

From the Inkhorn

People quickly identify from the name, Christian Israelite Church, that we are a Christian Church accepting the sacrifice of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God. However it is not so clear what the Israelite in the name means. Many people think it means that we are a Jewish Christian Church, but this limits the Israel message in the Scriptures. A series of articles in this and future Latter Rains will look at the past, present and future of Israel as set out in the Bible to help explain this issue.

The articles in this edition include how historically God chose Israel as a vehicle to show His Power to the World (A History of Israel), a scriptural review of outstanding promises to Israel which have not yet been fulfilled (What Purpose Remains For Israel), consideration of the biblical importance of Birthright, Inheritance, Blessing and Adoption, and a summary of Why did God Choose Israel? What are the physical and the spiritual promises made to Israel, and who will be entitled to claim them? Other supporting details are included in the regular feature articles. Articles in future issues of Latter Rain will consider "Who Are Israelites" (Romans 9:4) and will review the fundamental principles of God's relationship with Israel as established in the Old Testament (Hebrews 10:1).

It is a challenging time to be alive – the time in which we

Index

A History of Israel	2
Hymn No. 86	7
What Purpose Remains for Israel	8
The Word of God	12
Statement of Belief	13
Birthright, Inheritance, Blessing & Adoption	14
The Tablets of Nuzi	15
Debug Your Bible: Why did God Choose Israel?	18
Patriarchs - Adam to Abram	20
Children's Story: Joseph	23
Expand Your Bible: Where are They?	26
Vegetarian Recipes: Quick & Easy Vegetable Curry Indian Style Potatoes	28

believe the promises which have been held across the ages will be fulfilled. And what an exciting finish it will be! We know which Team will win, although there will be some doubt in some people's minds as the end approaches, and the call is out for people to join the Team. Are you willing to "press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14)?"

A History of Israel

by Rodney GRAY

There is no doubt that the Old Testament is a history book about Israel. The choosing of Abraham in Genesis, the delivery of the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt in Exodus, the wanderings in the Wilderness in Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy and then the period of the Judges and the Kings, the establishment of a Kingdom with the eventual demise of the Kingdom into a subservient group of believers who were responsible for the Crucifixion of Jesus. This article looks in more detail at the history which is detailed in the Bible and presents some of the events which have a significant impact on things that are still to happen in the World. Other articles in this series look at why God chose a special people and what promises still remain to be fulfilled for Israel in the future.

God Chooses Abraham

After the Flood, when the ways of mankind turned again from following God's instructions, He chose Abram with whom He made a Covenant of obedience and blessing. *"Walk before me and be thou perfect; and I will make a covenant between me and thee and will multiply thee exceedingly"* Genesis 17:1-2. The Bible gives little background as to the state of idolatry in the world at that time, and as to why Abram was chosen by God to be His representative to carry down the promise of life which had initially been given to Adam and passed on through Noah (Genesis 2:16-17; 4:26; 9:9). The Bible gives a genealogy to show the line of descent from Adam to Abram. Sources outside the Bible indicate that the World was again in a very ungodly state at that time, and that Abram had to make great personal sacrifices to move away from his family and follow the instructions of the Lord. However it is clear that God chose

Abram as His vehicle through which He would show His power and Presence to all people.

Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and the promise was directly passed down to his descendants namely, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 22:16-18). Jacob had 12 sons who became the Fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. When there was a great famine in the land of Canaan, Israel and his family all moved to Egypt where God had sent Joseph, the eldest son of Jacob's "true" wife, to prepare for them during the famine.

The Formation of a Nation

Whilst in Egypt, the families of the twelve sons of Israel became recognized as a people – called the Hebrews. As they left Egypt they were recognized as the children of Israel, a nation under God, led by Moses. *"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a **special people** unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth"* Deuteronomy 7:6.

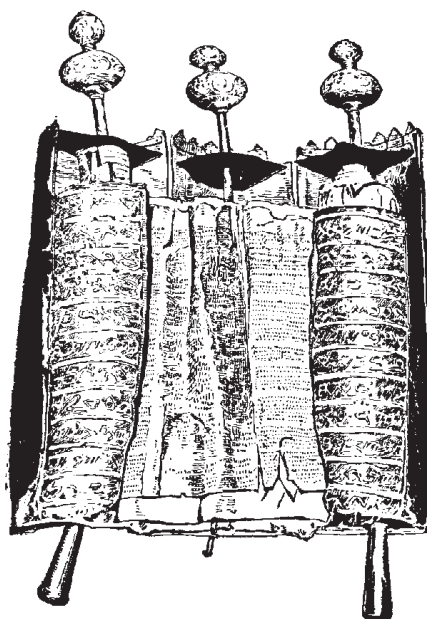
The Twelve Sons of Israel

Reuben (Leah)
Simeon (Leah)
Levi (Leah)
Judah (Leah)
Dan (Bilhah/Rachel)
Naphtali (Bilhah/Rachel)
Gad (Zilpah/Leah)
Asher (Zilpah/Leah)
Issachar (Leah)
Zebulun (Leah)
Joseph (Rachel)
Benjamin (Rachel)

Through Moses God gave the Israelites instructions about the way they should live. He gave them the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17, Deuteronomy 5:6-21), which He wrote with His own finger on the tablets of stone, and the statutes and judgments which contained details about relationships between each other as well as instructions about a personal way of life that He wanted His special people to follow individually. God also gave instructions about worship, and directions for the Priests, the sons of Aaron, to follow as they administered the implementation of these instructions.

For some hundreds of years Israel was ruled by Judges who received their instructions directly through revelation from God (see the book of Judges). To all intents and purposes it was a theocracy, and God ruled by 'raising up' those whom He chose to lead the people. The running of the nation was in accordance with the civil, religious and ceremonial laws that God had given through Moses.

God had given Israel the Law as a way of life. Paul said of the law, that if there be any word that summarizes what it is, it is LOVE (Romans 13:8-11). However,



because of the strong influence of other people and cultures, the people enacted the Law in a very legalistic way. God had said, *"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always..."* Deuteronomy 5:29, but as Jeremiah later observed, *"...the heart of man is deceitfully wicked above all things"* Jeremiah 17:9.

The Judges and their Tribes

Othniel - Judah
 Ehud - Benjamin
 Shamgar - Benjamin
 Deborah - Ephraim
 Barak - Naphtali
 Gideon - Manasseh
 Abimelech - Manasseh
 Tola - Issachar
 Jair - Manasseh
 Jephthah - Manasseh
 Ibson - Zebulun or Judah
 Elon - Zebulun
 Abdon - Ephraim
 Samson - Dan
 Eli - Levi
 Samuel - Levi

The Change to a Monarchy

Samuel was the last of the Judges. The story of how his mother dedicated him to God before his birth, and then at five years old took him to live with the Priest Eli in the temple is well known (1st Samuel chapters 1-3). Remember how God called him, and he thought it was Eli? After the third time he said, *"Speak, for thy servant heareth."* Chosen, ordained and sanctified. A reflection of God's plan for Israel. But after many years of Judging the people of Israel, they decided that they wanted a King of their own, not just a representative from God. They could identify no specific problems with the present arrangement, but felt that they wanted an earthly ruler like the nations round about them (1st Samuel chapter 12). Again so typical of our relation ship with God – He gives us all we need and we respond by wanting something else, even though it may

not be the best for us to have!

So, reluctantly Samuel gave in to the people's wish, and anointed Saul to be the first King over a United Israel – the twelve tribes (1st Samuel 10:1). God said to Samuel *"...for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them"* 1st Samuel 8:7. They had been chosen, ordained as God's people, but not sanctified!

The Period of A Powerful Nation

Around c1047-1007BC, Saul started as a good King. He had had a "spiritual" experience that set his heart right, even though he would not share this experience with his father for fear of reprisal. But the taste of power, and perhaps lack of understanding of a Godly way of life in his younger years, turned his heart to fear and covetousness. God rejected Saul as being Leader of His people, (1st Samuel 15:26) and chose David to replace him (1st Samuel 16:13). When Saul realized

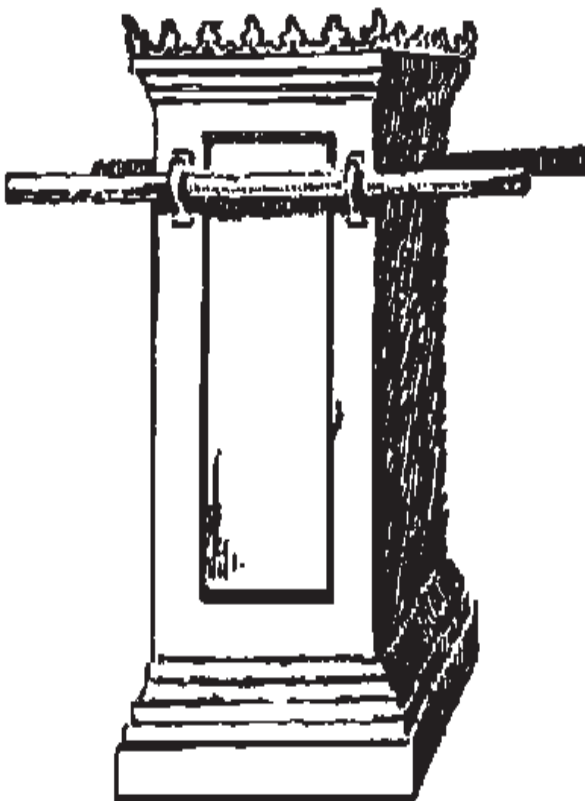
this, he was jealous for the sake of his own son, Jonathan, whom he had thought would reign after him. Saul chased David as a hunted animal with the thought of destroying him so that the Kingdom would still go to Jonathan. However, in the meantime, Jonathan had accepted that David's anointing was from God, and David and Jonathan became very close friends. Once something has been ordained of God, it is folly for man to try to alter it!

Under King David (c1000BC to 970BC) Israel grew into a well recognized and respected super-power of the day. Based on David's humble origin, and life experiences, he had grown to love and trust God, and this carried over into the whole Kingdom. However, David succumbed to fleshly lusts, slaying people in revenge, and killing to get his own way. The story of Nathan the Prophet telling David the parable of the sheep is well known, but needed explanation before it was understood by David (2nd Samuel 12:1-13).

David showed true repentance for the wrongs he had done, and still wanted to build a Temple to God to be a house for the Ark of the Covenant that had been built in the wilderness. However, this offering was not accepted by God, and the task was left to Solomon, David's son who succeeded him to the throne. Despite David's wonderful relationship with God, he too was chosen, and ordained, but not fully sanctified before God.

Under Solomon (971BC to 931BC) the Kingdom thrived and flourished. He made *"silver and gold at Jerusalem as plentiful as stones"* 2nd Chronicles 1:15, such was his wealth resulting from God's blessings on His people.

Solomon led the people to worship God, and the first years of his reign were the pinnacle of national prosperity and peace. He built the Great Temple in Jerusalem and focused the people to worship



God there (2nd Chronicles chapters 2-7). However, as the writer of Kings puts it, “*Solomon loved many strange women*” 1st Kings 11:1.

Solomon’s prosperity was founded on trust in God, but once established, he failed to respect the very foundation on which it had been built. His support of people with different ideas, and acceptance of other faiths and belief systems caused his heart to turn away from being pure towards God. This was the very reason God had purged the Land of its inhabitants when Israel returned from Egypt (Deuteronomy 13:6-8). By the end of his 40 year reign the kingdom was falling apart. Taxes were high, national morale was low, and whilst the material wealth was still evident, the level of national

peace and personal faith was fast in decline.

The Division Into Two Kingdoms

On the death of Solomon (931 BC) it was appointed that his son Rehoboam would secede him to the throne of the United Israel. However, the people were discontented and again the ‘it’s time’ factor came into play. The people were sick of the King (just as Samuel had warned) and wanted a change. Two of the tribes stayed loyal to Solomon’s son, more likely out of respect to David and Solomon than because of any value they thought Rehoboam would offer, but the other ten tribes elected to follow Jeroboam, “*the son of Nebat*”, a General who had earlier been deposed and exiled for outspoken behavior against the King.

From this time there became two separate

The Kings of the Divided Monarchy			
Israel		Judah	
Jeroboam	931-910	Rehoboam	931-913
Nadab	910-909	Abijah	913-911
Baasha	909-886	Asa	911-870
Elah	886-885		
Zimri	885		
Omri	885-874		
Ahab	874-853	Jehoshaphat	873-848
Ahaziah	853-852		
Joram	852-841	Jehoram	848-841
Jehu	841-814	Ahaziah	841
		Athaliah	841-835
Jehoahaz	814-798	Joash	835-796
Jehoash	798-782	Amaziah	796-767
Jeroboam II	793=753	Uzziah	792-740
Zechariah	753		
Shallum	752		
Menahem	752-742	Jotham	750-731
Pekahiah	742-740		
Pekah	752-732	Ahaz	735-715
Hoshea	732-722	Hezekiah	729-686
		Manasseh	696-642
		Amon	642-640
		Josiah	640-609
		Jehoahaz	609
		Jehoiakim	608-598
		Jehoiachin	598-597
		Zedekiah	597-586

nations – Judah the two tribes who remained faithful to the traditional leaders, and Israel, comprised of the other ten tribes. The ten tribes were to the North, and the two tribes to the South. This event has caused a lot of confusion in Bible history, as the name Israel had formerly applied to the united twelve tribes, but the same name now applied only to the ten tribe Kingdom. However many people associate the continuing two tribes (the Jews) with Israel, and refer to them as Israel, but Judah was only two of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Judah retained the area of land which included Jerusalem and continued with the traditional worship of God with the Temple as a central place in this worship. Jeroboam however, realized that if the ten tribes continued to return to Jerusalem for worship, there was a chance that this may encourage a return to unity with the two tribes, so he established a new theological regime and process of worship, based in Shiloh, a city in the Northern Kingdom.

It is unfortunate that biblical history records that there was not one king of Israel who remained faithful to God for the duration of his reign. Some did recognize God for a portion of their time in power, but most were ungodly for the whole of their reign, using the Biblical

phrase, “and he sinned and caused Israel to sin with him”.

Judah was a little more faithful to God, and there was a cycle of God-fearing kings and those who did not fear God. When the people were prosperous they would turn from God, who would send an oppressor. Under oppression they would repent and call on God for deliverance, and He would show His power and suppress their enemies. And so the cycle went on.

The Dispersion of Israel – The Northern Kingdom

After the division of the twelve tribe kingdom into two separate kingdoms, Israel the northern ten tribe kingdom, quickly drew away from God, and there was not one king who was God-fearing for the whole of his reign. As a result of their unfaithfulness in circa 722 BC God allowed them to be overcome by Shalmanaser. They were dispersed and scattered amongst all the nations of the earth. They have never regained a separate identity. Even at the time of Jesus, He sent the disciples to “*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” Matthew 10:6, and James wrote his Epistle to “...*the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad*...” James 1:1. Although their identity has been lost, there are many promises in Scripture about God re-gathering and showing His blessings on a remnant of these people (Deuteronomy 30:1-3; Jeremiah 31:10).

Shalmanaser V


Shalmanaser V was king of Assyria from 727-722BC. His father was Tiglath-Pileser III. After the death of his father he succeeded to the throne on 25th day of Tebet in 727BC. It was Shalmanaser V and his father Tiglath-Pileser III who were responsible for the deportation of the ten tribe nation of Israel. 2 Kings chapters 18 and 19 provides details of this event where Shalmanaser V is described as the conqueror of Samaria. In the book of Tobit (chapter 1), the exiled Tobit is reported as having found favour with Shalmanaser, but this influence was lost under the next ruler, Sennacherib.

The Captivity of Judah – The Southern Kingdom

The Kingdom of Judah continued as a separate nation for quite a lot longer than Israel – about 150 years. However, as the kings grew generally successively worse, apart from some notable God-fearing revivalists, God allowed them to be taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar (circa 540BC). Whilst the dispersion of Israel had resulted in an annihilation of the Kingdom, the captivity of Judah had been foretold as a punishment that would last for a given period – seventy years in fact. As prophesied after seventy years there was a return of

the exiled Jews to Jerusalem where they again were able to worship at the Temple. The Kingdom lost its national status, but continued as an ethnic group up until the time of Jesus. This return was only a partial return of those taken into captivity, and does not fulfill those promises in Scripture about the re-gathering of God's people to their promised land. A small number of Jews have retained their identity as a group, and

as God's people, throughout history.

Out of interest, Jeremiah records how at the time of the captivity, the prophet Jeremiah took Zedekiah's daughter Tamar down to Egypt and thence to the Isles afar off, which event is used by many to historically establish a link between the throne of David and the British throne as it survives today. 

Hymn No. 86

(Revelation 18; Psalm 137)

Ye ransom'd tribes will sing
In loud harmonious strains,
'Till woods and hills shall ring
Throughout the earthly plains,
In anthems loud of Zion's song,
Which will inflame your ev'ry tongue.

Your harps no more shall hang
Mute on the willows high,
But loud shall ev'ry string
In notes of truth reply -
At last proud Babylon is fall'n,
Her witchcraft shall no more be known.

An angel did come down,
All darkness to dispel;
All lands did hear the sound,
When he that truth did tell;
All mystic Babel here shall sink,
Her poison'd wines no more shall drink.

"In one hour" did she fall,
Her craftsmen they did cry;
All her pow'r, great and small,
Did as the millstone lie;
Alas! alas! that city great
Shall be no more in royal state.

Rejoice, ye heav'ns high,
Isr'el on earth rejoice;
Redemption, it is nigh,
From heav'n is heard the voice,
"Come out from her, my people free,
That ye corruption ne'er may see.

What Purpose Remains for Israel

by Paul GRAY

The history of Israel at the end of the Old Testament leaves us with the Northern Kingdom of Israel (the ten tribes) scattered all over the World without an identity, and a remnant of the Jews (the two tribes) living in and around Jerusalem as an ethnic religious group. Many may be inclined to think that that is where it ends. However, there are many prophecies about a promised re-gathering of a remnant of God's people in the Scriptures. *"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night...if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever"* Jeremiah 31:35-36. Many people try to interpret these promises in a spiritual way, and neglect the importance of the physical lineage in the inheritance promised. What support, then, is there in the New Testament for the continuing support of the belief that God has a special purpose in His Plan for descendants of the original Israelites?

The Mission of Jesus

Simeon, a servant of God, prophesied over the baby Jesus when he was being presented to God, *"Mine eyes have seen thy salvation ... a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel"* Luke 2:28-32. He through knowledge of the Holy Ghost, recognized that Jesus through His sacrifice had two missions to fulfill in coming to this Earth:

1. **"A light to lighten the Gentiles"** - to all people of the World, the Lamb of God was here to be offered, and that all who call upon His name would have their sins forgiven. These people will have *"Faith,*

the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen..." Hebrews 11:1, and *"though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow"* Isaiah 1:18, through the righteousness of Jesus being reflected in them (Psalms 32:1-2); and

2. **"the glory of thy people Israel"** - the promises to Israel should not be discarded, because they will be achieved, but only by a people who are meek and lowly in spirit (humble). They will acknowledge that there is an evil power trying to deceive them, and keep them from personal and physical dedication to God, and they will receive power against this evil, through the name of Jesus, and the help of the Comforter. Jesus said, *"I will not leave you comfortless"* John 14:18. The Power of God, through Christ and the Holy Ghost, will strengthen their spirits, through dedication, and prayer, and lead them into a standard of obedience to God's instructions. They will be chosen by God, their



mission will be ordained of God, and their lives will be sanctified to God.

Jesus' First Coming

It is interesting to note that Jesus said to the twelve disciples, whom he sent out, *"...go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand"* Matthew 10:5-7. Jesus clearly recognized that the promises from the Old Testament were still available to those descendants who would fulfill the "conditions" of their acceptance. This supports the view that Jesus recognized this as a significant part of his mission; to be *"the glory of thy people Israel"*.

Later Jesus instructed His disciples *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"* Matthew 28:19. This was in accord with the other part of Simeon's prophecy, that the Gentiles, all nations not only Israel, were to be reconciled to God through Jesus' Sacrifice.

What Was Required?

Following the instruction of Jesus *"...to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"* Matthew 28:19-20, created dissension amongst the disciples. Some felt and taught, that anyone who was converted to accept Jesus' sacrifice should also be required to keep the complete laws of God as set out in the Old Testament, which the Jews and Israelites had been trying to do, whilst recognizing the offering of the sacrifice of Jesus as the perfect sacrifice, the *"Lamb without blemish and without spot"* 1st Peter 1:10, and thus that the requirements of the sacrificial laws had been fulfilled, but all the other elements of the life-style set out in the Old Testament still remained.

Others believed and taught that those who were not Jews (or Israelites) and who had had no understanding, heritage or part

of the Old Testament teachings, should not need to follow the Mosaic teachings. These were Gentiles who had turned to God, and so now accepted God through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus.

One particular point of contention from the laws which was often mentioned was 'circumcision', the sign of the covenant given to Abraham (Genesis 17:9-14). However reference to 'circumcision' was sometimes an indicative reference to the whole of the Law and not just to this one requirement.

So were new Christians, who did not come from a Israelite background, required to start keeping the Laws of the Old Testament, and were the Israelites who had been aspiring to keep the Laws still required to do this, or were they now justified in forsaking that lifestyle and saved through just believing in the sacrifice of Jesus?

The Meeting at Jerusalem

Let us read from Acts chapter 15 when this issue was brought before the Elders of the Church. *"And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question"* Acts 15:1-2.

Peter then testified of his visit to Cornelius, who was a Gentile and who had sought God to direct his life, in Acts 10. *"... and God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us"* Acts 15:8. *"Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them"* Acts 15:12.

James the Elder then delivered the verdict, *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and*

from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day" Acts 15:18-21.

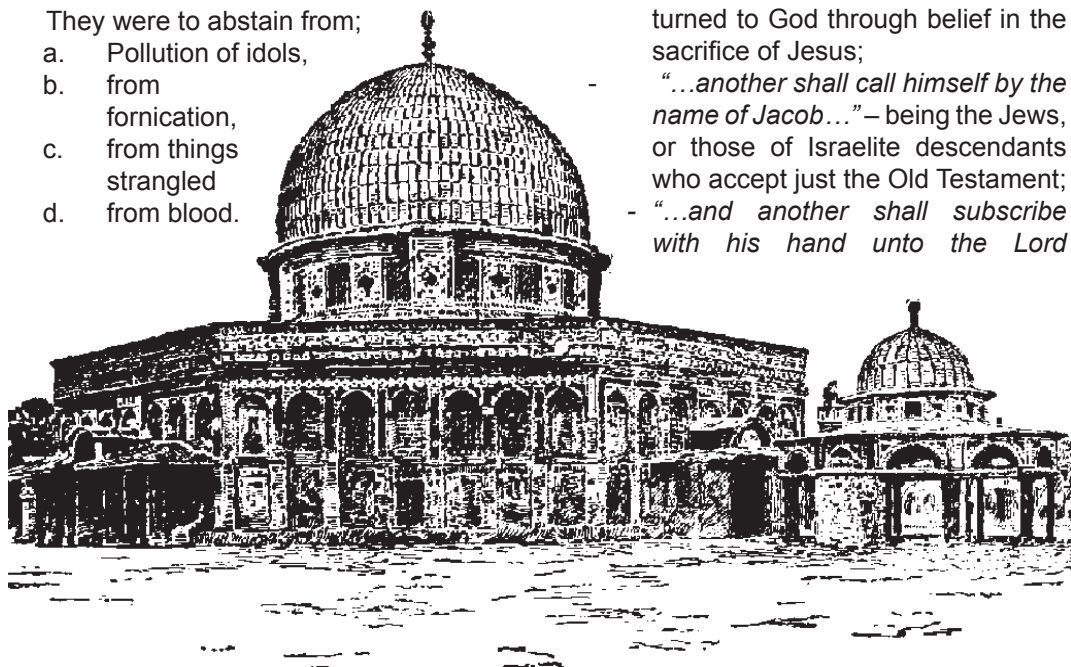
This verdict did not say that those of Jewish/Israelite heritage should not keep the law as kept by Jesus, especially if they want to claim the promises made through the patriarchs. It is verifying Simeon's prophecy that Jesus was to be a *"light to lighten the Gentiles"* as well as *"the glory of thy people Israel."*

The Decree Sent Out

Paul and Barnabas were sent out with a letter, *"The apostles, elders and brethren send greetings unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles"* Acts 15:23. Remember 'the Gentiles' at that time referred to anyone who was not a believer in the Old Testament, or was not a Jew/Israelite. In other words this decree was not addressing those of Jewish/Israelite descent to whom the Old Testament instructions and promises still applied, but those who were converted to believe in the sacrifice of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. These people were to observe four essential things from the Old Testament laws.

They were to abstain from;

- a. Pollution of idols,
- b. from
- c. from things
- d. from blood.



As well they were required to confess to belief in Jesus, Romans 10:19. These followers were called *"Christians first in Antioch"* Acts 11:26.

Paul as he preached had in his congregations both Jews and Gentiles, and consequently he was aware of the two messages which Simeon had identified in Jesus' Mission:

1. *"A light to lighten the Gentiles"* - people with no previous belief who were converted to accept Jesus' sacrifice, for the remission of their sins, and
2. *"the glory of thy people Israel"* - those who had believed the Law and the prophets and now accepted Jesus sacrifice as the fulfillment of the sacrificial requirements of the Law and were awaiting fulfillment of the promises to Israel.

Three Groups of Believers

Isaiah spoke prophetically about the last days when God's Spirit would be outpoured upon the Earth. He identified three broad groups of believers.

In Isaiah 44:5, we read:

- *"One shall say, I am the Lord's..."*
- Christians, or Gentiles who have turned to God through belief in the sacrifice of Jesus;
- *"...another shall call himself by the name of Jacob..."* - being the Jews, or those of Israelite descendants who accept just the Old Testament;
- *"...and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord*

(Christian), *and surname himself by the name of Israel* (Israelite)" – generic Christians Israelites, who will accept the teachings of Jesus and follow the Old Testament instructions as given by Moses and observed in the lifestyle followed by Jesus.

In Revelation chapter 7 John saw in vision two groups of believers gathered in the last days who were sealed to God. The first group comprised twelve thousand of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, making 144,000 (Revelation 7:1-8), the second, *"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."* Revelation 7:9-10 are those who believe in God either from the New Testament, *"One shall say I am the Lord's"* or from the Old Testament, *"another shall call himself by the name of Jacob;"* and hold a hope of the resurrection after their physical body has died and gone to corruption.

We can link the first group in Revelation chapter 7 with those in Revelation chapters 14 and 15, (each numbering 144,000). We see that they had attained to a standard of obedience to God's laws and commands. *"And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God"* Revelation 14:5. This was a special group, elected by God, ordained to this position and sanctified through the power of God's Spirit working His will in them. They would align with Isaiah's third group – generic Christian Israelites. They are sealed whilst on the Earth, and physically stand with the Lamb.

Paul exhorted those he was writing to in the Book of Romans, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies* (physical body) *a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"*

Romans 12:1-2.

In 1st Corinthians chapter 15 Paul speaks of Jesus' return and events that will happen says, there are two broad groups calling them the corruptible and the immortal. In essence these glories represent the difference between these two groups. Paul says *"this corruptible must put on incorruption"* and *"this mortal must put on immortality"* 1st Corinthians 15:54. He explains the difference between the hope of the resurrection (incorruptible) and the hope of remaining alive and being changed without death at Jesus' return (immortal).

The Israelite group, the 144,000, through the mercies of God will be preserved in *"...spirit and soul and body* (physical), *... blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"* 1st Thessalonians 5:23. *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"* 1st Corinthians 15:51-52; that is changed from mortal to immortal.

God said to Israel, *"For why will ye die, O house of Israel?"* Ezekiel 33:11, and through Isaiah, *"And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand"* Isaiah 28:18. It seems, then, as though a remnant of Israel will be gathered in the last days, and will be alive when Jesus returns, and will be physically preserved in spirit and soul and body. This will be the glory of *"mortal putting on immortality"*, and it is this promise to be preserved alive (physically) which will make the Christian-Israel group different from the group of those who receive the glory of the resurrection.

When Will These Things Be?

In Acts chapter 1 the disciples asked of Jesus; *"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom the Israel?"* This showed that they had an expectation that the promises of a restored Israel still needed to be fulfilled, but that they realized that there was a timing element known only to God.

Generally speaking we are impatient individuals. We plant seeds, and expect shoots to break the ground within days, and bushes and fruit to be there in weeks, but God talks in generations, in years, decades and thousands of years. We cannot imagine how long eternity is for, because our vision is limited and obstacles block our comprehension. Be reassured, however, it will happen at God's appointed time. We have a general picture painted to prepare us but we are not given dates. Jesus spoke of the last days in Matthew chapter 24.

The Ingathering of Israel

Since the disciples asked that question there was further revelation given through the New Testament writers, which enabled a greater understanding of those promises on record. It would appear that there will be a group of 144,000 who will be prepared and faithfully awaiting the return of Jesus at the end of this phase of God's plan for mankind. We still do not know when this is going to take place but have been given signs that would indicate that we are living in the times of the end when Jesus will return, and the 'Kingdom of God' will be restored to Israel.

"For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God" Ezekiel 34:11,12,31.

Jeremiah wrote, *"If those ordinances (the sun, moon and stars) depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever"* Jeremiah 31:36. Read the whole passage from verse 31 to 37 and be reassured of how God will fulfill the promises He has made, and how they are still binding. They will be fulfilled in a special people who seek through love and a willing hearts, to be obedient to God.

Both Old and New Testaments in the Bible clearly affirm that there will be a remnant of the descendants of the tribes of Israel who will return to serve the Lord with all their hearts, and who through the Power given them from God, will obey His Laws and Commands, as has been promised in the Scriptures.📖

The Word of God

Someone asked Luther, "Do you feel
That you have been forgiven?"
He answered, "No, but I'm as sure
As there's a God in heaven.
For feelings come, and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God,
Naught else is worth believing.

"Though all my heart should feel condemned
For want of one sweet token,
There is one, greater than my heart,
Whose Word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in His unchanging love,
Till soul and body sever;
For though all else shall pass away,
His Word shall stand, forever."

Statement of Belief

The Christian Israelite Church beliefs can be fully supported by the Scriptures.

Here is an outline:

We believe...

- In God Almighty creator of all things (Genesis 1:1).
- In the existence of Satan, the Devil, in whom God allowed iniquity to be placed (James 2:19; Ezekiel 28:14,15).
- That God created a spirit-existence in which the devil manifested evil and caused some of the spirits to rebel against God (Isaiah 14:12-14; Jude 6).
- That God created our physical world, to which each person comes with a body and a soul made alive by a spirit from the spiritual creation (Luke 9:55; Genesis 2:7).
- That God gave His people instructions on the way they should live, which instructions were "for their good always" (Deuteronomy 6:24).
- That all have sinned and come "short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23; 2nd Corinthians 5:19).
- That God has reconciled the (whole) world to Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus (John 3:16,17).
- That through belief in the sacrifice of Jesus believers are counted as righteous before God, and can be assured of the resurrection of their souls (a Spiritual body) at Jesus' return (1st Timothy 4:10; 1st Corinthians 15:44).
- That there will be a small number who will fully prove their faith by a work of true obedience to God's instructions and will thereby receive the prize of the highest calling of God, the redemption of spirit and soul and body - this living mortal Body made Immortal without seeing death (1st Thessalonians 5:23; Revelation 14:1-5; Hebrews 11:39,40).
- That Jesus Christ will return to this earth again, subdue the power of Satan and reign forever and ever (Revelation chapters 19 and 20).
- That the return of Jesus Christ is near and we are living in the period described in Scripture as the latter days (Matthew chapter 24; Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21).
- That there are promises in the Scriptures especially to Israel - God's chosen people (1st Peter 2:9).
- That although Israel of old did not accept the challenge of spiritually being God's peculiar people, a remnant of their descendants will come forward in the latter days to fulfill the obligations and receive the promises (Revelation 7:1-8).
- That the Mission of the Christian Israelite Church is to awaken the lost ten tribes of Israel to this special inheritance to be the physical Immortal "Bride of the Lamb" and to be the vehicle for the task of bringing them all together at God's appointed time (Matthew 10:5,6; Revelation 19).

We believe that God is the absolute Judge and Arbiter and that we as His servants have an obligation to respond to what He puts in each heart, and that whilst we seek to proclaim and discuss our beliefs, we have no right to contend with other people about them.

Birthright, Inheritance, Blessing & Adoption

by Kerion FELLOWES

Adam
—
Seth
—
Enos
—
Cainan
—
Maleleel
—
Jared
—
Enoch
—
Mathusala
—
Lamech
—
Noah
—
Shem
—
Arphaxad
—
Cainan
—
Sala
—
Heber
—
Phalec
—
Ragau
—
Saruch
—
Nachor
—
Thara

Before we examine this topic we need to define an understanding of Birthright, Inheritance and Blessing.

A *Birthright* is a right or privilege to which someone is entitled at birth because of the family's social position or the birth order. This can be a physical entitlement of land or a title and is automatically bestowed at birth.

An *Inheritance* is the act of inheriting an estate, title or even physical characteristics from a member of your family who has passed on or who considered that they are no longer able to administer the estate etc. This is a physical act of receiving a tangible item.

A *Blessing* is similar to an inheritance but it is spiritual (non-tangible) in nature. A blessing is given through a request or prayer for divine

protection or aid from God Jehovah.

It is through the incredible blessings that God bestowed upon Abraham that we, as Christians, have the assurance of receiving the Spirit of Christ through faith. The blessings that God promised to bestow on the world through the descendants of Abraham, come to us through our faith in the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. ... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" Galatians 3:14-18.

Jesus was of the direct line of Abraham and so is heir to both the physical inheritance of Israel, being the land of Canaan, and also the spiritual blessing, which is salvation through faith. *"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."* Genesis 12:2, 3.

In order to pass on his inheritance, before the birth of Isaac, Abram (Abraham) sought to adopt Eliezar of Damascus who had been born to a servant in Abram's household. God rejected Abram's proposed method of providing an heir.

"Abram said to the Lord, 'Oh Lord God, what will You give me since I am childless and the heir of my house is Eliezer of

The Tablets of Nuzi

"Nuzi was a Hurrian administrative center not far from the Hurrian capital at Kirkuk in northern Iraq. The Hurrians are equivalent to the Horites in the Old Testament, also called Hivites and Jebusites. Excavations were carried out at Nuzi by American teams from 1925 to 1933. The major find was more than 5,000 family and administrative archives spanning six generations, ca. 1450-1350 BC. They deal with the social, economic, religious and legal institutions of the Hurrians. The tablets tell of practices similar to those in Genesis such as adoption for childless couples (Genesis 15:2 children by proxy (Genesis 16; 21:1, inheritance rights (Genesis 25:29, marriage arrangements (Genesis 28 and levirate marriage (Genesis 38; Deuteronomy 25:5. They also demonstrate the significance of the deathbed blessing (Genesis 27; 48 and household gods (Genesis 31:14 30. Some Nuzi tablets, called "tablets of sistership,ve agreements in which a man adopted a woman as a sister. In the society of the Hurrians, a wife enjoyed both greater protection and a superior position when she also had the legal status of a sister. In such a case, two separate documents were drawn up, one for marriage and the other for sistership. This may explain why both Abraham (Genesis 12:10 20:1 and Isaac (Genesis 26:7) said their wives were their sisters. It is possible that they had previously adopted them to give them higher status, in accordance with the custom of the day" (www.biblearchaeology.org/post/2006/02/Great-Discoveries-in-Biblical-Archaeology-The-Nuzi-Tablets.aspx).

The Tablets of Nuzi address the type of situation that Abram was confronted with (no heir): a slave could become the heir of a couple who had no children by being adopted by them. Sarai also took steps to give Abram an heir by offering Abram her servant Hagar as a 'surrogate' mother. Ishmael was the child of the union of Hagar and Abram.

Damascus... and since you have given me no offspring, a son born in my house is my heir.' And the word of the Lord came to Abram saying, 'This man shall not be your heir, but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir" Genesis 15:2-4.

God's blessing of Abraham to make him "a blessing to all nations", was through his son Isaac and his descendents and this is why Jesus' lineage is prominent in the recounting of the New Testament. *"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham"* Matthew 1:1. Ishmael,

Abraham's son by the bondwoman, was also promised that he would be the father of '12 kings' but he was not the *true* heir as Ishmael was not the legitimate son. He received blessings, but not the inheritance.

The Covenant Promise originally given to Abraham, was divided into two parts, the heritage

Abraham

Isaac

Jacob

Judah

Phares

Esrom

Aram

Aminadab

Naason

Salmon

Booz

Obed

Jesse

David

Nathan

Mattatha

Menan

Melea

Eliakim

Jonan

Joseph

Juda

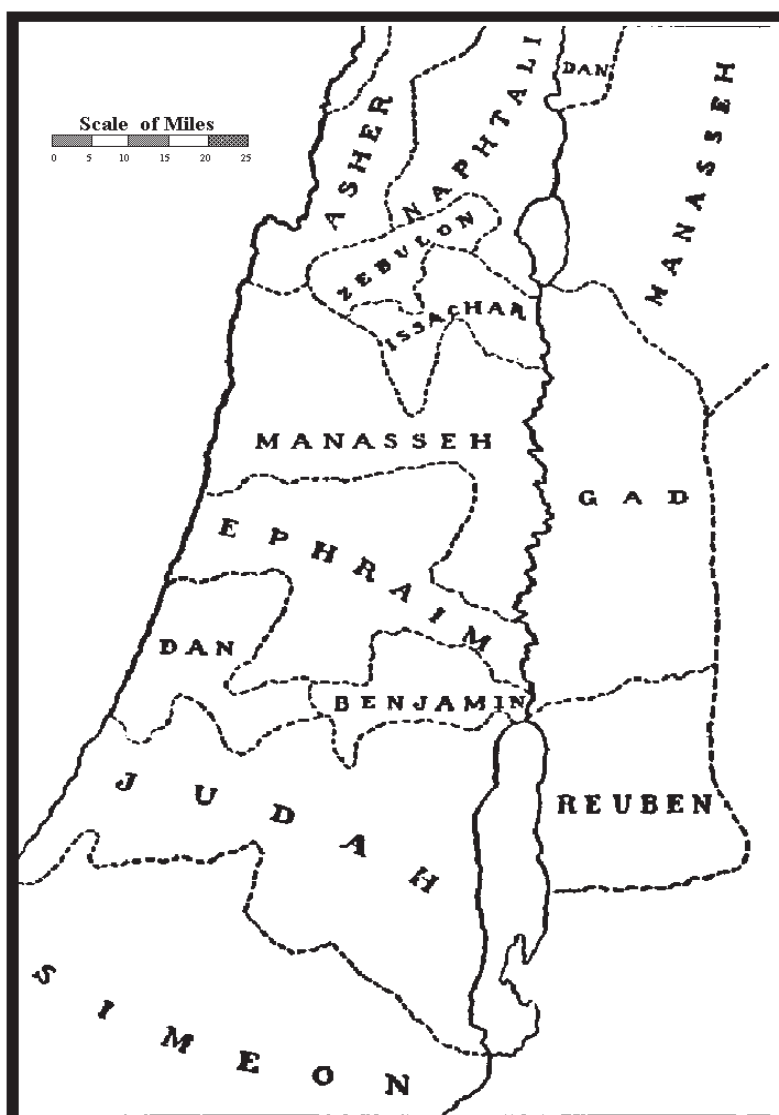
Simeon

Levi
Matthat
Jorim
Eliezer
Jose
Er
Elmodam
Cosam
Addi
Melchi
Neri
Salathiel
Zorobabel
Rhesa
Joanna
Juda
Joseph
Semei
Mattathias
Maath
Nagge
Esli
Naum

of 'Sceptre of Rulership' to Judah, and secondly the 'Birthright Blessing' to Joseph.

Joseph receives a 'double portion' from his father. Because Jacob's eldest son (a son of Leah), Reuben, committed incest with his father's concubine, Jacob transferred Reuben's portion of

the birthright to his favourite son, Joseph, the eldest son of Rachel his true wife. Genesis 35:22 *"And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: 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"* 1 Chronicles 5:1,2.



The continuation of this birthright and blessing is demonstrated when Jacob comes to Egypt after the 7 years of famine. When Jacob was about to die Joseph brings his two sons to their grandfather and to be blessed by him.

“And Joseph said unto his father, ‘Not so, my father: for this (Manasseh) is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.” And his father refused, and said, “I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother (Ephraim) shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations” Genesis 48:18, 19. Joseph is trying to correct his father’s placement of his hands in the blessing, but divine providence overruled his action. Ephraim the younger would become *‘a multitude of nations’*.

Jacob’s adoption of these grandsons as his own children is not a new concept. In fact, adoption is evidenced numerous times in Genesis. Eliezer is named to be heir to Abraham’s fortune in Genesis 15:2–3, Sarah obtains a son through her maidservant Hagar (Genesis 16:2), and Rachel raises Dan and Naphtali as her own through Bilhah (Genesis 30:3–8). Jacob himself is adopted by his father-in-law, Laban (Genesis 29–31).

If Ephraim was to become *‘a multitude of nations’*, which definitely means more than the nation state of Israel today, then which nations are they? Likewise, if Manasseh was to become *‘a great people’* and nation, then they must also be excluded from today’s land of Israel in the middle-east. This word *‘nations’* in v.19 is *‘gowy’* in the Hebrew meaning *‘a foreign nation; hence, a Gentile’* (Strong’s no.1471).

Ephraim and Manasseh are half Israelite (Joseph) and half Gentile (their Egyptian mother). They are ‘adopted’ to be sons as Jacob removes the sons from between the knees of Joseph which is symbolic of adoption. This is an early demonstration of God’s Plan, to scatter His people Israel among the Gentiles, so they who believe in Christ Jesus as Saviour, might become through adoption, ‘sons of God’.

“For ye have not received the spirit of

bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” Romans 8:15-17

The promises still remain unfulfilled that a remnant of those of this family have the right to the birthright and through inheritance will receive God’s blessings and be adopted back to be brothers and sisters with Jesus Christ.

Whilst all Christians receive of the spiritual blessings through faith it would appear that there is to be a rightful group who will receive the blessings both physically and spiritually to fulfil the promises that have been made (see Genesis 25:5-6; 27:37,39-40; 48:13-16; John 8:33, 37, 39; Romans 9:4-5).📖

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Amos
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Mattathias
|
Joseph
|
Janna
|
Melchi
|
Levi
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Matthat
|
Heli
|
Joseph
|
Jesus

Debug Your Bible:

by Lynne GRAY

Why did God Choose Israel?

In responding to this question a few answers come to mind, but the list below is by no means exhaustive.

1. Israel formed a direct line of God fearing people from Adam through to Abraham, and from Abraham through to Jesus.
2. God would reveal Himself and His power to mankind through His relationship with the people of Israel.
3. The spirits to be given to the Remnant of Israel (the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh) in the last days are those spirits that followed the archangel Michael and stayed loyal to God during the spirit rebellion.
4. Israel would pave the way for the birth of the Messiah who would reconcile ALL mankind (through their acceptance of Him) to God.
5. God's relationship with Israel was based on unconditional love giving a material example for mankind to follow of agape love.
6. God gave Israel a set of laws to live by that demonstrated His love for them – these laws would be for their (Israel's) good always.
7. Israel would be God's mediator to the world.

Let us now have a more detailed look at each of these points in an attempt to gain an understanding of Israel's purpose and God's intent for Israel.

1. Israel formed a direct line of God-fearing people from Adam through to Abraham, and from Abraham through to Jesus.

Looking at the lineage of God-fearing people from Adam, Seth, Enoch, to Noah and then on to Abraham, there is a direct

line of people who knew who God was and obeyed what He commanded. Although there was no written law (that we know of) before Moses, there was obviously an observance of a verbal law because Cain and Abel both practiced sacrifice as a form of worship and a means of giving thanks to God, and Noah divided the animals into clean (7 pairs) and unclean (2 pairs) that were taken on board the ark. With the ages that the generations from Adam to Noah attained, there would have been no need of a written law or history because the maker of the history would be there when these issues were handed down verbally from one generation to another "around the campfire". For example Enoch would have talked with his Great (seven times) Grandfather Adam.

Cain and Abel are also an example of mankind's perpetual battle between self-focus and God-focus and Cain gives us our second example of self focus over-riding God-focus, and thereby the first murder was committed.

2. God would reveal Himself and His power to mankind through His relationship with Israel.

God had said of Israel, "*The Lord shall establish thee as an holy people unto himself, ...and all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord...And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail: and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath*" Deuteronomy 28:10-13. It was through the lineage of Israel that God sent His son Jesus.

God chose a special people, and set out to them in types and shadows the work of salvation to all mankind that was to be

fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and the ultimate Plan that He had to overthrow the power of Satan and evil. This would be done in His chosen people, and He will redeem them from physical death. He had a 'pet' name for Israel, 'Jeshurun', just as many parents have 'pet' names for their children, which is a sign of the intimacy of the relationship, indicating the fondness with which the subject is held – see Isaiah 44:1-2.

3. The spirits to be given to the Remnant of Israel (the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh in the last days) are those spirits that followed the archangel Michael and stayed loyal to God during the spirit rebellion.

God needed a vehicle through which He could reward the loyalty of those spirits who had remained faithful with Michael in the spirit creation. This shows us how God's Plan for mankind acknowledges things that happened even before this world that we are living in was created. This topic will be dealt with in a future Latter Rain.

4. Israel would pave the way for the birth of the Messiah who would reconcile ALL mankind to God.

Jesus Christ was a direct descendant of Abraham. The genealogical detail of Jesus' descent is given in Matthew 1:1-17 which starts with Abraham and brings the descent through Joseph to Jesus whereas Jesus' genealogy that has been recorded in Luke 3:23-38 traces Jesus' history backwards from Him all the way to Adam.

Israel, under the obligation of the law, was looking for the birth of the Saviour of Mankind, who would be sinless (without blemish) just as the lamb used for the Passover in the Jewish sacrifices. Through the Law God showed what was required to be sinless before Him. In Luke we are told about the circumcising of Jesus at 8 days old, the naming of Jesus at 40 days old and Mary having gone through the days of her purification according to the law of Moses at which time she offered a sacrifice to the Lord according to the law (Luke 2:21-24; Leviticus 12:2-6). The law was not only

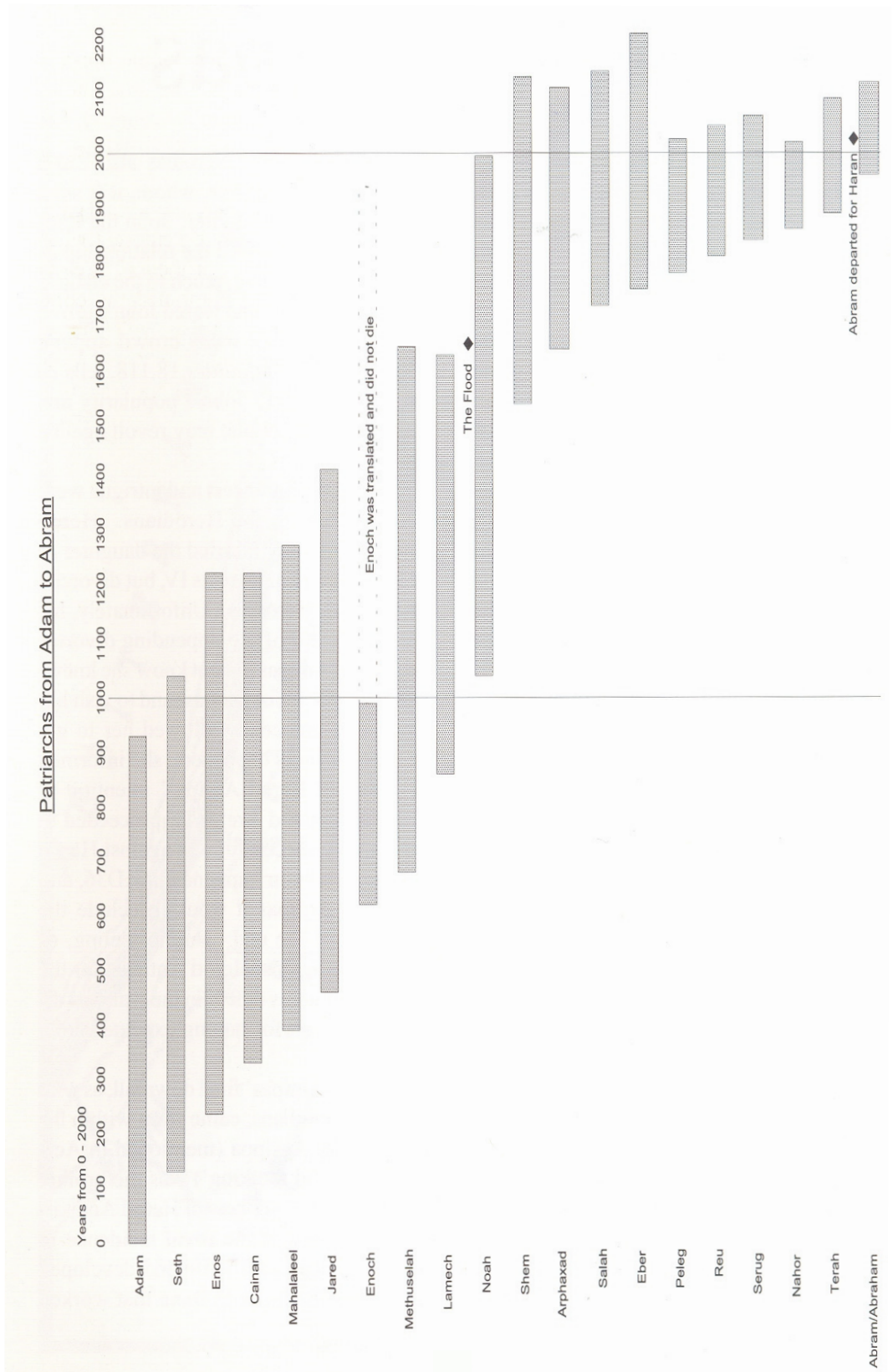
given as a form of legal code for Israel to live by, but was also needed to ensure that the coming Messiah would be conceived and born according to the precepts laid down by God.

Why did mankind need a Saviour/Messiah? God is omniscient (has infinite knowledge) and omnipresent (present everywhere at the same time). Time as we know it has no pertinence or use to God – He encompasses all of time. Therefore He knew mankind would have difficulty focusing God-ward rather than self-ward – since the time of Adam mankind has chosen self-focus rather than God-focus. God knew that the time would come when mankind would need a means to make restitution to God to restore the relationship with God and fellow-mankind that mankind had been originally created to experience. Thus through the lineage of Israel God provided a **perfect** sacrifice and **mediator** to:

- a) be the purest sacrifice that could be for the sins of **all** (as per the sacrificial laws in Leviticus), and
- b) be the mediator (the first Comforter) between God and mankind (Israel had fulfilled this purpose in the Old Testament, Jesus would now fulfill this purpose in the New Testament).

5. God's relationship with Israel was based on unconditional love which gave, and gives, an eternal example for mankind to follow of *agape* love.

Unconditional love. What is unconditional love and what can we, as humans, liken it to so as to gain a greater understanding of this emotion? Perhaps the only relationship in this world that may be likened to the relationship that God has with Israel is that of parents with their children. Both parents, the mother and the father, love their children unconditionally. They don't have a list of criteria the child has to meet before they will love the child. They may not like everything their child does, but that does not alter the fact that they love the child unconditionally, and usually hope and pray that their behaviour changes if they have done wrong.



The child does not have to earn the parent's love – that love is a fact of their life and has been there, and growing, since before the child was born.

When you think about God, what do you imagine? Do you imagine a distant, stern grandfather type of individual, with a big long beard, who is remote and unattached, stern and administering judgment in a booming voice? Or do you imagine a father image, soft and kind, with eyes that reveal an all knowingness and forgiveness and manifesting love to all He beholds. God loves his children unconditionally, but it is only natural, as with any child, for children to err, to listen to themselves rather than their parents who know better (in this case, God).

God is our Father and as such we need to develop a very real parent/child relationship with him. This is what God has wanted with His creation since the beginning – as if God didn't know where Adam was when He asked, "Where are you?" God knew exactly where Adam was but the question shows the relationship between God and Adam was real and tangible, just as our relationship with God today should be real and tangible. So the reason He chose Israel as a "special people" unto Himself was to be able to develop a real relationship with individuals that He had created.

This brings to mind the image of a father (or mother) with their young children, and when any of them stumbles, immediately out comes the parent's arm to steady the child and correct their course. God's relationship with us is the same – whenever we trip (sin) God throws out his arm to save us and help us regain our balance. What father, who loves his children, would allow them to fall and hurt themselves.

Jesus called his Father, *Abba*, which in Hebrew is the equivalent to the English word 'Daddy' – not the distant authoritative term 'Father', but the familiar, intimate, endearing word 'Daddy'. Just as we look to our earthly fathers for guidance and assurance, even the more so should we look to our heavenly Dad to keep our way steady and have His outstretched arm ready to steady us and

send us on our spiritual journey. Just have a look in your Bibles and notice how many times God's outstretched arm saved Israel, just like a father with his child: Exodus 6:6,7, *"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians."* Ezekiel 20:33-34, *"As I live, saith the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out, will I rule over you: and I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out."* (Further references are: Deuteronomy 4:34; 5:15; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8; 33:27, 1st Kings 8:42; 2nd Chronicles 6:32,33; Job 40:9; Psalm 77:15; 98:1; Isaiah 40:11; 51:5; 53:1; 59:16; 63:5, 12; Jeremiah 27:5; 32:17,21,22.)

6. God gave Israel a set of laws to live by that demonstrated His love for them – these laws would be for their good always.

God gave the Laws to Israel, and promised that if they kept them they would live. However, in selfishness, people chose not to follow God's Laws, thinking in their own minds that they were too onerous or restrictive, and not realising the long term consequences of disobedience. However when Israel obeyed God's Laws they experienced times of prosperity and well being, and when they disobeyed they had times of servitude and depravity. God had given the Laws as a civil and moral code within which people could co-habit and get on well. But although God gave Israel this opportunity, they did not understand! The Laws maintained God as the focus of Israel's worship, reminding Israel on a daily basis who their God was, where He was and what He required from them.

7. Israel would be God's mediator to the world.

Genesis 12:1-3, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country; and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall **all families of the earth be blessed** (emphasis added)." This was the promise made to Abram, and we all know that God keeps His promises. In this statement also lies Israel's purpose and destiny. Through Abram's seed (Israel) all the families of the earth would be blessed – this is a universal promise to ALL mankind. God loves all of His creation and wants all of His creation to be reconciled to Him. As a

means of bringing about this reconciliation, God chose a people (Israel) to hold a special relationship with Him, and through this relationship the world would see what it meant to live in 'right' relationship with God, rather than against God. Sometimes this relationship has been interpreted as giving Israel an elitist or privileged status, but the election of Israel as God's representatives in this world is an election for service. God called Israel to be His ambassadors by which means God's purpose can be known to mankind – Israel's call was to restore the world to God. In the Old Testament, Israel were God's mediators to mankind to be examples of how to live in 'right' relationship with God – in the New Testament Jesus was God's mediator with mankind, again to show how to live in 'right' relationship with God. 📖

Baruch the Scribe

Baruch appears in the Bible as the secretary of the prophet Jeremiah. The Bible relates that Jeremiah dictated his prophecies to Baruch: "*Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words*" Jeremiah 36:32.. The Book of 2 Baruch is seen as the reaction of one pious Jew to the tragedy of 70AD. The work shows parallels with other works such as 2 Esdras. 2 Baruch is also known as the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch and is a Jewish pseudo-epigraphical text that was thought to have been written after the destruction of the Temple in 70AD.

"How long will that which is corruptible remain, and how long will the time of mortals be prospered, and until what time will those who transgress in the world be polluted with much wickedness? Command therefore in mercy and accomplish all that Thou saidst Thou wouldst bring, that Thy might may be made known to those who think that Thy long-suffering is weakness... a voice was heard from on high, and it said unto me: 'Baruch, Baruch, why art thou troubled? He who travels by a road but does not complete it, or who departs by sea but does not arrive at the port, can he be comforted?... when Adam sinned and death was decreed against those who should be born, then the multitude of those who should be born was numbered, and for that number a place was prepared where the living might dwell and the dead might be guarded. Before therefore the number aforesaid is fulfilled, the creature will not live again [for My spirit is the creator of life], and Sheol will receive the dead. And again it is given to thee to hear what things are to come after these times. For truly My redemption has drawn nigh, and is not far distant as aforesaid" 2nd Baruch 21:19-21; 22:2-4; 23:4-7. 📖

Children's Story: Joseph & Family

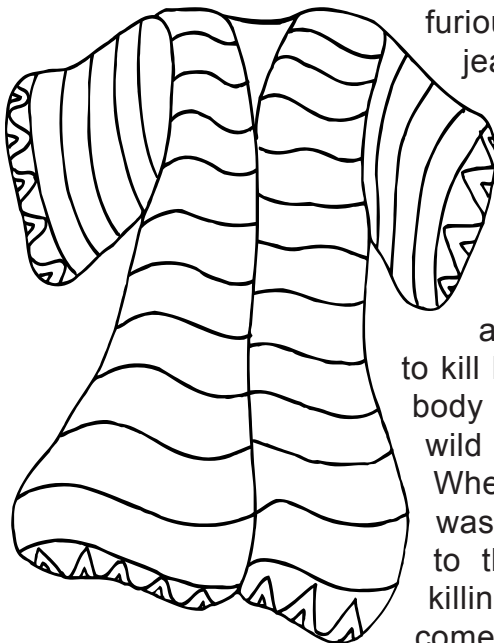
by Sarah & Brydie Gray

This story takes place in ancient Israel - where life was hard and you had to work for everything. Long ago there lived a man named Jacob. Jacob had many sons - 12 in total. Their names were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and baby Benjamin.

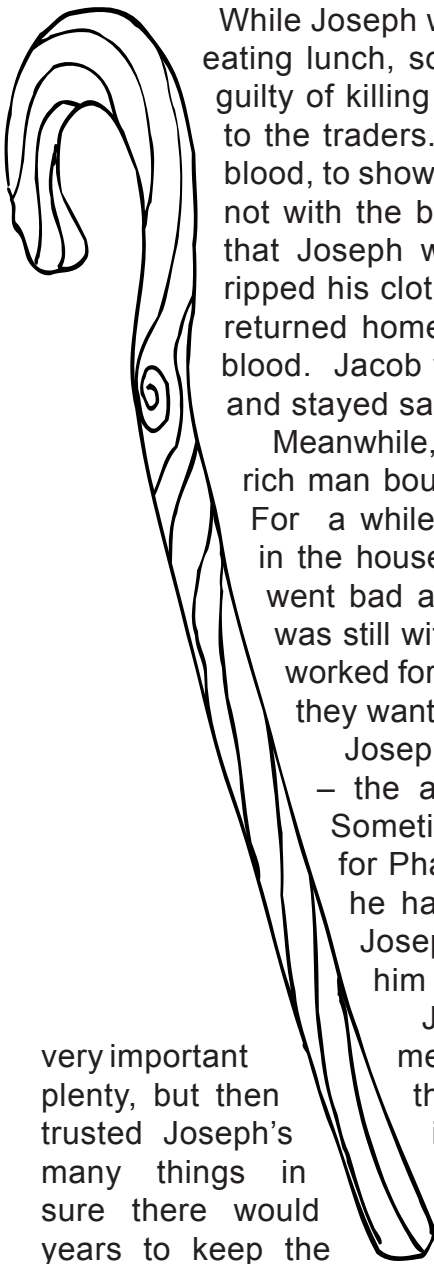
Out of all his sons, Jacob loved Joseph more than the others. Joseph and his brothers were shepherds. Whenever they came back from caring for the sheep, Joseph would tell his father stories of the bad things his brothers had done. One day Jacob gave his favourite son a special coat – a coat of many colours. Not only was Joseph always getting his brothers into trouble, but he was also getting special presents from their father.

One night, Joseph had a dream. In the dream Joseph and his brothers were out in their father's field tying wheat into bundles together. Joseph's bundle stood up - then, all the other bundles bowed down to Joseph's bundle. This made Joseph's brothers very angry.

Then Joseph had another dream. This time, he told his brothers he saw the sun, moon and 11 stars bowing down to him. The 11 stars were his brothers. By now his brothers were furious with Joseph. They became very jealous and refused to speak to Joseph nicely.



Not too long after these dreams, Joseph's father asked him to go and check on his brothers who were watching the sheep. The brothers saw Joseph coming from far away. As he got closer they decided to kill him. They made a plan to throw his body into a well, and tell their Dad that a wild animal must have attacked Joseph. When Reuben heard about the plan he was worried – he convinced his brothers to throw Joseph into the well without killing him. Reuben secretly wanted to come back later and save Joseph.



While Joseph was trapped in the well, and his brothers were eating lunch, some traders came past. So they wouldn't be guilty of killing Joseph, the brothers decided to sell Joseph to the traders. They kept his coat and dipped it in animal blood, to show their father when they returned. Reuben was not with the brothers when they did this – when he found that Joseph was no longer in the well he panicked and ripped his clothes to show he was sad. When the brothers returned home they showed their Dad the coat, dipped in blood. Jacob was very, very sad. He cried for many days, and stayed sad for a long time.

Meanwhile, the traders took Joseph to Egypt, where a rich man bought him as a slave to work in his household. For a while things went well – Joseph was well trusted in the household where he was working, but then things went bad and Joseph found himself in jail. In jail, God was still with Joseph. One night two prisoners, who had worked for Pharaoh, came to Joseph - each with a dream they wanted to know the meaning of.

Joseph asked God for the meaning of their dreams – the answer Joseph gave each man came true. Sometime later, one of the men was again working for Pharaoh. Pharaoh was troubled by two dreams he had had during the night – he found out that Joseph could tell the meaning of dreams, and had him bought from the prison at once.

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Joseph told Pharaoh that his dreams had a meaning. Egypt would have seven years of plenty, but then there would be seven years of famine. Pharaoh trusted Joseph's interpretation. He put Joseph in charge of Egypt. Joseph was responsible for making sure there would be enough food stored during the good years to keep the people alive during the bad years.

During the famine, Joseph's family back in Canaan were struggling to stay alive. They desperately needed food – they heard that there was food in Egypt – so the brothers made the journey to Egypt to buy food. The man they had to ask for food was Joseph. They did not recognise him - but Joseph recognised them.

When the brothers appeared before Joseph, Joseph asked them a few questions. Because they were not from Egypt, Joseph suggested they were spies. To prove their innocence, they had to return to Egypt with their youngest brother who had remained at home. In the mean time, one of the brothers, Simeon, was kept in jail in Egypt – to make sure the brothers

would return.

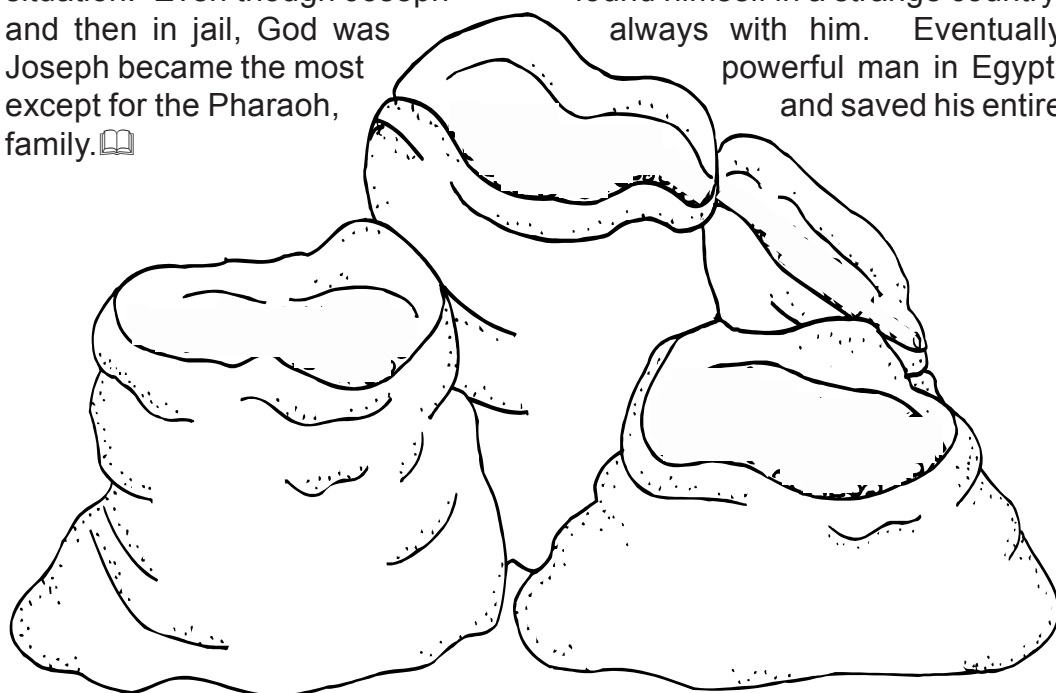
Joseph's brothers went back and told their father what had happened, but their father did not want Benjamin to go. As time went on, the famine continued and there was less and less food – eventually the brothers convinced Jacob to let Benjamin go with them to Egypt.

Now they returned to Egypt, this time with Benjamin. Joseph gave them grain, but he also put a silver cup in Benjamin's bag. When they were leaving Egypt, Joseph's servants stopped them to search for any stolen items. They found the silver cup in Benjamin's sack and had the brothers bought before Joseph again. Joseph demanded that the one who had stolen his cup become his servant. The brothers knew they could not return home to their father without his beloved Benjamin. Judah offered himself in place of Benjamin.

When Joseph saw that the brothers would sacrifice themselves for Benjamin, he could no longer keep back his secret. He told them who he was. At first they were afraid at what he might do to them for revenge, but he reassured them and told them that it had been all God's doing. Joseph could see that God had bought him to Egypt to prepare the nation to survive during the famine. This was God's way of keeping Jacob's family alive.

Joseph wanted his family to move to Egypt where they could survive the famine. He sent the brothers home to tell their father that he was alive and to bring back all their family and all their belongings to Egypt.

From the story of Joseph we learn that God is in control of every situation. Even though Joseph found himself in a strange country, and then in jail, God was always with him. Eventually Joseph became the most powerful man in Egypt, except for the Pharaoh, and saved his entire family.📖



Expand Your Bible:

Where are They?

by Audrey HARRISON

I S R A E L I T E

What thoughts come to your mind when the country of Israel is mentioned?

Do you think of a land steeped in history? Do you, on the other hand, think of a country trying to live peacefully but continually at war with its neighbours?

As a country it is a land of antiquity and to the Bible student a country full of stories relating to Bible events. When you visit the country you are immediately taken back in your mind and think, "This is where Jesus was born," or "This is where the sun stood still," "This is where...", and on it goes.

Or do you think of a new Israel, a state born and given status and recognition only in recent years, to which Jews world wide go for spiritual uplift and originally for political asylum and the making of a new life.

The next question that comes to mind is, "How do we name Israel's citizens – Israeli or Israelite, or do you have to be a citizen of Israel to be an Israelite.

The name of Israel

was first mentioned when Jacob had his name changed to Israel by the mysterious stranger when he wrestled. Jacob's descendants were known from then on as 'Children of Israel' or Israelites.

God told these people that He had chosen them to be the group who were to represent Him and show His love and how He would like people to live. To this end God gave them special laws and instructions for their well being.

Since creation there has been a great controversy between God and Satan – good and evil, with evil seeming to be the more attractive path.

What happened to Israel? They did not obey and became a divided and scattered nation of two kingdoms, Israel and Judah.

The kingdom of Judah became known as the Jews and to a certain degree followed the leadings given to them. When Jesus came, He was born to a Jewish family and brought up with Jewish customs.

But Jesus recognized that this was only a small section of the children of Israel and sent His (apostles) disciples to spread God's promises to the Lost Tribes of Israel in all parts of the world, being as the old prophet Simeon said 'the glory of thy people, Israel'.

James in his letter prefaces it "*To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting*" James 1:1.

Paul, in Romans 4, gave us a summary of those "who are Israelites". These characteristics/privileges belong to these people:

1. The adoption – privileges due to their adoption as God's children
2. The glory – evidence of presence of God among His people;



3. The covenants – promises made to Abraham, Moses, etc.,

4. The giving of the Law—10 commandments and the laws of health, etc.,

5. The services of God – man's reverence and obedience,

6. The promises – Old Testament peace and harmony - New Testament everlasting life.

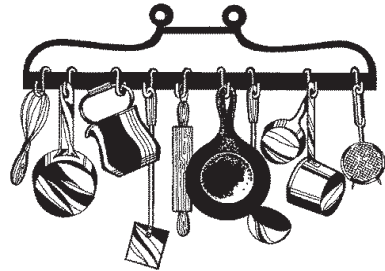
Amongst the literature of the Christian Israelite church is a small booklet called "The Law and Testimony" (available on request) – the Testimony is the story from the creation of man's relationship with God and the Law is those rules and laws of which we must be mindful. The introduction to this booklet explains one facet of the aim of the Christian Israelite Church – "that His laws and commands might prove them – who are Israelites and who are not."

It would appear then that Israelites may be 'hidden' anywhere, but wherever that is, they will feel the 'urge' to follow their heritage and inherit God's wonderful promises. 📖

Vegetarian Recipes

Quick and Easy Vegetable Curry

- 1 tblspn olive oil**
- 3 tblspns curry powder or red curry paste**
- 1 tin chick peas, drained and rinsed**
- 1 tin coconut milk**
- 1 cup diced pumpkin**
- 1 handful fresh green beans, chopped into 2 inch lengths**
- 1 large potato diced**



Heat oil in a large fry pan that you can place a lid on. Add curry powder to oil and fry until fragrant. Add vegetables and stir in with the curry powder for about a minute until the vegetables are coated with curry powder and oil mix.

Add coconut milk and place the lid over the fry pan. Cook until vegetables are tender. After vegetables are tender add drained and rinsed chick peas and replace the lid. Cook for a further five minutes.

Serve with pappadams, dahl, etc.

Serves 4-6.

Indian style potatoes

- 500g small new potatoes**
- 60g butter**
- 1 tblspn cumin seeds**
- 2 tspns turmeric**
- 5cm piece ginger, peeled and finely chopped**
- 1 green chilli, chopped**
- 1/2 bunch mint, chopped.**

Place potatoes in large pan and cover with cold water. Cover pan and bring to the boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook until potatoes are just tender. Drain well and then let the potatoes cool. When the potatoes are cool cut them in half.

Heat butter over a low heat in a large pan until foaming, stir in cumin and turmeric. Add potatoes and cook, tossing the mixture, for 5-6 minutes.

Add ginger, chilli and mint and toss for 1-2 minutes.

Serve immediately.

Potatoes may be served with a dollop of yoghurt.