

YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL BE CARRIED ON THEIR SHOULDERS
- THE GREAT REUNION OF THE TWO OLIVE TREES

Christian Restoration Fellowship Meeting 8th Nov 2008

The mission statement of Yeshua was that he came to preach the good news of the KoG. The Hebrew Bible, the TaNaK, the Bible that Yeshua read was full of descriptions of the KoG, often described in relation to great banquets and so eloquently described by Isaiah and other prophets as a time when peace would pervade Israel and the whole earth.

A time of joy, a time of harmony or man with animal, a time when the all nations of the earth would acknowledge the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and would journey to Jerusalem for Sukkot, the Feast of Booths. The Jews or more accurately the Judeans of Yeshua's day seemed to have lost this message and its power and urgency; they had lost their way and Yeshua came to call the lost sheep of the House of Israel back to their Father and Creator.

While Yeshua said he had only, or primarily come to speak the word of God, the message of the Kingdom to **his** people, there was plenty of evidence in the TaNaK that this message was also for Gentiles. Yeshua's interactions with Gentiles also highlighted this fact.

However, it was left to the Apostle Paul to be the main man, in proclaiming this great message of hope; this message of resurrection life to the Gentile world.

In the early years after the ascension of Yeshua, his followers were almost exclusively Judean. Into this reality Paul addressed the believers and especially the Gentile believers in Rome.

The Apostle Paul tells those outside of the nation of Israel how they can in fact be adopted in or grafted into Israel, the chosen people of God.

As one of the most clear and definitive documents of this proclamation of the Gospel message to the Gentile world, Romans 9-11 is an extremely important portion of scripture. In fact, it seems a fair statement to say that Romans 1-8 lays the groundwork for the great truths of Chs 9-11¹ which then lead into the practicalities of Gentile believers lifestyles (as adopted 'sons') in Chs 12-15 with a

¹ *Re the 'enemies' of Rom 11:28 it appears that 'hostile' is a better translation from the Greek as the TNT amongst others indicates the word actually means 'personal enemies' rather than national or foreign enemies. I think this is a most significant distinction which supports my contention that the Jews are our 'estranged elder brothers' rather than sworn enemies as per, for example, strict materialists/atheists or Muslims who deny that God is a Father. etc.*

sign-off or footnote in Ch16.

While we don't have time to read all of Chapters 9 – 11 let us look at a few verses with the perspective I have begun to lay.

Romans 11:11-24:

So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.²

Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.

For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a **wild olive shoot**, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, **remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.***

Then you will say, Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.

*That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. **So do not become proud, but stand in awe³.***

For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

*For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into **a cultivated olive tree⁴**, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.*

I believe that Paul makes it very clear here that the nation of Israel is the cultivated tree, that we Gentiles have been grafted into. Yes, it is true that most of the tree has been broken off and given a veil over their eyes by God so that, for a time, we Gentiles have the opportunity to be grafted in, that is to be adopted into the family of God!

² Note the focus, the centrality of Israel, that is the children of Jacob, not the Gentile Church.

³ In awe and in humble gratitude to have been given the opportunity to grasp at the great promise of God, the eternal KoG.

⁴ Despite the world view that the Hellenistic or Greek mindset is the cultivated (cultured) one, God declares the Hebraic mindset and pattern of life is the higher ideal.

Thus, it seems appropriate and accurate to label Judeans who have been blinded to the truth about their own Messiah, as our 'estranged elder brothers'.

Now think of a large, loving family which even includes some adopted children. Some of the elder members of the family have refused to recognize the God-ordained leader of the family, as he didn't present himself as the type of forceful leader they expected.

In this family, as is typical for many large families, the meal table is the central place of fellowship; support; joy and comfort. (Isaiah for example stresses the Messianic Banquet many times and of-course we all desire to share in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb).

So, even though they may think they are still welcome at the table, they have been cast out from the table and refused their birthright of a place at the table. There are old and a bit blind so like Isaac in his last days they are perhaps easily deceived.

The patriarchs of the family of course still sit at the table, at least in spirit and when the new leader was anointed as head of the family all who sat with him were natural sons and daughters.

At some future time these 'estranged elder brothers and sisters' are given back their sight and return to fully embrace their leader who they now recognize as the most deserving head of the family.

Just like the prodigal son, how incredible will it be when these estranged family members have their eyes opened and are welcomed back to the table and are grafted back into their own olive tree!

The Olive Tree of God Almighty into which we have been so graciously adopted or grafted. What an amazing time it will be.

Note that Paul tells us that it will be **life from death!**

Nothing is more incredible and miraculous than returning the spark of life to something dead. When this relates to human beings we call it resurrection. At the end of this age, when all Israel is saved, that is, all of Israel that still lives, Israel will be the dry bones that are given the spirit of God and the flesh of resurrection life. This is happening today in some small measure!

This, will of course coincide with the Messiah's return.

Note carefully also that evaluation of the performance of the Jewish branches has never been assigned to the Gentile members!

When does 'life from death', this incredible awakening happen?

What needs to proceed this amazing removal of the scales from their eyes and this resurrection of their birthright?

16 out of 17 of God's prophets in the TaNaK contain at least some small reflection on the re-establishment of Israel in general and restoration of Jerusalem in particular. Isaiah occupies nearly half his book to this very theme, and Zechariah and Ezekiel almost as much. Even in the minor prophets like Nahum and Obadiah, whose prophecies are preoccupied with proclamation against God's foes, there is a glimmer of the hope of a new day for Judea and for Jerusalem.

Out of the entire 17 Old Testament prophets, only Jonah fails any mention of this restoration to the land. Please see my article on the "Israel: Return in Belief or Unbelief" for details on this amazing fulfillment of prophecy that has been seen in our day and is on-going.

Let us look forward to after this 'life from death' has occurred and the cultivated branches have been grafted back into their own tree. Their eyes are opened and they, many for the first-time see us – Gentile believers. Isaiah describes this incredible time in Isaiah 49⁵.

With the ultimate return of the Messiah we see the unification of Judean and Gentile described in a most humbling and moving manner in Isaiah 49.

Isaiah 49:

1 "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar!

The reference to coastlands is generally in the TaNaK (OT) a reference to the nations and also normally all nations other than Israel i.e. the Gentiles. (See Isaiah 24:15-16; 41:5; 42:4,12; Zephaniah 2:11; Daniel 11:18; Ezekiel 39:6; 26:18). This is also a common refrain of Isaiah and as an opening to the prophecy of this chapter should alert us to his earlier Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 42.

The LORD called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me.

Someone who is 'called' by God and follows that calling is a servant of God. This servant is 'called from the womb'. Generally, this phrase is used to describe the nation of Israel (see Isaiah 44:21 for example).

We also read in Isaiah 7 that the House of Israel, this servant 'called from the womb', will be given a sign; a son called from his mother's womb who will be named Immanuel, that is 'God with us' (i.e. an ambassador of God!). We also read in Psalm 86:16 of a servant of God who is a son of Yahweh's handmaiden (Luke 1:38).

2 He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver.

⁵ See my 'Commentary on Isaiah 49 for a fuller discussion

A mouth like a sharp sword. In John 7:46 men say of Yeshua (Jesus) "Never has a man spoken like this". Also in Luke 4:36 we read that the Jews marveled at the power and authority of the words of Yeshua. (See also Rev 1:16; 2:12,16.) In Rev 19:15 we read of the power of his words in 'smiting' the nations and shepherding them with a 'rod of iron'.

This appears to be both a reference to the 'polished shaft' of verse 2 and to the great Messianic Psalm 2. 7 This 'rod of iron' or 'polished shaft' or 'select arrow'(NASB) is both an implement of war and of judgment (shepherding suggests both a leading and a separation – of sheep and goats for example). The reference to Habakkuk 3:11⁶ also fits with this understanding.

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation, At the light of thine arrows as they went, At the shining of thy glittering spear Hab 3:11 (ASV)

A servant of God speaking with such authority is a prophet (Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the belly I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I did set you apart – I appointed you a prophet to nations.") and, in bringing Jacob back to God (v5) a political leader.

Note also the references to this servant of God being hidden. This servant was 'hidden' from the Babylonian Jews at the time Isaiah wrote this, as his arrival was still a long time in the future, but this double reference may also hint at his being 'hidden' after his earthly ministry in the true children of God

('quiver' – a place where a man's arrows are stored or used metaphorically in Psalm 127 as the house or storage place of a man's children, where the children are depicted as arrows).

3 He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory."

The 'servant of God' is given Israel's name. Is this servant then actually the nation of Israel? We learn in verse 5 that this 'servant' is to bring the apostate national 'servant', Israel (also called Jacob- often when in apostasy) back to God and also to be 'abhorred' by the nation of Israel (v7) in the process. Therefore this servant, this 'Israel', can not logically be national Israel or Jacob, but someone or something else?

All the references here seem to clearly indicate that this servant is Yeshua. So why call him 'Israel'?

Perhaps because he represents them both in his afflictions and his ultimate glory – like Isaac's son, Jacob fought with the 'messenger of God' (angel) (Genesis 32:24) and was hence bestowed the name Israel (Israel means 'to strive with God, to overcome with God, then to rule with God), so Yeshua in the garden of Gethesame and on the cross, strove with an angel, overcome with God by fully submitting unto death to the will of God, and will ultimately, rule with God.

⁶ 1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, set to Shigionoth. 2 O Jehovah, I have heard the report of thee, and am afraid: O Jehovah, revive thy work in the midst of the years; In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy. 3 God came from Teman, And the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of his praise. 4 And his brightness was as the light; He had rays coming forth from his hand; And there was the hiding of his power. 5 Before him went the pestilence, And fiery bolts went forth at his feet. 6 He stood, and measured the earth; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; And the eternal mountains were scattered; The everlasting hills did bow; His goings were as of old. Hab 3:1-6 (ASV)

How appropriate then that Yeshua be given the name 'Israel' as well. Yeshua's being 'raised from the dead' is also illustrative of national Israel's being 'raised from the dead' in 1948 (Isaiah 66:8 – A nation was born in one day)

6 He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

God declares through Isaiah that it is a 'small matter' to raise up the tribes of Jacob (clearly national Israel) and bring back the preserved ones of Israel. (i.e. return from exile, those preserved or kept ethnically pure and obedient throughout some 1900 years of the last exile).

A small matter to God but an amazing miracle that we have witnessed over the last 60 years.

This verse then essentially says: "Therefore, I will also make you a light to the gentiles (i.e. all people) and bring to all nations the offer of deliverance or salvation from this evil age and the curse of death into the everlasting life of the Kingdom of God."

Here we see God's order – to the Jews first (to the root of the Olive Tree) and also to the Gentile. [Note: If Gentiles are to receive deliverance then they must also have 'circumcised hearts']

Yeshua had been a 'great light' in Galilee (Isaiah 9:2) – but he has been removed from the scene of his labours – now his 'light' is through the preaching of his disciples like Paul (Acts 13).

7 Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, "Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You." 8 Thus says the LORD, "In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation I have helped You; And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages;

Note 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 "And working together, we also call upon you not to receive the favour of Elohim in vain – For He says, "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in a day of deliverance I have helped you." See, now is the well-accepted time, see, now is a day of deliverance ...".

Note also that at the end of this chapter in Corinthians the Apostle Paul exhorts his readers to "Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says YAHWEH, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you. "And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says YAHWEH the Almighty.""

Here is another call and parallel with Isaiah 49, for Gentiles and apostate Jews to turn to God and become His sons and daughters; that is, to become true children of God and spiritual descendants of Abraham by faith.

*Paul though says "**now is the day of salvation/deliverance**"- was he speaking of just his day or can we apply this to this century?*

Clearly, this call to repentance is valid in all ages but surely, evermore so as the end of this present age approaches. As I have related in the 'Return' article, this does indeed appear to the 'last days'; the time of the final tribulation does appear very eminent.

In v 16 Isaiah goes on:

16 "Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me. 17 "Your builders hurry; Your destroyers and devastators will depart from you. 18 " Lift up your eyes and look around; All of them gather together, they come to you as I live," declares the LORD, "You will surely put on all of them as jewels and bind them on as a bride.

Here God describes the true 'citizens of Zion'; the believers in Messiah, both Jew and Gentile as ornaments. This figurative description is expressed in many places such as by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 "For what is our expectation, or joy, or crown of boasting? Is it not even you, before our Master Yeshua Messiah at His coming? For you are our esteem and joy."

God sees the 'walls' of the towns of Israel; that is, He sees and is aware of their need for protection, but now is being described a time when the enemies of Israel will depart; Israel's children, both natural-born and adopted will come to her and 'adorn' or clothe her with beauty. The reference to the beautiful adorning of a bride seems relevant to a great time of rejoicing.

19 " For your waste and desolate places, And the land of your destruction, will even now be too small for the inhabitants; And those who swallowed you up will be far away.

Here we see the Earth based, and Land of Israel centred, nature of this prophecy and heartfelt pleading by God to His people. Not only will He remember them and restore them, but He will transform the wastes and deserted places into bountiful vegetation (see v9-10) and blossoming peoples (v19). The Land of Israel will become too small to contain the nation of Israel and the citizens of the Kingdom of God. We also see confirmation of this lack of room after the gathering of all the sons and daughters of Israel in Zechariah 10:107. As the enemies of God and His people have been removed, the Kingdom will be expanded such that the whole Earth comes under the Lordship of the Messiah and his followers.

20 The children you will have, After you have lost the others, Will say again in your ears, 'The place is too small for me; Give me a place where I may dwell.'

And now to an incredible revelation!

21 "Then you will say in your heart, '**Who has begotten these for me, Since I have been bereaved of my children And am barren, an exile and a wanderer? And who has reared these? Behold, I was left alone; From where did these come?'**"

The 'you' who speaks in his heart is clearly national Israel. Firstly, national Israel having been in exile for some 1900 years has seen much bereavement, much mourning. As a people they have been wandering as they have had no place to call home (until 1948).

⁷ I will bring them home from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria, and I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon, till there is no room for them.

Israel has to some degree been barren, especially in terms of producing off-spring who are obedient to their Father, that is, who have the faith of Abraham; have recognized their Messiah and who have circumcised hearts.

But here we learn that she 'suddenly' discovers she has almost too many 'sons'; too many off-spring. Israel asks, how can this be?

As in the days of Joseph, when Jacob's sons thought Joseph was long dead yet such was the rejoicing when they discovered this 'King' of Egypt was their long lost brother. So to will Israel as a people rejoice when their Messiah and King of Kings stands on Mount Zion.

When Yeshua is revealed to them, they will then 'see' the many children that Yahweh, in Messiah, has given them. These children have been 'brought up' or 'brought forth' both through nourishment by the word of life or word of truth (James 1:18); that is, by the very words of Messiah Yeshua, and through the literal end-time resurrection from the dead. The Messiah himself is called 'the first born of the dead'; his followers are called 'his seed' (Matt 13:37- 38)

See also Romans 9:6-8 "For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, neither are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham, but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of Elohim, but the children of the promise are reckoned as the seed."

22 Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples⁸ ; **They shall bring your sons in their arms, And your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders**

As part of this amazing revelation of the great many sons and daughters of Israel, the natural seed of Abraham will see at last that many Gentiles, have been adopted as sons and daughters and hence as a result of their repentance and learned righteousness through the words and actions of Yeshua, this 'bride of Messiah' will at last become one with the 'wife' of God, the restored nation of Israel.

23 Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

Not only are Gentile children adopted into the family of God; into the Israel of God, but these 'sons and daughters' of Israel have been raised by the nations of the world; by their leaders, their Kings and Queens. These adopted children from all over the earth both living and resurrected will acknowledge their indebtedness to the chosen people of God, to the cultivated Olive Tree into which they have been grafted (Romans 11), to the family of their Messiah.

⁸ In the Middle East, amongst travelers it was quite common, even as late as the nineteenth century, for women to carry their children on their shoulders, even when riding atop a horse or camel. (see 'Mode of Carrying' p 33.34 of **Bible Notes by the Wayside** by Rev Horatio B Hackett 1872). The reference to both the sons in their arms and daughters on their shoulders, probably alludes to the idea of first, travelling from afar to the Promised Land and secondly, using a variety of means and modes. I don't think anything deeper should be read into the division of *sons in their arms and daughters on their shoulders*.

In verse 23 we also see in the words ‘They bow down to you ...’ that these Kings and Queens; these leaders of this present evil age, who have perhaps unknowingly raised many ‘sons and daughters’ of Israel, will be forced to acknowledge the rightful authority and exalted place of the Messiah and of the restored and redeemed nation of Israel. This total submission of the nations leaders is also indicated in the great Messianic Psalm 72 (see in particular, verse 9) and in Micah 7:17.

Some of the scriptures that declare this are:

*Rev 2:25-26 “But hold fast what you have until I come. “And he who overcomes, and guards My works until the end, to him I shall **give authority over the nations**, and he shall shepherd them with a rod of iron, as the potter’s vessels shall be broken to pieces, as I also have received from My Father.*

*Rev 5:9-10 “..You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and **made us kings** and priests to our God, and **we shall reign upon the earth.**”*

*Dan 7: 18 “Then the **set-apart ones of the Most High shall receive the reign**, and possess the reign forever, even forever and ever.’ 22 until the Ancient of Days came, **and right-ruling was given to the set-apart ones** of the Most High, and the time came and the set-apart ones took possession of the reign. 27 ‘And the reign, and the rulership, and the greatness of the reigns under all the heavens, shall be given to the people, the set-apart ones of the Most High. His reign is an everlasting reign, and all rulerships shall serve and obey Him.’*

See also Psalm 2 and Revelation 7.

Note also God’s proclamation that those obedient and righteous Jewish believers who have waited on the Lord (Isaiah 26:8,9), as for example, Simeon (Luke 2:25) and the prophetess Hannah (Luke 2:38) in Yeshua’s day, will not be put to shame as King David declared in Psalm 25 (this is also reiterated in the end-times prophecy of Joel 2 – see Joel 2:27), but will lift up their heads in joy as their patient obedience instead brings great comfort and eternal blessing.

It is possible that when Simeon, filled with the power of God, spoke a prophecy over the baby Yeshua, brought to him by the baby’s parents Joseph and Miriam, he referred to Isaiah 49 when he declared the Yeshua would be a light for the unveiling of the Gentiles and the esteem (glory) of God’s people Israel.

Perhaps Simeon was speaking here of the unveiling of the Gentile children of Israel and the end-times glory of Israel when all nations would humble themselves before Jerusalem and her God?

24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, Or the captives of the righteous be delivered? 25 But thus says the LORD: “ Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible be delivered; For I will contend with him who contends with you, And I will save your children.

God here is reiterating that He will save His people from the powers of this evil age and as the unrighteous nations display their might, God also will display His might (through His Messiah Yeshua), and save all who are known by Yeshua. See Ezekiel 38,39 & Zechariah 14.

26 I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know That I, the LORD, am your Saviour, And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

So emphatic will God’s triumph over the evil powers of this present age, that they will be reduced to devouring themselves rather than the children of Israel. It appears from the context of Isaiah 9 where in verse 20 Isaiah speaks of evil men eating their own arm, that what is meant by this phrase is that the oppressors of Israel will turn against themselves. The great many nations that have come up against Israel will fall away fighting and destroying each other. In their absolute decimation and loss they will recognize that the God of Israel is the only true God and they will witness His redemption and restoration of Jacob!

Rev 14:8 And another messenger followed, saying, “Babel is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her whoring.”

The humbled state of the Gentiles after the judgement of God through the return of the Messiah is also revealed in the last verse (v 16) of Zechariah 14: “And it shall be that all who are left from all the gentiles which came up against Jerusalem, shall go up from year to year to bow themselves to the LORD, Yahweh of hosts, and to observe the Festival of Booths.”

Again, note the perspective here; the centrality of Israel, not the Gentile Church. This is also described in Isaiah 66:12, 20. Through His only begotten Son, the Messiah, God will show Himself most emphatically and with absolute finality, the ultimate Saviour and Redeemer of Israel, and of all who call upon the Name of the Messiah.

So Isaiah 49 declares the great union; what I believe is the union of the 2 Olive Trees. Let us turn to a few scriptures to investigate this concept a little further.

In Ezekiel 37 we read about the Valley of Dry Bones where the bones come to life, putting on sinew and then skin and finally being given breath, and rising to life as the resurrected "whole House Of Israel". Immediately following this prophecy comes the Lord's message about the two sticks that become forever one.

Ezek 37

11 Then he said to me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off.

12 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.

13 And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.

14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the LORD.

It should be clear from the references to **life from death**⁹ and return to the land that this prophecy is referring to natural Israel – note they first get life (sinew, etc) and then breath (Holy Spirit).

⁹ Do you recognize this theme from Romans as already discussed?

These dry bones are being infused with God's breath, with His Spirit, as we speak. Let me mention just two examples for now.

1. Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis¹⁰.

In a recent chat on Israel National Radio she talked about living in the footsteps of the Messiah; she spoke about the prophecies of the end times such as children rising up against their parents and parents against their children. Her words and call to return to God and His truth need to be heard to sense the power of the Holy Spirit that flows from her¹¹.

Quote: *We are one People. Let's come back to our Heavenly Father, let's search for Him, and He will say to us 'Hineni, my children. Here I am.'*"¹²

2. Quoting Victor Schlatter:¹³ *A couple of the ladies who worked with the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, in paying a courtesy visit to Kiryat Arba had the fortunate privilege of being introduced to Rabbi Waldman. They kindly extended him an invitation to someday call in at the Christian Embassy office in Jerusalem. If one considers the extremely unpleasant treatment the Jews have been dealt from Christian organizations over the last 2,000 years, I would suppose this to be tantamount to extending an invitation to Daniel to drop in to have a cup of tea with the lions when he had the time. But Rabbi Waldman, being a godly man and of strong character, seized upon the opportunity and paid a visit. He came. He saw. He appreciated. So positive was the contact that the good rabbi agreed to speak at one of the embassy seminars at the next Feast of Tabernacles. In his address, he opened with his initial impression when he first stepped into the offices of the International Christian Embassy, "I sensed that the presence of the Holy Spirit was there."*

And even more amazing, this at a Trinitarian institution!

The Ruach Ha Kodesh; the breath of God, the Holy Spirit is starting to be poured out upon the devout men and women of Israel.

God instructs Ezekiel to take two sticks and write on one "Of Judah and the Israelites associated with him" and on the other "Of Joseph-the stick of Ephraim--- and all the House of Israel associated with him."

He then tells Ezekiel to bring them together so that they become "one stick" in his hand, and He continues His allegory by instructing the prophet that when his

¹⁰ <http://www.hineni.org/>

¹¹ A summary of some of her comments: No happenstance; no accidents – God ordained. Momentous times – icons collapsing; natural disasters increasing & illness? The world is now In the labour pangs of the Messiah' – the contractions are increasing in intensity; just when a woman thinks it is beyond coping the baby arrives. Families fragmented – children against parents and parents against children (see Micah 7; Isa 49 & Matt 10); youth worshipped; people are like dogs – they have no opinion – they follow media; the media controls their thoughts; Jews have forgotten God. Ishmael (i.e Islam) will control the world; Amadinejad honoured by some Christian Churches. Persia to terrorize entire world; Israel struggling with the disease of Egypt and the Pharaoh (PM) doesn't get it. '29 crash led to environment that allowed Hitler to rise to power – current crisis to do the same. Only 1/5 of Israel left Egypt? The People of the Book have forgotten the Book!

¹² Hineni means 'here I am'

¹³ Where is the Body, by Victor Schlatter. Treasure House 1999

countrymen question what all this means, he should inform them that this is what the Sovereign Lord says:

Ezek 37: 16-17

16 Son of man, take a stick and write on it, For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him; then take another stick and write on it, For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.

17 And join them one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand.

Ezek 37: 21-24

I am going to take the Israelite people from among the nations they have gone to, and gather them from every quarter and bring them to their own land. I will make them a single nation in the land, on the hills of Israel, and one king shall be king of them all. Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms.... My servant David shall be king over them; there shall be one shepherd for all of them. They shall follow My rules and faithfully obey My laws. Thus they shall remain in the land which I gave to My servant Jacob and in which your fathers dwelt; they and David my servant shall be their prince forever.

While the most likely take here, without considering related scriptures, is that this refers to the split of the tribes, the split between Israel (the northern 10 tribes, which included Ephraim) and Judah and Benjamin (the southern 2 tribes), it could mean more. I would like to suggest the possibility, that Victor Schlatter expounds in his book 'Where is the Body' that these 2 bones or sticks are in a sense not just the 12 tribes of Israel, but instead natural Israel and the Gentile Church. That is, there is a sense in which the Diaspora represents the Gentile Church.

How is this?

Firstly, Ephraim was born in Egypt. Egypt represents both sin and sometimes the Gentile world. 'Out of Egypt I called my son' (Matt 2: 15; Hosea 11:1).

Ephraim was blessed before his elder brother; perhaps a parallel to the blessing of the church over her elder brother, natural Israel for the last 2000 years. In Psalm 60, God calls Ephraim his helmet. In 1 Thess 5:8 we see Paul call the helmet the 'hope of salvation'. Those who are Ephraim are scattered amongst the nations and therefore have the hope of restoration to the land and its King – this is the hope of salvation. All believers should sense, empowered perhaps by the indwelling of the Spirit of God, a great affinity and affection for the Land of Israel, the home country of their Saviour and for the Holy City of God, the City of His presence, the eternal city Jerusalem.

Isaiah 7 tells us, incidentally just after prophesying about the Messiah being born, that Ephraim departed from Judah and took up an alliance with Samaria, that is with the Gentile world.

Zechariah 10 speaks of Ephraim as scattered children who will one day be restored and returned (as per Isaiah 49?).

Interesting we read in John 11, just after the raising of Lazarus from the dead, that the high priest Caiaphas, prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. Jesus then went and stayed in Ephraim.

Zechariah 4: 1 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.

2 And he said to me, What do you see? I said, I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it.

3 And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.

...

11 Then I said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?

12 And a second time I answered and said to him, What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?

13 He said to me, Do you not know what these are? I said, No, my lord.

14 Then he said, These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

The 2 olives trees were eventually explained by Paul in Romans 11 but here we have some hints.

The clear understanding, at least now in the light of history that there have been 2 Olive Trees of God that have declared his greatness and been his anointed, the Jew and righteous Gentile.

There are through the last 2000 years been two witnesses to God. The mere existence as well as the incredible success of the Jewish people through much hatred and pogroms and then their return to the Land. The creation of the Gentile Church; its growth and influence on society despite the best efforts of many such as Constantine, etc to destroy it. These efforts seem as strong today as ever.

While true believers may no longer be burned at the stake as they were in Luther's day, their voice is now drowned out and almost non-existent. The power of the Mass Media now decides all the important issues of our day such as the election of a new President of the USA who is strongly pro-abortion and therefore fails the litmus test of acceptance at the table, at the Messianic Banquet.

We see from Jeremiah 11:16, *"The LORD once called you a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit."* That Israel is God's primary Olive Tree. He has cultivated from the time of Abraham. But through the disobedience over the ages, a number of its beautiful branches have been broken off through God's judgment.

Now, through the first coming of the Messiah, He introduces a second tree, a wild one from the bush, which represents the Gentile believers in Yeshua.

Note again from Romans 11 that Gentile believers replace only some broken-off branches.

It is without any scriptural foundation to suggest that the entire tree has been replaced by the Gentile Church¹⁴.

Look at Rev 11:3. *3 And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lamp-stands that stand before the Lord of the earth.*

We are told that these 2 witnesses are the two olive trees; that is, I would argue, the Jew and the Gentile Believer. I acknowledge that there are a great many and varied understandings promoted as to who or what the two witnesses of Rev 11 are. I agree with many like Harry Whittaker in 'Revelation – A Biblical Approach', that the two witnesses are not two people, that is, they are not Moses and Elijah resurrected, but somehow, perhaps as the Law and the Prophets, represent Israel.

Victor Schlatter takes this a little further though to include the Gentile Church in this prophecy.

Surely the greatest witness to God has been the indestructibility of the Jew. And Yeshua also declared that his followers would be indestructible as well when he declared in Matt 16: 18 that the gates of hell would not prevail against his church¹⁵.

Certainly, Moses and Elijah can be seen to represent natural Israel (Moses) and the Holy Spirit age (Elijah), and perhaps the vision of the transfiguration in Luke 9 is also indicative of our Messiah with the 2 olive trees which will be united at his return.

Luke 9

28 Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.

30 And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah,

31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

Is not the transfiguration a vision of the Kingdom of God; a vision of a time when there truly will be no distinction between Jew and Gentile as all will have circumcised hearts and all will say 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of our God'. A time when all who have humbled themselves before the Creator of the Universe and His only begotten Son, will sit down together at that great table of eternal nourishment; eternal fellowship and true peace and joy.

¹⁴ I suggest Frank Selch's book on Replacement Theology for an excellent review of this issue

¹⁵ Apparently there is an ancient olive tree in Gethsemane, just outside the Old City of Jerusalem, whose age is estimated to be somewhere between 2,000 to 3,000 years old. Clearly, God has chosen a very good analogy here as the olive is a tree that seems to never die!

So whether or not the 2 olive trees are the Jewish and Gentile believers, Isaiah 49 should help convince us that a great reunion is coming, a time when we, those so fortunately and incredibly blessed to have been adopted into this eternal family will most fully and joyously embrace our elder brothers and be united as one great family of God.

So in concluding today, what should we take away from this and how should we respond in our daily lives as we continue to yearn for the return of our King?

What should our (Gentile believers) response to our Jewish brethren be? We should:

- Support the root,
- demonstrate our love not our judgment;
- pray (Ps 122:6),
- develop relationships with them;
- make them jealous in our devotion and faithfulness to the One God!
- Love them even when we don't understand them or their relationship with their God and ours, the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob.

Paul Herring Nov 2008, Christian Restoration Fellowship Australia
As always, I am indebted to the scholarship of Frank Selch.

Appendix:

Victor Schlatter (Where is the Body) – some more excerpts:

A very poignant encounter took place years ago in Wichita, Kansas, with newspaper reporters who were interviewing a former prominent Christian missionary to Israel. He had been asked by the Israeli government to serve as a spiritual counselor for Adolf Eichmann during his Nazi crimes trial in Jerusalem. Next to Adolf Hitler, Eichmann was regarded to be the most responsible Nazi criminal for the mass murders of six million Jews throughout Europe.

The reporters asked the missionary two questions:

"Do you believe the six million Jews, cruelly slaughtered by the Nazis went to hell because they could not accept Christ?" The missionary answered, "Yes."

The second question:

"Do you believe that if Adolf Eichmann had accepted Christ at the last moment, he would have gone to Heaven?" Again, the missionary replied, "Yes."

How could any Gentile deem himself qualified to pronounce a second infernal judgment on those who marched into the gas chamber singing Anachnu Maamenirn, "We believe in our hearts...with perfect trust. .. in the coming of our Messiah"?¹⁶

With an absolute certainty, the New Testament teaches consistently that our Lord Yeshua is the Father's sole provision for redemption of humanity; there is no other access. His teaching is legendary:

... I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).

Of that there is no question. Paul in his letters to the churches all repeatedly underlines the universality of the atonement: *For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive (I Corinthians 15:21-22).*

Yet: *... With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26)*

Today, as perhaps throughout history, many Jews continue to deeply and prayerfully yearn for their Messiah.

Even more of a shock to the good old sectarian system is the genuineness of repentance before the eyes of their God, which they yearly pursue on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Yeshua, you should remember, is no stranger to the synagogue. They even used to call on Him regularly to teach there. They kept His Word in there-and they still do. Is it a wild-eyed assumption that He might still be there on Yom Kippur silently, obscurely taking note of a few of those more passionate prayers of repentance?

Do you remember the crippled man that Jesus healed at the pool of Bethesda? He had no idea who had touched him so incredibly until he ran into Jesus later at the temple.

And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on Me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son (Zechariah 12:10).

¹⁶ Where is the Body, by Victor Schlatter. Treasure House 1999

Another "witness" is the graphic cleansing of the high priest, Joshua in Zechariah Chapter 3:
Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you" (Zechariah 3:3-4).

The rest of the metaphor continues with an exacting description (Israel at the end of days, and the Lord Almighty finalizes it with His inalterable promise: ... *and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day*" Zechariah 3:9

The promise of redemption to *all* Israel presented by both Jeremiah and Ezekiel:

For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh, and I will put My spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be My people, and I will be your God (Ezekiel 36:24-28).

Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city ...for three and a half days ... (Revelation 11 :8-9).

In Chapter 15 of Genesis, Abraham cut a covenant with the Almighty to forever seal the promises to his entire family for all generations. After the Lord instructed Abraham, in the exact animal sacrifices He wanted him to offer:

He brought Him all these, split the animals down the middle and placed each half opposite the other; but the birds he did not divide. And whenever birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, Abram drove them off (Genesis 15:10-11, NJB).

Note that each sacrifice was cut into *two identical halves* and out symmetrically before the Lord. Is there a precise meaning in there a prophetic parallel with the *two olive tree* witnesses of Revelation 11?