

THE KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

1 KINGS 12

The Renaissance of Israel

Israel is more than a Jewish State

The Historical, Biblical and Prophetic Reality



THE RENASCENCE OF ISRAEL

**Israel is more than a Jewish State
The Historical, Biblical and Prophetic Reality**

Rabbi Anvayel Ben Ephraim

Published 2025 by Rabbi Anvayel Ben Ephraim, this publication may be freely shared.

2 O God, keep not Thou silence; hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O God.

3 For, lo, Thine enemies are in an uproar; and they that hate Thee have lifted up the head.

4 They hold crafty converse against Thy people and take counsel against Thy northern/hidden ones.

5 They have said: 'Come, let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.'

ב אֱלֹהִים אֶל-דָּמִי-לָךְ ; אֶל-תַּחֲרֹשׁ וְאֶל-תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל.
ג כִּי-הִנֵּה אֹיְבֶיךָ, יִהְיֶינּוּ ; וּמִשְׁנֵאֵיךָ, נִשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ.
ד עַל-עַמֶּךָ, יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד ; וַיִּתְיַעֲצוּ, עַל-צְפוּנֶיךָ.
ה אָמְרוּ--לָכוּ, וְנִכְחַדֵּם מִגּוֹי ; וְלֹא-יִזְכָּר שֵׁם-יִשְׂרָאֵל
עוֹד.

תהילים 83 Psalms

Renaissance – the revival of something that has been dormant; reincarnation; rebirth.

Introduction

Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People is an Israeli Basic Law which specifies the nature of the State of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people. The Law was adopted by the Knesset, with 62 in favor, 55 against, and two abstentions, on 19 July 2018.¹

The quote from the *Wikipedia* article seems to indicate that the lament of the 83rd Psalms which spoke of the name *Israel* no longer being in remembrance is no longer necessary, nor is cutting off from being a nation a viable possibility at this point; the State of Israel was established in 1948 and has thrived since that time despite numerous attempts to destroy its existence up until this very day. Why therefore was there a perceived need on the part of then Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to push so earnestly to have the country declared specifically a *Jewish* state?

A closer look at the Psalms holds the answer; while the 4th verse in English is rendered variously as “*thy treasured ones; thy cherished ones; those whom you cherish; your Holy ones; etc.*”, the King James and American Standard versions both correctly translate the Hebrew צפון as “*hidden ones*”. What is not indicated, however, is that this Hebrew word also means “*north*” and is the clue to what the Psalms is really about, i.e., the attempt by those who hate God to prevent acknowledgement of the truth that no only is *Israel* is the name of the Northern Kingdom, it is the heritage of the sons of Joseph.

The historical and biblical existence and importance of the northern kingdom is recognized widely by scholars all over the world, but the significance of that existence is not common knowledge, nor that it represents a segment of the story of the children of Jacob that is not Jewish. The role played by the north has been nearly wiped from popular history and plays a very secondary part in the telling of the Biblical narratives. This in spite of the fact that the name *Israel* has always historically been associated with the northern people and *Judah* with the south only.

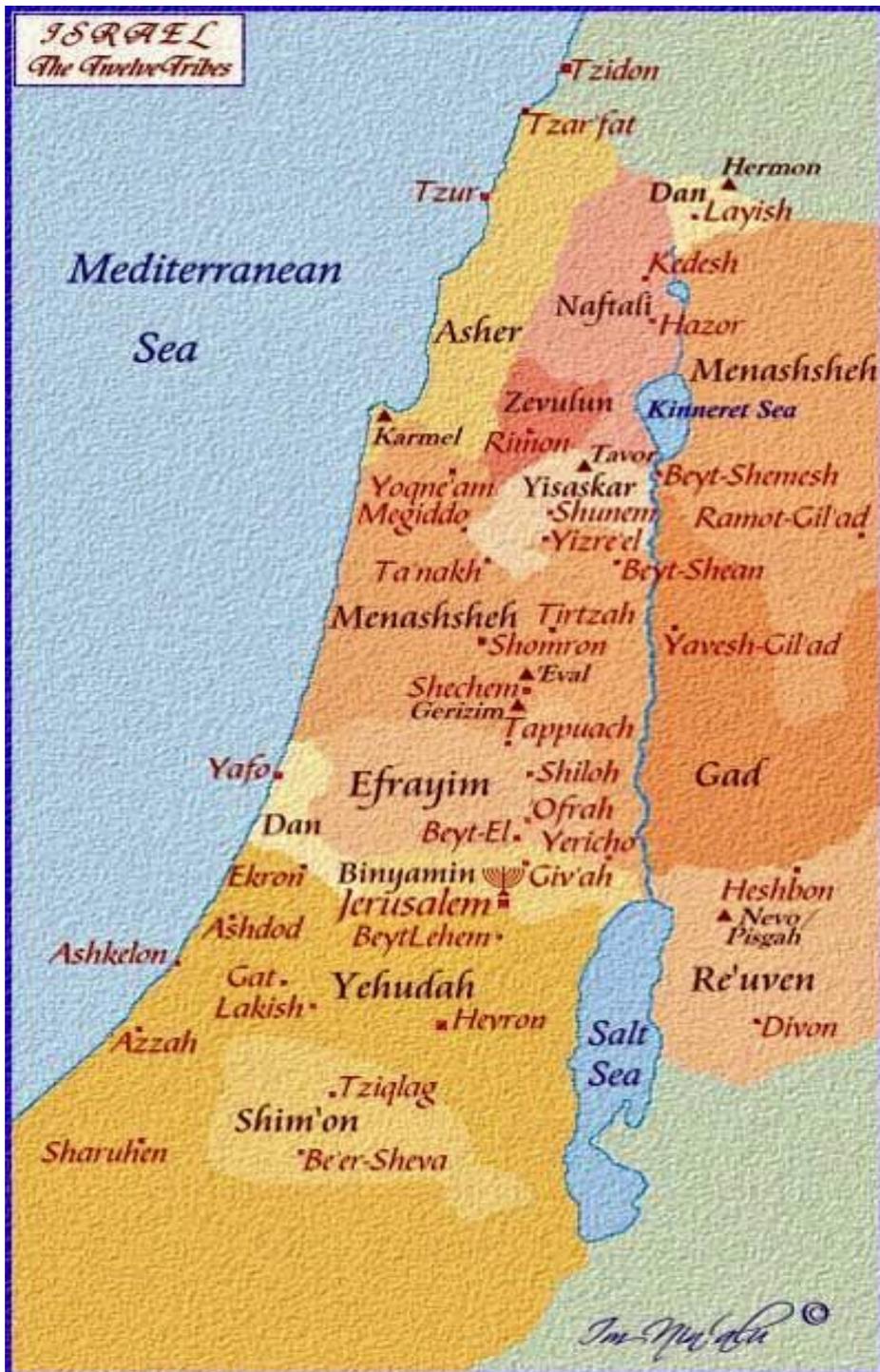
¹ Wikipedia-Basic law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish people

It was only the fall of the northern kingdom and the move of a large number of Israelites to Judah that brought about the rise of pan-Israelite ideology in the south. The new vision promoted the idea of the supremacy and sole legitimacy of the Davidic dynasty and the Jerusalem temple among the mix of Judahites and Israelites that now constituted the population of Judah. Still later, with the withdrawal of Assyria, this ideology was expanded to include all people and territories that were once ruled by the two Hebrew kingdoms. As part of this ideological process, and in competition with the remaining Israelites, the Samaritans, and their temple at Mount Gerizim, the term Israel was transformed from the name of the kingdom to a concept of a future unified nation living under a Davidic king and worshipping in the Jerusalem temple. The short, two-century-long history of the kingdom of Israel gave birth, then, to the millennia-long concept of the people of Israel.²

While the name *Israel* has become associated primarily with the Jewish people today, the 83rd Psalms indicates that the kingdom of Israel, i.e., the northern kingdom, will once again rise to acknowledgement. This is most evident in the prophetic writings of the scriptures, which clearly predict a future where the distinction between the northern *Israel* and the southern *Judah* is accepted. I believe the beginnings of the reality have manifested in our day with the return of to this land in 1969 of a group of people from America calling themselves Hebrew Israelites, and the announcement at that time by their spiritual leader, Ben Ammi of blessed memory, that they returned as *Israelites*, not as *Jews*:

The Renaissance of Israel had begun....

² THE FORGOTTEN KINGDOM, THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF NORTHERN ISRAEL
By Israel Finkelstein, Copyright © 2013 by the Society of Biblical Literature, pg. 163



Israel and Judah

The conflict between Joseph and his brothers, particularly that between Joseph and Judah, runs like a seam across the entire history of Israel. At times Joseph gains the upper hand, at times Judah prevails, but the schism always resurfaces. Our sages even speak of two messiahs, each with a role to play in the final fulfillment of Israel's mission—a messiah descended from Joseph, and a messiah from the royal house of David, from the tribe of Judah.³

The *Israel* spoken of here is the one that most people are familiar with, i.e., the family of the patriarch Jacob, the *Children of Israel*. However, the archeological record and the written history bear witness to a somewhat different reality in which the terms *Israel* and *Judah* refer to two separate groups of people within the land of Caanan, one in the north, *Israel*, and the other, *Judah*, in the south, contrary to the Biblical account, which presents a picture of a patriarch, Abraham, being promised the land of Caanan by his God, and that promise subsequently passing to his progeny after him. Professor Israel Finkelstein addresses this issue in his book, *The Forgotten Kingdom*:

In the first half of the eighth century B.C.E., Israel ruled over the lion's share of the territory of the two Hebrew kingdoms (fig. 1), and its population accounted for three quarters of the people of Israel and Judah combined (Broshi and Finkelstein 1992). Israel was stronger than Judah both militarily and economically, and in the first half of the ninth century and in the first half of the eighth century—almost half the time the two kingdoms co-existed—Israel dominated the southern kingdom. Nonetheless, Israel has lingered in the shadow of Judah, both in the story told in the Hebrew Bible and in the attention paid to it by modern scholarship.

³ https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/1122/jewish/A-Rift-Extending-Across-History.htm

1. Historiography and Historical Memory

The history of ancient Israel in the Hebrew Bible was written by Judahite authors in Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom and the hub of the Davidic dynasty. As such it transmits Judahite ideas regarding territory, kingship, temple, and cult.⁴

Thus, historical *Israel* was far different, according to Professor Finkelstein, from the modern nation, which has officially declared itself a *Jewish state*. It is this kingdom that I feel the prophets of old insistently envisioned returning in spite of the apparent writing of those prophecies in the Hebrew Bible being by the hands of Judahite authors. The struggle spoken of by the Chasidic writer was/is not between Joseph and Judah as Brothers within the family of Isarel, but rather between the very concepts of Israel and Judah as separate historical and Biblical entities. The commonly accepted position is that the northern tribes have been lost to knowledge of the world and no one envisions their return as a polity to the world stage, however, that is not how I read the words of the prophets of Israel, according to whom both Israel and Judah would return to such prominence again. The Jews have returned, why not Israel?

When Ezekiel saw a valley full of bones, dried out by the sun and seeming beyond all hope of revivification, he understood the message: the bones represent the “whole house of Israel,” those northern tribes that had been deported. They might appear dead now, and yet, God could and would bring them back to life. North and south would once again be united, and a mighty empire would raise its head as in days of old. Indeed, it was not, Ezekiel said, just a matter of physical resuscitation, but of a changed spirit. Like the book of Jeremiah, Ezekiel said that God would make a new covenant with His people, and things would return to what they were before: My servant

⁴ THE FORGOTTEN KINGDOM, THE ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF NORTHERN ISRAEL
By Israel Finkelstein, Copyright © 2013 by the Society of Biblical Literature, pg. 1

David [that is, one of his descendants] will rule over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow My rules and they will carefully carry out My laws. They will settle in the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, and in which your ancestors lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and My servant David will be their prince forever. Then I will make a covenant of peace with them. It will be an eternal covenant with them, and I will bless them and make them numerous, and I will set down My sanctuary in their midst forever. My dwelling place will be with theirs, and I will be their God, and they will be My people. Ezek. 37:24–26 But it was never to be. Wherever the northern tribes had ended up, they never again returned to the Samaritan hills. To this day, their fate is quite unknown.⁵

The general consensus- as Mr. Kugel states- is that the fate of the northern tribes is "unknown", which is true as far as the human knowledge goes. But the Bible is about more than human knowledge...

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that YHWH will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, that shall remain from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

12 And He will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the dispersed of Israel, and gather together the scattered of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Isaiah 11

3 For, lo, the days come, saith YHWH, that I will turn the captivity of My people Israel and Judah, saith YHWH; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.'

Jeremiah 30

⁵ James L. Kugel, *How to Read the Bible*, Pg. 848-9

22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel: Thus, saith YHWH GOD: I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name, which ye have profaned among the nations, whither ye came.

23 And I will sanctify My great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am YHWH, saith YHWH GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.

24 For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Ezekiel 36

The promise is that the God of Israel knows where His people are because He scattered them there and can call them forth when He is ready.

13 And ye shall know that I am YHWH, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O My people.”

Ezekiel 37

Those who had seemed dead would come forth from their graves and give praise to YHWH; this is how you would know them and His works.

6 For thus saith YHWH: sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout at the head of the nations; announce ye, praise ye, and say: 'O YHWH, save Thy people, The remnant of Israel.'

7 Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; a great company shall they return hither.

8 They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born.

Jeremiah 31

The God of Israel proclaimed Himself *a father to Israel*, therefore the great unification of Ezekiel 37 will result in there being one nation known as *Israel*, Judah would be submerged within the greater union. Today's nation known as *Israel* is the beginning of that transformation; while there are still attempts to hold on to the idea of the nation belonging to or of *Judah*, i.e., Jewish, and the use of the proper term *Israelite* is avoided by using the transliteration *Israeli*, the final result is inevitable; the people of *Israel* will be known as *Israelites* in the coming days, because this is the correct translation of the Hebrew ישראלית, *a native or inhabitant or citizen of Israel*. Attention is already being drawn to the fact that the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are *Hebrews*, just as Professor Finklestein referred to the *two Hebrew kingdoms*, one Judahite/Jewish and the other Israelite, it is simply a matter of time until it is accepted that the united nation is *Israelite*, and not Judahite/Jewish.

The challenge for the Jewish people is acknowledging that *Jewish* is not synonymous with *Israel*; they have grown comfortable in using the terms interchangeably, even in obviously erroneous instances, such as saying that Moses was sent to deliver the *Jewish* people from Egypt when the word יהודי/Yehudi never appears in the book of Exodus. We can definitely point to Moses stating that the *God of the Hebrews*⁶ sent him, and the people he was sent to deliver were known as *Israel*⁷, but there is not one mention of *the God of the Jews* or *Judah*.

⁶ <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0205.htm>, v 3

⁷ <https://mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0205.htm>, v 2

Throughout the prophetic writings, while *Judah* and *Israel* are called His people, there is not one time when He refers to Himself as *the God of Judah*. The same cannot be said with regard to the name *Israel*.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I help thee, saith YHWH, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

3 For I am YHWH thy God, The Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I have given Egypt as thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

15 I am YHWH, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

6 Thus saith YHWH, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer YHWH of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside Me there is no God.

Isaiah 41, 43, 44

Clearly, Judah is included within *Israel* in these instances, but this is a reminder that He is the God of the Whole family of Jacob as *Israelites*, not as Judahites/Jews, according to scripture. The name *Israel* is the birthright of the house of Joseph through his youngest son, Ephraim, and declaring a Judahite/Jewish state in that name requires acknowledging that biblical truth, for the house of Ephraim/Israel has never been Judahite/Jewish.

“Of course, reading through the books of Samuel and Kings, it is utterly clear that in the eyes of the biblical writers, the monarchy was never completely unified in the first place. The distinction between »Judah and Israel had been there since the first time that the men of Judah joined forces with the Israelite Saul in his war against Amalek (I Sam 15,4).

The same is true of David’s kingdom. Even after he was anointed over Israel and moved his court to the neutral Jerusalem, David seems to have kept the two parts of his kingdom constitutionally separate (cf. II Sam 5,5).”⁸

⁸ Joseph, Judah and the Benjamin Conundrum, By Yigal Levin, pg. 225-6

Conclusion

The Jewish people have lived in Israel for about 3,500 years...and it's in the Bible!



The Jewish people live in the Land of Israel, which is today the State of Israel,



Has lived and been connected to this place for about 3,500 years, Three and a half thousand years



Now for the first two thousand years or so of that period



We lived in what is described in the text commonly known as the Bible.



So, the Bible describes that the Jewish people lived on this land.



Were tied to this land, fought conquerors, sometimes were conquered, but remained on our land.

Taken from an interview of Prime Minister elect, Benyamin Netanyahu, by Jordan Peterson, Dec. 21. 2022.

Coalition deals include discrimination bill, judicial override, immigration reform

New Netanyahu gov't stresses exclusive Jewish rights to Land of Israel, backs annexation in principle; presents its guidelines, signed deals with partners before swearing-in Thurs.

By TOI STAFF

28 December 2022, 5:08 pm



Incoming prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the Knesset on December 28, 2022. (Olivier Fitoussi/Flash90)

Incoming prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu finalized his right-religious coalition on Wednesday, setting out government guidelines that stressed the Jewish people's "exclusive and inalienable right to all parts of the Land of Israel" and vowing to bolster the settlement of "the Galilee, the Negev, the Golan and Judea and Samaria" (the West Bank).

The Times of Israel, December 28, 2022



Mike Pompeo

Pompeo says Israel has biblical claim to Palestine and is 'not an occupying nation'

Trump's secretary of state makes comments on podcast to defend former administration siding more openly with Israel

Chris McGreal in New York

Thu 16 Feb 2023 05:01 GMT

Mike Pompeo, the former US secretary of state, has defended Israel's decades-long control of the Palestinian territories by claiming that the Jewish state has a biblical claim to the land and is therefore not occupying it.

Pompeo told the **One Decision** podcast that his religious beliefs, US strategic interests and his view of the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, as a "known terrorist" underpinned his support as the Trump administration's top diplomat for the shift in US

The Guardian, February 16, 2023

In any case, as the new, religiously defined Jewish identity eventually replaced the old, tribal based Judahite one³², the tribal traditions of the Benjaminites died out as well. As noted above, the post-exilic prophets do not make the distinction between Judah and Benjamin.

*³² These, too, are of course modern definitions, but they are useful for our purposes. Judahite means someone or something pertaining to the pre-exilic tribe and kingdom of Judah (cf. Rendsburg, *Israelian Hebrew Features in Genesis 49, 163*, who writes of Judahite Hebrew, as opposed to Israelian Hebrew). Judean is the same, pertaining to the post-exilic province or state of Yehud/Judah/Judea, though R.C. Head (*Dynamics of Dissection, Ambiguity in Genesis 12–36 and Ethnic Boundaries in Post Exilic Judah*, 2001, 16ff.) has used Yehudian*

to describe the former. The term *Jewish* is used for the worldwide religious community. These distinctions are lacking in Hebrew, where the word יהודי encompasses all three meanings. Modern Israeli scholars have, in recent years, coined the term יהודאי as an equivalent of *Judahite*.⁹

1. In this book “*Judahite*” is used as an adjective for terms relating to the kingdom of Judah (also described here as the “southern kingdom”), e.g., *Judahite pottery*. “*Judean*” is used to refer to geographical regions, such as the *Judean Desert*. “*Israel*” generally refers to the northern kingdom, while “*ancient Israel*” refers to the Iron Age people—north and south combined. In “*two Hebrew kingdoms*” I ostensibly adhere to the ideology of later *Judahite-Judean* authors but at the same time acknowledge both the proximities and differences in their material culture and cognitive world (see more in Finkelstein 1999a).¹⁰

While it is true -as then Prime Minister elect, Netanyahu said-that the “*Jewish*” people have been in the land now known as the state of Israel for about 3.5 thousand years, and that this can be found in the Bible, this also serves to negate what he announced later concerning this land belong solely to the “*Jewish*” people; Professor Levin points out that the use of “*Jewish*” is modern usage, and the pre-exilic people were more properly known as *Judahites*, of the tribe and kingdom of *Judah*.

Professor Finklestein further elaborates by saying that there were *two Hebrew kingdoms*, one in the north and one in the south, and, in his book, the northern one was called *Israel*, while for the combination of north and south he used *ancient Israel*. He chose not to use the term *Jewish* when dealing with members of the southern kingdom during this period of the early history of the two kingdoms, ending in about 722 B.C with the Assyrian conquest of *Israel*, the northern kingdom.

⁹ Joseph, *Judah and the Benjamin Conundrum*, By Yigal Levin, pg. 230-1

¹⁰ Israel Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom*, footnote, pg. 1

The use of the Bible by now Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the former U.S. Secretary of State to support the Prime Minister's claim to the land now known as the *State of Israel* in totality on behalf of the *Jewish* people shows faulty reasoning on their part, because the Bible does not support this claim.

The Bible clearly tells us that the land that was known as *Canaan* during the time of the patriarchs was given as the inheritance of the seeds of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who gave his name, *Israel*, and a *double portion* of that inheritance, to the seed of his son *Joseph*, *Ephraim*, the youngest son of Joseph -- who also received the right of the first-born- and *Manasseh*. It is an affront to the house of Joseph to declare that only the *Jewish people* have a right to any portion of this land!

The God of Israel has heard the cries of His people:

14 Thus saith YHWH: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children, because they are not.

17 I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself: 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a calf untrained; turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for Thou art YHWH my God.

19 Is Ephraim a darling son unto Me? Is he a child that is dandled? For as often as I speak of him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore My heart yearneth for him, I will surely have compassion upon him, saith YHWH.

Jeremiah 31

In an article published in the Times of Israel, March 24, 2022, Professor Israel Finklestein made the following statement:

“As far as I can judge, it dates to the 11th century BCE. As such, it can be understood as representing the groups which established the kingdom of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) in the 10th century BCE. In other words, it is an early Israelite site,” he told The Times of Israel.”

'NAMES REVEAL SOCIAL HIERARCHIES OF ANCIENT SOCIETIES'

Ancient Israelites were more worldly than their insular Judean cousins, study shows

Using statistical methods from field of ecological biodiversity, Israeli scholars analyze 1,000 First Temple period names and find that the northern state was likely more 'cosmopolitan'

By [ROSSELLA TERCATIN](#) 
Today, 10:15 am



The 'Natan-Melech/Eved Hamelech' bulla found in the City of David. (Eliyahu Yanai, City of David)

A group of top Israeli archaeologists has borrowed tricks of the trade from colleagues in the fields of ecology and biodiversity to analyze around 1,000 first names of Israelites and Judeans recorded in archaeological findings from the First Temple period (950–586 BCE).

Pioneering the use of these digital humanities tools for archaeological research, the study found that some 2,900 years ago, as the peoples of Israel and Judah lived side by side in the Land of Israel, the Israelites were more open and cosmopolitan than the Judeans.

The study was published on Monday in the prominent [PNAS journal \(Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America\)](#).

Times of Israel 12.05.25

Archeology has proven conclusively that the northern kingdom was known as *Israel* and that it rose to ascendancy before its southern brother, *Judah*, enjoying wide ranging respect as a kingdom. The article in the Times of Israel if verified would also mean that the worship of YHWH, the tetragrammaton for the name of the God of Israel, within the borders of Caanan/Israel originated in the north, which is yet another reason for understanding the importance of the place of the northern kingdom in the history and legacy of the people known as the *Children of Israel*, as well as its place in today's *State of Israel*. There is no *Israel* without Joseph!

1 Let me sing of my well-beloved, a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill;

7 For the vineyard of YHWH of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah the plant of His delight; and He looked for justice, but behold violence; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Isaiah 5

Jewish identity became the basis of Israeli citizenship, with political debate naturally centering on the vexing question, "What is a Jew?" Since Jews, like most people, have a mixed ancestry, Jewish supremacist myth-makers buttressed weak territorial claims with appeals to historical continuity, blurring distinctions between Hebrew, Israelite, Judean, Jewish, and Judaism, while forestalling recognition that these were different people at different times in history with different ways of life.¹¹

There can be no peace in this land without the acceptance of the whole truth of its Biblical, historical and political realities; *Israel* is far more than a Jewish state.

¹¹ *Israel: The twisted Dream Turns 59* Michael K. Smith, May 13, 2007, legalienate



One Family, One Nation

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