

Notes: Shabbat – June 15, 2013

Introduction: Addressing the Two House Issue in the Congregation

Moshe was dealing with various challenges when leading Israel out of Egypt.

After the leaders associated with Korach, Datan and Aviram were put to death as a penalty for rebelling against Moshe, there arose among the people a spirit of rebellion...

Num 16:41 (17:6) But the very next day, the whole community of the people of Isra'el complained against Moshe and Aharon: "You have killed Adonai's people!"

This complaining was identified as a plague.

Num 16:46 (17:11) Moshe said to Aharon, "Take your fire pan, put fire from the altar in it, lay incense on it, and hurry with it to the assembly to make atonement for them, because anger has gone out from Adonai, and the plague has already begun!"

I believe we have a plague in the congregation and at one point in time I thought it had been addressed. However, I believe it is still present and ultimately affecting the health and future of the congregation.

The plague that I am referring to is the Two House theory.

It is currently affecting the congregation and our vision because it is consuming resources that are supposed to be used in other areas.

We should not be focusing on this, but this is partly my fault because when I tell people not to bring it into the congregation, silly me, I expect that they are able to receive and follow instruction.

In order to address this matter I am going to touch on a few things that are taught in order to support and justify this theory, so that you will be able to recognize some of the verbiage used.

They tend to focus on a few “foundational aspects” in order promote this theory.

Who is Israel?

In order to establish this theory, they must define certain things.

A thesis requires an outline...and here is the beginning of the two house thesis.

One of those definitions is who is Israel.

A significant amount of time is spent in drawing a connection to what are identified as the “lost tribes of Israel”

Basically, those that are connecting themselves to Israel via a genetic connection are going about it in a reverse manner. They have identified that they are part of Israel, now they need to line up the scriptures to support this view.

The first aspect that they do is identify who is Jewish and who isn't.

Jew refers to people of the tribe of Judah only...at first

Jew refers to people of the southern kingdom, comprised of Judah, Benyamin and Levi.

This is where the delineation tends to stop.

There is a distinction made that specifies that the term Jew refers only to a descendent of Judah.

In making this distinction, opens the door, the back door, because the Jewish people are Judah, therefore there are 10 other tribes that are missing.

So now we have to make a connection to the lost tribes...what happened to them and how do we identify as being part of them?

In applying this definition of who Israel is, part of it is stating that after the Assyrian captivity, the northern tribes never returned. Because they never returned opens the door to claim this identity.

One such origin of thought associated with lost tribe identity stems from the British Israelism, starting with John Sadler and his book "The Rights of the Kingdom, continuing with Richard Brothers and John Wilson and up to today with more contemporary supporters:

Mary Baker Eddy (christian science)
Herbert Armstrong (worldwide church of God)
Allan Campbell (a pentecostal pastor from northern Ireland)

The other point that they emphasize is that those of the 10 lost tribes didn't return after the Assyrian captivity in 722 BCE.

What gets glossed over, or downright overlooked is that at the time of the fall of the Northern Kingdom and the pending civil war between the two kingdoms was about to transpire, the following is recorded in 2 Chronicles:

2Ch 11:1 When Rechav`am arrived in Yerushalayim, he assembled the house of Y'hudah and Binyamin, 180,000 select soldiers, to fight Isra'el and bring the rulership back to Rechav`am.

2Ch 11:2 But this word of Adonai came to Sh'ma`yah the man of God:

2Ch 11:3 "Speak to Rechav`am the son of Shlomo, king of Y'hudah, and to all Isra'el in Y'hudah and Binyamin; tell them

2Ch 11:4 that this is what Adonai says: 'You are not to go up and fight your brothers! Every man is to go back home, because this is my doing.' " They paid attention to the words of Adonai and turned back from attacking Yarov`am.

Rechav'am was instructed not to battle Isra'el...that what was going on was from Him. So to use a military term, Adonai had them stand down.

So, at the time of the judgment against the northern tribes as recounted in 2 Kings 17:19 – 23

2Ki 17:19 (However, neither did Y'hudah obey the mitzvot of Adonai their God; rather they lived according to the customs of Isra'el.)

2Ki 17:20 Yes, Adonai came to despise all the descendants of Isra'el. He caused them trouble and handed them over to plunderers, until finally he threw them out of his sight.

2Ki 17:21 He tore Isra'el away from the house of David. They made Yarov`am the son of N'vat king; and Yarov`am drew Isra'el away from following Adonai and made them commit a great sin.

2Ki 17:22 The people of Isra'el followed the example of all the sins that Yarov`am had committed and did not turn away from them,

2Ki 17:23 until Adonai removed Isra'el out of his sight, as he had said he would through all his servants the

prophets. Thus Isra'el was carried away captive from their own land to Ashur, and it remains so to this day.

Likewise in having them stand down, there was a shaking of the tree.

2Ch 11:12 In every city he put shields and spears, making them very strong. Y'hudah and Binyamin stuck with him.

2Ch 11:13 The cohanim and L'vi'im from wherever they lived throughout all Isra'el made themselves available to Rechav`am.

2Ch 11:14 The L'vi'im left their pasture lands and property and came to Y'hudah and Yerushalayim; since Yarov`am and his sons had thrown them out, not allowing them to function as cohanim for Adonai,

2Ch 11:15 and had appointed for himself cohanim for the high places and for the images of goat-demons and calves that he had made.

2Ch 11:16 Those from all the tribes of Isra'el who had set their hearts on seeking Adonai, the God of Isra'el, followed them to Yerushalayim to sacrifice to Adonai, the God of their fathers.

2Ch 11:17 For three years they strengthened the kingdom of Y'hudah and made Rechav`am the son of Shlomo strong, because for three years they followed the way of life of David and Shlomo.

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Did the northern kingdom return?

Are they lost?

From 2 Chronicles 11:16...

The faithful remnant that returned before the fall of the North, became part of the South. Those that did not return...

2Ch 15:9 Then he (King Asa) gathered all Y'hudah and Binyamin, along with those from Efrayim, M'nasheh and Shim`on who were staying with him (for they had defected to him in large numbers upon seeing that Adonai his God was with him).

So, in addition to those who came to Judah originally, more came later...

There was a large number from the tribes of the northern kingdom.

2Ch 31:1 After all this was over, all Isra'el who were there went out to the cities of Y'hudah and smashed the standing-stones, chopped down the sacred poles, and broke down the high places and altars throughout Y'hudah, Binyamin, Efrayim and M'nasheh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the people of Isra'el returned to their own cities, each to his own possession.

Throughout Ezra and Nehemiah, we see the identity of Israel mentioned, yet are part of the Southern Kingdom. Some 200 years after the fall of the North, we are viewing the return of the Southern Kingdom to the land.

Ezr 2:2 they went with Z'rubavel, Yeshua, Nechemyah, S'rayah, Re`elyah, Mordekhai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rechum and Ba`anah. The number of men from the people of Isra'el:

Neh 1:6 Let your ear now be attentive and your eyes be open, so that you will listen to the prayer of your servant, which I am praying before you these days, day and night, for the people of Isra'el your servants — even as I confess the sins of the people of Isra'el that we have committed against you. Yes, I and my father's house have sinned.

Those in Judah were identified as the people of Israel, indicating that within Judah were representation of each tribe.

Even within the New Covenant writings, Judea comprised representation from all tribes...

Act 26:7 It is the fulfillment of this very promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they resolutely carry on their acts of worship night and day; yet it is in connection with this hope, your Majesty, that I am being accused by Jews!

In making such a statement, Sha'ul identifies the irony of being accused by his own people.

Jas 1:1 From: Ya`akov, a slave of God and of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah To: The Twelve Tribes in the Diaspora: Shalom!

This verse tends to get twisted as well.

As a result of the Babylonian captivity, not all from the southern Kingdom would return to Judea, hence you have the creation of the synagogue, enabling those in the diaspora to connect with Jerusalem and the Temple, through Torah.

By this time, the term Jew is a universal term, and not used to specifically represent descendants from Judah.

Yet there was still tribal identity...

Luk 2:36 There was also a prophet named Hannah Bat-P'nu'el, of the tribe of Asher. She was a very old woman — she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage

Within Judah, hundreds of years prior to the coming of Messiah, you had a melting pot of such. Numbers of each tribe lived in Judea.

Just as the term Ephraim came to be used in identifying the northern tribes of Israel as a whole, thus indicating that Ya'akov's blessing over Ephraim would indeed come true,

In the case of Israel, we see countless times in the New Covenant where Jew and Israel are used interchangeably.

Genesis 48:19

Genesis 48:19 is commonly referenced to substantiate the Two House claim.

Gen 48:19 But his father refused and said, "I know that, my son, I know it. He too will become a people, and he too will be great; nevertheless his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will grow into many nations."

Basically, the blessing to Ephraim is understood that he will become many nations, or in the manner that typically gets related as many gentile nations.

The JPS translates this passage as follows:

“and your offspring shall be plentiful enough for nations.

Translated in the manner that most Two House theorists do that infer that nations refers to gentile nations because of the use of goy.

Goy has been translated into gentile to mean the following:

pagan, gentile nation...someone other than Israel.

I heard a two house teacher reference the term gentile to mean – out of covenant

In its P'shat, its plain understanding, goy means nation.

Goy is used 550 times throughout the Tenach and references both Israel as a nation and gentile nations.

The first time the Hebrew word goy is used, is in Genesis 10:5

Gen 10:5 From these the islands of the nations were divided into their lands, each according to its language, according to their families, in their nations.

In this case it is the plural for nation - goyim

Avraham would be identified as the father of a goy gadol...

Gen 12:2 I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing.

If we are to take how goy gets used, does this mean that Avraham is going to be a great gentile nation?

Israel is identified as a goy...

Exo 19:6 and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el."

Here it is translated as goy kadosh – holy nation (nation set apart)

Recounting their experience in the desert...

Deu 32:28 " "They are a nation without common sense, utterly lacking in discernment.

Israel as a nation is spoken of after the Assyrian conquest and at the time of Babylonian captivity...

Jer 31:36 (31:35) "If these laws leave my presence," says Adonai, "then the offspring of Isra'el will stop being a nation in my presence forever."

In all these examples, the word for nation is goy / goyim

Just as the term Ephraim came to be used in identifying the northern tribes of Israel as a whole, thus indicating that Ya'akov's blessing over Ephraim would indeed come true, that is his offspring would become plentiful as nations.

and Israel as the 10 tribes, likewise Jew has an expanded meaning.

Jew or Jewish doesn't mean that you are exclusively from the tribe of Judah or the Southern Kingdom of Judea, but is a universal term used to represent Israel. A representation of all tribes that became part of Judea as I had referenced previously.

Today, there is still some tribal identity. Look at some of the last names that Jewish people have...

Levi
Levinson
Cohen
Reuben
Benjamin
Jacob

A colleague shared the following observation with me this week:

The idea the Jews from around the world would retain the Hebrew language, Torah studies, observing Shabbat BUT forget their family line...

In preparing for this message, I heard a term for the first time that I have never heard before and can't find it in scripture.

When I heard it, I realized that in order for this theory to espouse any validity, it needed to be created...

Gentile Israel.

I also heard a new meaning for the term gentile.

Out of covenant.

In taking the definition that is used for gentile to mean – out of covenant, and putting them together you have a new people that isn't referenced in scripture specifically, but they are now changing the meaning of the term gentile in the following passages to refer to Gentile Israel.

Twisting the scriptures:

Romans 11 – the Olive tree.

Rom 11:12 Moreover, if their stumbling is bringing riches to the world — that is, if Isra'el's being placed temporarily in a condition less favored than that of the Gentiles is bringing riches to the latter — how much greater riches will Isra'el in its fullness bring them!

Rom 11:13 However, to those of you who are Gentiles I say this: since I myself am an emissary sent to the Gentiles, I make known the importance of my work

Rom 11:14 in the hope that somehow I may provoke some of my own people to jealousy and save some of them!

You have the natural branches which are Judah and the wild olive tree which is commonly referred to as the nations, is now identified as Gentile Israel.

Ephesians 2 – Gentiles strangers

Likewise, when they refer to this passage in Ephesians 2, the term gentile doesn't refer to the nations, but rather Gentile Israel. They make the claim, how else could Sha'ul have been so successful in bringing so many to Messiah in a pagan area like Ephesus if they weren't of the lost tribes...gentile Israel.

Eph 2:11 Therefore, remember your former state: you Gentiles by birth — called the Uncircumcised by those who, merely because of an operation on their flesh, are called the Circumcised —

Eph 2:12 at that time had no Messiah. You were estranged from the national life of Isra'el. You were foreigners to the covenants embodying God's promise. You were in this world without hope and without God.

So, what they are saying is that gentile Christians spiritually represent Ephraim but are also physical Ephraim.

In other words gentile believers are actually descendants of biblical Ephraim or to be more specific, descendants of the 10 lost tribes of Israel.

How does one come to such a belief.

Dr. Brown uses the following scenario.

A person growing up in an atheistic home, not believing in God, has a wonderful born again experience, joins a local church, is growing in their faith, love the Jewish people and prayer for Israel, thus feeling a special spiritual connection with God's ancient covenant people.

Then, you are presented with the two house teaching and all of a sudden a light goes off...

Could it be that I'm actually a real Israelite?

Could it be unbeknown to my entire family for many generations we are not actually gentiles but are descendants of the 10 lost tribes?

In talking with a colleague this past week, he presented me with another dynamic of the type of person who may embrace such a teaching...

The idea the Jews from around the world would retain the Hebrew language, Torah studies, observing Shabbat BUT forget their family line...

Returning to our original premise, regarding the plague that was spreading like wildfire...this is what happened.

Num 16:47 (17:12) Aharon took it, as Moshe had said, and ran into the middle of the assembly. There the plague had already begun among the people, but he added the incense and made atonement for the people.

Num 16:48 (17:13) He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

Num 16:49 (17:14) Those dying from the plague numbered 14,700 — besides those who died in the Korach incident.

Num 16:50 (17:15) Aharon returned to Moshe at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and the plague was stopped.

Likewise, with this congregation, I am looking to end a plague before it affects anyone else in the congregation.

It has been present and lingering for quite some time.

This affect could be in the form of:

- Leaving because leadership did not address this matter

- Leaving because no response or no action implies support.
- People embracing a false teaching, thus as shepherd my not protecting the flock from such a disease.

What about the Ethiopian Jews?

How are they different from those who profess a two house viewpoint.

Let's look at the distinction.

Those of a two house view, are led into this revelation.

Galatians 3:1 - 3

Referencing Sha'ul and his writings to Timothy...

1Ti 1:2 To: Timothy, a true son because of your trust: Grace, mercy and shalom from God the Father and the Messiah Yeshua our Lord.

1Ti 1:3 As I counseled you when I was leaving for Macedonia, stay on in Ephesus, so that you may order certain people who are teaching a different doctrine to stop.

1Ti 1:4 Have them stop devoting their attention to myths and never-ending genealogies; these divert people to speculating instead of doing God's work, which requires trust.

and to Titus...

Tit 3:3 For at one time, we too were foolish and disobedient, deceived and enslaved by a variety of passions and pleasures. We spent our lives in evil and envy; people hated us, and we hated each other.

Tit 3:4 But when the kindness and love for mankind of God our Deliverer was revealed,

Tit 3:8 You can trust what I have just said, and I want you to speak with confidence about these things, so that those who have put their trust in God may apply themselves to doing good deeds. These are both good in themselves and valuable to the community.

Tit 3:9 But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, quarrels and fights about the Torah; because they are worthless and futile.

Tit 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, then a second time; and after that, have nothing more to do with him.

Tit 3:11 You may be sure that such a person has been perverted and is sinning; he stands self-condemned.

Ultimately, if you affirm the two house view then Kehilah Portland is not the place for you. There are other places that will support this view.

We are not one of them.

Anyone who does support this view, and in any way promotes it to anyone in the congregation...and I find out about it, will be asked to leave.

Many times I have addressed this issue, believing people would honor my requests, not to promote this in any way.

Unfortunately, that hasn't been the case. - Exodus 32:26