



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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Hezekiah's Passover and the Lost Tribes of Israel

Many People ask me what I think about the Lost Tribes of Israel. My answer is that they are not lost, God knows exactly where they are. But to be more specific, the Bible explains about the remnants of the tribes. When the Assyrians invaded the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C., they almost destroyed the 10 northern tribes, and then carried many thousands into exile in Assyria, but they didn't take everyone. Sometime after the exile, King Hezekiah of Judah invited those in the Northern Kingdom (Ephraim and Manasseh) who had not been taken into captivity by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:6) to join with the people of Judah in celebrating the Passover in Jerusalem. King Hezekiah of Judah reigned from 716 B.C. to 697 B.C. which was after the exile of the northern tribes, and according to 2 Chronicles 30, King Hezekiah communicated with the northern tribes saying, "Now Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover to the Lord God of Israel... So they established a decree to circulate a proclamation throughout all Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to celebrate the Passover to the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem. For they had not celebrated it in great numbers as it was prescribed," 2 Chronicles 30:1,5

The Split:

This is what happened. After the death of King Solomon, his son Rehoboam became King in his place. Solomon had taxed the people heavily to further his kingdom, but Rehoboam said he would tax them more (see 1 Kings 12). Jeroboam, the de facto leader or rep-

resentative of the ten northern tribes to the King, led the people of the north in a revolt and made himself king of the ten northern tribes. This was their response to Solomon's son when he raised taxes on them: "When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them the people answered the king (Rehoboam), saying, what portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse; To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house David! But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam

reigned over them... So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. It came about when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. None but the tribe of Judah followed the house of David," 1 Kings 12:16-17, 19-

20. For roughly 200 years the

Northern Kingdom rebelled against God by worshipping golden calves at Dan and Bethel and celebrated manmade holidays created by Jeroboam instead of following the House of David (God's appointed royal line of the Messiah in Jerusalem).

The Remnant and the Diaspora:

When the Assyrians invaded Israel from the north in 722 B.C. they carried off many thousands from the ten northern tribes, settling them in cities of the Medes like Halah and Habor (2 Kings 17:6), which was part of the Persian Empire in the time of Esther. The Israelite exiles who were eventually settled in all 127 provinces of Persia, had come from both the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms, and were collectively called "Jews" for the first time in the Bible! (See Esther chapter 2).



As I mentioned before, approximately a decade after the northern exile to Assyria, Hezekiah sent couriers to invite those who remained from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. You see they were not lost. There always has been a remnant of the twelve tribes living in Israel and in Jerusalem (see 1 Kings 12:17). Furthermore, even in exile the Israelites were not lost. Do you think that in just 220 years, from the time of exile to the time of Esther, the Israelites living in Persia would forget who they were? Maybe they weren't religious, but they certainly kept their distinctive Jewish customs and traits enough to be identified by the natives and Haman as Israelites, who were then called Jews. The Jews of Esther's kingdom were all unified and identified into one group whether they came from Judah, Dan, Zebulun, Naphtali, Simeon or Ephraim ... So how exactly is it that they were lost? They were lost because they had been led astray from the God of Israel, just like in Elijah's day (1 Kings 18), and just like in our day where most Jewish people don't know their Messiah, yet they know they are Jews. In the same way, the Israelites in northern Israel and the Diaspora had lost touch with the true faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David. They were lost spiritually, but they knew were Israelites and still identified culturally as Jews.

Restoration:

So what happened with the invitation Hezekiah sent? Did they accept his plea to return? The couriers went north saying, *"O sons of Israel, return to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, that He may return to those of you who escaped and are left from the hand of the kings of Assyria... So the couriers passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. Nevertheless some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem,"* 2 Chronicles 30:6, 10,11. The bottom line is that everyone who left God's established kingdom through David's house, was required to return. That meant going back to Jerusalem and worshipping God in truth and righteousness.

Jesus goes north:

Did you ever notice that Yeshua (Jesus) spent most of His time in the north of Israel in places like Capernaum,

Bethsaida, Jarmuk, Tyre (modern Lebanon), Cana, Nazareth, Samaria, Gadara, Chorazin Caesarea Philippi, and the Sea of Gallilee? Yeshua definitely went to Jerusalem and surrounding area for the Feasts of the Lord several times a year, but most of His ministry was in the north. According to Matthew 15, when Yeshua was in Tyre and Sidon, *"A Canaanite woman from that region came out and began to cry out saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon possessed. But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, "send her away, because she keeps shouting at us. But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,"* Matthew 15:22-24.



Yeshua delivered the woman's daughter, but only after begging and pleading with Him. Yeshua ministered to some Gentiles, but His main focus was on Israelites who lived in northern Israel. It wasn't as if these people were wandering in the wilderness. They weren't lost geographically, they were lost spiritually. Remember that Jeroboam split off with the ten northern tribes in 1 Kings 12, and began idol worship. Remember that Hezekiah sent messengers up north to invite people from the ten tribes who survived the Assyrian invasion of 722 B.C. to Passover in Jerusalem. You see, Hezekiah is a type and shadow of Yeshua and Yeshua is our Passover Lamb (1 Cor

5:6-8). When a person comes to Yeshua, they are coming to the Passover, the real Passover!

Yeshua was going to the same remnant of the ten northern tribes who had fallen away from the true worship to idolatry. He was reaching out to them, but instead of inviting them to come and celebrate Passover as Hezekiah did, He was saying, "come to Me, I am your Passover sacrifice. Only I can heal, save and deliver you from slavery and bondage to sin, sickness and demons!" Jesus went North to reach out to tribes that were lost spiritually, not scattered or misplaced in the world... They were lost because they didn't know the Messiah and He felt compassion for them more so than the people of the south who had the true form of worship, but didn't expect Him as the Messiah!

Isaiah wrote, *"In earlier times he treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make it glorious by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gen-*

A Morning of Praise & Worship



Lev Shelo with Corry Bell

In Concert

Saturday April 29th

10:45 am

Location:

Tri-Cities Messianic Center
1128 New Hampshire Ave
Bristol, VA 24201

Featuring

Marty Goetz

In Concert

Friday June 2nd

7:00 pm



Performing At:

The Tri-Cities Messianic Center
1128 New Hampshire Ave
Bristol, VA 24201

tiles. The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land. The light will shine on them... For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be call Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore,” Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7.

Conclusion:

When the Bible speaks of lost sheep (it does not speak of lost tribes), it is referring mostly to the ten northern tribes who fell away into idolatry and paganism. God knows where every one of them are. Did some wander off and scatter? Sure, but even if you have Jewish ancestry going back hundreds of years, the more important thing is that you are grafted into the Olive Tree of Romans 11 spiritually by your connection to the Messiah Yeshua! Even physical Jews who were cut off from the tree must graft back in. As Peter said, **“There is no other name under heaven by which men are saved.”** Yeshua is our Passover Lamb, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Sooner or later we must all come back to the house of David; we must all come out of paganism and back to Jerusalem, back to the real Passover Lamb and celebrate what He did for us at Calvary.

Happy Passover and Resurrection Sunday,
Love,
Joe and Dawn

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Saturday mornings at 10:45 AM

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