

THE HEIRS OF JACOB - ISRAEL

Throughout this book words like *inheritance*, *elect* and *chosen* have come up many times and these show that there is a difference between Israel and the balance of peoples. Now we come to some differences within Israel itself. Among these sons of Jacob, there are differing end-of-age blessings for each tribe. These things are for *the last days*.

Following the line from Abraham and Isaac, we come next to Jacob. These three are described as *the fathers* in the New Testament. Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel, had twelve sons, each of which was the head of a tribe, the tribes becoming known as the twelve tribes of Israel. Normally the eldest son Reuben would have inherited the birthright, but he *defiled his father's bed* and it is recorded that Jacob gave the birthright to the sons of Joseph. This does not mean that Reuben was totally disinherited; we find Reuben sealed in Rev 7:5.

*1 Chron 5:1,2 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, [for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler, **But the birthright was Joseph's**].*

This introduces two factors that are often overlooked, namely that, although the chief ruler comes from Judah, the birthright is not given to Judah. Accordingly, Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, thus have this birthright, even today. Right at this point, we must note that each individual tribe was not treated the same by God and the birthright given to Joseph carried a double blessing [Gen 48:22]. Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph.

When the patriarch Jacob was giving his sons their individual blessings, we are told four things:

1. Genesis 37:3 *Israel loved Joseph more than all his children*
2. Genesis 48:5 *And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh which who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee in Egypt, as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.*
3. Genesis 48:16 *... 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.*
4. Genesis 48:6 *And thy issue [Joseph's] which thou begettest after them, shall be thine [Joseph's], and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.*

This means that Ephraim and Manasseh would be included in the sons of Jacob. This perpetuates the name of Jacob in Ephraim and Manasseh. In listings of Israel through the Bible, in differing contexts and circumstances, two sons are deliberately left off each time to make the total twelve only each time. One of the extra names often replaces Levi who had no inheritance among the other twelve, and the other sometimes replaces Dan, for example, because of the golden calves.

Let my name be named upon them indicates, *to proclaim – to nominate – to cry or call out*. So this is important. In Isaiah 43:7 and 48:1 this naming is a proclamation of racial identity, so that Ephraim and Manasseh are henceforth part of Israel and are sons of Jacob.

In addition to their birthright blessing, the name "Israel" was passed on to Ephraim and Manasseh as part of all the other twelve tribes. This includes the names of Abraham and Isaac, according to

verse sixteen; this shows that all were part of the same racial line through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What is believed here conditions what is believed prophetically in the remainder of the Bible.

THE BLESSING ON EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH

This is found in Genesis 48:15-22 and should be read and re-read until it is understood. The traditional blessing [*mitzvos*] is imparted by placing the right hand on the person's head, but here the patriarch crossed his hands and placed the hand of blessing upon Ephraim thus giving primacy to Ephraim over Manasseh. In various places through the Old Testament where we are told, *Ephraim is My firstborn* [Jer 31:9]; he is also spoken of as being God's firstborn, the one with the blessing.

Ezek 37:19 ... the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim ...

With the birthright being Joseph's, Ephraim has the stick or is *ates* (fastened in place) in relationship to the other sons of Jacob. This stick must not be confused with the sceptre [*shebet*] that shall not depart from Judah [Gen 49:10]. Psalm 108:8 says, *Ephraim is the strength of my head; Judah is my lawgiver*. This establishes the relationship between Ephraim and Judah. That Judah has the sceptre does not remove the birthright from Joseph.

1 Chron 5:2 For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's.

Judah was praised by his brethren because of his strength and from Judea came Jesus, *that shall rule my people Israel* [Micah 5:2 and Matt 2:6]. But, in no way did this take away the birthright from Joseph, who in turn gave primacy to his son Ephraim.

In this, as in many places in Scripture, we see the principle of birthright, where the natural firstborn may be passed over. We see Ishmael being the natural firstborn to Abraham being out of favour to Isaac. Isaac's natural firstborn was passed over in favour of Jacob. Jacob, in turn, blessed his eleventh son and then we see how Ephraim, the last born, received the birthright. The birthright was always given to a kinsman, who is a blood descendant. That is why Jesus can only be the Kinsman-Redeemer of Israel. We are told that He came, *To save His people from their sins*. *His people* is a specific limitation; they were His people before they were saved. To most in the denominational churches, and even amongst the Messianic Jews, the ideas held are either:

[a] Judah is still prevailing.

[b] Judah or "Jews" are Israel.

[c] The multi-racial "church" is now Israel.

[d] Through the redemption of Israel that is in Christ Jesus, nothing of the prophecies of Moses have meaning any more.

This is nothing less than unbelief in what Jesus said about the necessity of believing what Moses wrote, in order that His Words might be understood.

THE PEOPLE AND THE MULTITUDE OF NATIONS

In giving his blessing to the lads, Ephraim and Manasseh, the patriarch Jacob immediately stated what each would become [Gen 48:19]:

[a] Of Ephraim (the younger brother): he shall become a multitude of nations.

[b] Of Manasseh: He shall become a people.

The promise to Abraham and the promise to Ephraim are not the same. Abraham was to become a *qahal* of *am*, or a *congregation of people*, whereas Ephraim was to become a *melo* of *goi* or a *full hand of nations*. Manasseh was to become an '*am*, a people.

In the last days neither Ephraim nor Manasseh have disappeared in favour of any multi-racial church. Moses likewise pronounced blessings on all the tribes and he said the sons of Joseph would *push the people [am]* together to the ends of the earth saying, *These are the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh* [Deut 33:17].

If we are now in the last days, there must be somewhere on Earth, peoples representing Ephraim and Manasseh. They would have a common tongue, being brothers. One must be a grouping of nations and the other must be a people. Scripture shows how each tribe has symbols, banners and other pointers giving individual identification. Present identification from this aspect is not within the scope of this book.

What is vital to understanding of prophecy, is the division of the twelve tribes into the two Houses. They have enmity between them. Ephraim and Manasseh both come from the one House, but Judah represents the other House. This division is not generally recognised today, with the consequence that prophetic interpretation is totally confused. What we have commonly presented is a *church* that is completely foreign to prophecy. In the chapter, *The Church*, it has been shown how the *assembly* is drawn out from among Israel who are of the physical blood descendants of Abraham through Isaac. They become manifested as "sons" through resurrection in the New Testament.

It is common to hear that the House of Israel has disappeared, leaving only "The Jews" who can be identified. It has come to the point where it is commonly said that the Jews are Israel. However, the House of Judah is only part of "all Israel" and modern Jew is a multi-racial conglomeration that adheres to a common religion.

But, since the House of Judah are Israelites, there is nothing wrong in referring to them as Israelites. This can be found in Scripture. The two houses went into separate captivities and it is common to hear false teaching how Israel [suggesting the whole nation] returned from captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah. This is entirely wrong as it was the House of Judah that went into captivity in Babylon. The House of Israel [ten tribes] has never returned "to the Land" as a nation or nations after their captivity in Assyria. The timing of this event is shown in the chapter, *The Regathering Of Israel*.

Throughout Scripture we find parts or the whole of the twelve tribes, spoken of as *all Israel*, *Jacob*, *Judah*, *Ephraim* and the two Houses, in a way that is not generally understood. Each rightly is entitled to be called Israel as part of all Israel. This is wrongly used to try to support the popular teachings that there is now no separation between the Houses or the Tribes. Sometimes prophecy is directed at one part and not another, so careful reading is essential to determine just who is being addressed. It is commonly thought that all the ten tribes of the House of Israel have disappeared into a foreign milieu and that no identification of any part is possible. This is far from the truth.

The 10 tribed House of Israel are never described in Scripture as "Jews". That they became like the foreign nations in many ways is not disputed. They were called Greeks in New Testament Scripture and the *uncircumcision* by the Judeans, but the disciples still knew exactly where to find them and

to tell them the gospel story. It is evident that they got results. Remember how Jesus sent the disciples only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel? [Matt 10:6 and 15:24]. Jesus made this limitation which the churches today refuse to allow or believe. They subsequently became lost in history and blind to their own identity and, collectively, (that is, in the common knowledge of the general population), nobody knows where they are today.

SOME POPULAR INTERPRETATIONS AND COMMENTS

Jacob prophesied that Ephraim's descendants would become a *m'loh* [or *melo*] of *goyim* or a *fullness or a full hand of nations*. With the popular, but wrong translation, this has become "the fullness of the Gentiles"! This terminology, together with the other examples listed below, is used to try to prove that these expressions mean something other than what the Hebrew or Greek means.

1. EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH ARE SAID TO BE 'TYPES'

Some people will go so far as to recognise the position of Ephraim and Manasseh, but then they will say that Manasseh is a "type" of the Old Testament with Ephraim being a "type" of the New Testament. They have to say that to keep believing the traditional teachings about "Jews and Gentiles". When God said that He would make Abraham's descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, they say this myriad represents the Gentiles' conversion to become the Church. But, as we have seen, Abraham's descendants could not be both Israel and a multi-racial Church.

2. "GALILEE OF THE GENTILES"

In Isaiah 9:1 we find the expression, *Galilee of the Nations* or *Galilee of the Gentiles* according to version. This is quoted in Matthew 4:15 where the word "Gentiles" is picked up and used to say these were non-Israelites. But, Jesus' ministry was mainly in Galilee, rather than in Judea, and all the people ministered unto were Israelites. Isaiah, who is being quoted, does not even remotely suggest non-Israelites – the context in these passages relates to Jacob/Israel. The section starting in Isa 9:8 confirms the exclusiveness of Israel outside of the so-called Gentile non-Israel nations.

Isaiah 9:8 The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

"Jacob" and "Israel" cannot mean every race. One of the marks of Ephraim/Israel today, as the heirs of Jacob, is the place of the Word of God found among this people. This does not mean that all this people believe in Jesus, but that the Word of God has a place in the affairs and laws of these people. Ultimately, the one blessing given in the original covenant is fulfilled in both the Houses when:

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the Throne of David ...

Jesus is yet to return to take that Throne. This throne exists today in the people upon whom the, *word has lighted*. The *over all Israel* means all of the tribes of Israel, and there is no suggestion that this could be everyone of every race.

3. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN

The general assembly [paneguris: general public assembly] *and church* [ekklesia: called out assembly] *of the firstborn* [Heb 12:23] is used to support the belief that the *firstborn* are believers from all races on Earth who believe in Jesus. Jesus is the *firstborn from among the dead*, but *ekklesia* does not have the meaning they place upon it.

It is often wrongly said, *as creator He is father to all men, but he is the 'spiritual' Father only to believers*. However, Moses was to tell Pharaoh, "**ISRAEL IS MY SON, EVEN MY FIRSTBORN**" [Ex 4:22]. Under God's law *all the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou redeem* [Ex 34:20]. God says, *all the firstborn are mine* [Num 3:13]. *All the firstborn of my children I will redeem* [Ex 13:15]. God does not break His own law of redemption to include everyone else, as is commonly taught today.

4. THE ISRAEL OF GOD ... AND... CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

This is yet another way of trying to get around the exclusive nature of Israel in order to incorporate all races within a New Testament Israel which some like to call *The Israel of God*. It is said that the Old Testament Israel has passed away and that believers in Jesus are all now the New Testament Israel. The mechanism is based upon the *circumcision of the heart* doctrine. The basis is Jer 31:31 where God says:

Jer 31:31-33 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 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; ... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write in their hearts ...

As usual, there are the two parts, namely the House of Judah and the House of Israel as has been pointed out many times before. When the prophet goes on to describe how the law would be put in their inward parts, and be written on their hearts, this is said to be what happens when a non-Israelite joins Israel. They are supposed to have become *circumcised in heart* and somehow then become "Israel".

The problem is this: that the *circumcision of the heart* is an expression that is not confined to the New Testament. It is found in the books of the Law where this expression is applied to Israel. In the New Testament, likewise, outward circumcision in the flesh is useless without the circumcision of the heart. Paul does not say the covenant of circumcision no longer exists. How could anyone be given a new covenant who first never had an old covenant? Both Testaments address this promise expressly to only the House of Israel and the House of Judah, as demonstrated in the above verse. These Houses both still exist in the New Testament [Heb 8:8].

So, if Bible Colleges like to say that the *Israel of God* is a multi-racial term this does not make it so in fact. In all of these things, the blessing Jacob placed upon his sons, and the birthright blessing upon Joseph, have not passed away.

5. THE SO-CALLED NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER

Another aspect sometimes presented is what some like to call the New Testament Passover, which somehow is supposed to allow for the multi-racial concept. When Jesus said, *With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer* [Luke 22:15], He was confirming that He was to fulfil the Law of Sacrifices with His own Blood. Jesus became the Passover Lamb for Israel. In no way does this say that somehow this was now to be extended to all races beyond Israel and Judah. The moment we understand that every book of the New Testament is written to Israelites alone, and that the New Testament fulfils what is written in the Old Testament, understanding will come. The institution of the Passover was made for Israel alone and was to be commemorated by Israel for all generations.

WHEN EPHRAIM REPENTS

In Scripture, "Ephraim" is used of the single tribe, as well as the leader of the ten - tribed House of Israel. One of the very sad stories through prophecy is the story of Ephraim. They are *cut off, become not a people*, and are described as drunkards. Ephraim becomes like *a silly dove* and as *a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*. They become much punished by God. But through it all, through prophetic Scriptures we can sense the yearnings of God for Ephraim.

Jer 31:20 Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him; ...

Isa 7:8 foretold that Ephraim would become *not a people*. They came to the place where they no longer recognised who they were; nationally they lost knowledge of their identity, as being God's people. They lost all knowledge that they carried the patriarch's as well as God's blessing. God says:

Hosea 11:3 I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms, but they knew not that I healed them.

But we are told that one day Ephraim will repent. He will first have sorrows like a travailing woman [Hos 13:13] and God will hear Ephraim *bemoaning himself* [Jer 31:18] and Ephraim will call upon God, as a nation.

Zech 10:7 And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.

From this point, the story is that of the regathering of Israel. It is a thrilling story in prophecy, but the sad side of all this is that the churches refuse to teach it, or even ever mention the name of Ephraim. The repentance of Ephraim and the regaining of the knowledge of their identity are connected.

WHAT ARE WE SAYING?

The Christian denominations will not accept the blessings that Jacob prophesied in Genesis 49 or what the prophet Moses said at the end of the book of Numbers. Jesus said that it was necessary to hear Moses in order to comprehend His words. Although Ephraim, as the leader of the ten-tribed Northern House, is not even mentioned in the New Testament by that name, once what Moses wrote is seen and believed, the blessings of the patriarchs and the words of the prophets can be seen through the New Testament books. For example, the language of Peter is that of Hosea. Hosea wrote primarily to the ten tribes and likewise Peter writes to the same people. The parables of Jesus come alive in this context and suddenly these parables can be seen to be dealing with the two separate Houses and the Kingdom.

Traditionally, the churches spiritualise the prophetic messages. Whenever nations and races are considered, this is made a matter of personal belief or disbelief. This is because the foundation in Moses's writings are destroyed.

Ps 11:3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

These Psalms differentiate between righteous people and wicked people, in terms of nations and races, as well as good and bad people within Israel. To most churchgoers there is only some kind of spiritual message. Once again, the problem doctrine is the *all the world* doctrine. It does not exist

through the Old Testament. Moses did not write one word about this *all the world* doctrine. Moses prophesied about the sons of Jacob and what would happen to them in the last days. They have not somehow disappeared. The sons of Jacob have not somehow become all races. All races have not become the sons of Jacob. These sons of Jacob cannot therefore be modern Jewry that comes from almost every race and colour on Earth. The New Testament teaching about the regathering of Israel is exactly the same as that in the Old Testament and the heirs of Jacob/Israel remain the same.