body of Messiah is known as the house of Jacob (Luke 1:33). We believe that the Kingdom of Messiah is characterized and defined within the whole house of Israel (the house of Jacob) model. They are the redeemed olive tree of Romans 11.

Those who are in Messiah's Kingdom, those who would desire to be the bride of Messiah should seek to identify with their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Isaiah 51:1-7). After we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:28-30), we should love Messiah and keep His commandments (Exodus 20:6, John 14:15, I John 5:2). Believers in the Messiah saved by grace through faith should establish the Torah in their lives (Romans 3:31) through the help and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13, Romans 7:22). The Torah is holy, just and good (Romans 7:12). Keeping the commandments of the God of Israel is not grievous (I John 5:3). He who abides in Messiah (John 15:1-8) ought to walk (lives their lives) as Messiah walked (lived His life) (I John 2:6). The stranger who is adopted into the covenant made with our fathers is to observe the commandments of the God of Israel. One Torah (set of commandments) is for both the stranger / sojourner and for the native born Israeli (Numbers 15:15-16). This includes observing the Sabbath (Isaiah 56:1-8, Luke 4:16) and the Biblical Festivals (Zechariah 14:16-17, Luke 2:41-42, 22:15). The new covenant is a Torah based covenant (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10). Those who break the commandments are least in Messiah's Kingdom. Those who keep the commandments are great in Messiah's Kingdom (Matthew 5:19). The reward for keeping the commandments of the Messiah is the tree of life and access to the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem (Revelation 22:14). The Torah and the Prophets teach about the Messiah (Psalm 40:7, Hebrews 10:7, John 5:46-47).

Historical Christianity has separated themselves from the people of Israel, the fathers and the teaching of Moses with the Prophets. They have falsely testified that the death of Messiah did away with the teachings of Moses (Acts 6:13-14). We believe this separation in theology and practice is error. The Israel of God, the remnant of Israel, and chosen people (the elect of God) are those who desire to subscribe fully and completely to all that the God of Israel has manifested through the Scriptures. While the body of Messiah has many members (I Corinthians 12:12), the head of that body is Yeshua / Jesus, the Messiah (Ephesians 4:15, 5:23). All members whether Jewish or non-Jewish are to keep the commandments of the God of Israel (I Corinthians 7:18-19). We believe that there is one body of Messiah and one faith (Ephesians 4:4-6). Therefore, we do not subscribe to the definition that the believing world is composed of two groups: believing Jews and the Gentile Christian Church (with some of Ephraim in it). We believe that there is one body in Messiah Yeshua. That one body consists of descendants from the house of Judah with their Gentile companions and the house of Israel with their Gentile companions. Believing Gentiles are not an entity in and of themselves within the Messiah. Believing Gentiles are to be welcomed into the commonwealth of Israel and adopted into that Kingdom (Ephesians 2:12, 19). Torah teaches us that the adopted can never be disinherited and receives the inheritance of the first born. The believers in the Messiah have the status of being a first-born family (Hebrews 12:22-23) which is not based upon genealogy (I Chronicles 5:1). While all believers in Messiah are required to love Him and keep His commandments (John 14:15) and to keep what is written (Deuteronomy 30:10-14, I Corinthians 7:18-19) not adding or taking away from what is written (Deuteronomy 4:1-2), non-Jews are not required to observe customs and traditions which are uniquely Jewish and not specifically commanded in the Bible.

THE ROLE OF CIRCUMCISION WITHIN THE BODY OF MESSIAH

With regard to the matter of Torah and the rite of circumcision, both Moses and the New Testament testify to the importance of the rite being the circumcision of the heart first and foremost. Abraham was first circumcised in heart (his faith was counted for righteousness) (Genesis 15:6, Galatians 3:6-8). Later, the God of Israel required him to be circumcised in the flesh (Genesis 17:9-11). The God of Israel required in the Torah that we be circumcised in the heart (Deuteronomy 10:12, 16). The New Testament further states that those coming from among the Gentiles (both Gentiles and those of the house of Israel) are not required to be circumcised in the flesh at this present time while living in exile from the land of Israel.

During the Messianic Era, the redeemed in Messiah's Kingdom will not be allowed to enter into the Temple of the Messianic Era without being circumcised in the flesh and the heart (Ezekiel 44:6-9). Therefore, in this present age, Jews practice circumcision of their sons and those who come from among the Gentiles are not required to do so. However, studies made by medical science have proven a benefit for all males who get circumcised at their birth. With regard to Torah, Torah is to be taught to the sons of Israel and to the alien and sojourner who is among them (Numbers 15:15-16). Therefore, any person regardless of ethnicity is to receive the teaching of Moses "on Sabbath in the assemblies in every city" (Acts 15:21) if they are in fellowship with the sons of Israel. Therefore, if a non-Jew would choose to get circumcised, they should not be hindered from doing so being an heir of the promises which were made to Abraham (Genesis 17:9-11, Galatians 3:29) through the Messiah. 

A PEACEFUL JERUSALEM – A PEACEFUL SOUL

In times like these, it's common for people to turn to various interpretations of the Bible, particularly when conflicts and wars, especially involving Israel, unfold in the Middle East. Speculations and concerns tend to run high in Messianic and Christian communities. There's always a segment of individuals who predict imminent apocalyptic events, often leading to the creation of entire denominations fixated on apocalyptic scriptures, signs, and prophecies. During my youth, I was captivated by the teachings of figures like Jimmy Swaggart and Hal Lindsey, who repeatedly tried to predict the second coming of Christ, only to be consistently wrong.

Conversely, there are those who have grown somewhat desensitized to the continuous flow of apocalyptic warnings. This desensitization makes them dismissive of anyone discussing such matters. Notably, significant global events tend to create a sudden surge in self-proclaimed experts on eschatological subjects. This phenomenon is especially pronounced on social media platforms, where the credentials of those posting cannot be verified, and opinions span a wide range, from teenagers to seniors who might not otherwise engage in spiritual discourse. Such is the confusion that Yeshua warned us about in Matthew 24.

The words of the Apostle Paul offer comfort, reminding us that the return of Christ should not take us by surprise (1 Thessalonians 5:4). The implication is that we should have some understanding derived from our readings of the Bible. And we should! Recently, I addressed concerns within my small community by sharing Yeshua's words from Luke 21: *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, THEN KNOW that its desolation is near."* Although Israel has been involved in nearly 20 conflicts since 1948, it has never been entirely surrounded by armies. Hence, the current conflict along one of its southern borders does not signal the end but rather represents a birth pain. And it's events like this that should give us warning while at the same time a sense of peace because we've been instructed what to look for as disciples of Yeshua.

As the Lord advises us, we should not allow our hearts to be troubled because He has left us with His peace (John 14:27). Regarding peace, Psalm 122 instructs us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. This is a duty we earnestly fulfill and will continue to do so until Yeshua returns to ultimately redeem Jerusalem. However, this directive carries a deeper significance. As previously noted, Israel has been involved in almost 20 wars since 1948. It remains one of the most contested regions globally, a condition initiated when Yehovah declared His name would forever reside there (Deuteronomy 12:5, 2 Kings 21:7), which will persist until His arrival to redeem Jerusalem (Zechariah 14).

In praying for Jerusalem's peace, we seek not only its immediate tranquility but its ultimate redemption. Praying for the peace of Jerusalem equates to an ardent prayer for the return of its Savior and the establishment of His Kingdom.

ED DOSS



Ed's 30-year ministry has been as an Evangelist, Campus Missionary, Church Planter, and founder of the on-line Biblical teaching group: "Digging Deeper" in Dallas, TX. Ed's desire is "making Torah observant disciples of

How frequently do we partake in this prayer? How often do we beseech the return of Christ? Personally, I acknowledge that I do not pray about it as much as I should, and it is likely that many others share this sentiment.

This is unsurprising because, while Yeshua instructs us to be vigilant regarding the end times, none of us is comforted by the trials that precede it. The prospect of the impending tribulation is disconcerting, and it will indeed be a supernatural juncture in Earth's history, as Yeshua conveyed, *"men's hearts will fail them for fear"* (paraphrased). Finding peace amid the awareness of these impending events is a challenging proposition, particularly for those who will live through them. Nevertheless, such peace is imperative, for how can we pray for the peace of Jerusalem if we ourselves are continually plagued by fear and insecurity?

Let us remember that among His many amazing titles, He is also called the Lord of Peace (2 Thes 3:16) and Paul prayed that He would give us His peace *"always and in every way"*.

David said, *"I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety"*. (Psalm 4:8)

Isaiah said, *"You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You"* (Isaiah 26:3)

Jude said, *"Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you"*. (Jude 1:2)

And David reminds us once again, *"Great peace have those who love Your law, And nothing causes them to stumble"*. (Psalm 119:165)

So, as we continue in this troubled world, observing and bearing witness to its ever-increasing evil ways, let us stand steadfast in our peace.

Remembering that our Lord has already overcome the world and will soon come to gather us unto Himself. Let us also maintain our fervent prayers for the peace of the city that forever bears His name.





Scott Harwell

Scott practices Personal Injury/Litigation law in the State of Alabama. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Admin. and Marketing from Auburn University and a Doctor of Law (L.D.) from the University of Oregon School of Law. Scott has a passion for God's Word and is ever-expanding his outreach via podcasts, videos and other electronic means in celebrating our unity in the Commonwealth of Israel.

Scott Harwell will be posting on this electronic newsletter interviews with the various authors of the previous quarterly newsletters. These exchanges will allow the authors to amplify what they have written thereby providing clarity and in-depth analysis; ALSO:

[Visit Our Video Channel @ COIF](#)

Interview with Dr. Gavin Finley:

Join Dr. Gavin Finley and myself as we discuss the REAL great reset that is coming at the end of the age as millions around the world are now beginning to understand that they/we are all citizens of Israel.

<https://fb.watch/nL3FVhcJq5/>

Interview with Ed Doss:

What is the *Way of the Lord*, and how have contemporary belief systems veered away from it? Did the Way actually change? Did Yeshua create a new or different way? *"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice."* (Gen 18:19)

"So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. 3:24-KJV)

"WAY" = From Strong's Hebrew Lexicon:

H1870 - derek

H1870

H1871

H1869

דֶּרֶךְ

Transliteration: derek

Pronunciation: deh'-rek

Part of Speech: masculine noun

Root Word (Etymology): From דֶּרֶךְ (H1869)

TWOT Reference: 453a

Outline of Biblical Usage: way, road, distance, journey, manner, road, way, path, journey, direction

Psalm 86:11 KJV — *Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*

John 14:6 KJV — *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

<https://fb.watch/nL4r954pGN/>

Interview with Chris W. Steinle

Join Chris Steinle and I as we discuss whether there was/is a "change" on how Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, etc. were "forgiven" for sin and whether there was/is a change post-resurrection of Messiah.

It is often taught by Dispensationalists that sins were merely covered—not taken away—under the Old Covenant. Is this true? And what was the depth of God's relationship with His chosen people before Messiah? Did the writers of the "Old" Testament understand what they were writing? Or, were they just experiencing "automatic writing" for the sake of "New" Testament believers? These questions will be answered and more . . .

<https://fb.watch/nL4RAIqoNf/>

Interview with Doug Krieger

Sadly, the terms "church" and "gentile" are the two worst culprits in hiding the Truth of every disciples' identity as ...a citizen of Israel.

Join Doug Krieger and me as we discuss the Greek term *ekklesia* that has been horribly translated as *church*. This choice was and is deliberate and blinds many Christians to think they are part of a "new entity" that either replaced Israel or is entirely separate from Israel. Both of these systems of theology are, to put in bluntly, twisted and incorrect.

For all its faults, the King James Version is at least consistent. In Acts 7, Stephen states that the *church* was in the wilderness. He is quoting from Exodus and the Hebrew word used for the congregation of Israel is *eda*. Its root word is *ed* which means: *Witness*. This correlates with/to the Hebrew word *edut* which means: *Testimony*.

If you know Doug and me, we will by biblical trailing all over the place and we always have a great time discussing these matters.

<https://fb.watch/nL60A1lzh/>

COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL SUMMARIES

By Dr. Douglas Hamp

COIF TAGLINE:

COI Theology teaches the good news that we former Gentiles can be full citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel and that Israel and Judah will be restored into one nation.

Commonwealth of Israel Theology Brief Intro.

Commonwealth of Israel Theology teaches that God married Israel at Sinai (Old Covenant). Israel was unfaithful, divided into two kingdoms, and then God divorced the northern kingdom (though Judah deserved it too). He then promised to betroth Israel again, but the curse of the law (due to adultery) prevented that. Only through the death of the husband, Jesus, could the curse be removed and could Israel (scattered and assimilated into the nations) come back to God. The good news is they/we can be full members (citizens) of the Commonwealth of Israel; and God will restore the two houses into one.

Commonwealth of Israel Theology Summary

God elected Israel (Deut. 7:6) and entered into a marriage contract with her at Mt Sinai (Exo. 24:7-8



Jer. 31:31), COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE Old Covenant. Sadly, instead of being faithful, Israel repeatedly went after other gods (Jer. 3) which lead to the split of the United Kingdom into the southern Kingdom of Judah (house of Judah under Rehoboam) and the northern Kingdom of Israel (House of Israel/Ephraim under Jeroboam) (1 Kings 11:31-32). Finally, after seven hundred years of adultery since Sinai, God gave the northern kingdom a certificate of divorce and sent her away (Jer. 3:8, Hos. 2:2), calling her No-Mercy (*Lo-Ruchama*) and Not-My-People (*Lo-Ammi*) (Hos. 1:8-9) and she (the ten northern tribes) assimilated into pagan gentiles (nations) (Hos. 7:8,

Hos. 8:8, 9:17; 2 Kings 17:23-24). Judah likewise deserved divorce but God would not because of his promise to David (Hos. 1:7, 1 Kings 11:32).

God then promised to betroth the house of Israel to Himself in righteousness (Hos. 2:19) and to restore the two kingdoms into one (two sticks per Ezek. 37:16-23). That promise created a divine dilemma because God's instructions (law) did not permit a woman to come back to her first husband after she had been married to others (Deut. 24:1-4) (that was the curse of the law) (Gal. 3:13).

This divine dilemma was resolved by Jesus' (the husband's) death which canceled the Old (Marriage) Covenant and canceled the curse of the law (due to her adultery) (Rom. 7:1-4). Now those who were not his people (Rom. 9:24-26) and who had not obtained mercy (1 Pet. 2:10) could come into the Commonwealth of Israel as full members and citizens (Eph. 2:11-19) which was also in fulfillment of Ephraim becoming the multitude of nations (Gen. 48:19; Rom. 11:25).



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No Longer Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel - A final Word from our Associate Editor of the COIF Newsletter, Chris Winters Steinle:

It is imperative, if we are to understand the fullness of the message undergirding Commonwealth Theology - simply but profoundly clarified we find the following to be its foundation truths (primarily from the NT book of Paul's Letter to the Ephesians):

1. We all must be adopted into the household and inheritance of God through faith in Jesus—this is true for the Jew as well as the Gentile as expressed by Jesus in John 8.
2. God planned before the foundations of the world to include the Nations—the rest of mankind—in His great salvation (Gen. 12:2; Amos 9:11-12; John 11:51-52; Acts 15:16-18).
3. This plan, which has now been revealed, remained shrouded in mystery until the work of Christ; and Paul was made administrator of this revelation (Eph. 3:6).
4. The Commonwealth of Israel includes those adopted from among the Nations and the "natural branches,"—the Jews, Paul's fellow countrymen, "to whom pertain the adoption..." (Rom. 9:4);
5. Even those of Judah (the Jewish people) who, until the present time, remain disobedient to the gospel, that in the future, they may become obedient: "Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy" (Rom. 11:28-32).
6. Thus, the Commonwealth of Israel requires a distinction between:
 - a. The irrevocable gift of election, and
 - b. Unmerited Messianic salvation, which is freely given through faith (as in Abraham was justified by faith, not works) in the finished work of Christ.