

A dramatic sky scene featuring a vibrant rainbow arching across the frame, with bright, jagged lightning bolts striking down from the clouds. The sun is partially obscured by a large, dark, billowing cloud formation in the lower right. The overall atmosphere is one of divine power and awe.

Mankind's Reply to God's Test

Rev. Charles E. Darnell, PhD

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Scripture quotations

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The Publication Manual presents explicit style requirements but acknowledges that alternatives are sometimes necessary; authors should balance the rules of the Publication Manual with good judgment. Preface: p. xx.

Introduction

I have an idea of what God wants me to write, but I'm seeing so many changes in such an apparently short period of time that I feel lost. It used to be that time was such a slow thing. As a child, it seemed forever for time to pass from one Christmas to the next, or even from one birthday to the next. Now it seems that one month to the next goes by in a moment. Is it the mental state of the elderly, or the control by God Himself that causes time to change in the manner of perception?

It is interesting to observe the truth of God's Word toward mankind as a whole. Read with me Psalms 90:

*¹ A Prayer of Moses the man of God. Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. ² Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. ³ You turn man to destruction, And say, "Return, O children of men." ⁴ **For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night.** ⁵ You carry them away like a flood; They are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up: ⁶ In the morning it flourishes and grows up; In the evening it is cut down and withers. ⁷ For we have been consumed by Your anger, And by Your wrath we are terrified. ⁸ You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance. ⁹ For all our days have passed away in Your wrath; We finish our years like a sigh. ¹⁰ **The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years,** Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away. ¹¹ Who knows the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. ¹² So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom. ¹³ Return, O Lord! How long? And have compassion on Your servants. ¹⁴ Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, That we may rejoice and be glad all our days! ¹⁵ Make us glad according to the days in which You have afflicted us, The years in which we have seen evil. ¹⁶ Let Your work appear to Your servants, And Your glory to their children. ¹⁷ And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.*

In my human understanding, I find two verses to be rather enlightening. In verse 4, I find a slightly different wording to 2 Peter 3:8, *⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* (ESV) Now, let us go a little further with verse 4 from Psalms 90. Notice the last portion of the verse: *And like a watch in the night.* I really do not know the method of time distribution in the days of Moses, however, in the time of Jesus, a watch in the night was three hours. The day was divided into hours, i.e. the third hour or the 6th hour, and the night into watches, i.e. the first watch or the third watch. So, it would seem that to God even a three hour period of time could be as a thousand years. Interesting!

The second verse, I'd like to call attention to, is verse 10, *¹⁰ **The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years.*** I find it interesting in the fact, that Moses lived to be 120 years. If we turn to the book of Genesis, we see that many of the descendants of Adam lived to be in their 900th year of life. There is one more verse I'd like to bring into this discussion, turn to Proverbs 18:21, *²¹ Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.* (ESV) To me, in my opinion, God intended for mankind to live forever, but through the actions of Adam and Eve, sin entered the picture and the extent of a person's life was shortened. Sin, and rebellion against God, continued and the existence of life was again shortened to that of seventy years, or maybe eighty years. But, by virtue of the power of the tongue, mankind can either shorten their life even further, or they can extend their life beyond the point of eighty years. What the mouth speaks impacts the life of the person speaking. It would do well for everyone to understand that point, and identify it as one of God's rules for humankind to know.

My quest was answered in this last paragraph. What is it God wanted me to write about? It seems that it is (1) God's rules and (2) mankind's rebellion against God. Ever since Satan entered the Garden of Eden, mankind has listened to his smooth talk and wonderful lies to change the mindset of mankind against a loving, merciful God. Where has this rebellion against God taken mankind? History is a wonderful ally by which mankind has had periods of time to seek both the historical and God's Word at the same time. At other times they seem to reject one another!

Over the last three or four years, God has continued to fill me with ideas and facts to support and provide additional insight toward the facts, stories and lives of the patriarchs of our Christian heritage. We must, out of necessity, agree with and understand that our Christian history began as Hebrew history with Abraham. Yes! I know that Abraham was not the first person, nor even the first story that is told within the Bible. However, it was this friend of God who spoke so highly of God and who believed via faith to accept what he was told by his friend, God. We understand that the flood of Noah had occurred hundreds of years prior to Abraham, We know about the tower of Babel and the beginnings of pagan religions. We also must associate the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with Abraham and his nephew Lot. We also know that God told Abraham, that even at the age of 90+, he would have a son by his wife Sarah. God went so far as to tell Abraham that the whole of earth would be blessed through him, Genesis 18:17-19, ¹⁷ *The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,* ¹⁸ *seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?* ¹⁹ *For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."* (ESV)

We find the stories of Isaac, who was that promised son of Abraham. Isaac inherited all that belonged to Abraham, other than what Abraham had already given to his other sons (that's another story). He and his wife Rebekah had twin sons, Jacob and Esau. Esau was the oldest and possessed the birthright. One day Esau came in famished and asked for some of Jacob's food. Jacob made a deal with Esau and bought Esau's birthright for a meal. Esau wasn't too worried, he still had his father's blessing on his side. But, as in many of the ways of men, there was scheming going on. Jacob, along with his mother, created a way for Jacob to steal his father's blessing, while presenting himself as his brother to a blind elderly father. Jacob managed to obtain both the birthright and the blessing of his father so that he would be the next in line to hold God's blessings through the lineage of Abraham. Rebekah overheard Esau declare that he was going to kill his brother, therefore she told Jacob to flee to her brother's house in Paddan Aram.

Jacob stopped to sleep for the night on the way to Paddan Aram. He took a stone and placed blankets over it for a pillow and went to sleep. That night Jacob had a dream of a stairway from Earth to heaven with angels traveling upon this stairway. The next morning when he awoke, he took the stone and turned it from the horizontal to the vertical and made it a pillar, which he anointed with oil and called the stone Beth-el, meaning House of God. Remember this story, it is important to your understanding later in this work. Jacob found his uncle and made an agreement to work for him. Seeing the beauty of his cousin Rachel, Jacob agreed to work for his uncle for seven years so he could marry Rachel. Once again, we see man changing things just because they can. Laban, Jacob's uncle, hid the truth from Jacob and married him to his older daughter Leah. The next morning Jacob felt he was cheated, but agreed to work for another seven years for the right to marry Rachel. All total, Jacob spent 21 years working for his uncle. God taught Jacob how to have favor with the breeding of sheep and goats. His father-in-law was not cheated in any way during the years that Jacob managed his flocks. Both men gained in the size of their flocks. A time came when Jacob was to return to Canaan. He was afraid to meet with his twin brother Esau. God told him that He would be with him, yet he was still afraid. Jacob, along with his wives and 12 of his 13 children (Benjamin had not been born yet) headed

toward Canaan, and he was so afraid that he divided his family and flocks into two groups. If one group was attacked by Esau, Jacob felt he could get away with the remaining portion of his family and flocks. This did not happen and the two brothers greeted each other with brotherly love.

We have progressed to the second generation from Abraham. We know that Jacob, now called Israel, had 12 male children and one daughter. With these children, we have another story to tell. The youngest two sons of Israel were Joseph and Benjamin. These two were the children of Rachel, the wife Israel loved the most. Israel loved Joseph so much that he had a special coat of many colors made for him. This coat and the special attention given to him by their father put the other brothers in envy of their little brother and his special coat. One day Israel called to Joseph and told him to go and check on his brothers who were with the flocks. Joseph found his brothers and envy took over. They decided to kill Joseph and put goat's blood on the coat, then they conspired to tell their father that a wild animal had killed Joseph. A band of traders in a caravan came along and the brothers decided to sell Joseph as a slave to these traders. They could still tell their father that a wild animal had killed Joseph. So off Joseph went with the traders to Egypt. God did some strange things with Joseph in Egypt. Joseph stood up for the truth and was placed in prison because he would not subject himself to an affair with an official's wife. Nevertheless her trumped up charge placed Joseph in prison. Because of his strong ethics, the chief guard of the prison put Joseph in charge over many of the functions in the prison. Joseph also demonstrated his ability to interpret dreams while in prison. God worked the situations which would allow Joseph to become governor of all Egypt under Pharaoh. Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams and was eventually placed in the position of governor.

About twenty-five years after being sold by his brothers, these brothers appear in Egypt to buy food because of the great famine in the lands around Egypt. The brothers did not recognize Joseph, however Joseph recognized his brothers. After this trip, about two years went by, and, the brothers once again headed to Egypt to obtain food. This time Joseph asked many questions and told the older brothers that they could not purchase food until they brought their youngest brother with them to prove they were not lying to him. When they brought Benjamin back, Joseph was very emotional over seeing his one true brother and invited all the brothers to have a meal at his house. The table was set in the traditional order with the youngest receiving a greater portion of food. The brothers were shocked to see this and Joseph finally identified himself as their brother whom they had sold into slavery. He invited them to return to Canaan and bring back their father and the rest of the family. This was done and seventy Hebrew people returned to Egypt. All of this was done by God's plan to save His chosen people from a famine. We must remember that God has established the end of all things from the beginning, and has a plan set in motion that all things fit together as they are suppose to be at the appointed time. However, we must move forward with our story. Notice that nothing has been said about a great amount of sin up to this point. Yes! There were pagan religions being practiced by the people living on earth at that time. The Hebrews, now in Egypt, had practiced a righteousness that was passed down from Abraham. Read Genesis 18:19 again, ¹⁹ *For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.* (ESV) However, after the passing of Israel, Joseph, the brothers and that entire generation, the Hebrew descendants became slaves to Egypt. They forgot everything they had been taught of God and who they were as God's people.

God allowed them to be enslaved in Egypt for 390 years and then was going to break their bondage and bring them out of Egypt. A new festival was established called Passover and the hand of God moved over Egypt. Things changed quickly, Pharaoh told them they could finally leave and they did. Led by Moses, they headed back to the land of Canaan where they had come from. Seventy people went into Egypt, but now about 2 million were being led by the direction of God through Moses. By

several miracles as well as by strange signs, the Hebrews crossed the Reed Sea, and entered the wilderness of Sinai. These Hebrews had seen the miracles God had performed to persuade Pharaoh to release these people from their bondage. When they arrived at the Reed Sea, they felt that they would all die because the Egyptian army was closing in behind them. God opened a channel through the sea and the Hebrews crossed on dry ground, but when the Egyptians tried to follow the channel was closed by God and the Egyptian army was destroyed. The great signs were a cloud by day and a flame in the sky by night. There is something else that needs to be said at this junction. Remember, these people are traveling across a desert area. It is hot in the day time, in a desert, and usually very cold at night. God placed a cloud over them by day to keep them cool and a flame by night to keep them warm. God does provide for His people.

At this point, we have transitioned from the book of Genesis to the book of Exodus. We are seeing the instructions from God that He gave to Moses to give to the people. When God tried to speak with the people themselves, they confused the sounds of thunder and the flashes of light as a terrifying experience. Thus they told Moses they would listen to him, but **they did not** want to listen to God directly. Through Moses, God laid out His purpose for the Hebrew people. God had chosen them to be His people and they were to lead the rest of the world as the model to follow in order to please Almighty God, and to cast aside idols and false religion. God presented His case in the form of a covenant. He laid out His rules, along with what He would do to protect and watch over the Hebrews. All the Hebrews had to do was accept the rules and to follow them. He also informed them what would happen for their disobedience. They accepted the contract (covenant) and had Moses to take their response back to God. God accepted their reply and wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets, then He had Moses take the tablets back to the people.

Oh my gosh! What has happened? Moses was gone for forty days and the people became restless. They gave all their gold to Moses' brother Aaron to form a golden bull for them to worship, frolic and have a drunken pagan party. Moses came down the mountain and was so upset with their actions that he threw down and broke the tablets of God's law. Then he destroyed the golden bull and all the pagan party items. God was displeased with the whole thing and turned His back on His people for a moment. Moses was instructed to prepare new stones and to bring them up the mountain for God to write once again the Ten Commandments. Moses was given further instructions on how God wanted the Tabernacle to be constructed and who was to do the work.

The first five books of the Bible are attributed to Moses as the author. It is also my practice to place Bible scripture after my own statements to provide proof of what I write. With the retelling of early Biblical history, I failed to enter the scripture to prove the fact that I covered a large amount of history from these first five books of the Bible. However, with getting into greater detail, I feel it is time to start placing scripture into this work. The people were curious about the land God was declaring to give to them as a land of milk and honey. God told Moses to select one leader from each of the tribes to explore the land of Canaan. This is shown in Numbers 13:1-3, ¹ *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,* ² *"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them."* ³ *So Moses sent them from the Wilderness of Paran according to the command of the Lord, all of them men who were heads of the children of Israel.* There were twelve men sent out, one from each tribe, and they explored the land for forty days, Numbers 13:25, ²⁵ *At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land.* (ESV) When they returned, 10 claimed that the land was the land of giants and of fortified cities, and there would be no way that they could take the land, Numbers 13:28-33, ²⁸ *However, the people who dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. And besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there.* ²⁹ *The Amalekites dwell in the land of the Negeb. The Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the hill country. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and along the Jordan."*

³⁰ But Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.” ³¹ Then the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.” ³² So they brought to the people of Israel a bad report of the land that they had spied out, saying, “The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. ³³ And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.” (ESV) Two of the spies, Caleb and Joshua, claimed differently, that through God’s grace and promise they could take the land and defeat those living there, Numbers 14:6-9, ⁶ And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes ⁷ and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, “The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. ⁸ If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. ⁹ Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them.” (ESV) The people were ready to stone Caleb and Joshua, but the glory of God appeared at the Tent of Meeting. The words of God, spoken to Moses, indicate how strong God was upset, Numbers 14:11-12, ¹¹ And the Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? ¹² I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.” (ESV) The fact remains that ten men had convinced the people to reject God’s statement to the people. It appears the people had no trust in God’s promise to watch over and protect them. This protection was a portion of the Ten Commandment contract between God and the Hebrews. Two things were quickly done by God. First, He put a period of wrath upon these people: That, for each day these ten men who disbelieved, there would be a year of wandering in the desert by these people. Therefore, they would have to wander in the desert for forty years before being allowed to enter the promised land, Numbers 14:34-35, ³⁴ According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, a year for each day, you shall bear your iniquity forty years, and you shall know my displeasure.’ ³⁵ I, the LORD, have spoken. Surely this will I do to all this wicked congregation who are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.” (ESV) Secondly, God put a curse on the people. Numbers 14:26-33, ²⁶ And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying, ²⁷ “How long shall this wicked congregation grumble against me? I have heard the grumblings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against me. ²⁸ Say to them, ‘As I live, declares the LORD, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: ²⁹ your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number, listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against me, ³⁰ not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. ³¹ But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. ³² But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. ³³ And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.” (ESV) **Only the two, Caleb and Joshua, who gave a good report, would enter the promised land.**

We haven’t even gotten the Israelites into the promised land, yet God has corrected these people in more than one situation. In my book, *God’s Test for Mankind*, I was surprised to find that God made two covenants with the Israelites in the wilderness. The first covenant was the Ten Commandments. God already knew that mankind would disobey those commandments, therefore, He, on purpose, restated one rule as a perpetual every lasting rule for all of mankind for all of his generations. Mankind’s rebellion against God is unbelievable. There are those individuals who read the material I post on my website. But, there are many others who could care less of what God gives me to write. Here’s an

interesting question. Are you aware of the second covenant that God made with the Israelites in the wilderness? Let's look at that once again, the second covenant in found in Exodus 31:12-17, ¹² *And the Lord said to Moses,* ¹³ *"You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you. '14 You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. '15 Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. '16 Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. '17 It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.' "* Just to show when this occurred, I included verse 18. ¹⁸ *And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God. (ESV)*

I understand that there are many people who read these verses and say, "Those verses do not apply to me for two reasons, I'm not an Israelite, and two, I'm a New Testament believer." Allow me to ask you a simple question. Are you a strong enough Christian to have an open mind, and if shown that what you have been taught is false, would you change your belief to fit the truth? That will be the objective of this book from this point forward! God has worked miracle after miracle for the benefit of mankind, and mankind has basically thumbed their nose at God. The rebellion of mankind toward God is truly unbelievable!

The Rebellion of Mankind Toward God

In my introduction, I attempted to provide a short and simple overview of mankind's history on the earth from the time of Adam and Eve, to the period of time that Moses was leading the Israelites through the wilderness. I did not attempt to document every pagan religious practice the rest of earth was participating in, but just to make mention that pagan practices were there. God, in His true mercy, knew that Satan and his fallen angels had already begun to spread lies about God, His angels, His Son and The Word of God. Satan hates all things Godly. He wants to do away with them and change everything from time, to season, to basic belief toward himself and himself only. Satan hates Israel because God chose them to be His people and to model righteousness to the rest of the world through them. God established a covenant, which the Israelites agreed to, with this people. He witnessed how quickly this people could throw off the meaning and the intent of the covenant, and established a principle rule covenant of only one rule to last forever and ever. That one rule was to be obedient to honor the Sabbath.

I seem to have established that I must address two items in my endeavor to provide you with a different thought. The first is to clarify your identity to Israel. I grew up in a Southern Baptist church, just as my forefathers had. That was mine and their relationship with God along with some Methodist. Their doctrine and dogma became my basic belief and that was that. Unfortunately, time of the past seven decades has allowed me to search and understand many of the reasons that I believed as my forefathers had. At the same time, there were many reasons to change my mind and my understanding of what I had been taught. One item would be what I have presented here for our discussion. Tell me, how and where did your ancestors come from? Are they of European origin? Do you consider yourself to be Catholic because of that denomination's impact upon Europe? How did the Catholic Church begin and where did its doctrine and dogma come from? Did Peter and Paul, as apostles of Christ, have any influence upon the Catholic church? Are you beginning to see and understand that there are many questions that a person, any person for that matter, should ask themselves, when it comes to the question of what do you believe?

As New Testament believers, do you stop and ask yourself why is there an Old Testament portion of the Bible? Many, and I do mean many, of the basic points and principles of what you say you believe, have their historical basis in the Old Testament. Without an understanding of those basic items, you have absolutely no understanding of what Christ taught, nor how He provided those instructions to the twelve apostles to model them for the world. Once again, take, for example, what we have undertaken to begin our search: How do you have a tie back to Israel? Is it by your ancestors that you have a physical relationship to Israel, or is it strictly via the teachings of Paul that you have that relationship? You may not interpret the second part of my last statement as I have meant it to be! Paul taught throughout Asia (modern day Turkey), Greece, Rome, and there are indications that he was also in Spain and the isles of the sea. In many of these locations, there were Jewish factions that took exception to what Paul was teaching, and they would accuse Paul of violating their law, or somehow instilling a riot against the state and those who governed. Paul took it upon himself to travel back to Jerusalem and address the apostles, elders and the established church of Christ in Jerusalem. One of these main items of discussion was circumcision. The Jews wanted the laws of Moses, as modified by traditions, to be applied and followed by the new converts into the belief of Christ and His teachings. Paul strongly objected to this pressure from the Jews. Here is what is recorded at the council meeting from Acts 15:4-11, ⁴ *And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.* ⁵ *But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses."*

⁶ Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. ⁷ And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, ⁹ and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." After Peter spoke these words, we learn in verse 13 that, James spoke to those assembled, Acts 15:13, ¹³ And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: This James would be Jesus' brother who was the leader of the church at Jerusalem. James went on and said the following in verses 19-21, Acts 15:19-21, ¹⁹ Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, ²⁰ but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath."

So this council meeting produced the following letter to be sent to the Gentile churches in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. Acts 15:22-29, ²² Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren. ²³ They wrote this letter by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia:

Greetings.

²⁴ Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law" —to whom we gave no such commandment— ²⁵ it seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. ²⁸ For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: ²⁹ that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

These verses from Acts provide us all with the historical facts presented to the council at Jerusalem and their reply, via letter. What we should understand from this meeting is that, the acceptance of Gentiles into this new viewpoint of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God are all Israelites by virtue of the circumcision of the heart. It is this change of heart that all are adopted as children of Israel. This becomes the simple answer of the spiritual side of mankind becoming children of Israel, and the covenants that God made with Israel in the wilderness apply to these who now profess to be followers of Christ. Okay, I know that some will accept what I have just shown you and others will not accept this as having a meaning. Let me ask you another question. How much time do you give to reading and studying your Bible? Let's use the principle of the tithe and apply it to this question. If a tithe is ten percent and there are twenty-four hours in a day, shouldn't you give to God two-point-four hours per day to the study of God's Word? Do you? Why not? You profess to be a follower of Jesus, why are you not following what He taught? I'll go one step further: In the passage above and in the letter sent out to the Gentiles, doesn't it say that you are to abstain from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Do you do that, or do you declare that you are tolerant, and anyone else who does not agree with the LBGTQ+ is intolerant and not a true Christian? Pray tell what does your Bible actually say? Somehow, along the way you became mistaken in what the Bible says, if you

believe that nonsense. Once again these verses from Acts are the historical, not the specific words of Paul. If you want the specific words of Paul, we must look in the Epistles to see what Paul actually spoke. Let's see what Paul says in Romans. Romans 2:29, ²⁹ *but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.* How about 1st Corinthians 7:18-19, ¹⁸ *Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.* ¹⁹ *Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.* Look at Galatians 3:26-29, ²⁶ *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.* ²⁷ *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* ²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* Read further in Ephesians 2:11-22, ¹¹ *Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—* ¹² *that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.* ¹³ *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

¹⁴ *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,* ¹⁵ *having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,* ¹⁶ *and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.* ¹⁷ *And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.* ¹⁸ *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*

¹⁹ *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,* ²⁰ *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone,* ²¹ *in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,* ²² *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.* From the book of Colossians 2:8-10, ⁸ *Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.* ⁹ *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;* ¹⁰ *and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.* Finally, Titus 1:10-16, ¹⁰ *For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,* ¹¹ *whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.* ¹² *One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."* ¹³ *This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,* ¹⁴ *not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.* ¹⁵ *To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.* ¹⁶ *They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.*

We have gone through the specific teachings of Paul and provided you with the passages of truth, that should give you a good idea that you are a child of God. You are a member of the family established by Abraham through the blessings of Christ Jesus to the whole world. If you found unfamiliar words in these passages, you should seek your inner spirit and ask if you have been deceived by false teachers and ministers of ungodliness.

We must, of necessity, also view the teachings of Jesus Himself. Remember, it is Jesus, as our Messiah, that we are following His teachings and His modeling of what we should or should not do! Allow me to make a statement. I went through Strong's Concordance and, if I counted correctly the word commandments is used 171 times throughout the Bible (via KJV's association with Strong's).

This term is only used 13 times in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. How did Jesus use this term in these 13 verses? Let's see!

Maybe, just maybe, I should repeat what the Ten Commandments are. Here are the Ten Commandments as stated in Exodus 20:1-17, ¹ *And God spoke all these words, saying:*

² *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

³ (1) *You shall have no other gods before Me.*

⁴ (2) *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

⁷ (3) *"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*

⁸ (4) *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

¹² (5) *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. Only Commandment with a promise!*

¹³ (6) *"You shall not murder.*

¹⁴ (7) *"You shall not commit adultery.*

¹⁵ (8) *"You shall not steal.*

¹⁶ (9) *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

¹⁷ (10) *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."*

Matthew 5:19-20, ¹⁹ *Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.* (ESV) So, let's take only one subject that is going around in the news of today, which has been all the way to the Supreme Court and back again. That is the issue of abortion. If we follow what both God and Jesus say in scripture, and you have an abortion then you have committed murder of your child and violated God's Holy Law. Was that your intent, or was this act by you a means to escape from the dilemma you now face because you are pregnant, most likely, because you violated another commandment and committed adultery.

Matthew 15:7-9, ⁷ *Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: ⁸ 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. ⁹ And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' "*

Matthew 19:16-17, ¹⁶ *Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" ¹⁷ So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."*

Matthew 22:36-40, ³⁶ *"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

Mark 7:6-7, ⁶ *He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it*

is written: *'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. ⁷ And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'* This is a retelling of Matthew 15:7-9.

Mark 10:17-19, ¹⁷ *Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "* This is a retelling of Matthew 19:16-17.

Mark 12:29, ²⁹ *Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹ And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."* This is a retelling of Matthew 22:36-40.

Luke 1:6, ⁶ *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.*

Luke 18:19-20, ¹⁹ *So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Honor your father and your mother.' "* This is a retelling of Matthew 19:16-17

John 14:15-16, ¹⁵ ***"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, (ESV)***

John 14:21, ²¹ *Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. "* (ESV)

John 15:10, ¹⁰ *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (ESV)* The term commandments is used twice in this verse.

It seems to me that Jesus put a strong importance on following the commandments of God. But, that is where the rebellion against God has become the strongest. Must we really go through the sheer numbers of rebellious acts against God, and the wrath that God has dealt out due to the disobedience. We could go through the list of prophets in the Bible and examine the warnings that God told these prophets to tell to His people. We could show, time and time again, the rebellion against these warnings and against the prophets themselves. We could begin this search with the Israelites in the wilderness and show the repeated disobedience of these people. After that, we could begin with the major prophets and All Israel's disobedience to God's warnings. We could follow this to the split of All Israel after the death of King Solomon, and begin to follow the actions of the people in the Northern Kingdom of the House of Israel and how terrible their disobedience was against God. We could follow this down through the various kings, and find the point where God had finally had enough. He sent Assyria to capture and carry off the Northern Kingdom. Through several of the prophets, we see how upset God had become, thua He gave the House of Israel a divorce and cast them off. God then turned His attention to the Southern Kingdom, the House of Judah. He sent prophets to warn them that they were not much better than their sister kingdom, and that they would also have to pay a price for their disobedience. So it was, Judah disobeyed God to the point that, God sent the Babylonians to capture the people of Judah and take them to Babylon. This was after the Babylonians had killed the last king of Judah and all of his sons. The major prophet at this time was Jeremiah. Somehow God delivered Jeremiah and a very small remnant from all of this.

I used another term that I would like my readers to understand. That term is remnant! If the time was taken to conduct a full study of the Bible, anyone would find that this term becomes very important

to the actions of a living, loving Holy God. Once again, I turned to Strong's Concordance and found that this term, remnant, is used 92 times in the Bible. Think about that! If the term remnant is used ninety two times, there must be at least 92 times that God thinned out the population of people that He was dealing with. Let's take that all the way up to our time and the statement made by Jesus in Luke 12:32, ³² *Do not fear, **little flock**, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Isn't the thought of a little flock the same as a remnant? Isn't there many, many times that God dealt with His people and there ended up only a remnant to continue. In similar manner, isn't Jesus calling His followers a little flock (a remnant)? Isn't it this little flock that is to be raptured prior to the time known as the Tribulation? If my understanding of God's Word is correctly interpreted, those going through the Tribulation period will be persecuted to the near extension of mankind on this planet. The Tribulation will be the most horrible time ever seen by mankind. God will have to send Jesus to save some of us from total annihilation. Even so, think about a few things that are going on right now, today! Mankind is seeking their own way. They believe that there is such a thing as global warming, and the internal combustion engine used in most vehicles is contributing to this global warming. Fear of war, riots, and heaven only knows what else, is causing anxiety to be at a max level. People are turning to ancient pagan religions and practices. They are abusing drugs and alcohol to the point of death. People are seeking social counseling services at an unbelievable number. Maybe, just maybe, I should go back to that little flock verse and give you the full statement made by Jesus, Luke 12:22-40, ²² *Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. ²³ Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? ²⁵ And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁶ If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith? ²⁹ And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. ³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. ³¹ **But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.** ³² Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. ³⁴ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.***

³⁵ *"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶ and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. ³⁸ And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. ³⁹ **But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁰ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."***

I, personally, do not believe that Jesus (Yeshua) was only speaking to the Apostles when He stated, "little flock". I believe that He was indicating the influence that the Apostles would have on the whole of the earth, and that Jesus would have only a little flock when He returns. Look at the verse just prior as stated by Jesus, Luke 12:31, ³¹ ***But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.***

Now, there are those in today's society that believe and teach that only a portion of mankind has been called by God to experience salvation. They state that this is a special limited calling out of the

whole of mankind. That the greater portion of mankind will be offered salvation and the chance to know, and to be with, Jesus for eternity with the coming of the “Eighth Day” or the “Day of the Lord” at the end of the Millennial Reign of Christ. I must really be “Old School” and believe that the Bible teaches that you only go through life once, and it is up to you to make your choice during this life. If you do not make that choice to accept Jesus as LORD and Christ (Messiah) during this life, you have chosen to accept eternal damnation for your inner spirit. Remember the Bible states that: God is a spirit and we must be in spirit form to worship with God, John 4:22-24, ²² *You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.* ²³ *But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.* ²⁴ ***God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*** There must be a clarification of what is this eighth day that is used. God gave to Moses the order of His feast days in the book of Leviticus in the 23rd chapter. Notice the section of scripture between verses 33 and 43. I’m including all these verses so we may look at the entire content, and, maybe conclude, what is meant in this passage. Leviticus 23:33-43, ³³ *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,* ³⁴ *"Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the Lord.'* ³⁵ *On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it.* ³⁶ *For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.* ³⁷ *These are the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the Lord, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day—* ³⁸ *besides the Sabbaths of the Lord, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the Lord.*

³⁹ *'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the Lord for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.* ⁴⁰ *And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days.* ⁴¹ *You shall keep it as a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month.* ⁴² *You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths.* ⁴³ *that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.'* " I have underlined the verses we should look at in-depth. In verse 34, we see that the Feast of Tabernacles is for seven days. Verse 35 tells us that there is a holy convocation on the first day. Two statements are made in verse 36: first that an offering is made for seven days; also, on the eighth day we are to hold a holy convocation. Now, it seems we have a reiteration of these rules in the verses between 39-42. In verse 39, we find three statements made: we are to keep this feast for seven days; there is to be a Sabbath rest on the first day; and, there is a Sabbath rest on the eighth day. In verse 40, we are to rejoice before the Lord for seven days. In verse 42, we are to dwell in booths for seven days if native born Israelite. What the context of these verses tell me is that the Feast of Tabernacles is a seven day feast. For seven days there is a sacrifice requirement to be made before the Lord, and on the eighth day a special convocation is to take place. There is no wording that I can understand that indicates the eighth day is some sort of holy day that God offers salvation to every individual who has lived on the earth, and NOT accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior. I also understand that this eighth day is supposed to be the final “Day of the Lord” or the “Second Resurrection” before the Great White Throne Judgment. I do not see where these two are one and the same, nor do I see where the so called offering of salvation is made to every individual who stands before God at judgment day. My understanding is that Judgment Day, is the day that the books

are opened and a person has to answer to God why they did what they did during life, and why they did not accept Jesus as their Lord.

The thought is that every soul has not yet heard the name Jesus, and has not had an opportunity to accept Christ as Lord. Boy! I really must have a different Bible. My Bible says that, during the Tribulation period for the first three and one half years, there will be the two witnesses in Jerusalem proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah. Through satellite coverage, the world will have access to hearing the two witnesses. Beside these two, there are 144,000 Jews who are proclaiming that Jesus is Lord and Messiah. Finally, before the end of the Tribulation, and if all else has failed, there are three angels circling the earth proclaiming the truth. Mankind will have that opportunity to accept Christ as Lord and Savior.

Besides all that, there is currently a ministry in New Mexico that has accepted the task of providing the world with the word of God by 2033. Jerry and Anet Jackson began a ministry in 1972 to share the word of God as a tape lending ministry. This has changed over the years, and they are now working on having all 7000+ languages on earth to be able to hear the word of God in their native tongue by 2033. Their website is Faith Comes By Hearing and their resources are truly amazing.

I also have a problem with some who call this last day of the Feast of Tabernacles as “The Day of the Lord.” The term day of the lord has been used many, many times by the prophets of old as being the day that the Lord’s wrath comes to a sinful people.

I have another problem with God’s feast days. They have been changed into what we now celebrate, and have for many years. Moses was given the interpretation of how God’s seven feast days are recorded and presented. Once again, I turn to Leviticus to see the order of God’s feast days. Chapter 23 of Leviticus records the first and second feasts as Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The third feast, Firstfruits, is given and explained in verses 9-14, ⁹ *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,* ¹⁰ *“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the Lord. ¹³ Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the Lord, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴ You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.* Firstfruits is brought to the priest on the day after the Sabbath, after Passover. God’s fourth feast is the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, and is fifty days after the wave offering of Firstfruits. Firstfruits is **not** part of the Feast of Pentecost. The reason for the very mention of firstfruits, in the verses between 15 and 21, is because these are two different harvests. The harvest for Firstfruits is Barley, and the harvest for Pentecost is Wheat. These are different firstfruits because of different times of the year for each grain harvest. If you really want to know some of the harvest seasons, there is a third harvest, during the Feast of Tabernacles, that would be the harvest of oil (olives) and wine (grapes) which are harvested in the fall of the year.

That should present enough information to have you understand that by being a follower of Christ that you are a child of Abraham, and a child of God. In other words, you are a spiritual Israelite. Now, what about the statement that you might be an Israelite by virtue of descent from the lost ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom. There are many people today that blow this off as pure nonsense. Really, have you studied your Bible, to either prove this, or to disprove this? Let’s take a trip through the Bible to see what it really does state. Turn to the next chapter to find out.

Are You A Direct Descendent of Abraham?

I am and my wife is! There is a story, and Biblical facts, to clearly show this. Yet, in order to test, validate and prove this, we must go through the Old Testament to show how this is possible! This may be an interesting journey to learn these facts. To begin this chapter, let's go back to those who were sent into Canaan to spy out the land. Remember, there were only two men who brought back a good report that the Israelites could take the lands that God had given to them. Those two were Caleb and Joshua. Here is the first question. Which two tribes did these two men represent? Numbers 13:4-16, ⁴ *Now these were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua the son of Zaccur;* ⁵ *from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat the son of Hori;* ⁶ **from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh;** ⁷ *from the tribe of Issachar, Igal the son of Joseph;* ⁸ **from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun;** ⁹ *from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti the son of Raphu;* ¹⁰ *from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel the son of Sodi;* ¹¹ *from the tribe of Joseph, that is, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi the son of Susi;* ¹² *from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel the son of Gemalli;* ¹³ *from the tribe of Asher, Sethur the son of Michael;* ¹⁴ *from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi the son of Vophsi;* ¹⁵ *from the tribe of Gad, Geuel the son of Machi.* ¹⁶ *These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua.* Do you understand the importance of these two men, aside from being the two who gave a good report concerning the land of Canaan? We really need to go through the Old Testament to pick up the critical pieces of the puzzle pertaining to these two men and the tribes they represented.

In the book of Genesis, we find the marriages for Jacob (later renamed Israel) and the birth of all his children. There were two sisters that Jacob married, actually his cousins as daughters of his uncle, his mother's brother, Laban. Leah was the older and Rachel was the younger. Jacob offered to work for his uncle for seven years in order to marry Rachel. Tradition said the older had to marry before the younger could marry, so Jacob's uncle deceived him and married him to Leah. It is important for our search to know the features of these two women. Genesis 29:16-18, ¹⁶ *Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.* ¹⁷ *Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance.* ¹⁸ *Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."* (ESV) The full accounting, of these two weddings, is given in verses 20-30 of Genesis 29, ²⁰ *So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.*

²¹ *Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed."* **Notice, he waited seven full years, without sex, to have the one he loved!** ²² *So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast.* ²³ *But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her.* ²⁴ *(Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.)* ²⁵ *And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?"* ²⁶ *Laban said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.* ²⁷ **Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.**" ²⁸ *Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.* ²⁹ *(Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.)* ³⁰ *So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.* (ESV) We must insert the statement that it, was by mankind's decision that a wife could use her maidservant to produce children for her, on her behalf. Go back to the story of Abraham and Sarah. The entire 16th chapter of Genesis tells the story of Hagar and Ishmael. We need to read verses 1-4, ¹ *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar.* ² *And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her."* *And Abram listened to the voice of*

Sarai. Notice who is speaking and making this decision, it is Sarai and not God. God ordained one man and one woman as husband and wife, (Genesis 2:24-25, ²⁴ *Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.* ²⁵ *And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.* (ESV)). ³ *So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife.* ⁴ *And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.* (ESV)

This confirms what I showed you in the story of Leah and Rachel. Notice that their father gave each daughter a maidservant. It is through these four women that we see the birth of the tribes of Israel and the one daughter. Over the course of time that I have presented the pieces of this puzzle, there are many people who say that Americans with English or Scottish ancestors do not look Jewish. Therefore, my entire presentation cannot be true. It is so funny to me that, they don't even think about what they are saying. Have you ever looked at all your cousins and thought that they all had the same basic facial features? Consider what is said in the verses I've presented. There are two sisters, each had a maidservant and each of these four women had children by one man. How in the world can you believe that all of the offspring children will have the same basic facial features? It just will not work that way! Beside that, you don't even know the background or the race of people from which these two handmaidens came. Another fact, that is overlooked, is that only those of the tribe of Judah are Jews, all others are Israelites. Not only that, but we must also recall the different distinctions between Leah and Rachel. Surely their children would look different. This would also apply to the children of Bilhah and Zilpah. But, let's go further with our search. For a side note, the first born of Jacob, who held the birthright, was Reuben (the first born of Leah). Let's identify the mother for all thirteen children:

Leah: Reuben; Simeon; Levi; Judah; (break) Issachar; Zebulun; Dinah (only daughter) - total of 7

Bilhah (for Rachel): Dan; Naphtali - total of 2

Zilpah (for Leah): Gad; Asher - total of 2

Rachel: Joseph; Benjamin - total of 2

Reference verses for the birth of all these children, except Benjamin, are given in Genesis 29:31-30:24. The birth of Benjamin is recorded in Genesis 35:16-20. In the text between Genesis 29 and 35, we find Jacob wrestles with (a man of) God and his name is changed from Jacob to Israel. This name change is recorded twice, Genesis 32:28, ²⁸ *Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."* (ESV) The second record of this name change is in 35:9-15, ⁹ *God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him.* ¹⁰ *And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel.* ¹¹ *And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.* ¹² *The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you."* ¹³ *Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him.* ¹⁴ *And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it.* ¹⁵ *So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.* (ESV) We pick up three more important pieces of this puzzle in verse 11, the first is: A nation shall come from your own body; the second is: a company of nations shall come from you; the third is: kings shall come from your own body. We must continue with our search.

In my introduction, I offered several short stories from the time of Abraham to Moses. Some of these verses were the telling of the story of Joseph. I did not include verses to prove any of my points at that time. Allow me to add a few verses here concerning Joseph. In Genesis 37:21-22 we see Reuben (the oldest) trying to save Joseph from his brothers, ²¹ *But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of*

their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." ²² And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father. We see that it was Judah who hatched the plan to sell Joseph to the traders, Genesis 37:26-27, ²⁶ So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened. Verse 28 provides us with the price the brothers received for selling their brother, ²⁸ Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

Another item, I passed over earlier and did not provide proof for the reader, was the birth of twins. There are two sets of twins that we need to know about. **The first set is Esau and Jacob.** Turn over to Genesis 24:21-26, ²¹ And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. ²² The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. ²³ And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger." **Here is the key that explains that a change of birthright will happen at some point! We will see that exchange later. Look for it!**

²⁴ When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵ The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. ²⁶ Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. (ESV) This is one set of twins where the younger child shall serve the older, or in other words, **the birthright is exchanged.**

We have arrived at another of the stories of Judah. Judah had three sons born of the daughter of Shua, Genesis 38:2-5, ² And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and went in to her. ³ So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. ⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. ⁵ And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name Shelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him. We find in verses 6-7 that Er was wicked and God put him to death, ⁶ And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was **Tamar**. ⁷ But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord put him to death. (ESV) Verses 8-10 illustrates for us that Judah's second son was not obedient and, also, put to death, ⁸ Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." ⁹ But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. ¹⁰ And what he did was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and he put him to death also. (ESV) Now it becomes difficult. Tamar was told by Judah to go and stay in her father's house until the third son Shelah was old enough to marry her. Years later Judah's wife, the daughter of Shua, died and Judah was going to Timmah to be with the men who were sheering his sheep. Tamar learned this and changed her clothes from her widow's clothes and covered herself with a veil to disguise herself. She then sat down at the entrance to Enaim on the road to Timmah. Here is the full account of Tamar's actions. Verses 13-19, ¹³ And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." ¹⁴ So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife. ¹⁵ When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face. ¹⁶ Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" ¹⁷ And he said, "I will send a young goat from the flock." So she

said, "Will you give me a pledge till you send it?" ¹⁸ Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?" So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand." Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁹ So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood. We understand from these verses that Tamar is pregnant by Judah, however Judah does not know this. Later Judah is told that Tamar is pregnant and he tells his servant to bring her out and burn her to death, verse 24, ²⁴ *About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned."* (ESV) Tamar sent back word that she was pregnant by the one who's seal and staff she had in her possession, verse 25, ²⁵ *As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant."* And she said, "Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." (ESV) Judah identified the items and declared Tamar to be more righteous than himself, and he did not know her ever again, verse 26, ²⁶ *Then Judah identified them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not know her again.* (ESV)

We have arrived at the **second set of twins**, the **first set was Esau and Jacob** on page 17, that we need to bring into the pieces of our puzzle. Tamar is pregnant with twins and there is an interesting piece of our puzzle that is stated in the verses from 27-30, ²⁷ *When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb.* ²⁸ *And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first."* ²⁹ *But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore his name was called Perez.* ³⁰ *Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.* (ESV) Notice what the midwife said about the twin with the scarlet thread on his hand, *"This one came out first."* As we have seen in earlier gatherings of puzzle pieces, the first born is normally the holder of the birthright. However, we have also seen where the birthright may be moved to another individual. We will continue building our case of puzzle pieces.

While we are here at this junction, let's illustrate the transfer of a birthright. Turn back to page 17, and the discussion of the first set of twins that were a part of our puzzle pieces. That set of twins would be Esau, and Jacob who was renamed Israel. Esau was the first to be born, therefore the holder of the birthright. Genesis 25:29-34 provides us with the rest of the story, ²⁹ *Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted.* ³⁰ *And Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called Edom.)* ³¹ *Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright now."* ³² *Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?"* ³³ *Jacob said, "Swear to me now."* ***So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob.*** ³⁴ *Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.* (ESV) In this particular case, we see the birthright being sold for a bowl of stew. We have also gone through the remainder of this story when Jacob and his mother deceived his father to obtain the all important blessing, and Esau made the statement that he would kill his brother. That was our story revealing why Jacob traveled to his uncle Laban's house, and how he married Laban's two daughters.

We have also told a portion of the story of Joseph and how he was sold by his brothers and then taken to Egypt. Within that story rests another important part of our puzzle. Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. That would mean that these two sons were half Hebrew and half Egyptian. Their father was the Hebrew, his mother was Rachel. The boys mother, Asenath, was Egyptian, she was the daughter of the priest of On. Genesis 41:45, ⁴⁵ *And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.* While we are here let's look at the factor of time. Read verse 46, ⁴⁶ *Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the*

presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. We find the other half of this time factor in Genesis 37:1-2, ¹ *Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.* ² *This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.* Be careful, there are two people, a father and son mentioned in these two verses. Nevertheless, I was attempting to show that Joseph had spent 13 years in Egypt before he stood before Pharaoh and told him what his dream meant. We have already gone through that portion of the story where the brothers come to buy food during the famine. It was during the second visit for food that Joseph reveals himself to his brothers and tells them to go and get their father, along with the remainder of the family, and move to Egypt and be under his care. Review Genesis 47:27-28 to see how long Jacob lived in Egypt, ²⁷ *Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.* ²⁸ *And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were 147 years.* (ESV) That would indicate that Jacob (Israel) was 130 years old when he went to Egypt.

We are on a great journey! Our goal is to attempt to establish that there are descendants from the children of Jacob living in countries outside of the nation of Israel. Genesis chapters 48-50 contains so very much information that is a major portion of our search. Bear with me as we continue to gather information. First, we find an adoption takes place, as you are aware, Joseph has two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Jacob (Israel) is aware of his two grandsons, but watch what he does. Genesis 48:5-6, ⁵ *And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.* ⁶ *Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.* By this action, Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons. Notice that in verse 5, the names are reversed. It is about this time that Jacob notices the two boys in the room and we find the following, verses 8-22, ⁸ *Then Israel saw Joseph's sons, and said, "Who are these?"*

⁹ *And Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me in this place."*

And he said, "Please bring them to me, and I will bless them."

¹⁰ *Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them.*

¹¹ *And Israel said to Joseph, "I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!"*

¹² *So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.*

¹³ *And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near him.* ¹⁴ *Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn.*

¹⁵ *And he blessed Joseph, and said: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has fed me all my life long to this day, ¹⁶ The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; Let my name be named upon them, And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."*

¹⁷ *Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.*

¹⁸ *And Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head." It is through the right hand that the blessing is passed. In so doing, what this verse reads, Jacob (Israel) is passing the blessing to Ephraim as the senior son and not to Manasseh. Thus the birthright is passed to Ephraim. This represents the second transfer of birthright between brothers. The other transfer was between Esau and Jacob (Israel). There are a total of four transfers of birthright that*

we must go through to complete our puzzle story.

¹⁹ *But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."* ²⁰ *So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.*

²¹ *Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers."* ²² *Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."* This establishes another manner of exchanging the birthright. If Manasseh is the older, he is the one with the birthright, and this is the reason why Joseph desired his father to put his right hand on the oldest son's head. Through the switch, and crossover, the blessing went to the younger instead of the older. Thus, Ephraim gains the birthright and is placed before his brother. Now, there is a very important part of our puzzle material that comes forth within these verses. Look at verse 19, there are two major statements made in this verse: 1) *I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great.* This indicates that, this is a single nation which becomes great. Which nation has had so much said over the last four or five years about becoming great again? Who is it that used this as part of their campaign strategy? Okay, I think you get the idea. Now, look at the other part of this: 2) *truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.* What nation is there in the world that had a host of nations under their flag, even to the point that the singular great nation was also apart of the multitude of nations? Return back to Genesis 35:9-15, on page 16, where God changes Jacob's name to that of Israel. Once again, here is what verse 11 reads, *"And God said to him, 'I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body.'* Aren't these two passages the same in slightly different words? The difference is that, we have not come across the kings as of yet. But I assure you that they are there and will be shown before we complete our puzzle. Oh! Did you also see in verse 22 that Joseph receives one portion above his brothers? This is the double portion given to Joseph. It is the division of land in Canaan with one portion going to Manasseh, and one portion going to Ephraim.

We were working on the passages where Jacob (Israel) is dying and he has called his sons so that he can bless them. We find this listing of the blessings upon each son in chapter 49 of the book of Genesis. Genesis 49:1-28, ¹ *Then Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come."* ² *"Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father.*

³ *"Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the firstfruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power."* ⁴ *Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!*

⁵ *"Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords."* ⁶ *Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen."* ⁷ *Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.*

⁸ *"Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you."* ⁹ *Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey, my son, you have gone up. He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?"* ¹⁰ *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples."* ¹¹ *Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes."* ¹² *His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.*

¹³ *"Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the sea; he shall become a haven for ships, and his*

border shall be at Sidon.

¹⁴ “Issachar is a strong donkey, crouching between the sheepfolds. ¹⁵ He saw that a resting place was good, and that the land was pleasant, so he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant at forced labor.

¹⁶ “Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁷ Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that his rider falls backward. ¹⁸ I wait for your salvation, O Lord.

¹⁹ “Raiders shall raid Gad, but he shall raid at their heels.

²⁰ “Asher’s food shall be rich, and he shall yield royal delicacies.

²¹ “Naphtali is a doe let loose that bears beautiful fawns.

²² “Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall. ²³ The archers bitterly attacked him, shot at him, and harassed him severely, ²⁴ yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), ²⁵ by the God of your father who will help you, by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. ²⁶ The blessings of your father are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents, up to the bounties of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers.

²⁷ “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey and at evening dividing the spoil.” (ESV)

There is another transfer of birthright, in this passage, that you may not have noticed. Look very closely at verse 3. Did you notice the wording that Jacob said about Reuben? In verse 3, he is preeminent in strength and power followed with the wording that he shall not have preeminence because he defiled his father’s bed. Turn over to 1 Chronicles 5:1-2, ¹ Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, the son of Israel, so that the genealogy is not listed according to the birthright; ² yet Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came a ruler, although the birthright was Joseph’s— That proves the third transfer of a birthright. The first transfer was from Esau to Jacob, the second was the transfer from Manasseh to Ephraim, and, in this passage, we have proof that the birthright of Reuben was transferred to Joseph. It is interesting to see this transfer. It does not transfer from the first born to the second born of Leah. It transfers from the first born of Leah to the first born of Rachel. Do you recall the two tribes that Caleb and Joshua came from? Remember, these are the two men who gave a good report after spying out Canaan. Return to Numbers 13:6; 8; 16, ⁶ from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; . . . ⁸ from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; . . . ¹⁶ These are the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun, Joshua. We see, with the above series of birthrights being transferred, that **Judah holds the Scepter** and **Joseph holds the birthright**. Exactly as the text from the book of Numbers indicates, it was these two tribes, Judah and Ephraim, that showed faith in God to protect and lead the Hebrews to the promised land. Everyone, reading this book, needs to understand the influence these two tribes have over the entire nation of Israel. More will be shown! We are not finished with our search for puzzle pieces, even with what we have already discovered. Review the previous page, there were three parts to the statement made to Jacob. From Jacob (Israel’s) descendants there would be (1) a great nation, (2) a group of nations and (3) kings among his offspring.

Centuries have now passed and the Hebrew people have captured the lands that God promised to give them. As we jump forward, we see a time when the descendants of the original group, those who were permitted to enter the promised land, wanted to be like the nations around them. They wanted to

have a king over them. God's prophet at that time was Samuel, and he attempted to show the people why they didn't need a king, as well as what a king would do toward them. We find this recorded in 1 Samuel 8:4-5, ⁴ *Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah,* ⁵ *and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."*

Samuel prayed to God and sought to have an answer. God answered him and Samuel told the people what God had said. 1 Samuel 8:10-18, ¹⁰ *So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king.* ¹¹ *And he said, "This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots.* ¹² *He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.* ¹³ *He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers.* ¹⁴ *And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants.* ¹⁵ *He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants.* ¹⁶ *And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work.* ¹⁷ *He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants.* ¹⁸ *And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.*" Notice two things in this passage. First, the last sentence in verse 17, You will become the king's servants! Second, a day will come when you will cry out for relief from the king that you have chosen, but the Lord will not hear you in that day. The people rejected what Samuel said to them, 1 Samuel 8:19-20, ¹⁹ *Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us,* ²⁰ *that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."* Samuel listened to the people and told to God what they said. God's reply is found in verses 21-22, ²¹ *And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the Lord.* ²² *So the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king."* And Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man go to his city."

Samuel needed time to find the man that God wanted anointed as king. We find the anointing of the first king of Israel in 1 Samuel 10:1, ¹ *Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance?"* That started the process, and we find the next step in verses 17-19, ¹⁷ *Then Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah,* ¹⁸ *and said to the children of Israel, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all kingdoms and from those who oppressed you.'* ¹⁹ *But you have today rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said to Him, 'No, set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your clans."* ²⁰ *And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was chosen.* ²¹ *When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was chosen. And Saul the son of Kish was chosen. But when they sought him, he could not be found.* Finally, we find the verse confirming the first king over Israel, verse 24, ²⁴ *And Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that there is no one like him among all the people?" So all the people shouted and said, "Long live the king!"* Haven't we heard similar words spoken in a coronation ceremony earlier this year? Have you figured out a portion of our puzzle?

Saul becomes the first king over Israel. We could go through the entire list of kings over Israel, nevertheless, that would not provide us with the next piece of our puzzle. The second king over Israel was king David. The third king was David's son Solomon. With king Saul, we find the beginning of the third statement made to Jacob pertaining to his descendants. Once again recall Genesis 35:11, ¹¹ *And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations*

shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. I have said, previously, that we would get to the kings. King Saul is the beginning of the kings that would be descendants of Jacob. Here is a nugget to remember. The kings, of Judah, Samaria, and most of the kings of Europe, are all descendants of Jacob!

We must look at the situation with King Solomon, and also with his son, Rehoboam. King Solomon built the temple that his father had laid out and had set aside the material for his son to use in building God's Temple. King Solomon was also given wisdom and wealth above all other kings on earth at that time. King Solomon was also reassured of the promise that God made with his father pertaining to the throne of Israel. However, King Solomon had so many foreign wives that they drew him away from the true God. God was so angry that He split the realm of Israel into two portions under the leadership of King Solomon's son, King Rehoboam. Let us prove that these things did happen. I will attempt to give a short heading and the verse reference in italics prior to the insertion of the verses for that heading:

David's Promise From God Concerning His Throne, 2 Samuel 7:8-17, ⁸ Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. ¹⁰ Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, ¹¹ since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house.

¹² "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵ But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." " ¹⁷ According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

David's Prayer to God, 2 Samuel 7:24-29, ²⁴ For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, Lord, have become their God. ²⁵ Now, O Lord God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, establish it forever and do as You have said. ²⁶ So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel.' And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. ²⁷ For You, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You. ²⁸ And now, O Lord God, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You; for You, O Lord God, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed forever."

A Part of David's Song, 2 Samuel 22:51, ⁵¹ "He is the tower of salvation to His king, And shows mercy to His anointed, To David and his descendants forevermore."

David Says Solomon is to be King, 1 Kings 1:28-30; 35, ²⁸ Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. ²⁹ And the king took an oath and said, "As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, ³⁰ just as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day." . . . ³⁵ Then you shall come up

after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.”

David Gives Solomon Advice, 1 Kings 2:3-4, ³ And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; ⁴ that the Lord may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

Solomon Asks for Wisdom, 1 Kings 3:9, ⁹ Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

God Grants Solomon Wisdom, 1 Kings 3:12-14, ¹² behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. ¹³ And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. ¹⁴ So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

Solomon's Wisdom, 1 Kings 4:29-31, ²⁹ And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰ Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations.

Solomon Builds the Temple, 1 Kings 6:1, ¹ And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord. It has now been 480 years since the Hebrew people left Egyptian bondage. God had to wait almost 500 years to have a house built for Him after He brought His people out of Egypt.

Solomon Receives a Word From God, 1 Kings 6:11-13, ¹¹ Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: ¹² "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. ¹³ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."

Solomon's Second Vision From God, 1 Kings 9:1-9, ¹ And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, ² that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³ And the Lord said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. ⁴ Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, ⁵ then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' ⁶ But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷ then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ⁸ And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' ⁹ Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the Lord their God,

who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this calamity on them.' " There are many ways, by which we could say, that God brought a fair warning to Solomon: **IF** he did not live and walk in God's rules and by His feast days that His wrath will fall upon Israel for disobedience!

Solomon's Greatness in Riches, 1 Kings 10:23-24, ²³ So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²⁴ Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

Solomon's Many Wives, 1 Kings 11:2-8, ¹ But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—² from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For it was so, when Solomon was old, that **his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.** ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸ And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. Within today's society, there are those who claim to be New Testament Believers of Christ who will read this passage and say that the Bible allows many sexual partners, and we need to be tolerant of their many relationships. If this mimics your thinking, you need to read verse 4 again! After you read verse 4, go back and read the previous entry. God is giving warnings! If you really want the proper answer, review 1 Corinthians 6:9-20, ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

¹² All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. ¹³ Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. ¹⁸ Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

God Tears the United Kingdom of Israel Apart, 1 Kings 11:9-13, ¹¹ Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. ¹² Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen." (ESV) Thus, we see the results of disobedience. On page 23, I indicated that we would be looking at King Solomon and his son, King

Rehoboam. We have now seen the results of God's actions and the dividing of united Israel into the two houses, the House of Israel and the House of Judah. We will continue with the subject heading and verse reference in italics. The objective will be to move forward through history to see the captivity of the House of Israel by the Assyrians, and the captivity of the House of Judah by the Babylonians.

Introduction of Jeroboam, an Ephraimite, 1 Kings 11:26; 29-39, ²⁶ Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king. . . . ²⁹ Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two were alone in the field. ³⁰ Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. ³¹ And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you ³² (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ³³ because they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David. ³⁴ However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes. ³⁵ But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and give it to you—ten tribes. ³⁶ And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. ³⁷ So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. ³⁸ Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. ³⁹ And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.' "

Recall once again Numbers 13: 6; 8; 16, ⁶ from the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh; . . . ⁸ from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Nun; . . . ¹⁶ These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Hoshea the son of Nun Joshua. (ESV) With the tearing apart of united Israel, we see the two principal tribes, who will lead the two nations of the House of Judah and the House of Israel. This was foretold in our story of the spys in the book of Numbers over 500 years before it actually happened. Returning to our present task, we see Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, preparing to be made king over the united kingdom of Israel.

Rehoboam to be Made King, 1 Kings 12:2-4, ² So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was still in Egypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), ³ that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ⁴ "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you." ⁵ So he said to them, "Depart for three days, then come back to me." And the people departed.

Israel Rebels Against Rehoboam, 1 Kings 12:13-16, ¹² So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day." ¹³ Then the king answered the people roughly, and rejected the advice which the elders had given him; ¹⁴ and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!" ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from the Lord, that He might fulfill His word, which the Lord had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶ Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king,

saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Now, see to your own house, O David!" So Israel departed to their tents. After this occurred, we have the divided kingdom with the House of Judah and the House of Israel.

Rehoboam to fight against Jeroboam, 1 Kings 12:23-24, ²³ "Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, ²⁴ 'Thus says the Lord: "You shall not go up nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel. Let every man return to his house, for this thing is from Me." ' " Therefore they obeyed the word of the Lord, and turned back, according to the word of the Lord. We see that, it was in God's plan for this to happen, God says this thing is from Me.

Jeroboam Sets Golden Calves at Bethel and Dan, 1 Kings 12: 26-33, ²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah." ²⁸ Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" ²⁹ And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. ³¹ He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. ³² Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. ³³ So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense. Human reasoning has entered with the help and influence of Satan. It is now more important to cover your own tracks, so to speak, and thus fail to be obedient to the ways of God.

With this split between the two houses of united Israel, we have a series of 19 kings in Israel, and a series of 23 kings in Judah. The kings in the house of Judah were both good and bad. However, the kings in the house of Israel, under Jeroboam's leadership, were sinful after the manner of idolatry established by Jeroboam. All the kings of the House of Israel practiced the idolatry that Jeroboam introduced to the tribes of Israel. Allow me to provide a little more information. Under God's ordained feast days, there are three feast days in the first month (of their calendar), one in the summer (Pentecost) and three in the seventh month (of their calendar). There is no required feast day in the eighth month. Nevertheless, that is the month that Jeroboam set up his unrighteous feast day to be followed to replace The Feast of Tabernacles. Now, to continue with our journey from a slightly different viewpoint.

Man of God Comes from Judah, 1 Kings 13:1-24, ¹ And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. ² Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.' " ³ And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the Lord has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out." ⁴ So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. ⁵ The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. ⁶ Then the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the favor of the Lord your God, and pray for me, that my hand

may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the Lord, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before. ⁷ Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." ⁸ But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. ⁹ For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.' " ¹⁰ So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

¹¹ Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. ¹² And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah. ¹³ Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, ¹⁴ and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I am." ¹⁵ Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." ¹⁶ And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷ For I have been told by the word of the Lord, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.' " ¹⁸ He said to him, "I too am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' " (He was lying to him.) ¹⁹ So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water.

²⁰ Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back; ²¹ and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the Lord: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord, and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you, ²² but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which the Lord said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.' " "

²³ So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴ When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. We find two things in this passage. First, even King Jereboam knows that there is a holy God, verse 6. We also see that even an old prophet, not necessarily of the Holy God, can deceive others, even a man of God, verse 18.

Ahijah's Prophecy Against Jereboam, 1 Kings 14:4-5; 7-9; 12-13, ⁴ And Jeroboam's wife did so; she arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were glazed by reason of his age. ⁵ Now the Lord had said to Ahijah, "Here is the wife of Jeroboam, coming to ask you something about her son, for he is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her; for it will be, when she comes in, that she will pretend to be another woman." . . . ⁷ Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: "Because I exalted you from among the people, and made you ruler over My people Israel, ⁸ and tore the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to you; and yet you have not been as My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only what was right in My eyes; ⁹ but you have done more evil than all who were before you, for you have gone and made for yourself other gods and molded images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back— . . . ¹² Arise therefore, go to your own house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. ¹³ And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he is the only one of Jeroboam who shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something good toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

Israel is to be Scattered, 1 Kings 13:14-16, ¹⁴ Moreover the Lord will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam; this is the day. What? Even now! ¹⁵ For the Lord will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden

images, provoking the Lord to anger. ¹⁶ And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin." With these verses, we see God's prophecy against the House of Israel. They are to be scattered. God did not say when this would happen. However, Israel is warned!

King Rehoboam Angers God, 1 Kings 14:22-24, ²² And Judah did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their fathers had done. ²³ For they also built for themselves high places and pillars and Asherim on every high hill and under every green tree, ²⁴ and there were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations that the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. (ESV)

Abijah, King of Judah, 1 Kings 15: 1-5, ¹ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam the son of Nebat, Abijah became king over Judah. ² He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom. ³ And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. ⁴ Nevertheless for David's sake the Lord his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem; ⁵ because David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. This last portion of verse 5 is another story. You would know and understand this statement if you had taken the time to study the Old Testament.

There are other kings anointed in both Judah and Israel, but we come to an interesting story in chapters 16 through 18. In chapter 16, we find the kingship of Ahab and his marriage to Jezebel, a Sidonian. Verse 33 of chapter 16 of First Kings reads, ³³ *And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.* In chapter 17 we add verse 1, ¹ *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."* Our story, that we need to view, is found in chapter 18.

Elijah on Mount Carmel, 1 Kings 18:16-46, ¹⁶ So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

¹⁷ *Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" ¹⁸ And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹ Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."*

²⁰ *So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. ²¹ And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "**How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.**" But the people answered him not a word. ²² Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. ²³ Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God who answers by fire, He is God." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."*

²⁵ *Now Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many; and call on the name of your god, but put no fire under it." ²⁶ So they took the bull which was given them, and they prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But there was no voice; no one answered. Then they leaped about the altar which they had made. ²⁷ And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and*

must be awakened." ²⁸ So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them. ²⁹ And when midday was past, they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice. But there was no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. ³¹ And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name." ³² Then with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³ And he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood, and said, "Fill four waterpots with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood." ³⁴ Then he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time; and he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. ³⁵ So the water ran all around the altar; and he also filled the trench with water. ³⁶ And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word." ³⁷ Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again." ³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" ⁴⁰ And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let one of them escape!" So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Brook Kishon and executed them there.

⁴¹ Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." ⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, ⁴³ and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again." ⁴⁴ Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" ⁴⁵ Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶ Then the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

The people of Israel understood that God was the true God. There was no question, they knew it! Do you think they changed their mind about who to serve? Do you think they were going to change how they worshiped and to whom they worshiped? The answer in both cases is **NO**! Oh, by the way, did you catch the funny at the end of this passage. Go look once again, the power of God came upon Elijah and he tucked his tunic into his belt and outran King Ahab's chariot to Jezreel.

I have provided the number of kings for both Judah and Israel. Since the House of Israel's kings have been practicing the sin of Jereboam all through the years of their separation from Judah, I moved to the last king of the House of Israel first.

Hoshea, Last King over the House of Israel, 2 Kings 17:1-2, ¹ In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. ² And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

King Shalmaneser of Assyria Captured Samaria, 2 Kings 17:5-6, ⁵ Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

Israel Exiled Because of Sin, 2 Kings 17:7-10; 14-15; 21-23, ⁷ For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from

under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods,⁸ and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the Lord had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.⁹ Also the children of Israel secretly did against the Lord their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower to fortified city.¹⁰ They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. . . .¹⁴ Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God.¹⁵ And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. . . .²¹ For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and made them commit a great sin.²² For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them,²³ until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.

Going to the last king of Israel was easy. All 19 kings in succession were bad, sinful and against God. All of these kings followed in the worship of idols established by King Jeroboam, the first king over the House of Israel. However, the kingly line in the House of Judah was different. Some kings disobeyed God's commandments and did evil. Others worked long and hard to clear the idol worship from the House of Judah. To get to the last king over the House of Judah, we really must go through the final five kings who reigned. Let us begin with this task.

Josiah Reigns in Judah, 2 Kings 22:1-2, ¹ *Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.* ² *And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in all the way of David his father, and he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.* (ESV)

Josiah Repairs the Temple, 2 Kings 22:3-7, ³ *In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the Lord, saying,* ⁴ *“Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may count the money that has been brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people.* ⁵ *And let it be given into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord, and let them give it to the workmen who are at the house of the Lord, repairing the house* ⁶ *(that is, to the carpenters, and to the builders, and to the masons), and let them use it for buying timber and quarried stone to repair the house.* ⁷ *But no accounting shall be asked from them for the money that is delivered into their hand, for they deal honestly.”* (ESV) It is amazing what honest accountability will do for anyone. These were honest men who could be trusted to provide the best material along with an honest day's work. It is a shame that humankind now sees greed, profit and control in the managers and slackness in the workers. Satan rules just as the Bible says.

Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law, 2 Kings 22:8-10, ⁸ *And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.* ⁹ *And Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, “Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the Lord.”* ¹⁰ *Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king.* (ESV) Surly, this must be the Torah scroll, which preceded our Bible, however, it was still the Word of God.

Josiah Tears His Clothes, 2 Kings 22:11-13, ¹¹ *When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes.* ¹² *And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan,*

and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, ¹³ "Go, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." (ESV)

Hilkiah Inquires of the Lord, 2 Kings 22:14, ¹⁴ So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter), and they talked with her. (ESV)

Huldah, the Prophetess Gives the Word of the Lord, 2 Kings 22:15-17, ¹⁵ And she said to them, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, ¹⁶ Thus says the Lord, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷ Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. (ESV) This is no longer a warning! This is a record of a statement made in the annals of the Kings of Judah. God has declared what will be done to Judah. Here is the reason that I write what God sends to me. We, you and I, the people of the United States are following the path of both the House of Israel and the House of Judah. I am not a prophet and cannot tell you when God's wrath will fall upon this race of people and this land. I can tell you that we are at the brink of this occurring. Nevertheless, I jump forward a few books in the Word of God and give you this reply from God to King Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:13-18, ¹³ *When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people,* ¹⁴ **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.** ¹⁵ *Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place.* ¹⁶ *For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.* ¹⁷ *As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments,* ¹⁸ *then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel.'* We have already seen what God said and did for King Solomon. We also saw the results of King Solomon's rejection of God's Commandments and the division of united Israel into the two houses: the House of Israel and the House of Judah. God's word shall stand, man's word shall fail! I understand that there will be those who proclaim that they are not a part of Israel in any manner, or by any means. They are New Testament believers who do not understand that they are spiritual Israel if you claim to follow Jesus, the Christ! I have already gone through a presentation to prove that to you! I am now working on the presentation that should prove to you that there are many direct descendants of the ten northern tribes of the House of Israel living as citizens of America. There remains a long journey to get to that culmination of our puzzle pieces.

Huldah Speaks a Word to King Josiah, 2 Kings 22:18-20, ¹⁸ *But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, ¹⁹ because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the Lord, when you heard how I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the Lord. ²⁰ Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.' "* And they brought back word to the king. (ESV) Isn't this what verse 14 above says?

We are now at the beginning of chapter 23 of 2nd Kings. If I practice my normal habit of writing, God has instructed me to print for you most of chapter 23 in its entirety. So let us begin.

Josiah Renews the Covenant, 2 Kings 23:1-3, ¹ Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. ² The king went up to the house of the Lord with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord.

³ Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to follow the Lord and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant. Notice two things in verse 3: (1) The king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the Lord. This pillar is the one Jacob set up and anointed with oil at Bethel while on his journey to his uncle Laban's house; (2) And all the people took a stand for the covenant. This showed that they were in agreement with the king and would obey the commandments of God and be obedient to God's Word!

King Josiah Cleans the Temple and the Land of all Idols, 2 Kings 23:4-28, ⁴ And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. ⁵ Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. ⁶ And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the Lord, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. ⁷ Then he tore down the ritual booths of the perverted persons that were in the house of the Lord, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image.

⁸ And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate. ⁹ Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren.

¹⁰ And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. ¹¹ Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

¹² The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. ¹³ Then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon. ¹⁴ And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

¹⁵ Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image. ¹⁶ As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

¹⁷ Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?" So the men of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel."

¹⁸ And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria. ¹⁹ Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel. ²⁰ He executed all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." ²² Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. ²³ But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the Lord in Jerusalem.

²⁴ Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. ²⁵ Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

²⁶ Nevertheless the Lord did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. ²⁷ And the Lord said, "I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, 'My name shall be there.' "

²⁸ Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Death of King Josiah, 2 Kings 23:29-30, ²⁹ In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him, and Pharaoh Neco killed him at Megiddo, as soon as he saw him. ³⁰ And his servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's place. (ESV)

Jehoahaz's Reign and Captivity, 2 Kings 23:31-35, ³¹ Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ³² And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. ³³ Now Pharaoh Neco put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. ³⁴ Then Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Pharaoh took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there.

³⁵ So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco.

Jehoiakim Reigns in Judah, 2 Kings 23:36-37, ³⁶ Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. ³⁷ And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done. (ESV)

King Nebuchadnezzar Invades Judah, 2 Kings 24:1-7, ¹ During Jehoiakim's reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded the land of Judah. Jehoiakim surrendered and paid him tribute for three years but then rebelled. ² Then the Lord sent bands of Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against Judah to destroy it, just as the Lord had promised through his prophets. ³ These disasters happened to Judah because of the Lord's command. He had decided to banish Judah from his presence because of the many sins of Manasseh, ⁴ who had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. The Lord would not forgive this.

⁵ The rest of the events in Jehoiakim's reign and all his deeds are recorded in The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah. ⁶ When Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin became the next king.

⁷ The king of Egypt did not venture out of his country after that, for the king of Babylon captured the entire area formerly claimed by Egypt—from the Brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River. (NLT)

Jehoiachin Reigns in Judah, 2 Kings 24:8-9, ⁸ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. ⁹ And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done. (ESV) When a king only reigns for three months, you know he did evil in the eyes of the Lord.

Jerusalem Captured, 2 Kings 24:10-17, ¹⁰ At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. ¹¹ And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it, ¹² and Jehoiachin the king of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself and his mother and his servants and his officials and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign ¹³ and carried off all the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the Lord, which Solomon king of Israel had made, as the Lord had foretold. ¹⁴ He carried away all Jerusalem and all the officials and all the mighty men of valor, 10,000 captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained, except the poorest people of the land. ¹⁵ And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officials, and the chief men of the land he took into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. ¹⁶ And the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valor, 7,000, and the craftsmen and the metal workers, 1,000, all of them strong and fit for war. ¹⁷ And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. (ESV)

Zedekiah Reigns in Judah, 2 Kings 24:18-20, ¹⁸ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ¹⁹ And he did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ For because of the anger of the Lord it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that he cast them out from his presence.

And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. (ESV) King Zedekiah was the last king to rule over Judah and Jerusalem. We are not finished with our story. There remains one more chapter in 2nd Kings, however, we will add more to our puzzle pieces as we go through the books of God's Prophets.

The Fall of Jerusalem, 2 Kings 25:1-7, ¹ And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and laid siege to it. And they built siegeworks all around it. ² So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ³ On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. ⁴ Then a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. ⁵ But the army of the

Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him. ⁶ Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed sentence on him. ⁷ They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon. (ESV)

Jerusalem and the Temple Burned, 2 Kings 25:8-12, ⁸ And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned the house of the Lord and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire. ¹⁰ And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls of Jerusalem all around.

¹¹ Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive the rest of the people who remained in the city and the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon, with the rest of the multitude. ¹² But the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers.

Bronze Items of the Temple Destroyed, 2 Kings 25: 13-17, ¹³ The bronze pillars that were in the house of the Lord, and the carts and the bronze Sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried their bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. ¹⁵ The firepans and the basins, the things of solid gold and solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. ¹⁶ The two pillars, one Sea, and the carts, which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. ¹⁷ The height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the capital on it was of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits, and the network and pomegranates all around the capital were all of bronze. The second pillar was the same, with a network.

Officials of Jerusalem Executed, 2 Kings 25: 18-21, ¹⁸ And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the three keepers of the threshold, ¹⁹ and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the men of war, and five men of the king's council who were found in the city, and the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. ²⁰ And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹ And the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile out of its land. (ESV)

Gedaliah Appointed Governor, 2 Kings 25:22-24, ²² And over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, he appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, governor. ²³ Now when all the captains and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah governor, they came with their men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, namely, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite. ²⁴ And Gedaliah swore to them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid because of the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you." (ESV)

Gedaliah Killed by Ishmael, 2 Kings 25:25, ²⁵ But in the seventh month, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men and struck down Gedaliah and put him to death along with the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. (ESV)

A Remnant Flees to Egypt, 2 Kings 25:26, ²⁶ Then all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the forces arose and went to Egypt, for they were afraid of the Chaldeans. (ESV)

Jehoiachin Released from Prison, 2 Kings 25:27-30. ²⁷ And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. ²⁸ And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who

were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table, ³⁰ and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, according to his daily needs, as long as he lived. (ESV)

We have followed the trail of kings within both, the House of Israel and the House of Judah. I have attempted to present to you sufficient information to go through both kingly lines. We have also seen both houses taken into captivity. The House of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians and the House of Judah was taken captive by the Babylonians. The difference between the two is the fact of time with Israel's captivity about 140 years prior to Judah's captivity. I do not feel that it is necessary to go through the two book of Chronicles, they are another view of the history of the kingly lines. Now, let's go through the books of the Prophets of God and see what they revealed from God. There will be some glorious statements of hope as God regathers Israel and Judah. There will also be warning after warning for the people to repent and return to the Covenant that they agreed to follow as God's people. Along the way, we will find more puzzle pieces. First, let's turn to Isaiah chapter 1 and view what the prophet records: Isaiah 1:13-31, ¹³ *Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.* ¹⁴ *Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them.* ¹⁵ *When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.* ¹⁶ *"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,* ¹⁷ *Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.* ¹⁸ *"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.* ¹⁹ ***If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;*** ²⁰ ***But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword";*** For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. ²¹ *How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.* ²² *Your silver has become dross, Your wine mixed with water.* ²³ *Your princes are rebellious, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards. They do not defend the fatherless, Nor does the cause of the widow come before them.* ²⁴ *Therefore the Lord says, The Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, "Ah, I will rid Myself of My adversaries, And take vengeance on My enemies.* ²⁵ *I will turn My hand against you, And thoroughly purge away your dross, And take away all your alloy.* ²⁶ *I will restore your judges as at the first, And your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city."* ²⁷ *Zion shall be redeemed with justice, And her penitents with righteousness.* ²⁸ *The destruction of transgressors and of sinners shall be together, And those who forsake the Lord shall be consumed.* ²⁹ *For they shall be ashamed of the terebinth trees Which you have desired; And you shall be embarrassed because of the gardens Which you have chosen.* ³⁰ *For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades, And as a garden that has no water.* ³¹ *The strong shall be as tinder, And the work of it as a spark; Both will burn together, And no one shall quench them.* Strong words are spoken by the Lord, nevertheless, if mankind will be obedient to God's Commandments and His feasts days, He blesses those who are obedient. We can find both hope and wrath in these verses. It remains mankind's free will choice as to what the future brings. We either repent and return to God's ways, or rebel and suffer the consequences.

Now, please turn to chapter 11. Chapter 11 takes on the mantle of prophecy and gives us a preview of Jesus as Christ and Ruler along with the remnant called together from the four corners of the globe. There is a bright glimmer of hope resting in these verses. I am placing here all 16 verses of this chapter. Isaiah 11:1-16, ¹ *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* (This, of course, is speaking of Jesus, as Christ.) ² *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.* ³ *His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by*

the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; ⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor; And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. ⁶ "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ "And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious." ¹¹ It shall come to pass in that day That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, (The first time God set His hand to recover His people was the exodus from Egypt, see verse 16.) From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea. ¹² He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth. ¹³ Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, And Judah shall not harass Ephraim. ¹⁴ But they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west; Together they shall plunder the people of the East; They shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab; And the people of Ammon shall obey them. ¹⁵ The Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt; With His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River, And strike it in the seven streams, And make men cross over dry-shod. ¹⁶ There will be a highway for the remnant of His people Who will be left from Assyria, As it was for Israel In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. Notice two other items besides the two notes I inserted. First, notice the last portion of verse 11. The islands of the sea is a puzzle piece and we shall see this clause again. Second, notice verse 16 above. God will provide a route for the descendants of the Assyrian exile to return to Israel. This return will be similar to the exodus from Egypt by the Hebrews. This is another puzzle piece.

Turn over to Isaiah chapter 24. Chapter 24 appears to be a chapter of God's wrath, but hidden in the verses are a few passages of great hope. Look at verses 14-15, ¹⁴ They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea. ¹⁵ Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea. (KJV) Once again we see the identifier the isles of the sea. Now review verses 21-22, ²¹ On that day the Lord will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. ²² They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. (ESV) Evil and wickedness will be punished and it will not make any difference whether it is Satan and his angels, or wicked leaders on earth and wicked people. They will all be gathered together and punished.

There is an interesting statement made in the first three verses of Isaiah chapter 30. Isaiah 30:1-3, ¹ "Woe to the rebellious children," says the Lord, "Who take counsel, but not of Me, And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, That they may add sin to sin; ² Who walk to go down to Egypt, And have not asked My advice, To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, And to trust in the shadow of Egypt! ³ Therefore the strength of Pharaoh Shall be your shame, And trust in the shadow of Egypt Shall be your humiliation. We shall see this again when we review the book of Jeremiah.

How about a passage of hope? Turn over to Isaiah Chapter 44 and read the following in verses 21-23, ²¹ Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you; you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me. ²² I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist; return to me, for I have redeemed you. ²³ Sing, O heavens, for the Lord

has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel. (ESV)

Time to turn a few pages and begin gathering information from the book of Jeremiah. Let's add Jeremiah's calling by God, and the commission that God gave to Jeremiah. First, his calling in chapter 1:4-5, ⁴ *Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying:* ⁵ *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."* Jeremiah's task to perform is given in verses 9-10, ⁹ *Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. ¹⁰ See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant."* These are the six items Jeremiah was instructed to perform. These six items also represent another puzzle piece. But why was Jeremiah instructed to do these things? The answer is given in verse 16, ¹⁶ *I will utter My judgments Against them concerning all their wickedness, Because they have forsaken Me, Burned incense to other gods, And worshiped the works of their own hands.* God gives to Jeremiah the strength and stamina to stand up against the king and the people to complete his task in verses 18-19, ¹⁸ *For behold, I have made you this day A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls against the whole land—Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land. ¹⁹ They will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you," says the Lord, "to deliver you."*

What information can we find in chapter 2? Let's see what is there. Jeremiah 2:4-9; 17; 19, ⁴ *Hear the word of the Lord, O house of Jacob and all the families of the house of Israel. ⁵ Thus says the Lord: "What injustice have your fathers found in Me, That they have gone far from Me, Have followed idols, And have become idolaters? ⁶ Neither did they say, 'Where is the Lord, Who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, Who led us through the wilderness, Through a land of deserts and pits, Through a land of drought and the shadow of death, Through a land that no one crossed And where no one dwelt?' ⁷ I brought you into a bountiful country, To eat its fruit and its goodness. But when you entered, you defiled My land And made My heritage an abomination. ⁸ The priests did not say, 'Where is the Lord?' And those who handle the law did not know Me; The rulers also transgressed against Me; The prophets prophesied by Baal, And walked after things that do not profit. ⁹ "Therefore I will yet bring charges against you," says the Lord, "And against your children's children I will bring charges. . . . ¹⁷ Have you not brought this on yourself, In that you have forsaken the Lord your God When He led you in the way? . . . ¹⁹ Your own wickedness will correct you, And your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing That you have forsaken the Lord your God, And the fear of Me is not in you," Says the Lord God of hosts.* Continuing with verses from chapter 2 let's look at several more verses. Jeremiah 2:20; 26; 30-31; 34-35, ²⁰ *"For of old I have broken your yoke and burst your bonds; And you said, 'I will not transgress,' When on every high hill and under every green tree You lay down, playing the harlot. . . . ²⁶ "As the thief is ashamed when he is found out, So is the house of Israel ashamed; They and their kings and their princes, and their priests and their prophets, . . . ³⁰ "In vain I have chastened your children; They received no correction. Your sword has devoured your prophets Like a destroying lion. ³¹ "O generation, see the word of the Lord! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, Or a land of darkness? Why do My people say, 'We are lords; We will come no more to You'? . . . ³⁴ Also on your skirts is found The blood of the lives of the poor innocents. I have not found it by secret search, But plainly on all these things. ³⁵ Yet you say, 'Because I am innocent, Surely His anger shall turn from me.' Behold, I will plead My case against you, Because you say, 'I have not sinned.'*

Chapter three really begins to explain how disappointed God was with the actions of the House of Israel. We went through the history of the kings of both Israel and Judah in the two books of Kings. In the time of King Josiah, we read of the actions of the secretary and the chief priest, however, we read nothing about the prophet Jeremiah. We find Jeremiah's statement concerning that time period in chapter

3:6-15, ⁶ The Lord said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: "Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot. ⁷ And I said, after she had done all these things, 'Return to Me.' But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. ⁸ Then I saw that for all the causes for which **backsliding Israel** had committed adultery, **I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce;** yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. ⁹ So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. ¹⁰ And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not turned to Me with her whole heart, but in pretense," says the Lord.

¹¹ Then the Lord said to me, "Backsliding Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. ¹² Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: '**Return, backsliding Israel,**' says the Lord; **I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I am merciful,**' says the Lord; **I will not remain angry forever.** ¹³ Only **acknowledge your iniquity.** That you have transgressed against the Lord your God, And have scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree, And **you have not obeyed My voice,**' says the Lord. ¹⁴ "Return, O backsliding children," says the Lord; "for I am married to you. **I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.** (This almost sounds like a selected remnant of the House of Israel.) ¹⁵ And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

The important portions of the book of Jeremiah, that relate to our search for puzzle pieces appear to rest in the latter portion of Jeremiah's work. However, there is one statement we need to understand in chapter 16. Please read the following from Jeremiah 16:14-21, ¹⁴ "Therefore behold, **the days are coming,**" says the Lord, "that it shall no more be said, 'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,'" ¹⁵ but, **'The Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.'** For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.

¹⁶ "Behold, **I will send for many fishermen,**" says the Lord, "and **they shall fish them;** and afterward I will send for many hunters, and **they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.**" ¹⁷ **For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes.** ¹⁸ **And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols.**"

¹⁹ **O Lord, my strength and my fortress, My refuge in the day of affliction, The Gentiles shall come to You From the ends of the earth and say, 'Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things.'** ²⁰ **Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods?** ²¹ "Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And **they shall know that My name is the Lord.**" There are several interesting statements within this passage of Scripture. Notice in verse 14 that the days are coming, indicating that this will be some time after the days of Jeremiah. In verse 15, we should understand that in those implied days from verse 14 that God will bring back to the nation of Israel the peoples of the ten lost tribes that made up the House of Israel. Verse 16 seems to have two parts. In the first part, God sends missionaries throughout the lands to have people to understand and accept His Word (to fish them). Once again, afterward He will send others to hunt them in their secret places and bring them out. Verse 17 tells us that God sees all that they do and how they are sinning against Him. In verse 18, God indicates that He will repay them double for their sins. Verses 19-21 seem to be a prayer from Jeremiah or a statement from God to Jeremiah. I desire that you see and understand **the one word in verse 19 that is in bold print.** **Who are Gentiles?**

Aren't they non-Jewish? (Strong's Greek 1484; spec. a foreign (non-Jewish) one (usually by impl. pagan). **Aren't all the lost ten tribes of the House of Israel non-**

Jewish and simply Israelites? Are you beginning to see and understand that the ten tribes of the House of Israel were taken captive by Assyria. Because of having no king and no country of their own, they lost their identity of being Israelites and therefore were simply a part of the general population of the Gentiles. They became Gentiles themselves.

We now know, through many of our puzzle pieces, that the Israelites of the House of Israel were assimilated into the Gentile world, and they practiced many of the pagan sins of the Gentiles. Even so with that information, we have not identified how many, Americans and a large portion of the English speaking Gentile world, are direct descendants of the lost ten tribes of the House of Israel. Isn't this confirmed by what is stated in 2 Kings 17:23 on page 31? We still have other puzzle pieces to find and put together before our task is complete.

There is another chapter of Jeremiah that I'd like to add to our list of puzzle pieces prior to the main discussion of the book of Jeremiah. Please turn over to chapter 18 and view the verses 5-10, ⁵ *Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: ⁶ "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the Lord. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!" ⁷ The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, ⁸ if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. ⁹ And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, ¹⁰ if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.* Notice what is stated in verse 7. Isn't this the same as the commission that was given to Jeremiah by God. There is a slight difference between these verses here and the six items given to Jeremiah on page 39. Using the six items from Chapter 1:10 or the five items listed here, there are two specific tasks given. One is the task of destruction and the other task is the (re)building of a nation, or kingdom.

The important portion of Jeremiah is located between chapter 30 to the end of the book of Jeremiah. I now turn to chapter 30 to locate and collect more of our puzzle pieces. We know from prior Scripture that both the House of Israel and the House of Judah will go into exile. We also know that the House of Israel went into captivity of Assyria about 140 years prior to the captivity of the House of Judah in Babylon. We understand that the House of Israel has not returned to their homeland, and the House of Judah returned from Babylon 70 years after their exile. Chapter 30 begins telling about the restoration of Israel and Judah. Read the following from chapter 30:1-7; 10-11; 16-17, ¹ *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, ² "Thus speaks the Lord God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. ³ For behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.' "*

⁴ *Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. ⁵ "For thus says the Lord: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, Whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins Like a woman in labor, And all faces turned pale? ⁷ Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it. . . . ¹⁰ 'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the Lord, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid.*

¹¹ *For I am with you,' says the Lord, 'to save you; Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, Yet I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you in justice, And will not let you go altogether unpunished.' . . . ¹⁶ 'Therefore all those who devour you shall be devoured; And all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; Those who plunder you shall become plunder, And all who prey upon you I will make a prey. ¹⁷ *For I will restore health to you And heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'Because they called you an outcast saying: "This is Zion; No one seeks her."* ' Does'n't verse 7 predict the time of the Great Tribulation, or, in the words here, a time of Jacob's Trouble? Also, look at the two underlined portions. Isn't that a warning that those nations, who have taken God's people captive, will be destroyed? Aren't the two original nations that took God's people captive Assyria and Babylon? Any student of the Bible should be able to tell you that the spirit of Babylon is now the Holy Roman Empire, and the 7th rising of that Empire will be the Beast of the book of Revelation. Those events and the mystery of things occurring today should wake everyone up to the fact that the period of the tribulation is just around the corner. Heed God's warning and repent of your sins and return to the service of God by being obedient to His laws and feasts.*

Let's look at Jeremiah chapter 31 to see what God says to Jeremiah. Jeremiah 31:1-4; 7-10; 17-18; 20-22; 27-28; 31-37, ¹ *"At that time, declares the Lord, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people."* ² *Thus says the Lord: "The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, ³ the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. ⁴ Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. . . . ⁷ For thus says the Lord: "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.'* ⁸ *Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹ With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰ "Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.'* . . . ¹⁷ *There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country. ¹⁸ I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the Lord my God. . . . ²⁰ Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child?* (I am inserting verse 20 from the NLT just for the sake of the translation: ²⁰ ***"Is not Israel still my son, my darling child?"*** says the Lord. "I often have to punish him, but I still love him. That's why I long for him and surely will have mercy on him. (NLT)) *For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the Lord. ²¹ "Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts; consider well the highway, the road by which you went. Return, O virgin Israel, return to these your cities. ²² How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encircles a man." . . . ²⁷ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. ²⁸ And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the Lord. . . . ³¹ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law*

within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

³⁵ Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the Lord of hosts is his name:³⁶ "If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the Lord, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever."³⁷ Thus says the Lord: "If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the Lord." (ESV)

In Jeremiah 33 we find these verses, 14-22,¹⁴ 'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:¹⁵ 'In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. (Jesus, as Christ the Lord.)¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called:

'THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'

¹⁷ "For thus says the Lord: 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel;¹⁸ nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.' "

¹⁹ And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying,²⁰ "Thus says the Lord: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season,²¹ then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.

There are two important statements to be recorded from chapter 39. Look at Jeremiah 39:4-7,⁴ When Zedekiah king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out of the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls; and they went toward the Arabah.⁵ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence on him.⁶ The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes, and the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah.⁷ He put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains to take him to Babylon. (ESV) We have seen this stated previously in 2 Kings 25:7 on page 36. The second statement that is made is in verses 11-12,¹¹ Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying,¹² "Take him and look after him, and do him no harm; but do to him just as he says to you." Isn't this an amazing statement. Here we find the king of Babylon instructing the captain of the guard to watch over Jeremiah and not to harm him. How did the King of Babylon even know about Jeremiah? Who told the king not to harm him and to care for him? Do you think the God of Israel and Judah might have whispered in the king's ear?

We find the follow up to the statement in chapter 39 in chapter 40. Look at Jeremiah 40:2-6,² The captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "The Lord your God pronounced this disaster against this place.³ The Lord has brought it about, and has done as he said. Because you sinned against the Lord and did not obey his voice, this thing has come upon you.⁴ Now, behold, I release you today from the chains on your hands. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you well, but if it seems wrong to you to come with me to Babylon, do not come. See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you think it good and right to go.⁵ If you remain, then return to

Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed governor of the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people. Or go wherever you think it right to go.” So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance of food and a present, and let him go. ⁶ Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah, and lived with him among the people who were left in the land. (ESV)

There are a few more pieces of information that we need to understand in the remainder of chapter 40 and in chapter 41. Chapter 40, verses 7-8a, ⁷ *And when all the captains of the armies who were in the fields, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, children, and the poorest of the land who had not been carried away captive to Babylon, ⁸ then they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—* Continuing with verses 11-14, ¹¹ *Likewise, when all the Jews who were in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom, and who were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ¹² then all the Jews returned out of all places where they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruit in abundance.*

¹³ *Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields came to Gedaliah at Mizpah, ¹⁴ and said to him, “Do you certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to murder you?” But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them.*

In chapter 41, we continue with the story of those who were the remnant left in the land of Judah under the guidance of Gedaliah. Chapter 41:1-3, ¹ *But in mid-autumn, (the ESV translation reads In the seventh month—that would be the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar, or in September or October to us today.) Ishmael son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family and had been one of the king’s high officials, went to Mizpah with ten men to meet Gedaliah. While they were eating together, ² Ishmael and his ten men suddenly jumped up, drew their swords, and killed Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor. ³ Ishmael also killed all the Judeans and the Babylonian soldiers who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah.* (NLT) The next passage of Scripture from chapter 41 gives to us one of the most important puzzle pieces in all of our search. Please read what verse 10 tells us: ¹⁰ *Then Ishmael carried away captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king’s daughters and all the people who remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive and departed to go over to the Ammonites.* Hold everything! What is this that there are daughters of King Zedekiah? Return to chapter 39 of Jeremiah. Didn’t King Zedekiah and his sons escape through the garden at night? Didn’t the Babylonians catch them and take them before the king of Babylon? Didn’t the Babylonians kill the sons and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and take him to Babylon? Strange that there was no mention of daughters in chapter 39. However, the more I thought about this, it made much more sense that God’s plan needed to keep the daughters alive, for the moment. How else would you have King David’s bloodline to continue? This is one of the major pieces of our puzzle.

We have a new twist in our story! The king’s daughters become a major connection between 588 B.C. and today. The entire portion of this work has the objective to show you the possibility that some of the population of the United States and other nations are direct descendants of the lost ten tribes of the House of Israel. Without something to tie that time to this time, the entire objective becomes mute. The bloodline of King David flows through the bodies of these daughters. We must continue. The last portion of chapter 41 tells us what happened next to this little group, Chapter 41, verses 11-15, ¹¹ *But when Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that were with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, ¹² they took all the men and went to fight with*

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah; and they found him by the great pool that is in Gibeon.¹³ So it was, when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, that they were glad.¹⁴ Then all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan the son of Kareah.¹⁵ But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to the Ammonites. Johanan the captain of the army officers becomes the leader of this remnant group. As the leader of this group, he became afraid of what Ishmael had done and desired to lead this group into Egypt. This is recorded in verses 16-18 of chapter 41,¹⁶ Then Johanan son of Kareah and the other guerrilla leaders took all the people they had rescued in Gibeon—the soldiers, women, children, and court officials whom Ishmael had captured after he killed Gedaliah.¹⁷ They took them all to the village of Geruth-kimham near Bethlehem, where they prepared to leave for Egypt.¹⁸ They were afraid of what the Babylonians would do when they heard that Ishmael had killed Gedaliah, the governor appointed by the Babylonian king.

(NLT)

The last we heard anything about Jeremiah was at the beginning of chapter 40 in verse 6. We are now in chapter 42 and we find Jeremiah again. We know that Johanan is leading this group, and we observe that Johanan asked Jeremiah to seek the Lord for guidance on what this remnant should do, verses 1-3,¹ *Now all the captains of the forces, Johanan the son of Kareah, Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people, from the least to the greatest, came near² and said to Jeremiah the prophet, "Please, let our petition be acceptable to you, and pray for us to the Lord your God, for all this remnant (since we are left but a few of many, as you can see),³ that the Lord your God may show us the way in which we should walk and the thing we should do."* Jeremiah's answer is in verse 4,⁴ *Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard. Indeed, I will pray to the Lord your God according to your words, and it shall be, that whatever the Lord answers you, I will declare it to you. I will keep nothing back from you."* Johanan's response is verses 5-6,⁵ *So they said to Jeremiah, "Let the Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not do according to everything which the Lord your God sends us by you.⁶ Whether it is pleasing or displeasing, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God to whom we send you, that it may be well with us when we obey the voice of the Lord our God."* Jeremiah had to wait for the Lord to give him the words to speak to Johanan, verses 7-11,⁷ *And it happened after ten days that the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah.⁸ Then he called Johanan the son of Kareah, all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest,⁹ and said to them, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your petition before Him:¹⁰ 'If you will still remain in this land, then I will build you and not pull you down, and I will plant you and not pluck you up. For I relent concerning the disaster that I have brought upon you.¹¹ Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid; do not be afraid of him,' says the Lord, 'for I am with you, to save you and deliver you from his hand.¹² And I will show you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and cause you to return to your own land.'* The negative side of this reply is given in verses 13-22,¹³ *"But if you say, 'We will not dwell in this land,' disobeying the voice of the Lord your God,¹⁴ saying, 'No, but we will go to the land of Egypt where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor be hungry for bread, and there we will dwell'—¹⁵ Then hear now the word of the Lord, O remnant of Judah! Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If you wholly set your faces to enter Egypt, and go to dwell there,¹⁶ then it shall be that the sword which you feared shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; the famine of which you were afraid shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there you shall die.¹⁷ So shall it be with all the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to dwell there. They shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. And none of them shall remain or escape from the disaster that I will bring upon them.'*

¹⁸ *"For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'As My anger and My fury have been poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so will My fury be poured out on you when you enter Egypt.*

And you shall be an oath, an astonishment, a curse, and a reproach; and you shall see this place no more.’¹⁹ The Lord has said concerning you, O remnant of Judah, ‘Do not go to Egypt!’ Know certainly that I have admonished you this day.²⁰ For you were hypocrites in your hearts when you sent me to the Lord your God, saying, ‘Pray for us to the Lord our God, and according to all that the Lord your God says, so declare to us and we will do it.’²¹ And I have this day declared it to you, but you have not obeyed the voice of the Lord your God, or anything which He has sent you by me.²² Now therefore, know certainly that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go to dwell.”

In chapter 43, we observe the arrogance of Johanan and others in regard to what Jeremiah told them, verses 1-3, ¹ *Now it happened, when Jeremiah had stopped speaking to all the people all the words of the Lord their God, for which the Lord their God had sent him to them, all these words,* ² *that Azariah the son of Hoshaiiah, Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men spoke, saying to Jeremiah, “You speak falsely! The Lord our God has not sent you to say, ‘Do not go to Egypt to dwell there.’* ³ *But Baruch the son of Neriah has set you against us, to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they may put us to death or carry us away captive to Babylon.”* Nevertheless, we see Johanan leading this remnant into Egypt, in disobedience to God’s instructions, verses 4-7, ⁴ *So Johanan the son of Kareah, all the captains of the forces, and all the people would not obey the voice of the Lord, to remain in the land of Judah.* ⁵ *But Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned to dwell in the land of Judah, from all nations where they had been driven—* ⁶ *men, women, children, the king’s daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch the son of Neriah.* ⁷ *So they went to the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the Lord. And they went as far as Tahpanhes.*

God leads Jeremiah to give an object lesson to the remnant of Judah who are dwelling in Egypt, in verses 8-13 of chapter 43, ⁸ *Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,* ⁹ *“Take large stones in your hand, and hide them in the sight of the men of Judah, in the clay in the brick courtyard which is at the entrance to Pharaoh’s house in Tahpanhes;* ¹⁰ *and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will send and bring Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will set his throne above these stones that I have hidden. And he will spread his royal pavilion over them.* ¹¹ *When he comes, he shall strike the land of Egypt and deliver to death those appointed for death, and to captivity those appointed for captivity, and to the sword those appointed for the sword.* ¹² *I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt, and he shall burn them and carry them away captive. And he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd puts on his garment, and he shall go out from there in peace.* ¹³ *He shall also break the sacred pillars of Beth Shemesh that are in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians he shall burn with fire.” ‘ ‘*

God is truly cleaning house with His wrath. We know that God permitted the House of Israel to be exiled to Assyria, and the House of Judah to be exiled to Babylon. We now find a remnant of Judah in Egypt, and we find the same thing going on. They are worshiping idols and disobeying the Commandments of God and His feast days. God now turns his wrath toward these in Egypt. Chapter 44 1-14, ¹ *The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews who dwell in the land of Egypt, who dwell at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,* ² *“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘You have seen all the calamity that I have brought on Jerusalem and on all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they are a desolation, and no one dwells in them,* ³ *because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke Me to anger, in that they went to burn incense and to serve other gods whom they did not know, they nor you nor your fathers.* ⁴ *However I have sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, “Oh, do not do this abominable thing that I hate!”* ⁵ *But they did not listen or incline their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no*

incense to other gods. ⁶ So My fury and My anger were poured out and kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as it is this day.' ⁷ Now therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Why do you commit this great evil against yourselves, to cut off from you man and woman, child and infant, out of Judah, leaving none to remain, ⁸ in that you provoke Me to wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have gone to dwell, that you may cut yourselves off and be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?' ⁹ Have you forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, the wickedness of the kings of Judah, the wickedness of their wives, your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? ¹⁰ They have not been humbled, to this day, nor have they feared; they have not walked in My law or in My statutes that I set before you and your fathers.'

¹¹ "Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Behold, I will set My face against you for catastrophe and for cutting off all Judah. ¹² And I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to dwell there, and they shall all be consumed and fall in the land of Egypt. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine. They shall die, from the least to the greatest, by the sword and by famine; and they shall be an oath, an astonishment, a curse and a reproach! ¹³ For I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, ¹⁴ so that none of the remnant of Judah who have gone into the land of Egypt to dwell there shall escape or survive, lest they return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return and dwell. **For none shall return except those who escape.**' " Chapter 44, verses 26-30, ²⁶ Therefore hear the word of the Lord, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: 'Behold, I have sworn by My great name,' says the Lord, 'that My name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, "The Lord God lives." ²⁷ Behold, I will watch over them for adversity and not for good. And all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end to them. ²⁸ **Yet a small number who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, who have gone to the land of Egypt to dwell there, shall know whose words will stand, Mine or theirs.** ²⁹ And this shall be a sign to you,' says the Lord, 'that I will punish you in this place, that you may know that My words will surely stand against you for adversity.' ³⁰ Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek his life, as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.' "

Chapter 45 is a message to Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, there are only 5 verses. ¹ The word that Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah: ² "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: ³ You said, 'Woe is me! For the Lord has added sorrow to my pain. I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest.' ⁴ Thus shall you say to him, Thus says the Lord: Behold, what I have built I am breaking down, and what I have planted I am plucking up—that is, the whole land. ⁵ And do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not, for behold, I am bringing disaster upon all flesh, declares the Lord. **But I will give you your life as a prize of war in all places to which you may go.**" (ESV)

Chapter 46 through most of chapter 51 is messages to the nations around Judah as to what God is going to do to them. Even so, there is a statement following the last verse of chapter 51, verses 59-64, ⁵⁹ The prophet Jeremiah gave this message to Seraiah son of Neriah and grandson of Mahseiah, a staff officer, when Seraiah went to Babylon with King Zedekiah of Judah. This was during the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign. ⁶⁰ Jeremiah had recorded on a scroll all the terrible disasters that would soon come

upon Babylon—all the words written here. ⁶¹ He said to Seraiah, “When you get to Babylon, read aloud everything on this scroll. ⁶² Then say, ‘Lord, you have said that you will destroy Babylon so that neither people nor animals will remain here. She will lie empty and abandoned forever.’ ⁶³ When you have finished reading the scroll, tie it to a stone and throw it into the Euphrates River. ⁶⁴ Then say, ‘In this same way Babylon and her people will sink, never again to rise, because of the disasters I will bring upon her.’”

This is the end of Jeremiah’s messages. (NLT) Here rests the mystery of Jeremiah. There is no closing at the end of the book of Jeremiah telling us the final whereabouts of this prophet. Neither does it fully complete the commission that God assigned to Jeremiah. Where is the planting and the building? Chapter 52 is a summary, and the Jews themselves cannot tell you what happened to Jeremiah.

Let us continue our journey and turn to the book of Ezekiel. There are three passages that we need to view. The first is in chapter 18. There is most definitely a condition called backsliding. God knows the heart of mankind and that man can turn and walk away from His teachings. To view this, turn to Ezekiel 18:24, ²⁴ “*But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.*” That sounds pretty straight forward to me. If a person chooses to turn from righteousness, they can lose the grace of God and forfeit a person’s sanctification. This can also happen to a nation. Both Israel and Judah experienced this as a fact, and therefore both houses were exiled.

Our next passage of Scripture is Ezekiel 21:24-27, ²⁴ “*Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear--because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.*” ²⁵

Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end, ²⁶ **thus says the Lord God: ‘Remove the turban, and take off the crown; Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.** ²⁷ **Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, Until He comes whose right it is, And I will give it to Him.’”** There are so many things to discuss within this passage. We have been following the line of kings of united Israel to the following split. At this junction, we saw that there were two kingdoms and two houses: The House of Israel and the House of Judah. We also found out that there were four changes to the person who held the birthright. Of those four changes, we have seen that three have already taken place. If we followed the birthright from Abraham down to this point in the book of Ezekiel, we would have the following chain of persons holding the birthright: Abraham; Isaac; Esau changing to Jacob (transition one: name changed to Israel); Reuben changing to Joseph (transition two: the line of the House of Israel); Manasseh changing to Ephraim (transition three). Now, for the House of Judah! The line of the House of Judah goes back to Jacob and begins with Judah as the holder of the Scepter, or the kingly line; Perez; Hebron; Ram; Amminadab; Nahshon; Salmon; Boaz; Obed; Jesse; David; (the line continues through the 23 kings who set on the throne of David down to King Zedekiah as the last king of the House of Judah). But where is the fourth transition of the birthright? It is getting ready to come to light within this riddle in the book of Ezekiel. First, look at verse 25, **Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end,**

This is God speaking through His prophet Ezekiel to Zedekiah as a profaned, wicked prince over the House of Israel. God declares that on that day his iniquity (sins) would come to an end. Along with Zedekiah’s iniquity, there was the iniquity of the whole House of Judah. Wasn’t the House of Judah being exiled to Babylon because of their iniquities?

The important part of this riddle rests in verse 26, *thus says the Lord God: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown; Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted."* God is announcing a change. He is telling, through Ezekiel, that the symbol of power, the crown, is to be removed and the humble are to be exalted, and the exalted are to be humbled. How are we going to make this change within the royal line and shift the point and placement of the crown? We must go back through all the pieces of our puzzle that we have collected up to this point. Return with me to the story of Judah and Tamar. We know that Judah holds the scepter. We also know that Tamar had twins by Judah. It is here that we must pick up another puzzle piece toward our objective, but at the same time, we must show the truth of the matter and exalt the humble. The story of the birth of these twins was given in Genesis 38:27-30, ²⁷ *Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb.* ²⁸ *And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first."* ²⁹ *Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez.* ³⁰ *Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah.* The midwife put the scarlet thread on the one born first, and declared in verse 28 that this particular twin actually was the one who entered our world first. Now notice, we find the name Perez in our line of descent for the House of Judah. We do not find the name of Zerah anyplace in either line of descent from Jacob. Nevertheless, we now find that the line of Perez, the exalted, is to transfer to the line of Zerah, the humble. This will make our fourth change of birthright as it has been stated previously. However, it is not an easy task to show you the outcome of this transfer. Allow me to give you a brief illustration of what must happen. We know from the book of Jeremiah that King Zedekiah had daughters who carry the bloodline of King David. We now know that the line through Perez must change over to the line of Zerah. Where, when and how is not directly recorded in the Bible. Yet, we must complete or search for puzzle pieces and the reasons why all this took place in history. We will complete our task, bear with me. For the final portion of this passage that we have under review in Ezekiel, look at verse 27. *Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, Until He comes whose right it is, And I will give it to Him.* ' ' It appears that there are to be three points or places where there is a transfer of power or even of a nation itself. The final statement in this verse indicates that wherever this ends up (a nation), it is to rest there until He (Christ) comes; whose right it is to hold the crown and the throne, and God will give it to Him! Remember, God can destroy kingdoms and God can make kingdoms as He pleases.

We must review our third passage from the book of Ezekiel. This last passage is a passage of hope and restoration. Please review Ezekiel 37:15-28, ¹⁵ *Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ¹⁶ "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: 'For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.' ¹⁷ Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.*

¹⁸ *"And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?'— ¹⁹ say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand." ²⁰ And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. ²¹ Then say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. ²³ They shall not defile themselves*

anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

²⁴ "David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. ²⁵ Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. ²⁶ Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. ²⁷ My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ²⁸ The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." ' ' There is great hope, for all of humanity to understand, that God's intent is to bring all the descendants of those scattered in ages past back together to their homeland, and under the gracious guidance of Christ in living, loving and obeying God in the Kingdom of Heaven.

There remains one prophet of God that I'd like to review his book in the Bible. It is hoped this may help illustrate the depth of sin that the House of Israel practiced. It is these practices that caused God to be so upset with them and to exile them in Assyria. That book is the book of Hosea. Now we begin with Hosea 4:6; 17-19, ⁶ *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. . . .* ¹⁷ *Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone.* ¹⁸ *When their drink is gone, they give themselves to whoring; their rulers dearly love shame.* ¹⁹ *A wind has wrapped them in its wings, and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices.* (ESV) Our next passage is Hosea 5:11-15, ¹¹ *Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to go after filth.* ¹² *But I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like dry rot to the house of Judah.* ¹³ *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound, then Ephraim went to Assyria, and sent to the great king. But he is not able to cure you or heal your wound.* ¹⁴ *For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear and go away; I will carry off, and no one shall rescue.* ¹⁵ *I will return again to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face, and in their distress earnestly seek me.* (ESV) So it is, we continue, turn to Hosea 6:6-10, ⁶ *For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.* ⁷ *But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me.* ⁸ *Gilead is a city of evildoers, tracked with blood.* ⁹ *As robbers lie in wait for a man, so the priests band together; they murder on the way to Shechem; they commit villainy.* ¹⁰ *In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing; Ephraim's whoredom is there; Israel is defiled.* (ESV) In chapter 7 we find the following, Hosea 7:11-13, ¹¹ *Ephraim is like a dove, silly and without sense, calling to Egypt, going to Assyria.* ¹² *As they go, I will spread over them my net; I will bring them down like birds of the heavens; I will discipline them according to the report made to their congregation.* ¹³ *Woe to them, for they have strayed from me! Destruction to them, for they have rebelled against me! I would redeem them, but they speak lies against me.* (ESV) From chapter 8 we take the following, Hosea 8:7-10, ⁷ *For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; it shall yield no flour; if it were to yield, strangers would devour it.* ⁸ *Israel is swallowed up; already they are among the nations as a useless vessel.* ⁹ *For they have gone up to Assyria, a wild donkey wandering alone; Ephraim has hired lovers.* ¹⁰ *Though they hire allies among the nations, I will soon gather them up. And the king and princes shall soon writhe because of the tribute.* (ESV) That's a strong statement against Ephraim (Israel). Could it be stated in the following manner if I rewrote verses 8 thru 10 ? *Ephraim has gone up to Assyria, a smart ass wandering alone. They have gone to Assyria and other nations to buy protection instead of having faith in My covenant.*

Their king and princes will shortly writhe due to the heavy burden of the tribute payments Assyria and the other nations demand.

Turn over to chapter 9 and review verses 16-17, Hosea 9:16-17, ¹⁶ *Ephraim is stricken; their root is dried up; they shall bear no fruit. Even though they give birth, I will put their beloved children to death.* ¹⁷ *My God will reject them because they have not listened to him; they shall be wanderers among the nations.* (ESV) Let us add Hosea 11:8-9, ⁸ *How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender.* ⁹ *I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath.* (ESV) In chapter 12, we add two passages, Hosea 12:1; 2-6, I use this split to distinguish between Ephraim in the first verse and Judah in the ending verses, ¹ *"Ephraim feeds on the wind, And pursues the east wind; He daily increases lies and desolation. Also they make a covenant with the Assyrians, And oil is carried to Egypt. . . ."* ² *"The Lord also brings a charge against Judah, And will punish Jacob according to his ways; According to his deeds He will recompense him.* ³ *He took his brother by the heel in the womb, And in his strength he struggled with God.* ⁴ *Yes, he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; He wept, and sought favor from Him. He found Him in Bethel, And there He spoke to us—* ⁵ *That is, the Lord God of hosts. The Lord is His memorable name.* ⁶ *So you, by the help of your God, return; Observe mercy and justice, And wait on your God continually.* Chapter 14 is the final chapter in Hosea and I added Hosea 14:8-9, ⁸ *O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from me comes your fruit.* ⁹ *Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.* (ESV)

At the moment, we are going through Scripture showing the actions of God's people and the sins they have committed against the Lord. There was a segment of Scripture that I jumped over in the 44th chapter of Jeremiah. Those verses were chapter 44:15-27, here is even more of why God exiled both the House of Israel and the House of Judah. Beginning with verse 15, ¹⁵ *Then all the men who knew that their wives had burned incense to other gods, with all the women who stood by, a great multitude, and all the people who dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying:* ¹⁶ *"As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not listen to you!"* ¹⁷ *But we will certainly do whatever has gone out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and saw no trouble.* ¹⁸ *But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine."* ¹⁹ *The women also said, "And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make cakes for her, to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her without our husbands' permission?"*

²⁰ *Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people--the men, the women, and all the people who had given him that answer—saying:* ²¹ *"The incense that you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them, and did it not come into His mind?"* ²² *So the Lord could no longer bear it, because of the evil of your doings and because of the abominations which you committed. Therefore your land is a desolation, an astonishment, a curse, and without an inhabitant, as it is this day.* ²³ *Because you have burned incense and because you have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord or walked in His law, in His statutes or in His testimonies, therefore this calamity has happened to you, as at this day."*

²⁴ Moreover Jeremiah said to all the people and to all the women, "Hear the word of the Lord, all Judah who are in the land of Egypt!" ²⁵ Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: 'You and your wives have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled with your hands, saying, "We will surely keep our vows that we have made, to burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her." You will surely keep your vows and perform your vows!' ²⁶ Therefore hear the word of the Lord, all Judah who dwell in the land of Egypt: 'Behold, I have sworn by My great name,' says the Lord, 'that My name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, "The Lord God lives." ²⁷ Behold, I will watch over them for adversity and not for good. And all the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, until there is an end to them.

Along the way as we gathered the pieces of our puzzle, there were several hints that were dropped just to stimulate an interest. But, we now have our Scripture references to begin our building of how some of those living in the United States are actual descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel, the northern kingdom or House of Israel. We went through the descendants of Abraham for both the House of Israel and the House of Judah beginning on page 49. We also added the fourth change of birthright with the story of Perez and Zerah. We dropped a hint with the clause "isles of the sea" and another one with the clause "God save the king". We also brought to you, the reader, that there is this mystery of just where did Jeremiah disappear? It is not stated in the book of Jeremiah, but there are other sources that give greater detail to this story in Jeremiah and the facts concerning where Jeremiah went. It has been indicated that there were three daughters of King Zedekiah.

One reference is *Jeremiah's Tomb (The Tomb of Ollamh Fodhla) located at Cairn T, Loughcrew, near Oldcastle, County Meath, Ireland (latest copyright by JAH in 2006)*. Each princess had a handmaiden to be with them and Jeremiah became their guardian, along with Baruch, Jeremiah's faithful scribe that made up this remnant party that escaped to Judah from Egypt. Jeremiah 44:14, *¹⁴ so that none of the remnant of Judah who have gone into the land of Egypt to dwell there shall escape or survive, lest they return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return and dwell. For none shall return except those who escape.* " There are a total of eight persons in this remnant. Interesting, when the earth became so sinful that God was ready to destroy it entirely, there were eight persons who survived. That would be Noah and his three sons and the four wives. Here we have another remnant, and once again, it is because of sin in the world that mankind arrives at this place and at this time. Jeremiah leads this group from Egypt back to Judah. Other sources make statements that when Jeremiah left Judah he took with them the ark, a lyre and the stone of destiny, or Bethel stone. The Bethel stone is the pillar that Jacob set up at Bethel and anointed with oil. This stone is the one that all the kings of Judah were sworn in to their kingship and anointed. This stone is also where any oath made by a king would be made at this stone.

So, the next question is, where did Jeremiah and this remnant travel? Would you believe to Ireland? Why Ireland? There seems to be several good reasons for this. The land the tribe of Dan received was on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. This was prior to the House of Israel being exiled to Assyria, and at the time when Joshua divided up the promised land. That would give Jeremiah someone to bargain with who was of the ten tribes. There is also some works which state that a portion of the tribe of Dan was already located in Ireland. Then we have the **annuals of Ireland** itself that attest to the presence of a prophet coming to Ireland and establishing a school of prophets in the northern part of the isle.

That's one side of the story. The other side goes to the travels of the House of Israel itself. Recall that the House of Israel was taken captive by Assyria about 140 years prior to the time the House of Judah was taken captive to Babylon. As Israel settled in Assyria, they lost their distinctive identity as Israelites. They no longer had a king and no longer had a national country to call their own. They became Gentiles, as we have already pointed out. There was a descendant of Zerah who was considered

to be a prince among his people within this group of wandering Israelites. Eventually, a group of these wanderers made an attack upon the Emerald Isle. This prince and one of the daughters of Zedekiah met and they married. Therefore, the first overturn of Ezekiel's riddle was from Judah to Ireland. Later King Kenneth moves the throne from Ireland to Scotland. That would make the second overturn. Much later the throne is moved one more time from Scotland to England. The present holder of the throne of King David is King Charles III who was crowned this year, 2023. All of this will be explained further and with additional proof in our next article.

In an article from The Ensign Message is a presentation of *Jeremiah in Ireland, Proof from the Bible and the Irish Annals* by John E. Wall. Where Mr. Wall inserted a reference from the Bible, I will continue my practice of placing the full text in blue italics.

Jeremiah in Ireland

Proof from the Bible and Irish Annals

One of the most beloved stories of traditional literature, written by those who support the modern identity of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, is the story of the coming of the prophet Jeremiah to Ireland. According to this story shortly after c. 586 BCE when the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem. Jeremiah the prophet, accompanied by his scribe Baruch, and the daughters of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, fled that country and for a short time resided in Egypt. From there, they returned to Judah, and then, took a ship to Ireland where one of the daughters married Eochaidh the high king (*Heremon* or *ard ri*) of Ireland. A variation says that the marriage took place in Jerusalem. The royal couple governed the Emerald Isle from their capital at Tara in County Meath. Jeremiah, at that time an old man, was also reputed to have established a sort of ministerial training college at Tara. He became a revered figure in Irish legend.

Over the course of the centuries, the royal line established at Tara was transferred from Ireland, to Scotland, then to England where it survives today in the person of His Majesty King Charles III. A wondrous stone, often called the Stone of Destiny, Stone of Scone, or Coronation Stone, upon which His Majesty and his predecessors on the thrones of the three kingdoms were crowned, is thought to be the stone that the patriarch Jacob slept on at Bethel (Genesis 28:18-22, ¹⁶ *Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."* ¹⁷ *And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."* ¹⁸ *So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. ¹⁹ He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first.* (ESV) It was also believed to have been brought to Ireland by Jeremiah.

It is claimed that the story of Jeremiah coming to Ireland can be found in the ancient annals, histories, and other literature of the Irish, and indeed references to it abound in the works written by traditional Ten Tribes scholars, especially 19th-century writers. Yet rarely, if ever, do these writers point to any specific history in which this tale may be found, vague references to "*Irish annals*" usually are made. A few examples will suffice:

One authority states that, "Irish historians are unanimous that about 580 B.C. there arrived in Ulster a notable man [Jeremiah], a patriarch or saint, accompanied by an Eastern princess, and a lesser person by the name of Simon Brach or Barech".⁽¹⁾ Further that, "Irish tradition tells us that Jeremiah married the princess Tamar Tephi to Eochaidh king of Ireland".⁽²⁾ However, the historians are not named, nor is any particular tradition cited.

Another writer says that, “The ancient records of Ireland bear ample testimony to this [Jeremiah’s coming to Ireland] as a historic fact, not only recording the event itself, but also supplying confirming evidence by giving the actual date or period of their arrival correctly”.⁽³⁾ Again, disappointingly, this author does not name the “*ancient records*” in which the Jeremiah story may be found; rather, we read phrases such as, “*the records conclude . . .*”⁽⁴⁾ and “*The royal records state . . .*”⁽⁵⁾ He dates the coming of Jeremiah to Ireland at late in 583 BCE or early 582 BCE.

The closest that any writer comes to naming names is a contemporary author and archaeologist, E. Raymond Capt. In his book, *Jacob’s Pillar: A Biblical Historical Study*, Capt makes reference to *The Chronicles of Eri*, *The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, *The Annals of Clonmacnoise*, and *The Chronicles of Scotland*. He quotes briefly from the latter and gives an extensive recounting of the entire Jeremiah legend in his notable book. However, like the learned writers cited above, Capt does not directly cite any passage in any ancient chronicle which explicitly mentions Jeremiah.⁽⁶⁾

This lack of corroboration of the Jeremiah legend has caused some to doubt the validity of the entire story. I will show in this article that Jeremiah is mentioned in the Irish annals and histories, but under another name. His Judahite ancestry and prophetic identity are clearly stated and even a brief physical description is given. His friend and scribe Baruch is also mentioned. Furthermore, I will name names and give the reader of this article the references by which he may corroborate the story himself.

First, however, in order to understand the proper chronological context of Jeremiah’s coming to Ireland, a brief review of Irish history, prior to his arrival, is necessary.

History of Ireland Prior to Jeremiah

Admittedly, the history of this ancient land can at times be confusing. It is said that the Irish like nothing so much as a good story, and their willingness to romanticize and embellish has led to a certain confusion. On the other hand, it is not entirely their fault. Much of the blame can be laid at the feet of Catholic monks who altered the traditional Irish histories, or invented their own, in order to deliberately *hide* the Israelite ancestry of the Irish people. For instance, they attempted to portray the Irish as descendants of Magog, son of Japheth!

Irish history begins, as the history of every civilization does, after the Flood of Noah’s day. For three hundred years after that catastrophic event, Ireland was an uninhabited land. A claim to sovereignty over Ireland was made, according to historian Herman L. Hoeh who refers to Irish annals by the Assyrian king Ninus, son of Bel, but the land was not colonized permanently.⁽⁷⁾

In c. 2069 BCE, again according to Hoeh who uses Geoffrey Keating’s *History of Ireland* as his source, a Hebrew named Parthalon along with his followers settled the land and established a kingdom. The country was divided into four parts after his death. The date, however, is open to some question. If the *P-r-t* in the name Partholan can be equated with the *b-r-t* of the Hebrew *brit* (covenant), then it is difficult to see how this would have referred to a descendant of Abraham who had not yet even been born. Moreover, as one authority states, “*the Partholanian (Parthalonian) story is clearly a variant of that of the eponymous [of, relating to, or being the person or thing for whom something is named] ancestor of the British, Brutus [Greek: Peirithoos] the Trojan with which it has been confused*”.⁽⁸⁾ Brutus arrived in Britain c. 1103 BCE according to one scholar.⁽⁹⁾ Others claim an earlier date, c. 1149 BCE. If this is so, then the date of 2069 BCE is impossible. The same source quoted above claims that Parthalon was a Milesian (see below). [There seems to be great confusion over the spelling of Parthalon and Partholan. Neither of these two names is Parthenon, the temple in Athens, Greece or the three quarters scale replica in Nashville, Tennessee. They are a race of people who at one time conquered Ireland.]

In any event, the Parthalonians, whoever they may have been, ruled Ireland intermittently until 1709 BCE when a tragedy befell them at the hands of Phoenician Formorians [a supernatural race in Irish mythology]. The island was then invaded by Nemedians [descendants of a character of medieval Irish legend] from Scythia who lived in Ireland until 1492 BCE and ruled by the Formorians for much of this period. A portion of the Nemedians escaped during their sojourn in the land and returned in 1492 BCE as the Fir-Bolgs [See Wikipedia for all four groups: Parthalonians; Nemedians; Formorians and Fir-Bolgs. There appears that we have no Biblical record for the Irish people from the Table of Nations, Genesis 10:1-32. Be that as it is, from mythology or legend, we see the pagan nature of the very early people of Ireland].

In 1456 BCE, a contingent of the famous Tuatha (pronounced “Too-ah”) de Danaan (“Tribe of Dan”) arrived in Ireland and ruled for 440 years until 1016 BCE. A second contingent came in 1213 BCE during the days of Deborah and Barak, Judges 5:17, ¹⁷ Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why did he stay with the ships? Asher sat still at the coast of the sea, staying by his landings.(ESV) Finally, in 1016 BCE, toward the end of the reign of King David of Israel another Hebrew people, the Milesians, descendants of Eber the Hebrew according to Hoeh, conquered the Danaan (Danites) forcing them to accept their rule. The kingdom of Ireland was then divided between the two sons of Milesius, Ebher and Ghede the Ereamhon (*Heremon or Erimionn, or high king*) and a capital was established at Tobrad, also known as Tea-mur, Tamhair, Teamhara, and now called Tara.

Throughout all these invasions, the Irish have meticulously maintained the record of their kings. Lists of these kings can be found in Geoffrey Keating’s *History of Ireland*, O’Flaherty’s *Ogygia*, and A.-M.-H.-J. Stokvis’s *Manuel d’Histoire*, volume II, pages 234-235.

For our purposes here, however, the royal line that most concerns us is that of Nemedh, the reputed ancestor of the Hebrew people who invaded Ireland c. 1709 BCE. His royal descendants are listed in various sources, sometimes differently, yet they are important to our story. Why? Because it is in this genealogy, whether always precisely accurate or not, that we find Jeremiah in Irish history, though under another name.

Nemedians and Milesians

Throughout this article, I have tried to pursue my objective, that of identifying Jeremiah in Irish history, in a manner that is easy for the reader to understand. The history of Ireland is confusing enough as it is without bringing in legends, fables, and tales of bravery and romance by the heroes of this “*Holy Land*” in the Atlantic. For this reason, I will confine myself to a discussion of Nemedh and his reputed descendants, one in particular whom I will identify with the Biblical Jeremiah.

Historian Geoffrey Keating, writing of the expedition of Nemedh to Ireland in “thirty-four ships, with a crew of thirty in each ship”(10) said that this party of colonizers was led by “Nemedh and his four sons, Stain, Larbanel the Prophet, Anind and Fergus Leth-derg (Fergus of the Red Side)”.(11) In the Annals of Clonmacnoise, the same four sons are named, in a different order (the father is called Neuie McAgamemnon): “with his four sonns came into Ireland out of Greece, his sonnes names alsoe were Sdarne, Jaruanell [Larbanel], the prophett, Fergus Leahderg, ... and Anyynn which people Ruled Ireland 382 yeares”.(12)

Another historical source, the *Leabhar Gabhala* (*Book of Conquests*) agrees, adding that Iarbanel the Prophet was a Nemedian chief. (Though Iarbanel is called a “son” of Nemedh, this need not literally be true. It simply means he is a descendant of Nemedh.) The account reads: “*Now as for Neimedh [Nemedh], he had four chiefs with him, Stain, Iarbanel the Prophet, Fergus Redside, and Ainnian. They were four sons of Neimedh*”.(13)

Still another account names Nemedh the ancestor of the Danaans. Keating writes, “Some antiquarians say that the nation, of whom we are now treating, was called Tuatha-De-Danaan, from Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba, the three sons of Dana, daughter of Delbaeth, son of Elathan, son of Niadh, son of Indae, son of Allae, son of Tath, son of Tabam, son of Enda or Enna, son of Beothach, son of Ibaath, son of Bathach, son of Iarbanel, son of Nemedh”.(14)

We find an echo of this in the *Leabhar Gabhala*, naming the same names as above (except that Elathan is called the son of Delbaeth), and also, that “*Larbanel the Prophet [is the], son of Neimedh [Nemedh], son of Agnoman*”.(15) (Agnoman is an obvious reference to Agamemnon, king of the Greek Mycenae, who led an expedition against the Trojans to recover Helen, wife of Agamemnon’s brother Menelaus the king of Sparta. See also Neuie McAgamemnon, above.)

Two other figures from Irish history, Bres of the Danaan and Nuadh Silver-Arm, claim descent from Nemedh.(16) Iarbanel is mentioned in both genealogies as a son of Nemedh. The Milesians also figure into this tale, but more on that later.

All this need not be as confusing as it looks as there is a common thread running through all these genealogies. [All these peoples were Hebrews whether we speak of Nemedians, Fir-Bolgs (a branch of the Nemedians), Danaans, or Milesians.] As the Nemedians preceded the other peoples, it is clear that the Irish historians have attempted to trace the lineage of their kings to this island’s earliest Hebrew ancestors. But still, we have not identified Jeremiah in Irish history. Or have we? Actually, we have stumbled across his name several times already without recognizing it. The next section will positively identify Jeremiah in the annals of ancient Ireland.

WHO WAS IARBANEL?

In all the genealogies of Nemedh’s descendants, one name is met with consistently: Iarbanel the Prophet. Who was he? Where did he come from? Do the annals have anything to say about him that might be relevant to our argument? Astoundingly, the Irish histories have several important things to say about Iarbanel, enough to answer the above questions. They give us the land of his birth (not Ireland), a brief physical description, and a description of his character. Yet, outside of Irish history, nothing seems to be known about him. I will demonstrate, however, that once we have established the identity of Iarbanel, a great deal is known about him.

Iarbanel is clearly stated to be a descendant of (“son of”) Nemedh, the Hebrew chieftain. This obviously makes Iarbanel also a Hebrew. Furthermore, Iarbanel is also unique in that he is called a prophet, the only one of Nemedh’s descendants so called.

Nor is Iarbanel the only name by which Jeremiah is known in Irish history. He is also found in the Milesian story as well. Again in his account of founders of a sort of school established by Fenius Farsa in Egypt after the Tower of Tahpanhes was abandoned, Keating writes, “*The three sages that held the chief direction of this great school were Fenius Farsa from Scythia; Gaedal, son of Ethor, of the race of Gomer, from Greece; and Caei, the Eloquent (or the Just), from Judea, or Iar (Iarbanel), son of Nemha [Nemedh], as others call him ...*”.(17)

Notice that Iarbanel, known here by the name Caei, is called an “eloquent” and a “just” man. Also, note that he *comes from Judea!* As for the name Tahpanhes, this should be familiar to Bible students. The name is found in the book of Jeremiah: “*So they [a party of rebellious Jews, with faithful Jeremiah, his secretary Baruch, and King Zedekiah’s daughters] came into the land of Egypt: for they (the Jews) obeyed not the voice of the Lord: thus they came even to Tahpanhes*”(Jeremiah 43:7, ⁷ *And they came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the Lord. And they arrived at*

Tahpanhes. (ESV) The Jewish refugees lived in Tahpanhes temporarily, and, according to legend, Jeremiah, his scribe and the king's daughters left that place to continue their journey to Ireland.

But, Irish historians have more to say about Iarbanel. Keating, quoting from the Leabhar Gabhala, gives us the following lines from a poem: "The Fair Iarbanel, a prophet true, / Was son of Nemedh, son of Ardnaman- / To this gray hero, mighty in spells / Was born Beothach of wild steeds".⁽¹⁸⁾ Here Iarbanel is called "fair" (which may refer to lightness of skin or a mild and pacific [peaceful or soothing] temperament, or a man of sympathy, deep feeling and justice), a "prophet true" (as opposed to a false prophet); a "gray hero"; and, "mighty of spells", i.e., a miracle worker. What have we learned about Iarbanel so far? First, he was a Hebrew, a true prophet, who came from Judea during the time of Jeremiah's stay at Tahpanhes. He was an eloquent and a just man, fair of skin and/or temperament, an old man, considered a hero and a worker of miracles.

What do we know about Jeremiah? First, he was a Hebrew, a true prophet (Jeremiah 1:5, ⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (ESV) coming from a priestly family (Jeremiah 1:1, ¹ The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, (ESV); he came from Judea (Anathoth in Judah, a town northeast of Jerusalem (see above). He spoke the word of the Lord often and eloquently, rising early (Jeremiah 7:12-14, ¹² Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of my people Israel. ¹³ And now, because you have done all these things, declares the Lord, and when I spoke to you persistently you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, ¹⁴ therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, and in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. (ESV), 25, ²⁵ From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day. (ESV); 25:3, ³ "For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, to this day, the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. (ESV); 35:14-16, ¹⁴ The command that Jonadab the son of Rechab gave to his sons, to drink no wine, has been kept, and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. I have spoken to you persistently, but you have not listened to me. ¹⁵ I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, 'Turn now every one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to you and your fathers.' But you did not incline your ear or listen to me. ¹⁶ The sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have kept the command that their father gave them, but this people has not obeyed me. (ESV), speaking of justice (Jeremiah 22:15, ¹⁵ Do you think you are a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. (ESV); 23:5, ⁵ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. (ESV); 31:23, ²³ Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes: " 'The Lord bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!' (ESV); 50:7, ⁷ All who found them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, 'We are not guilty, for they have sinned against the Lord, their habitation of righteousness, the Lord, the hope of their fathers.' (ESV)). His eloquence, given to Jeremiah by God Himself (Jeremiah 1:7, 9, ⁷ But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. . . . ⁹ Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. (ESV)), is revealed in his words and in this admission from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia that, "As far as the form of his poetic utterances is concerned, Jeremiah is of a poetical nature. . . . He often speaks in the meter (rhythm or verse form) of an elegy (a pensive and/or reflective poem)".⁽¹⁹⁾

As for “fair” (in the temperamental sense) and just, the ISBE says that Jeremiah “was, by nature, gentle and tender in his feelings, and sympathetic”.(20)

At the time of his flight from Judea, Jeremiah would have been an old man. The ISBE says that “At that time (the time of Jeremiah’s stay at Tahpanhes) Jeremiah must have been from 70 to 80 years old”.(21) After a long life in the Lord’s service enduring many trials, Jeremiah was a “gray hero” indeed. The evidence brought forth from Irish history and the Bible favors the identification of Iarbanel with Jeremiah. But, a nagging question remains: the name Iarbanel itself. What is its derivation and what does it mean?

At the beginning of this article, I promised to actually name Jeremiah in the Irish annals. I will now do so. The name Jeremiah in Hebrew is Yirmeyahu, abbreviated to Yirmeyah. It means “the Lord establishes”. The beginning letters in the name are yod and resh. It is possible, in fact, on the basis of the evidence presented here, more than likely, that the letters “Iar” in “Iarbanel” are simply an abbreviation for the name Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah), a transliteration (Transliteration means to represent or spell in the characters of another language) into the Irish tongue of the yod and resh of the prophet’s name. But, what does the rest of the name Iarbanel mean—“banel”? With an elementary knowledge of Hebrew, the meaning is easy to discover. “Ban” is simply the Hebrew ben, it means “son of”; “el” is the Hebrew El, it means “God”. Remembering that “Iar” is a short form of the name Jeremiah, one can easily see that Iarbanel, translated from Hebrew to English, is Iar ben El, or “Jeremiah, the son of God”!

As a true prophet of God who had God’s Holy Spirit within him, Jeremiah could legitimately be called a son of God. The Lord Himself as much as said so, *“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”* (Jeremiah 1:5, KJV). As a “sanctified one”, i.e., one set apart for holy use and having the Spirit of God, Jeremiah certainly qualified as a saint.

Was Iarbanel also a saint? The Irish annals do not explicitly say so, but, it can be assumed that for a “just” man who was a “prophet true” and “mighty of spells”, and whose name meant “son of God”, sainthood was at least a distinct possibility. It is interesting to note that the Irish word for saint is namh (pronounced “nav”), and that Iarbanel is said to be a son of Nemedh, also spelled Nemha. Is there a philological (relating to the study of language) connection between Nemedh/Nemha and namh? More light on this question will be shed later, but for now let us note the opinion of Yair Davidy, a respected Israeli Ten Tribes researcher, who points out that, “Nemha (Nemedh) (i.e. in ‘Iar son of Nemha’ above) is from the same root as Nemedian’ and means sanctified” (22) (emphasis mine). A sanctified person is a saint!

The evidence presented in this article leads to only one conclusion: that Iarbanel was Jeremiah. If one does not believe that Iarbanel was Jeremiah, then one is forced to believe that an amazing thing has happened. It has happened that a Hebrew prophet, a true prophet of the Lord in whom God’s Holy Spirit dwelt was thus a “son of God”, a saint who lived in Judea, who fled to Tahpanhes in Egypt with his [scribe] and friend Baruch and others, who was an eloquent speaker and a gentle man who preached justice, who was an old man and a worker of miracles [who] disappeared from the face of the earth.

At the same time in history there appeared in Ireland, a Hebrew prophet, whose name means “son of God”, a true prophet, considered a saint, lived in Judea, fled to Tahpanhes in Egypt, had a “son” named Brec, (23) was an eloquent and a just man, who was an old man and “mighty in spells”, who appeared on the scene, fully formed, literally out of nowhere. If one does not believe that Iarbanel was Jeremiah, one must believe that this is all a coincidence. The coincidence is impossible. Iarbanel was Jeremiah. It is a fact of history.

An Honest Objection Examined

Before leaving this subject however, it is only fair to mention that an alternative identity for Iarbabel has been proposed. In the third volume of his great trilogy on the identity of the Ten Tribes, Lost Israelite Identity, esteemed Israeli researcher Yair Davidy proposes that Iarbabel was Jar (or Yair) of Judah. He writes, “ ‘Jar’ or ‘Yair’ or ‘Jair’ is recorded in the Bible as a descendant of Judah who settled in the land of Gilead of Machir in Menasseh (sic)” (24) and furthermore that, “Yair in the Bible was linked to both Judah and to Gilead of Menasseh (sic) east of the Jordan, one of whose sons was Peresh (‘Separated’ or ‘Sanctified’) which name is identical with that of ‘Nemha’ in Irish”. (25)

There is no doubt that Jar (or Yair) existed and that he was also a Hebrew, and that he came from Judah or Judea. This he shares in common with Iarbabel, but that is where the similarity ends. Iar-Yair could not have been Iarbabel for the following reasons: Yair is nowhere in the Bible called a prophet as is Iarbabel in the Irish annals or Jeremiah in Scripture; he was not a saint nor was he sanctified; there is no evidence that he was eloquent of speech or particularly just as were Iarbabel and Jeremiah; he did not leave Judah to come to Egypt; he did not work miracles; he did not have a secretary/“son” named Baruch or Brec; he was not venerated in history as were both Iarbabel and Jeremiah.

Some will argue, however, that Davidy’s point concerning Yair being “linked” to both Judah and Gilead of Manasseh, one of whose sons had a name meaning “separated” or “sanctified”, indicates the identity of Iar-Yair-Jair with Iarbabel. But, I will show that the true link exists, in both a physical and spiritual sense, not between Yair and Judah and/or Manasseh, but between Iarbabel-Jeremiah and Aaron, brother of Moses.

Let us remember that, anciently, “son of” need not represent a direct father to son relationship, but only a descendancy or even a spiritual relationship of a student to his spiritual teacher. Jeremiah was the “son (father to son relationship) of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin”. Therefore, Anathoth was a priestly town.

E. W. Bullinger, in a note to Jeremiah 1:1 in his Companion Bible, in comparing the priestly lines of Eleazar and Ithamar says that “Anathoth belonged to that line of Ithamar”. This is not a common name in Scripture and only one man bears it. Ithamar is the fourth son of Aaron who founded a line of priests (I Chronicles 24:6, *“And the scribe Shemaiah, the son of Nethanel, a Levite, recorded them in the presence of the king and the princes and Zadok the priest and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar and the heads of the fathers’ houses of the priests and of the Levites, one father’s house being chosen for Eleazar and one chosen for Ithamar.”* (ESV)). It is obvious that if Jeremiah’s father, Hilkiah, who lived in Anathoth, was of the line of Ithamar, son of Aaron, then this makes Jeremiah a descendant (“son of”) Aaron as well.

Is there any evidence from the Bible that Iarbabel-Jeremiah was the “son of” a “Nemha” (“sanctified one”) or a namh (saint)? Could such a description apply to Aaron? Certainly! The Bible confirms it. Aaron was consecrated as a priest of the Lord, separated, sanctified, and given the Holy Spirit of God. Speaking to Moses, God says the following in Exodus 28:40-41, *“For Aaron’s sons you shall make coats and sashes and caps. You shall make them for glory and beauty. And you shall put them on Aaron your brother, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests.”* (ESV)

Thus Iarbabel-Jeremiah was also a son of “Nemha”, namh, a “sanctified one”. Even more so, since the sanctification is a spiritual, as well as a fleshly one; whereas in the case of Peresh (“separated”), only a tribal separation is implied. No spiritual or physical sanctification, both appropriate to a prophet, son of a priest, of a line of priests, can be inferred from the meaning of the name Peresh (who was not a priest in any case). Furthermore, namh has an applicability to Iarbabel-Jeremiah entirely lacking for Peresh.

Conclusion

The evidence is in! The conclusion is obvious! Iarbanel was Jeremiah! Contrary to the doubting opinions of some, Jeremiah is mentioned in the Irish annals, but, **under another name!**

This, of course, is not the total answer to all the mystery surrounding Jeremiah in Ireland. The question of *Ollam Fodhla*, variously called a prophet and a king in Irish history, needs to be explored. There are also questions that need to be answered concerning King Zedekiah's daughters allegedly taken to Ireland by Jeremiah, the identity of *Eochaidh the Heremon*, the whereabouts of the wondrous stone, harp, and ark which were also carried to Ireland by Jeremiah according to legend. But that is for further research and/or revelation.

For now, it needs only to be said that Jeremiah came to Ireland, as proven from Irish and Biblical history. His coming was part of the purpose of God for his people of Israel, a purpose ironically revealed every day, yet seen by few. Let us pray, with further research and revelation, the few will one day become many.

Notes and References

- (1). Haberman, Frederick. Tracing Our Ancestors. Burnaby, B.C., Canada: The Association of The Covenant People, 1934, p. 153.
- (2). Ibid., p. 153.
- (3). Fox, John S. The World's Greatest Throne. Burnaby, B.C., Canada: The Association of The Covenant People, n.d., p.23.
- (4). Ibid.,p. 24.
- (5). Ibid.,p. 24.
- (6). Capt, E. Raymond, M.A.,A.I.A., F.R.S.A. (Scot.), Jacob's Pillar: A Biblical Historical Study. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Artisan Sales, 1977.
- (7). Hoeh, Herman L., Ph.D. Compendium of World History. Pasadena, Calif.: Ambassador College, 1963. See Volume I, Chapter 18. Much of my review of Ireland's ancient history comes from Hoeh's two-volume work on the ancient history of the world.
- (8). Bible Research Handbook. London: Covenant Publishing Co. Ltd., 1946, Serial No. I 18a.
- (9). Haberman, op. cit., p. 74.
- (10). Keating, Geoffrey. The History of Ireland from the Earliest Period to the English Invasion. Translated by John O'Mahony, New York, 1866, p. 122.
- (11). Keating, ibid., p. 122.
- (12). Annals of Clonmacnoise, from the Creation to A.D. 1408. Translated by Conell MaGeoghagan, 1627. Edited by Denis Murphy. Dublin: University Press, 1896, p. 14.

- (13). Leabhar Gabhala or the Book of the Conquests of Ireland. Michael O’Cleirigh (rec.). Dublin: University College, sec.44.
- (14). Keating, op. cit., p. 140.
- (15). Leabhar Gabhala, sec. 100.
- (16). Leabhar Gabhala, secs. 106,107.
- (17). Keating, pp. 155,166. The observant reader may object to my reference to the Tower of Tahpanhes in the story of Fenius Farsa, Gaedal, and Caei the Eloquent (or Caei the Just), as according to Keating the school was established after the Flood on the “plain of Shenaar”. However, it is obvious that the Tower of Babel and the “Tower” of Tahpanhes have been confused in Keating’s account. Neither Scythia nor Judea existed at the time of the Tower of Babel, nor was Caei-Iar yet even born. “Shenaar” may refer to the plain of Shinar mentioned in Genesis. Or could it be an echo of Goshen, the location of Tahpanhes.
- (18). Keating, op. cit., p. 138.
- (19). International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Volume III, p. 1590.
- (20). ISBE, 111:1589.
- (21). ISBE, 111:1588.
- (22). Davidy, Yair. Lost Israelite Identity. Jerusalem, Israel: Russell-Davis Publishers, n.d., p. 349-350.
- (23). Keating, op. cit., p. 126. In Keating’s history, Simeon Brec is the son of Starn, son of Nemedh. In the Leabhar Gabhala, he is either the son of Erglan, son of Beoan, son of Starn, son of Neimedh [Nemedh] (sec. 67); or he is, significantly, son of Iarbanel, son of Neimedh [Nemedh] (sec. 53).
- (24). Davidy, op. cit., p. 350.
- (25). Davidy, ibid., p. 350.

Within Mr. Wall’s listing of references he gives as item number 6 the following: (6). Capt, E. Raymond, M.A.,A.I.A., F.R.S.A. (Scot.), Jacob’s Pillar: A Biblical Historical Study. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Artisan Sales, 1977. In addition to the books of Mr. Capt that are listed, there is at least one additional work that must be brought into this discussion. I have said that the riddle of Ezekiel contained three overturns. The first was the transfer from Judah to Ireland, and the second was from Ireland to Scotland. The third overturn was from Scotland to England. In Mr. Capt’s work entitled, *The Scottish Declaraation of Independence*, Artisan Publishers, Muskogee, Oklahoma, 2006 (18th Edition) there are some very interesting statements. I have underlined those statements in the following document.

Within the contents of Mr. Capt's work, there rests the story of how Robert the Bruce and Edward I and II of England had their differences. William Wallace also enters this story as the great defender of Scotland. I will not go through all the various battles between England and Scotland. Nor will I go through the capture of William Wallace and the kangaroo court that sentenced Wallace to death. However, there is one article that I feel must be added to our story. That one item is the Declaration of Independence of Scotland or the Declaration of Arbroath. That document written in fluent Latin, reads in the following manner in English:

Translation of the Declaration of Arbroath, 6 April 1320

National Records of Scotland, SP13/7

To the most Holy Father and Lord in Christ, the Lord John, by divine providence Supreme Pontiff of the Holy Roman and Universal Church, his humble and devout sons Duncan, Earl of Fife, Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, Lord of Man and of Annandale, Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March, Malise, Earl of Strathearn, Malcolm, Earl of Lennox, William, Earl of Ross, Magnus, Earl of Caithness and Orkney, and William, Earl of Sutherland; Walter, Steward of Scotland, William Soules, Butler of Scotland, James, Lord of Douglas, Roger Mowbray, David, Lord of Brechin, David Graham, Ingram Umfraville, John Menteith, guardian of the earldom of Menteith, Alexander Fraser, Gilbert Hay, Constable of Scotland, Robert Keith, Marischal of Scotland, Henry Sinclair, John Graham, David Lindsay, William Oliphant, Patrick Graham, John Fenton, William Abernethy, David Wemyss, William Mushet, Fergus of Ardrossan, Eustace Maxwell, William Ramsay, William Mowat, Alan Murray, Donald Campbell, John Cameron, Reginald Cheyne, Alexander Seton, Andrew Leslie and Alexander Straiton, and the other barons and freeholders and the whole community of the realm of Scotland send all manner of filial reverence, with devout kisses of his blessed feet.

Most Holy Father, we know and from the chronicles and books of the ancients, we find that among other famous nations our own, the Scots, has been graced with widespread renown. It journeyed from Greater Scythia by way of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Pillars of Hercules, and dwelt for a long course of time in Spain among the most savage peoples, but nowhere could it be subdued by any people, however barbarous. Thence it came, twelve hundred years after the people of Israel crossed the Red Sea, to its home in the west where it still lives today. The Britons it first drove out, the Picts it utterly destroyed, and, even though very often assailed by the Norwegians, the Danes and the English, it took possession of that home with many victories and untold efforts; and, as the histories of old time bear witness, they have held it free of all servitude ever since. In their kingdom, there have reigned one hundred and thirteen kings of their own royal stock, the line unbroken by a single foreigner.

The high qualities and merits of these people, were they not otherwise manifest, shine forth clearly enough from this: that the King of kings and Lord of lords, our Lord Jesus Christ, after His Passion and Resurrection, called them, even though settled in the uttermost parts of the earth, almost the first to His most holy faith. Nor did He wish them to be confirmed in that faith by merely anyone but by the first of His Apostles – by calling, though second or third in rank – the most gentle Saint Andrew, the Blessed Peter's brother, and desired him to keep them under his protection as their patron for ever.

The Most Holy Fathers, your predecessors gave careful heed to these things and strengthened this same kingdom and people with many favours and numerous privileges, as being the special charge

of the Blessed Peter's brother. Thus our people under their protection did indeed live in freedom and peace up to the time when that mighty prince the King of the English, Edward, the father of the one who reigns today, when our kingdom had no head and our people harboured no malice or treachery and were then unaccustomed to wars or invasions, came in a guise of a friend and ally to harass them as an enemy. The deeds of cruelty, massacre, violence, pillage, arson, imprisoning prelates, burning down monasteries, robbing and killing monks and nuns, and yet other outrages without number which he committed against our people, sparing neither age nor sex, religion nor rank, no-one could describe nor fully imagine unless he had seen them with his own eyes.

But from these countless evils, we have been set free, by the help of Him who though He afflicts yet heals and restores, by our most tireless prince, King and lord, the lord Robert. He, that his people and his heritage might be delivered out of the hands of our enemies, bore cheerfully toil and fatigue, hunger and peril, like another Maccabaeus or Joshua. Him, too, divine providence, the succession to his right according to our laws and customs which we shall maintain to the death, and the due consent and assent of us all have made our prince and king. To him, as to the man by whom salvation has been wrought unto our people, we are bound both by his right and by his merits that our freedom may be still maintained, and by him, come what may, we mean to stand.

Yet, if he should give up what he has begun, seeking to make us or our kingdom subject to the King of England or the English, we should exert ourselves at once to drive him out as our enemy and a subverter of his own right and ours, and make some other man, who was well able to defend us, our King; for, as long as a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be subjected to the lordship of the English. It is in truth not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself.

Therefore it is, Reverend Father and Lord, that we beseech your Holiness with our most earnest prayers and suppliant hearts, inasmuch as you will in your sincerity and goodness consider all this, that, since with Him Whose vice-gerent on earth you are, there is neither weighing nor distinction of Jew and Greek, Scotsman or Englishman, you will look with the eyes of a father on the troubles and privations brought by the English upon us and upon the Church of God. May it please you to admonish and exhort the King of the English, who ought to be satisfied with what belongs to him since England used once to be enough for seven kings or more, to leave us Scots in peace, who live in this poor little Scotland, beyond which there is no dwelling-place at all, and covet nothing but our own. We are sincerely willing to do anything for him, having regard to our condition, that we can, to win peace for ourselves.

This truly concerns you, Holy Father, since you see the savagery of the heathen raging against the Christians, as the sins of Christians have indeed deserved, and the frontiers of Christendom being pressed inward every day; and how much it will tarnish your Holiness's memory if (which God forbid) the Church suffers eclipse or scandal in any branch of it during your time, you must perceive. Then rouse the Christian princes who for false reasons pretend that they cannot go to the help of the Holy Land because of wars they have on hand with their neighbours. The real reason that prevents them is that in making war on their smaller neighbours they find a readier advantage and weaker resistance. But how cheerfully our lord the King, and we too, would go there if the King of the English would leave us in peace, He from Whom nothing is hidden well knows; and we profess and declare it to you as the Vicar of Christ and to all Christendom.

But if your Holiness puts too much faith in the tales the English tell and will not give sincere belief to all this, nor refrain from favouring them to our undoing, then the slaughter of bodies, the perdition of souls, and all the other misfortunes that will follow, inflicted by them on us and by us on them, will, we believe, be surely laid by the Most High to your charge.

To conclude, we are and shall ever be, as far as duty calls us, ready to do your will in all things, as obedient sons to you as His Vicar, and to Him as the Supreme King and Judge we commit the maintenance of our cause, casting our cares upon Him and firmly trusting that He will inspire us with courage and bring our enemies to nothing.

May the Most High preserve you to His Holy Church in holiness and health for many days to come. Given at the monastery of Arbroath in Scotland on the sixth day of the month of April in the year of grace thirteen hundred and twenty and the fifteenth year of the reign of our King aforesaid.

The Declaration has been translated into English on many occasions. This version of the translation was compiled by National Records of Scotland staff in 2005, and is based on the version of Sir James Fergusson in his book *The Declaration of Arbroath, 1320* (published in 1970).

Contained in E. Raymond Capt's book, there is a map that provided the wanderings of the Scottish people. I am placing a copy of that map on the next page.

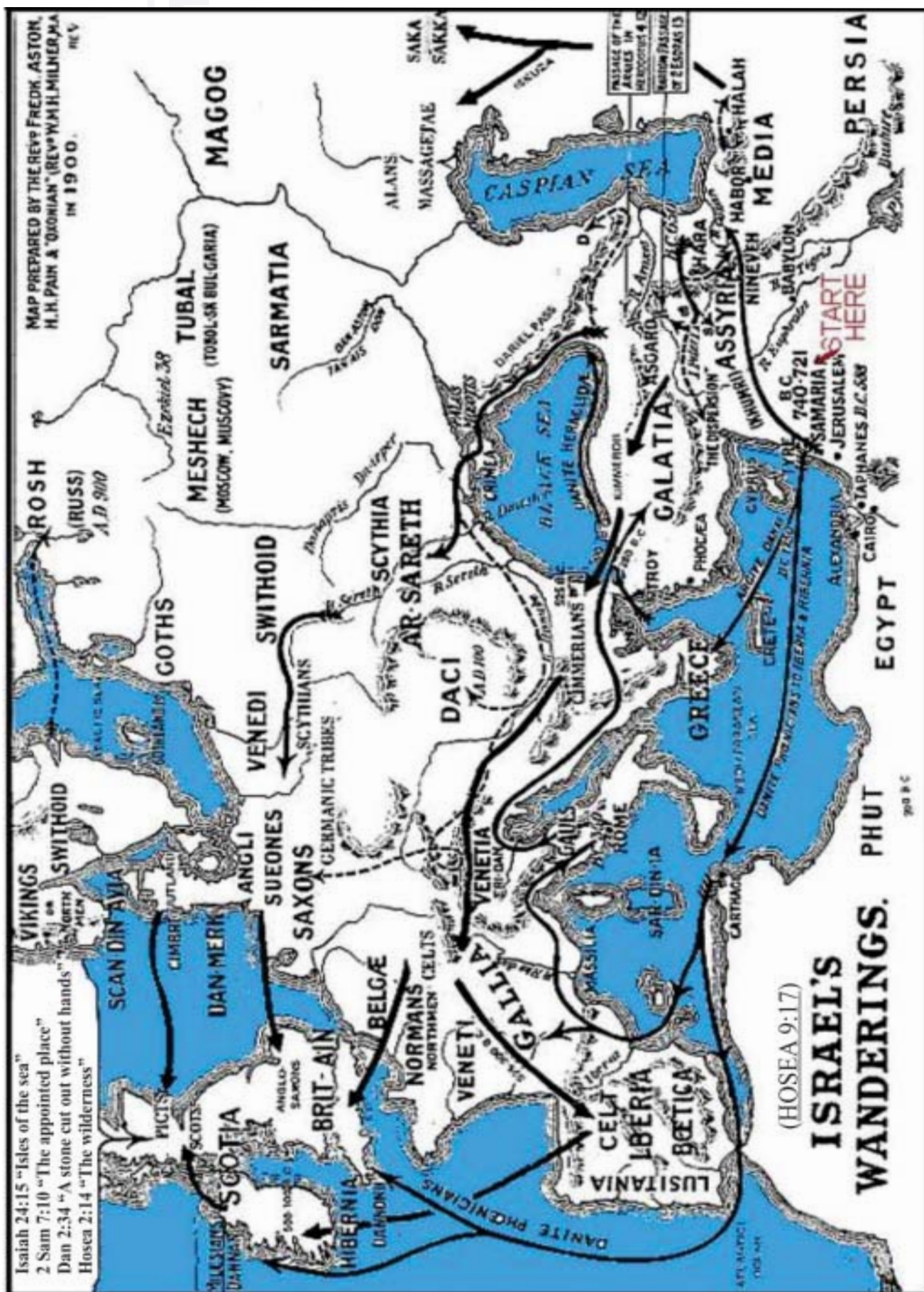
In the continuation of following the written trail of the travels of the House of Israel, there is another book that goes into much detail of these travels and how they developed as they did. That work is titled, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* by Rev. J. H. Allen. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1902 by J. H. Allen. In the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C., Copyright 1917 by A. A. Beauchamp. Nineteenth Edition printed by Destiny Publishers, Merrimac, Massachusetts.

Finally, there is one more item in this search. I ran across Rev. Allen's book in a used bookstore and bought it. To my amazement, this book illustrated the entire journey of the House of Israel through it's existence as united Israel's journey through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. It continued with the brotherhood of all the tribes and the split between the two tribes that made up the ruling Scepter holding tribe, and the tribe holding the birthright. It was too much for me to understand at that time. I also noted along my journey that there were some things not explained clearly for my understanding. God pushed me and assigned to me to rewrite Rev. Allen's work. Of my list of copyrights with the Library of Congress, you will find that I have probably written at least four versions of Rev. Allen's work. The final version is titled, *The Thirteenth Tribe of Israel*, Copyright © 2016. If anyone cares to read this final work, it is available on my website: www.vqpub.org under the tab for "Our Books". All items on my website are Copyrighted and in PDF file format. I do not sell my works and only ask that you honor my Copyrights.

Through the pages of this portion of this work, we have taken a lengthy journey through the Bible to chase down the pieces of the puzzle that are needed to provide understanding of what happened to the prophet Jeremiah. Our objective in this portion of this work was to show to you, my reader, that there are many people living in the United States who are direct downline descendants of the lost ten tribes of Israel. You are a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as a direct line.

Please allow me to show you one more item. God always desired a family relationship with a son. He called His angels the sons of God. One third of the angels rebelled and were cast out of heaven. God then took the soil of the earth and created a man in His image. That man disobeyed and was cast out of the Garden of Eden. God then established a friendship with Abraham and we read in Genesis 18:18-19 the following: ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ **For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."**

In our final section, I will attempt to show you mankind's reply to God's one test for mankind. If you are unaware of God's test go to my website and read "*God's Test for Mankind*".



Mankind's Rebellious Reply to God's One Test for All Humanity

Every person, presently living, or those who have passed, who has ever stated that they are a Christian needs to do a little soul-searching. What does it mean to be a believer of Christ? Aren't you making a statement when you say that you are a Christian and that you are following the ways of Christ? Shouldn't you view how Christ acted and what He said? If you believe that Christ is LORD, shouldn't you be obedient to what He teaches?

We could start at the beginning and go all the way back to the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan, posing as the serpent, convinced Eve that she would become like God if she took of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By accepting the challenge presented to her by Satan, she took and then gave some of the fruit to Adam (he was standing there with Eve). Immediately, rebellion entered the picture. From this point, all the way forward, up to today, mankind has been in rebellion against God. Because God's rule had been broken, Adam and Eve received a curse upon themselves and were forced out of the Garden.

At that time, there really wasn't a religion of which to speak. You either knew God or you didn't know God. However, as time progressed God watched as mankind took on one evil sin after another to the point that God was ready to erase the existence of all mankind. Thankfully, Noah and his three sons and their wives found favor with God, and God instructed Noah to build an ark. It took one hundred years for this to be done. Finally, the day came when God shut the door on the ark and this remnant of eight people were all of mankind that remained connected to the earth, even if it was above the earth floating in the ark.

Once again, God places mankind upon the earth, and we again see the actions of mankind. What was it they started to do. They were going to build a tower all the way to heaven. God saw what they were doing and recognized that it was through His grace that mankind actually had the capability to even think up such a thing. God destroyed the tower, made the people speak many different languages and scattered them around the world. This time God did not bring His wrath against the people. God truly gave mankind a freewill capability to select whether they would follow God, or go a different direction. Pagan practices came into being and Satan took full advantage to instill evil in the heart of men and lead them into perversion after perversion.

We can open the Holy Bible and read the historical story of mankind on the face of the earth. We see Job being tested and God allowing Satan to test Job, but God put limits on what Satan could do. God allowed Satan to do many things to Job, but he could not take Job's life. After Job proved that he was faithful to the Lord, all that had been taken from him was restored. Abraham was a man of righteousness and a friend of God. Even Abraham was tested when God instructed Abraham to sacrifice his son. Abraham had faith in God and did exactly as God told him. Isaac was saved and the line of descent for the Hebrew people was established. Nevertheless, it was, and is, this chosen line of God's people that have brought grief to God and wrath toward themselves.

Prior to the Hebrews going to Egypt, it seems that their practice was self-driven in what they believed and if they were even the least bit righteous. Over the period of time that the Hebrews spent in Egypt, they forgot just about everything that their forefathers taught them about God. God took it upon Himself to lead this group of people out of their Egyptian bondage.

God chose Moses to be the leader that would lead his people out of Egypt. The Hebrews saw what God did to the Egyptians, along with the giving of the Egyptian's wealth to them, just as they prepared to depart into the wilderness. I perceived that God intended this to be a short trip to travel from Egypt to Canaan. Even with that plan, we see that the rebellion in the heart and soul of this people was against God. The result was God telling this group that they would end up spending 40 years

wandering through the wilderness prior to their being allowed to enter the promised land.

In going through our previous chapters, we saw the evil in both the House of Israel and the House of Judah. We also saw the exile of the House of Israel to Assyria, and the exile of the House of Judah to Babylon. My initial questions at the beginning of this chapter were: What does it mean to be a believer of Christ? Aren't you making a statement when you say you are a Christian, and that you are following the ways of Christ? Shouldn't you view how Christ acted and what He said? If you believe that Christ is LORD, shouldn't you be obedient to what He teaches? Let's look at these questions with a little more depth to our thinking.

As a believer in Christ, aren't you acknowledging that Christ is your Lord and Savior? What does the word Lord mean? Doesn't it mean that you have accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as the master over your life? Then why do you not obey what Christ has said? Just to show a couple of things that are recorded pertaining to Christ, turn over to Matthew chapter 19. Let's look at verses 3-6 to begin, ³ *The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"* ⁴ *And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'* ⁵ *and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?* ⁶ *So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."* We see that the Pharisees came to test Jesus by asking about divorce, but, look at Christ's answer, *"Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'* ⁵ *and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?* ⁶ *So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."* Have you, who claim to be New Testament Christians, understood what Jesus said and what He meant? Jesus spoke a mouthful! Number one, He said specifically that marriage is one man and one woman. It does not say two men or two women! It also says, the two shall become as one flesh! That is the union of a marriage, and once again, it is between one man and one woman. Two men or two women cannot, nor do not, make one flesh! To think in this manner is perversion, or as God Himself says is an abomination! There is another statement that is made in this passage. God only made two genders, male and female! There are no others! To think that there are is Satanic, and in the minds of mankind only! Somehow many New Testament Christians have missed the true meaning of what it is to be a Christian. The simple statement is that being a Christian means to follow after the model of what Jesus did and to be obedient to what He says. Anything added to or changed about that, is a Satanic influenced concept and a sin. Simply stated it is a counterfeit version of the Christian faith.

That was just one statement concerning one question about divorce. The Pharisees pressed further and asked Jesus what is stated in verse 7, ⁷ *They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"* Jesus gave them the following reply in verses 8-9, ⁸ *He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.* ⁹ *And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."* We have another true statement from Christ that seems to be overlooked in today's actions and belief. Doesn't it say, *I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery?* Mankind's rebellion continues, and we have a very, very large number of so-called Christians running around that are nothing more than a bunch of hypocrite adulterers. At this point, I will have to be honest and even admit that I might fall into that category. My first wife was cheating on me and asked for the divorce. My second wife was a Turk and used me to get to the United States, after obtaining her citizenship, she wanted a divorce. My current wife is truly my helpmeet and a true blessing to me. Praise God for forgiveness and His Holy Spirit and His grace.

There is another question posed to Jesus by a rich young man in chapter 19. That question is stated in verses 16-30, ¹⁶ *Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"* ¹⁷ *So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But **if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.**"* ¹⁸ *He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'* ¹⁹ *'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"* ²⁰ *The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"* ²¹ *Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."* ²² *But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

²³ *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."* ²⁴ *And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."* ²⁵ *When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?"* ²⁶ *But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."* ²⁷ *Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"* ²⁸ *So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* ²⁹ *And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life."* ³⁰ *But many who are first will be last, and the last first.* In this passage, verses 16-19, there are two different questions asked: First, the question of what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? Jesus' reply was **keep the commandments.** Jesus' answer means to keep all of the **TEN original commandments** as stated by God to the Hebrews in the wilderness. Second, the young man asked, Which ones? Jesus gave him five specific commandments, however, He had already said to **keep the commandments!**

Keeping the commandments appears to be the largest stumbling block for mankind to follow. At the same time, it seems that when God spoke to Moses and laid out His covenant that the people quickly and decidedly accepted that they were responsible to follow God's commandments. It is interesting that we are going to follow another chapter 19, turn over to the book of Exodus, the 19th chapter and read for yourself what the people agreed to before the Lord. It remains my habit to provide the verses for any statement I make concerning the Bible, therefore, here are the important verses. Exodus 19:3-6, ³ *And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: "* ⁴ *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. "* ⁵ *Now **therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.** "* ⁶ ***And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.** ' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."* Continuing with this passage, we find Moses speaking these words to the elders and the people, and the reply of the people back to Moses, verses 7-8, ⁷ *So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him."* ⁸ ***Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."** So Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.* Turning to chapter 20, we find the Lord speaking to all the people and stating the Ten Commandments. Notice, that at this time, the commandments are spoken to the people, they are not written down on stone tablets at this time. Exodus 20:1-17, ¹ *And God spoke all these words, saying: "* ² *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. "* ³ *You shall have no other gods before Me. "* ⁴ *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; "* ⁵ *you*

shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. ⁷ "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. ⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. ¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. ¹³ "You shall not murder. ¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ "You shall not steal. ¹⁶ "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." From chapter 20 to chapter 31, we find many things that God instructed Moses to tell the people, or the instructions to build the Tabernacle and to furnish it. In chapter 24, we see the Israelites agreeing and verifying what the Lord had told to Moses. First, look in verse 3, ³ So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the Lord has said we will do." Follow this with verse 7, ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient." That gives us at least three different places that confirms that the people have promised to do all the things the Lord has made as a part of His covenant.

Recall that, we have not seen text that tells us that the Ten Commandments are yet recorded on stone tablets. We are now over to chapter 31 and we read from verse 12 through verse 18, ¹² And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹³ "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. ¹⁴ You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. ¹⁷ It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.' "

¹⁸ And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God. We learn that the keeping of the Sabbath is a perpetual covenant between God and the children of Israel. Notice that God did not state a difference between those who have accepted Jesus as Christ and the Lord making them spiritual children, and those who are actual descendants of any of the ten tribes, the physical children. This means that anyone who says they are Christian needs to understand that they are to honor God on His Sabbath and not this false date of worship on Sunday, the day of worshiping the pagan sun god. In time, we will prove that this is an actual fact, perpetrated by a man, but, influenced with the spirit of Satan.

What do we find next? These people, who had promised to obey God in all that He directed them to do, and because Moses was gone for forty days, begged Aaron to make them a god to lead them. Aaron crafted them a golden calf and they worshiped around the calf and had a good 'ol pagan feast. This can be seen in chapter 32. Since chapter 32 represents a prime example of mankind's rebellion against God, I am inserting the entire 32nd chapter of Exodus. ¹ Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him,

"Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." ² And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." ³ So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" ⁵ So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord." ⁶ Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

⁷ And the Lord said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. ⁸ They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!' " ⁹ And the Lord said to Moses, **"I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!"** ¹⁰ **Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation."**

¹¹ Then Moses pleaded with the Lord his God, and said: "Lord, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. ¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' " ¹⁴ So the Lord relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.

¹⁵ And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides; on the one side and on the other they were written. ¹⁶ Now the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. ¹⁷ And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp." ¹⁸ But he said: "It is not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, But the sound of singing I hear."

¹⁹ So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it. ²¹ And Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?" ²² So Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. ²³ For they said to me, 'Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' " ²⁴ And I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.' So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out."

²⁵ Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), ²⁶ then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the Lord's side—come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. ²⁷ And he said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.' " ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. **And about three thousand men of the people fell that day.** ²⁹ Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother."

³⁰ Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." ³¹ Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! ³² Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." ³³ And the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book." ³⁴ Now therefore, go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin." ³⁵ So the Lord plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

So it was, the people who had said they would follow what God told them, at their first opportunity threw off that promise and broke the covenant that was made with God. That rebellion cost 3,000 lives within the camp by the sword and a plague upon the people who remained in the camp. I do have one question, verse 34 tells us that God told Moses to lead the people to the place where God intended for them to go. Recall what is stated in chapter 19 verses one and two, ¹ In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. ² For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness. So Israel camped there before the mountain. It had only been three months since Israel left Egypt, and this verse would indicate to me that God intended for this to be a short period of time for Israel to travel across the wilderness and enter the promised land. Why did it cost them forty years to get there? Actually, we have already covered the answer to that question. If you recall, only two came back with a good report when Moses sent the ten to spy out the land of Canaan. The other eight said it was a land of giants and couldn't be overtaken. Because of their unbelief, God said they would wander for one year for each day they were in the land. They were gone for forty days to spy out the land, thus they would wander for forty years. Mankind truly does have a hardened heart and a stiff neck to disavow what they had said to God. Here's the next question: Has any of that changed in the 6,000 years that God has allocated to mankind to attempt to manage the affairs of man?

It appears not! God went along with man's management of the earth for 4,000 years and fully understood that mankind was making one mess after another under their own management. It became time for God to send His Son to model for mankind how they should act and interface with each other, along with being obedient to God's Commandments. Satan had been the cause of much of mankind's mismanagement and attempted to destroy the Christ child just after His birth by having the king, of the time, to send soldiers to kill all male children under the age of two in the village of Bethlehem. God protected His son by having Joseph, Mary and the Christ child to travel to Egypt. After the king died, God sent word, through an angel, that they were to return from Egypt.

Let's allow Christ to grow into manhood. Christ prepares to begin His ministry, but first He seeks to be baptized by His earthly cousin, John the Baptist. After He is baptized, we find the two accounts, Matthew and Luke, of Christ being tempted by Satan in the desert. There is a very interesting statement that is made in the Luke account of Jesus being tempted by Satan. Take special notice of Luke 4:13, ¹³ Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time. During the time period that Jesus walked upon the earth, Satan did not find an opportune time to deceive, confuse or cause Christ to deny God or His Commandments. Nevertheless, Satan did find a way to influence mankind, just as he did with Eve in the Garden. After the resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Church became the body of Christ. It is through the church that Satan has found an opportune time to influence and deceive mankind. Just as we found in the account of Israel traveling through the wilderness, it didn't take them long to throw off the covenant they had made with God. In similar fashion, it didn't take the church very long to throw off the sanctification of the church as the body of Christ. What were the warnings and who made the statements?

First, we must look to see what Jesus gave as an instruction for mankind to be aware of. Please turn to Matthew 24, chapter 24, verses 4-14 and 24, ⁴ *And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.”* ⁵ *For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.* ⁶ *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* ⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.* ⁸ *All these are the beginning of sorrows.* ⁹ *Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.* ¹⁰ *And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.* ¹¹ *Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.* ¹² *And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.* ¹³ *But he who endures to the end shall be saved.* ¹⁴ *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. . . .* ²⁴ *For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.* We find a similar statement in Mark 13:5-6, ⁵ *And Jesus, answering them, began to say: “Take heed that no one deceives you.”* ⁶ *For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and will deceive many.*

Our second source of instruction comes from Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul gave many warnings to those he disciplined. From Romans, we have chapter 16, verses 17-18, ¹⁷ *Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.* ¹⁸ *For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.* From 1st Corinthians 3:18-19, ¹⁸ *Let no one deceive himself.* *If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.* ¹⁹ *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their own craftiness”;* From Ephesians 4:11-14; 5:6, ¹¹ *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,* ¹² *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,* ¹³ *till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;* ¹⁴ *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.* . . . ^{5:6} *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.* Finally, from 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7, ¹ *Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,* ² *not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.* ³ *Let no one deceive you by any means;* *for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,* ⁴ *who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.* ⁵ *Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?* ⁶ *And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.* ⁷ *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.* We must also review what the Apostle John said. Turn to 1 John 1:8-10 then 3:7-8, ⁸ *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,* *and the truth is not in us.* ⁹ *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* ¹⁰ *If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. . . .* ^{3:7} *Little children, let no one deceive you.* *He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.* ⁸ *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.* John also wrote the Revelation of Jesus, we find this next passage in Revelation 20:3-4, 7-8, ² *He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;* ³ *and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him,*

so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. . . .⁷ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

Therefore, we see that false christs and false prophets (even well-meaning preachers, priests and teachers) will arise in the latter days prior to the second coming of Christ. The Bible even goes so far as to say that Satan goes about masquerading as an angel of light and his demons as false teachers of God's Word. Jesus plainly states that, we are to be on our guard and to let no one deceive us. The deception is the act that Satan attempts to portray upon the world, that he is the true god and we are to honor him.

Paul tells us in several places that this deception has already begun even in his time. We can go further and illustrate the misguidance of the so called Church (Catholic) by 325 C.E. when the pope presses Emperor Constantine to change the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday, the day of the sun (sun worshipers). With the changes, we can find idolatry in the form of worshiping Joseph and Mary, later they added the worship of the images of saints and even more saints. This image worship even goes so far that they depict Jesus on the cross (as a dead person). My Jesus is alive and well, He is sitting on His throne in Heaven with God His Father. This false church establishes itself as the connection between mankind and God, and claims the head of the church is the vicar of God upon the earth. There is no place in human history that this connection ever took place, and it is a complete lie.

Let's stay with the church and take it a step further. Do you recall who Martin Luther was? Martin Luther was a schooled priest of the Roman Catholic church who opposed the church's use of indulgencies and misguided rites for death and other things. These practices of idolatry increased the coffers of the church and the influences church fathers had over civil governments. In many cases, the power of control over the people went to the church, and not to the rulers of the various kingdoms and countries. It was this manner of paganism that Luther wanted changed for the betterment of the church itself, or so I thought. I thought that Luther was a brave crusader for changes in the church structure that would revert back to the true teachings of Christ. Little did I know, until I checked out the ways and methods of the Protestant Reformation. It appears that Martin Luther actually made human selection on what books of the Bible should be a part of the Bible. It was reported that he even made changes to those portions which he did not believe in fully. Luther even went so far as to be against the Jews, contrary to God's own statement in Genesis 12:2-3, *2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*" (ESV) In many ways, it was this complete betrayal of anything Israelite or Godly that keeps Sunday as the day of worship, instead of the Sabbath as God directed in Exodus 31:12-18, *12 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 13 "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. 14 You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16 Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant. 17 It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.'"*

¹⁸ And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

Not only has the Roman Catholic church managed to change the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday, they also managed to introduce Easter and Christmas into the lives of those who claimed to be Christian. Do you understand what either of these two holidays really represent? Easter is a pagan fertility festival. That's why you have baby chicks and rabbits as part of the tradition. Christmas is a sun god festival celebrating the winter solstice as the shortest day of the year. From this day forward, in any given year, the days are getting longer until you reach the summer solstice. If you really want the Christian side of this, you would have to do a little deep study. The Christian side of the early festival is the celebration of Passover. This would be the rushed meal just prior to the exodus from Egypt by the Hebrew people. It is also the last meal that Jesus ate prior to His crucifixion. The opposite for Christmas, to me, would be the Day of Atonement. Here is my reason for saying this about both of these dates. Jesus is the reason for our Passover, it is by the shedding of His blood that paid the price for our sins. Jesus is also our Atonement who, once again, paid the price on our behalf to atone for all of our sins.

It is an absolute shame that the Roman Catholic church has managed to change God's true worship into pagan sun god worship and the creation of a counterfeit religion. Satan has done well with his opportune time to deceive the whole world. There are many highly respected evangelist who have missed the understanding of at least two things. They don't, or won't, teach the full meaning of Jesus' statement that He must spend three days and three nights in the grave as Jonah spent in the great fish. Neither will they take a stand that Christians are to worship God and His Christ on the Sabbath and not on the sun god day of Sunday. They are actually following Satan's desire to deceive many and are speaking soft things to people just to tickle their ears. What will it take for the true Christians to do to get mankind back on the correct trail of worshipping Christ according to what the Word of God says? Just as a reminder I'm inserting what Revelation says in chapter 18, verses 4-5, *⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."* ⁵ *For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.*

Let me return to Martin Luther for a moment. The time frame we are speaking about is generally called, The Protestant Reformation. While Martin Luther was a prime player in the reformation, there were others who also had ties to the Roman Catholic church, but did not like particular portions of the church's doctrine. Two other players would be John Wycliffe and John Calvin. Now, if we viewed some of the players of that time period, we might be surprised at what was taking place. Every person who may read this work should understand that the whore of Babylon, mentioned in so much of Revelation and the end of time, as we know it, revolves around this false pagan religion that was started in the spirit of Babylon. This whore of Babylon is represented by the Roman Catholic church. The daughters of this whore are the offshoot Protestant denominations that are derived from some of the traditions and rites of the Roman Catholic church. Many of the reformers wanted change away from some of the teachings and doctrine of the Roman Catholic church. What many people do not understand is that many of these reformers were trained priests to begin with. They changed what they thought was wrong, but carried over other things within the doctrine and dogma of the "mother church". It is for this reason that I took the time to give you all the verses that pertained to being deceived. Deception is nothing more than a lie. Why do you want to be taught lies about God and His Christ? Why do you desire to be like the Hebrews in the wilderness and throw off the true wisdom of God for the sake of having your ears tickled by sweet words of crap? Really now, you need to take a serious look at the increase in pagan practices that has been increasing in the last ten years.

The following is a rewrite of an article written by Douglas S. Winnail in the November-December 2019 issue of Tomorrow's World magazine. Where scripture is stated, I have continued my practice of inserting the text from the Bible in blue italics so my readers do not have to go and get their Bible to see what Scripture says.

The Rise of Modern Paganism

Ancient nature religions, long thought abandoned by civilized mankind, are reemerging across Western nations. Why is this happening? What is driving this global trend? Where is it leading? What does it mean to you?

The twenty-first century has witnessed remarkable historic events, including the rise of Russia after the demise of the USSR, the resurgence of militant Islam, the rise of China, the fragmenting of the European Union, and ever-deepening political divisions in the United States. Additionally, we must bring in the COVID-19 pandemic and the latest war between Russia and Ukraine. However, one of the most surprising events has been the reemergence of ancient pagan ideas and traditions in Western nations once considered “Christian.”

As an example of this new global trend, Iceland has constructed its first temple in over 1,000 years to worship the old Nordic gods, Thor and Odin. In England, thousands gather at Stonehenge on the summer solstice to greet the rising sun as ancient pagans once did. In Edinburgh, Scotland, performers, painted as red devils, entertain crowds to celebrate the ancient Celtic Fire Festivals of Beltane and Samhain, while many gather at ancient sites to burn a wicker man as Druids once did. In America, thousands travel to Burning Man festivals catering to uninhibited behavior resembling old pagan festivals.

In Greece, Hellenists are promoting the worship of the ancient deities Zeus, Apollo, and Athena; while at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, children write prayers to Aphrodite or Venus, the Greco-Roman goddess of love and lust, and patron goddess of prostitutes. In Eastern Europe, people celebrate ancient fertility rites by dancing around and jumping over fires, customs from a pre-Christian past. In Russia, church leaders note, with concern, the growing interest in pagan traditions. In America, the fastest-growing religion is witchcraft, and statues promoting Satanism appear on public grounds. Why should the return of paganism matter to progressive Western nations today, where tolerance, acceptance, and diversity are promoted and celebrated? Is there a largely unrecognized significance to the dramatic changes taking place? Are we ignoring important lessons of history? If so, what consequences await us in the days ahead? Why should you be concerned?

The Pagan Worldview

To grasp the significance of what is happening, we need to understand the ideas and practices of the old pagan world, and how they differ from those of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The term pagan was initially used to describe anyone who did not believe in the God of the Bible or follow biblical guidelines. The thoroughly pagan Greco-Roman world, given to idol worship and adopting gods and practices of other religions as if they were interchangeable, provides one ancient example. Such concepts and practices were totally at odds with biblically influenced religion. The Greeks and Romans were a mix of polytheists who worshiped many gods and goddesses, pantheists who believed that “god” was everywhere in nature, and what we now call atheists, worshiping no god at all. Such pagans had no knowledge of the God of the Bible. Compare this to Acts 17:23, ²³ *for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:*. The idea of one true, personal God was generally foreign to the Greco-Roman world.

In Greco-Roman paganism, there were few fixed rules and doctrines. Truth was relative, there was little comprehension of absolute right and wrong, and no real concept of sin, guilt, or judgment. Each person decided his or her own path through life. Pagans focused primarily on earthly life, gratifying physical desires, and pursuing personal happiness. While deceptively appealing and subtle in some of its errors, it does not take much research to see that the whole of the pagan approach is utterly alien to what the Bible reveals.

Unlike the God of Scripture, the gods of the Greek pantheon, for example, were promiscuous. Myths abound with tales of their lust, envy, murder, and other gruesome deeds. Open sexuality and debauchery characterized many pagan ceremonies, especially the spring and midsummer fertility festivals. The worship of Aphrodite involved visits to temple prostitutes that generated revenue for the temple, which the Bible also condemns (Leviticus 19:29, ²⁹ *'Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.* ; Deuteronomy 23:17-18, ¹⁷ *"There shall be no ritual harlot of the daughters of Israel, or a perverted one of the sons of Israel.* ¹⁸ *You shall not bring the wages of a harlot or the price of a dog to the house of the Lord your God for any vowed offering, for both of these are an abomination to the Lord your God.*). In Greco-Roman society fornication, homosexuality, and the sexual abuse of children was advocated by Plato and practiced by the Spartans. All were common and accepted. Art, that we would term pornography, was everywhere. The Roman baths, inns, and taverns were locations for gratifying any kind of physical desire. One reason pagans saw biblical religion as a threat was that they feared the Bible's teachings about sex would "turn the lights out on that merry dance" (Steven Smith, *Pagans & Christians in the City*, p. xiii).

The Bible teaches us that children are a gift from God. Psalm 127:3-5, ³ *Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.* ⁴ *Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.* ⁵ *Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.* They are precious in His sight Matthew 19:13-15, ¹³ *Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them.* ¹⁴ *But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."* ¹⁵ *And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.*

On the other hand, in the ancient pagan world, infanticide was common. Aristotle advocated killing children for population control and to eliminate malformed infants. History records the case of a Roman citizen advising his wife that if she had a child while he was away, she should keep it if it were a boy, but kill it if it were a girl (Ken Spiro, *WorldPerfect*, pp. 6-7). The pagans of ancient Canaan and Carthage burned babies alive as sacrifices to the god Baal, hoping to receive in return rain or safe voyages. This was a practice the Scriptures clearly condemns, Leviticus 18:21, ²¹ *And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.*; Deuteronomy 18:10, ¹⁰ *There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer.* The Bible also states that human beings are made in God's image. Genesis 1:26-27, ²⁶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* ²⁷ *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.* We are not to murder each other. Exodus 20:13, ¹³ *"You shall not murder.* Yet, in the pagan world, human life had little value. Not only killing in battle, the Romans also killed for entertainment on a massive scale, and thousands of people died as crowds cheered in arenas scattered across the empire. In today's world, we see killings at schools, shopping malls and even on city streets.

Why, do we even ask if we understand ancient pagan ideas and traditions, and are they relevant to us today? We should ask, because today, they are all around us!

The Return of Paganism

In recent years, there has been a growing realization that the spread of Christian ideas in the West and general respect for the Bible did not eliminate paganism. Many ancient ideas simply went

underground and have begun to reemerge in today's more favorable climate. For the last several centuries, Europe and America have become increasingly secular as pre-Christian ideas and traditions have gained acceptance. Look around at the growth of the LBGTQ+ community. They have gone so far as to pressure those in government that we now have the month of June ear-marked as PRIDE month! Think about that for a moment. There is no festival or feast ordained by God that lasts an entire month. The WOKE and BLM doctrines are against Biblical teachings. All lives matter! Mankind only has one blood, that's human blood and all are equal in God's sight. It is man themselves that thinks, and then makes, different ideas. Today, the Western nations, once considered "Christian," appear to be in the midst of a "pagan revival," as noted in a December 2018 New York Times article titled "The Return of Paganism." Many concepts viewed as "progressive" in our modern society are actually part of the reemergence of pagan ideas that stand in total contrast to the teachings of biblical Christianity, and those ideas have consequences.

Commonly accepted ideas today, such as: that God does not exist; that the Bible is not divinely inspired; that all religions are equally valid; that absolute values of right and wrong do not exist; and that there is no such thing as sin were all expounded by ancient pagan philosophers. Just as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, pornography, and infanticide were condoned and widely practiced in the ancient pagan world, these activities are increasingly common and even celebrated today. The "secular humanism" that dominates modern society is, in many instances, a thinly disguised "neo-paganism" asserting itself in our twenty-first century culture. In fact, a Google search for "modern paganism" or "contemporary paganism" demonstrates a startling level of interest in bringing ancient, pagan practices back into prominence. But how could the anti-Christian values and ideas of paganism displace Judeo-Christian values that have seemed so firmly woven into the culture of Western civilization for so long? Even our form of government was built on Christian values.

Seeds Sown Long Ago

Some people may think, the fertile ground for the decline of Christian influence and the return of paganism was actually prepared during the early centuries of Christianity. That is not necessarily correct! We could go all the way back to the tower of Babel and observe the beginning of pagan ideology in mankind's thinking. We can also see God's wrath for disobedience. As the Church grew and spread throughout the Mediterranean world, it encountered many pagan ideas and practices that some did not discard, but rather adopted and absorbed into their doctrine. These customs were popular, and apostate church leaders reasoned that incorporating them would make it easier for pagans to convert to this new religion. The biblical Sabbath observed by Jesus, the apostles, and early Christians was abandoned in favor of Sunday, a day already acknowledged by pagans, who, like Emperor Constantine, worshipped the sun. Here are some examples to show Sabbath day worship. Luke 4:16, ¹⁶ *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.* ; Acts 13:14, ¹⁴ *But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.* , 42–44, ⁴² *So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.* ⁴³ *Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.* ⁴⁴ *On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God.*; 17:1–2, ¹ *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.* ² *Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them*

from the Scriptures, We must understand that the honoring of the Sabbath is God's special mark for His people. Exodus 31:12-17, ¹² And the Lord said to Moses, ¹³ "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you.' ¹⁴ You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. ¹⁶ Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. ¹⁷ It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.' " (ESV)

The popular winter festival of the Saturnalia: a time of gambling, merry-making, and social role-reversal, was renamed "Christmas" and observed as Jesus' birthday, despite the total lack of biblical support for the major deviation from original Christian practice that the festival represented. Through careful research, a person can come close to figuring out Jesus' birth. It will line up with one of God's fall feast days about the last of September or early October on our modern day calendar. The pagan springtime fertility festivals with eggs, rabbits, and sexually oriented activities honoring Aphrodite and Ishtar ("the queen of heaven") were adopted by increasingly apostate leaders and named "Easter" under the guise of remembering Jesus' resurrection even though the Scriptures condemns these practices. See, for examples, Jeremiah 7:18, ¹⁸ The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke Me to anger. ; 44:18-23, ¹⁸ But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have lacked everything and have been consumed by the sword and by famine." ¹⁹ The women also said, "And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did we make cakes for her, to worship her, and pour out drink offerings to her without our husbands' permission?"

²⁰ Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people—the men, the women, and all the people who had given him that answer—saying: ²¹ "The incense that you burned in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them, and did it not come into His mind? ²² So the Lord could no longer bear it, because of the evil of your doings and because of the abominations which you committed. Therefore your land is a desolation, an astonishment, a curse, and without an inhabitant, as it is this day. ²³ Because you have burned incense and because you have sinned against the Lord, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord or walked in His law, in His statutes or in His testimonies, therefore this calamity has happened to you, as at this day." ; and Ezekiel 8:15-18, ¹⁵ Then He said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." ¹⁶ So He brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.

¹⁷ And He said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose. ¹⁸ Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them." It is unsurprising that some Christians begin to question their faith when they look into the origins of these major holidays.

The historical evidence is undeniable! Professing Christians, who claimed to follow the teachings of Jesus, borrowed many ideas and customs from the pagan world, something the Bible clearly warned

against. Deuteronomy 12:29–32, ²⁹ *"When the Lord your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, ³⁰ take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' ³¹ You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. ³² Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.* 16:21–22, ²¹ *"You shall not plant for yourself any tree, as a wooden image, near the altar which you build for yourself to the Lord your God. ²² You shall not set up a sacred pillar, which the Lord your God hates.;* 18:9–12, ⁹ *"When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. ¹⁰ There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. ¹² For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.*

Historian Will Durant has stated, "Christianity did not destroy paganism; it adopted it. . . . The Greek mysteries passed down into the impressive mystery of the Mass. . . . From Egypt came the ideas of a divine trinity. . . . the adoration of the Mother and Child. . . . From Phrygia came the worship of the Great Mother. . . . Christianity was the last great creation of the ancient pagan world" (Caesar and Christ, p. 595). Others have documented that many non-Scriptural practices of modern, mainstream Christianity: such as crosses, crucifixes, halos, church steeples, shrines, clerical vestments, relics, Sunday worship, and even the title Pontifex Maximus were "lifted directly out of pagan culture in the post-apostolic period" (Frank Viola and George Barna, Pagan Christianity?, p. 6).

While many assume the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s restored true, biblical Christianity, this is simply not true. Although some non-biblical practices were eliminated or weakened such as indulgences, confession to a priest, praying to saints, rosaries, the role of the pope, the ideas of purgatory and transubstantiation and many other doctrines of pagan origin were retained. Although the Reformation severed Protestantism from the ecclesiastical control of the Roman church over doctrine and practice, the new emphasis on religious freedom "opened the doors to wider dissent and to irreligion (lack of religion) as well" (Harold Lindsell, The New Paganism, p. 42). The irreligious fruits of the Reformation emerged in the centuries that followed.

Neo-Pagans of the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement that emerged in Europe in the 1700s, and it played a pivotal role in reviving ancient pagan ideas that continue to shape our modern world. Critical thinkers of the Enlightenment resented the corruption, extravagance, and oppressiveness of the Roman church, and they were driven by the winds of change the Reformation generated. Over the years that followed, critics launched unrelenting attacks on Christianity, the Bible and God. Their weapons included the rediscovery and popularization of pagan Greco-Roman writings and the misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and misuse of discoveries in the natural world.

Like their ancient pagan predecessors, the "neo-pagans" of the Enlightenment focused on the natural world, and they rejected the idea of one supernatural God who intervenes in human affairs. Enamored with human reason, they mocked the idea that the Bible is a divinely inspired book containing accurate history and universally applicable moral laws. The rise of so-called "higher criticism" in Western academia generated claims that many books of the Bible were spurious (meaning of a deceitful nature or quality, FORGED), that miracles are impossible, that Jesus was not the divine Son of God,

instead, that He was just an itinerant preacher in Palestine and that His resurrection was staged, invented, or imagined.

This anti-Christian perspective was aided by scientific discoveries and theories that appeared to contradict a religious worldview, partially due to unfounded (and unbiblical) superstitions that had become associated with “Christianity.” Copernicus had already demonstrated that the earth revolved around the sun and not the reverse. Medical advances revealed that diseases were not always caused by curses from God, but by germs, and seemed to be preventable through new medical practices. Observe what happened when COVID-19 was released upon the world. There were nationwide lock downs, mandatory masking and children around the globe were dumbed down because of being out of the classroom and receiving over the Internet schooling. Police State tactics of denying access to churches, stores and restaurants were put in place. Beatings with batons and tear gas were used if you did not have on a mask. Some of these tactics are still being used! These and other discoveries all fell in the realm of the natural world that the pagan philosophers focused on, and appeared to some to paint God and the Bible as unnecessary products of human imagination. Within an atmosphere of eagerness to reject the supernatural, Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution which claimed to explain the living world, without appealing to a Creator, found a ready audience.

Such cultural changes during and after the Enlightenment produced a momentous shift in the worldview of Western nations that had functioned on a Judeo-Christian foundation for the better part of a millennium. The spirit of the age presumed that human reason could replace biblical revelation as a guide to truth, that the scientific method was more trustworthy than Scripture, and that a secular approach to life would lead to happiness and a better world. These anti-Christian ideas were gifts of the Enlightenment that have infiltrated our universities and shaped the troubled world in which we live and is where paganism has returned as biblical religion has declined. However, as Yale historian Peter Gay has noted, the critics, skeptics, and reformers of the Enlightenment “were modern pagans” whose paganism was “directed against their Christian inheritance” in an effort to create a world free of moral restraints (The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism, pp. xi, 8).

A Dangerous Road Ahead

We need to ask several important questions. What is the real significance of the modern revival of ancient pagan ideas and traditions? What is driving this historic shift? Why is it happening today in the Western world? Where is it leading?

In recent decades, numerous observers have recognized that we are slipping backward into the equivalent of a pre-Christian past. Historian Jacques Barzun noted that, over the last 500 years, “the West offered the world a set of ideas and institutions not found earlier or elsewhere,” and that secular ideas and practices, largely stemming from the Enlightenment period, “are bringing about its demise” (From Dawn to Decadence, p. xv). British journalist Ferdinand Mount has observed that “the society that is now emerging bears an astonishing resemblance. . . . almost eerily so, to the ways in which the Greeks and Romans lived,” emphasizing physical pleasures, gratuitous violence, unlimited sexual freedoms, multiple gods, and no sense of guilt (Full Circle, p. 1). While some have resisted these “progressive” changes, our secular Western societies as a whole continue to jettison (get rid of) biblical values and absorb thoroughly pagan ones as they clearly head down a dangerous path.

Nearly 80 years ago, social critic T. S. Eliot noted that the future of Western societies would be determined by a contest between Christianity and what he called “modern paganism” (Pagans & Christians in the City, p. 8). A generation later, theologian Carl F. H. Henry warned that neo-pagans were threatening “to undermine the foundations of Western civilization” and that the already visible result of their ideas was “moral and intellectual decay paralleled only by Pompeii and Sodom” (The

Twilight of a Great Civilization, p. ix). Today, numerous scholars recognize that there is a powerful religious element to the “culture war” being waged within Western civilization, as essentially pagan and godless ideas come into conflict with long-held Judeo Christian values and biblical concepts.

The Bible reveals that the “god of this age” is Satan the devil, 2 Corinthians 4:3–4, ³ *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,* ⁴ *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.* Satan is an entity most modern pagans do not believe even exists. This is unsurprising, as Scripture also reveals that Satan has deceived “the whole world”, Revelation 12:9, ⁹ *So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* He is the demonic “author” of the spiritual confusion and carnal attitudes driving the return of paganism, and corrupting the Bible influenced foundations of Western civilization. The creatively destructive leaders of the Enlightenment and their modern disciples are Satan’s unwitting accomplices. See 2 Corinthians 11:3–4, ³ *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* ⁴ *For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!* , 13–15. ¹³ *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.* ¹⁴ *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.* ¹⁵ *Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

Few realize that the dramatic cultural shift we are witnessing was actually predicted nearly 3,000 years ago in the Bible. **The rise of Western civilization was not an accident!** God anciently revealed His laws, religion, and way of life to the ancient Israelites, Exodus 20, so they could be a light and example to the world, Deuteronomy 4:6–8, ⁶ *There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.* ⁷ *And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.* ⁸ *You shall not at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes.* The Israelites entered into a covenant with God that promised blessings for obedience and **serious consequences for disobedience**, Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28, consequences that included going into captivity for turning away from Him. **Following their Assyrian captivity, the northern Israelite tribes migrated into northwest Europe and America**, where God’s promises to Abraham and his descendants were fulfilled in the rise of several Western nations. **Satan’s current activities especially target these modern Israelite nations.** The nations of England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, along with the United States and Israel itself make up the Israelite nations. Observe the conditions in these nations. Canada and Australia are turning into Police States under their left wing political leaders. The Caucasian , English speaking people of South Africa are abandoning their farms and relocating back to Europe. Israel, New Zealand and America are seeing more and more violence and discord in their nations.

Moses thundered numerous warnings to the ancient Israelites about the consequences of forgetting God and turning to other gods. Deuteronomy 6:14, ¹⁴ *You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you ;* 7:16, ¹⁶ *And you shall destroy all the peoples whom the Lord your God delivers over to you; your eye shall have no pity on them; nor shall you serve their gods, for that will be a snare to you ;* 8:18–19, ¹⁸ *And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.* ¹⁹ *Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the Lord your God, and follow*

other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. ; 12:29–32,

²⁹ "When the Lord your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, ³⁰ take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' ³¹ You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way; for every abomination to the Lord which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. ³² Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it. Moses also recorded a sobering prophecy about what would happen to the modern Israelite nations as they approached the end of the age. He was inspired to warn, Deuteronomy 31:29, ²⁹ *For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands."*

Jeremiah also warned that "the time of Jacob's trouble" would come upon Jacob's descendants, modern-day Israelite nations, "in the latter days" because of their embrace of ideas and behaviors that God condemns. Jeremiah 30:1–24, ¹ *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, ² "Thus speaks the Lord God of Israel, saying: 'Write in a book for yourself all the words that I have spoken to you. ³ For behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord, 'that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.' "* ⁴ *Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. ⁵ "For thus says the Lord: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, Whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins Like a woman in labor; And all faces turned pale? ⁷ Alas! **For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.** ⁸ 'For it shall come to pass in that day,' Says the Lord of hosts, 'That I will break his yoke from your neck, And will burst your bonds; Foreigners shall no more enslave them. ⁹ But they shall serve the Lord their God, And David their king, Whom I will raise up for them. ¹⁰ 'Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the Lord, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar; And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid. ¹¹ For I am with you,' says the Lord, 'to save you; Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, Yet I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you in justice, And will not let you go altogether unpunished.' ¹² "For thus says the Lord: Your affliction is incurable, Your wound is severe. ¹³ There is no one to plead your cause, That you may be bound up; You have no healing medicines. ¹⁴ All your lovers have forgotten you; They do not seek you; For I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy, With the chastisement of a cruel one, For the multitude of your iniquities, Because your sins have increased. ¹⁵ Why do you cry about your affliction? Your sorrow is incurable. Because of the multitude of your iniquities, Because your sins have increased, I have done these things to you. ¹⁶ 'Therefore all those who devour you shall be devoured; And all your adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; Those who plunder you shall become plunder; And all who prey upon you I will make a prey. ¹⁷ For I will restore health to you And heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'Because they called you an outcast saying: "This is Zion; No one seeks her." ' ¹⁸ "Thus says the Lord: Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob's tents, And have mercy on his dwelling places; The city shall be built upon its own mound, And the palace shall remain according to its own plan. ¹⁹ Then out of them shall proceed thanksgiving And the voice of those who make merry; I will multiply them, and they shall not diminish; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. ²⁰ Their children also shall be as before, And their congregation shall be established before Me; And I will punish all who oppress them. ²¹ Their nobles*

shall be from among them, And their governor shall come from their midst; Then I will cause him to draw near, And he shall approach Me; For who is this who pledged his heart to approach Me?' says the Lord. ²² 'You shall be My people, And I will be your God.' " ²³ *Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord Goes forth with fury, A continuing whirlwind; It will fall violently on the head of the wicked. ²⁴ The fierce anger of the Lord will not return until He has done it, And until He has performed the intents of His heart. In the latter days you will consider it.* With the resurgence of outright and unmasked paganism in many Western nations, these ancient prophecies are coming true today.

Realizing that anti-Christian ideas and practices are spreading throughout the Western world today, it appears that many have failed to learn the lessons of history. We are repeating the mistakes of the ancient Israelites, both the House of Israel and the House of Judah, despite the examples God recorded in the Bible for our benefit at the end of the age. 1 Corinthians 10:1–11, ¹ *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. ⁷ And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." ⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; ⁹ nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; ¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.* While our modern nations may not repent of turning away from God, you can learn from these examples and avoid the coming consequences if you recognize and avoid the ideas and practices rooted in the modern return of paganism, begin sincerely seeking God and the way of life presented in the pages of Scripture. If you are going to wear the label of “Christian” start acting like one, and not a follower of a counterfeit religion!

Our next item to review is another work of Douglas S. Winnail in the July 2023 issue of Tomorrow’s World magazine. In this article, he provides a wonderful insight to the watchcare of General George Washington and the army under his command during the American Revolution. God truly does influence the rise and the fall of nations and those nation’s people.

The Miraculous American Revolution

Many say, “God Bless America,” but the true blessings may go deeper than many realize. What is God’s prophetic purpose for guiding the rise of the United States?

Though secular historians scoff at the idea, students of the Bible recognize that God guides the course of history. Long ago, Job wrote in Job 12:23, ²³ “*He makes nations great, and destroys them; He enlarges nations, and guides them*”. The prophet Daniel records the same important message: that God “removes kings and raises up kings” and “the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He will” ([Daniel 2:21](#); [4:17](#), [25](#), [32](#); [5:21](#)).

So, did God intervene to guide the outcome of the American Revolution? A quick survey of the facts will reveal that indeed, He did. In this brief article, we will consider just a few of His miraculous interventions and you may want to study more of them on your own.

George Washington’s Amazing Survival

American General George Washington played a leading role in the American Revolution and our nation’s founding. His solid character and firm convictions were key factors in molding the nature and outlook of America. But his very survival to lead the nation was not at all assured.

In 1755, a 23-year-old Colonel Washington was one of 1,400 British troops fighting under the command of General Braddock in the French and Indian War, battling to capture Fort Duquesne, near Pittsburgh. During the battle, they were attacked by a French and Indian force. “Braddock was killed and every officer on horseback was shot, except Washington.” The young colonel later wrote to his brother, “But by the All-Powerful Dispensations of Providence, I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me.” A Native American who fought in the battle later stated, “Washington was never born to be killed by a bullet! I had seventeen fair fires at him with my rifle and, after all, could not bring him to the ground” (Susie and William Federer, *Miracles in American History*, pp. 17–19).

How Did the Weather Help the American Revolution?

In the summer of 1776, General Howe had a British force of more than 400 ships and 32,000 troops stationed around Staten Island in New York Harbor. General Washington gathered about 8,000 American troops at Brooklyn Heights on the western edge of Long Island. The British were able to land about 15,000 troops behind Washington’s lines and inflict heavy losses on the Americans, who were encircled with their backs to the East River.

However, the weather proved to be a deciding factor. Strong winds, an ebbing tide, and incessant rain kept the British from further attacks on the American position, and from moving their warships into the East River to cut off an escape route. Washington, realizing the danger of his position, ordered a nighttime evacuation of Long Island. That evening, at about 11:00 p.m., the wind died down and a thick fog developed, shrouding the American evacuation and when the fog lifted later the next morning,

the British were surprised to find that the American soldiers were nowhere to be found (Chris and Ted Stewart, *Seven Miracles That Saved America*, pp. 9–11). One American soldier wrote, “Providentially for us, a great fog arose which prevented the enemy from seeing our retreat” (David Ludlum, *The Weather Factor*, pp. 36–37).

The outcome of this battle has been described as “so astonishing that many (including General Washington) attributed the safe retreat of the American army to the hand of God” (Mark Beliles and Stephen McDowell, *America’s Providential History*, pp. 158–161). If the wind, rain, and the fog termed the “heavenly messenger” had not intervened for the Americans, they would have been captured, Washington would have been hanged, and the revolution would have come to an early end.

In December, 1776, with morale low and Washington’s army dwindled to about 2,000 at Valley Forge, Washington decided to cross the ice-filled Delaware River and launch a surprise attack on the British in Trenton, New Jersey. The Americans attacked at sunrise on December 26 during a driving snowstorm, with the wind at their backs and blowing into the faces of the mercenary Hessian troops. In less than an hour, the Americans captured nearly a thousand Hessians and lost only a few men. Artillery officer Henry Knox wrote of the victory at Trenton: “Providence seemed to have smiled on every part of this enterprise” (Beliles and McDowell, pp. 161–162).

Burgoyne’s Defeat and Benedict Arnold’s Plot Revealed

Another crucial turning point occurred in the summer of 1777. British General John Burgoyne was marching down the Hudson River Valley from Canada with a force of 7,000 men to join General Howe, who was supposed to be marching north to Albany, New York. However, Burgoyne was stopped at Saratoga by a force of more than 15,000 Americans angered by the brutality inflicted by Burgoyne’s Native American allies. Failing to defeat the Americans, Burgoyne and his troops began a retreat, only to be caught in a rainstorm that turned the roads into a muddy bog. When the Americans crossed the Hudson River ahead of him and blocked his escape, Burgoyne and 6,000 of his troops surrendered.

General Howe never made the trip up the Hudson, as his reinforcements and supplies coming from England were delayed by contrary winds. The defeat of one of Britain’s best generals was a shock to London, but it was viewed as a “miracle” in Paris, a turning point in the Revolutionary War that brought France into the conflict on the side of the Americans (William Weir, *50 Battles that Changed the World*, pp. 55–59). Washington wrote of this event, “I most devoutly congratulate my country, and every well-wisher to the cause, on this signal stroke of Providence,” and Roger Sherman, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, wrote, “This is the Lord’s doing, and marvelous in our eyes” (Federer, pp. 55–57).

In the fall of 1780, the traitorous action of General Benedict Arnold, the hero of the Battle of Saratoga, was discovered by a surprising turn of events. Arnold was plotting to turn the American garrison at West Point, a key position for the control of the Hudson River, over to the British in return for a payment of 20,000 pounds—about a million dollars in today’s money. American sentries happened to stop Major John Andre, dressed as a civilian, as he attempted to return to British lines. In a hollow space in his boot, they found a map of West Point and details of an impending attack. The unexpected apprehension of Major Andre and the discovery of Benedict Arnold’s treachery was widely viewed as an act of “Divine Protection” (Beliles & McDowell, pp. 163–165). Yale President Ezra Stiles wrote in 1873, “A providential miracle detected the conspiracy of Arnold.... The body of the American army, then at West Point, with his Excellency General Washington himself, were to have been rendered into the hands of the enemy” (Federer, pp. 63–66).

Rising Rivers, Strong Storms, and a Sudden Squall

In January 1781, American General Daniel Morgan defeated an advancing British force under General Cornwallis at the Battle of Cowpens in South Carolina in what has been called a “tactical masterpiece and turning point of the war” (Federer, p. 67). Morgan retreated north, chased by the British. Cornwallis reached the Catawba River only hours after the Americans had crossed, “but a sudden storm made the river impassable.... [T]he British nearly overtook the Americans at the Yadkin River, but again rains flooded the river slowing the British” and “another flash flood blocked the British” at the Dan River allowing the Americans to cross into friendly territory in Virginia. British General Henry Clinton described these events as follows: “Here the royal Army was again stopped by a sudden rise of the waters, which had only just fallen (almost miraculously) to let the enemy over” (Federer, pp. 67–68). George Washington wrote in March of 1781, “We have abundant reasons to thank Providence for its many favorable interventions in our behalf. It has at times been my only dependence, for all other resources seemed to have failed us” (Federer, p. 69).

The culminating battles of the Revolutionary War were also decisively influenced by the weather. In October of 1781, an inconclusive engagement between the French and British fleets in the Atlantic, prolonged by shifting winds, allowed another squadron of French ships with troops and supplies to slip into the Chesapeake Bay preventing British supply ships from reaching Cornwallis, who was surrounded by 17,000 French and American troops in Yorktown. Facing overwhelming odds, Cornwallis attempted a nighttime breakout by starting to ferry his regular troops across the York River. The first group made it safely across. However, a sudden and severe rain squall blew the second contingent of soldiers downriver, leaving Cornwallis with a much reduced force.

This sudden “adverse turn of the weather completely disrupted the attempted breakout” and as a British colonel commented, “Thus expired the last hope of the British army” (Ludlum, pp. 59–64). Cornwallis surrendered the next day while a British military band played “The World Turned Upside Down.” The American victory at Yorktown has been called one of the most influential battles in history, as it ended an eight-year struggle for independence and launched America on a path to becoming a world power (Michael Lanning, *The Battle 100*, pp. 1–4) and it was aided by a sudden and dramatic change in the weather.

After the pivotal Battle of Yorktown, Yale President Ezra Stiles wrote, “Who but God could have ordained the critical arrival of the Gallic (French) fleet, so as to... assist... in the siege of Yorktown?” Several years later, George Washington wrote that “it will not be believed that such a force as Great Britain has employed for eight years in this country could be baffled in their plan of subjugating it.... The singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such, as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving, while the perseverance of the Armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement for the space of eight long years was little short of a standing miracle” (Federer, pp. 71–72).

Again and again, the hand of God intervened to guide events at this crucial time—but few remember this today. Why does this matter? **The Bible reveals that failure to transmit the true facts of history and the willingness of leaders to ignore important lessons of history will have serious consequences for America and other Israelite nations in the Western world.**

The words of the prophets ring out through time. Jeremiah records a warning from God: “Because My people have forgotten Me... I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy” *Jeremiah 18:15–17*, ¹⁵ *But my people have forgotten me; they make offerings to false gods; they made them stumble in their ways, in the ancient roads, and to walk into side roads, not the highway*, ¹⁶ *making their land a horror, a thing to be hissed at forever. Everyone who passes by it is horrified and shakes his head.* ¹⁷ *Like the east wind I will scatter them before the enemy. I will show them my back, not my face,*

in the day of their calamity.” (ESV) A time is soon coming when a neglectful United States of America will reap the consequence of its forgetfulness. Hundreds of millions on July 4 celebrate America’s independence from the British Empire. Let us not forget their, and our own, dependence on the God whose hand guides our history.

As a veteran, having served in the Air Force for twenty-seven years, I was willing to put my life on the line to serve my fellow Americans to have the freedoms that we had. I say HAD because of the self-centered political changes that have occurred over the last thirty years. Where, oh where, has common sense and decency gone? Every American veteran, who calls themselves a Christian, should be standing proud and tall for what they took an oath to obey. Our current enemy may well NOT be a physical force, however, I assure you there is a spiritual enemy that is doing everything he can in an attempt to overtake the throne of God. We are in the midst of a spiritual battle and at the moment it appears that Satan and his demons are winning. That is not necessarily so! God remains in charge and Satan forgot to read the last part of God’s Word, HE LOST and is removed from the presence of mankind. How long before foolish mankind will remove their head from the sand pile where it is stuck and return to common sense? People get off this nonsense that you can marry same sex, or change your gender, or do what ever it is that your nasty little mind thinks is okay. Please, oh please, return to a study of the Bible, repent, change your ways and your ideas. Look to a bright future of pleasant HOPE and not to this present day road that can only lead to destruction.

Change is enviable! So be it, but it does not have to be toward a utopia society that pays things in digit money and is under the strictly controlled police state where your every move is being watched and recorded. That is not the American way, neither is it God’s way!

Maranatha



VQP



VQP



VQP

