



FEED MY SHEEP

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More on modern Ephraim and Manasseh

The Story of Joseph, Part 39

In our study of the life of Joseph, we saw how the dying patriarch Jacob-Israel adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as his first-born in place of Reuben and Simeon. In placing his hands on the head of the two *grown* sons of Joseph, the blind Jacob deliberately crossed his hands to place the greater blessing on the head of the younger son, Ephraim.

Joseph tried to explain to his father that since Manasseh was the elder, *he* should get the blessing from Jacob's *right* hand. But Jacob assured Joseph that he knew what he was doing, and that indeed, the descendants of Ephraim would become the pre-eminent tribe.

We discussed how that has been fulfilled in these latter days, and I gave my own opinion of who is Ephraim and who is Manasseh today.

I have been pleased with the feedback regarding my contention that the old British-Israel writers ("old" referring to those writing about a century ago) had it wrong in their identification of Britain as Ephraim and the USA as Manasseh. I contend the opposite is the case. I have had no one respond to try to rebut even the few pieces of evidence presented in the last issue.

There were, however, a number of readers who expressed sentiments of agreement, and some offering comments such as "I thought I was the only one who saw that; glad to see you taking on the issue!"

I shall now continue along the same vein. Someone might point us to the flag of Great Britain, the Union Jack, as it is called, as being suggestive of Britain as Ephraim. Many of my readers are familiar with the idea common in British-Israel circles that when Jacob crossed his hands in blessing the sons of Joseph, that that crossing was signified by the X-type cross in the

Union Jack.

However, may I point out that both boys were under the crossed hands. Therefore, it could apply equally to either Manasseh or Ephraim. So just because the British flag has the symbol of the cross or crossed hands does not make Great Britain Ephraim. It could just as easily be applied to Britain as Manasseh.

Stone Kingdom Ministries holds a monthly fellowship-teaching meeting near Atlanta. And, as all my dear brothers and sisters there were sure to remind me, the flag of the nation-state of Georgia (until 2003) also had the symbol of Jacob's crossed arms in it. Because it was based on the Confederate battle flag, political pressure forced the change and the X-type cross is no longer part of the flag for the state of Georgia. The current state flags of Alabama, Florida and Mississippi still have the X-type cross. Historically, the X cross is known as the cross of St. Andrew.

(Left: the flag of the state of Florida. The cross is red on a white background, with the state seal in the center.)



The point is also made in many British-Israel writings that the term Union Jack means the Union of Jacob, thus signifying the gathering of the Israelite tribes in Great Britain. There is truth in

that, but again I believe the greater fulfillment is in the “United Nations” of America. Perhaps you might be interested in the origin of the term “Union Jack.” From the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

“The national flag of the British empire is the Union Jack, in which are combined in union the crosses of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick. ...”

The article then goes on to describe them in particular, and point out that the flag of St. Andrew was the national banner of Scotland and that of St. George was the national banner of England. With the accession of James I, the king of KJV Bible fame, the two nations were united. Then the article continues...

“On the union of the two crowns James I issued a proclamation” decreeing the new flag be displayed.

“This was the first Union Jack, as it is generally termed, though strictly the name of the flag is the “Great Union,” and it is only a “Jack” when flown on the jackstaff of a ship of war. Probably the name of the Stuart King ‘Jacques,’ which James I always signed, gave the name to the flag, and then to the staff at which it was hoisted.”

I do not deny that God hides the little secrets for us to discover when we learn who we are—such as that the Union Jack secretly refers to the Union of the tribes of Jacob, the Encyclopedia article notwithstanding. Israelite tribes were united in Great Britain. However, as I said, I believe the *greatest* fulfillment is in the company of *nations* called the United States of America.

Now back to the idea from the previous issue concerning all of the 13s in our heraldry. It does not signify that we are Manasseh, since he was the number 2 tribe. But when Jacob adopted the boys, it did made 13 tribes in Israel. Thus, the number 13 is indicative of all 13 tribes, not merely the 13th!

You see, England or Great Britain is both Manasseh and the Union of Jacob in the sense that it was a gathering place for many of the tribes. Just so, but on a greater scale, the United States of America is both Ephraim and the regathering place of all 13 tribes in its greatest fulfillment.

This continent, which would include Canada, is the greater fulfillment of the “appointed place” prophesied in 2 Samuel 7:10. Canada, being part of the British Commonwealth, is therefore part of Manasseh. We are full brothers, sons of the same mother, through Asenath and Rachel.

Interestingly enough, when one compares the population ratios of Ephraim to Manasseh, it seemed to be about 10 to 1. That approximate ratio still holds between the USA and Canada.

A thousand years before the Savior appeared in Bethlehem, Nathan the prophet came to King David in old Jerusalem and gave this prophecy for *all* Israel... All Israel because this was before the kingdom split. God said:

2 Samuel 7:10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

and “move no more;” Well, certainly, our Israelites did move in great numbers from England to America. So obviously, Britain could not be the final fulfillment of this prophecy. And not to overlook the last part, “neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,”

Well, it seems to me that the children of wickedness are still afflicting both Britain and America and all the Israel nations, so that fact does not offer an advantage to interpreting the verse to the favor either Britain or America over the other.

So as it stands, while there was a partial fulfillment of the regathering in Britain, certainly America has become the regathering of Israel in its greatest numbers. At the same time that we are all 13 tribes regathered, the USA and Canada are also “Joseph’s land.” Just as Joseph provided food for “the whole world,” so have we been the breadbasket of the world for a century now.

As in the days of Joseph, the land where Joseph dwelt became the habitation of all the tribes of Israel. Except this time, we are in the land of regathered Israel; we are in Zion, not the land of Egypt.

And yet we *are* in Egypt also, metaphorically, symbolically, because we are in a bondage of sorts. Many of them. We are in Assyrian Captivity. We are in the Mystery Babylonian captivity. We are in Midianite Captivity. We are in captivity to the children of the east. And we are in the symbolic *Egyptian* captivity, all at the same time. Because God speaks of our deliverance at this end of the age as coming about the following manner.

Isaiah 10:24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee

with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb: and as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

27 And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

One might think that the word *anointing* there would be the Hebrew word for Messiah, but it is not. It is H8081 shemen {sheh'-men} which simply means *oil*.

We now move on to Genesis, chapter 49. At this point, the dying Jacob calls for all his sons to come into his presence. This is a pivotal passage in the Bible because herein Jacob speaks of each of his sons, and utters prophecies concerning their descendants—prophecies which will be fulfilled in numerous centuries to come. Because of the tremendous significance of this passage we will spend considerable space on it in this and coming issues, with a special focus on the blessing to Judah.

Genesis 49:1 And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.

We find the phrase “gather yourselves together” twice in this passage. To me, this is a hidden indication that the tribes will be together at the beginning, followed by a split and a scattering, and then the tribes will be gathered together again in the distant future.

And indeed, they were together for hundreds of years—until the secession of the ten northern tribes which followed the death of Solomon. By 721 B. C., they were being scattered, and they remained so until the final regathering began in the past few centuries.

Notice the parallelism in verse 2: hear, ye sons of Jacob; hearken unto Israel. Hear-hearken and Jacob-Israel. It would appear that the name Jacob refers to the natural, the physical or even carnal; while the name Israel has reference to the spiritual. The call to the sons is not merely to hear his words, but to take them to heart and follow them; hearken unto them.

As we picture this scene, we see all twelve sons gathered around their father as his death approaches. In a sense, it almost pre-figures the Last Supper: twelve apostles with Jesus as His death approached. Jacob will speak to and about each son in turn beginning with the eldest, what he says to one will be heard by all the brothers.

3 Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

We can easily understand that verse up through the phrase “the beginning of my strength,” but after that it gets a little fuzzy. “The excellency of dignity, the excellency of power”—what does that mean in reference to Reuben?

Some think it means that Reuben was a handsome and dignified-looking man, who was a physically powerful person. However, I am inclined to think it means more than that. Substituting other words from the Hebrew lexicon, it could also read that Reuben had the superiority of exaltation and the superiority of power.

I think it refers to his place as the first-born, the one who would be exalted above his brothers, the one who would have inherited all the roles which Jacob possessed; namely, that of a man who inherits three things: 1) the double portion from his father... 2) to be the priest of the household, and 3) the one who also holds dominion or kingship over his brothers.

But as we know, because Reuben slept with his father’s wife, Bilhah, he forfeited all of those things. As we already have seen previously in these studies, the double portion went to Joseph, and as we will see shortly, the dominion-kingship goes to Judah. The priesthood ultimately goes to Levi. Thus, the dying Israel now prophesies of Reuben and his descendants—

4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father’s bed; then defiledst thou it:

Jacob had been speaking directly to Reuben, but now he turns to address Reuben’s brothers, and says, “... he went up to my couch.” “Unstable as water.” The Hebrew has the sense of “boiling over as water.” In other words, Reuben’s passions were hot and all over the place, unstable like boiling water. His inability to control those passions led him to that great sin and his subsequent disgrace and forfeiture of all first-born blessings

This prophecy came to pass. Even though Reuben had the right as first-born to be exalted above his brethren, he lost it. Therefore, he and his descendants did not excel. Among all the history and chronicles of Israel, the tribe of Reuben very rarely, if ever, stands out. Jacob-Israel now addresses the next two oldest brothers.

Genesis 49:5 Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

6 O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.

7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Simeon and Levi are brethren—Well, yes, we know that these two men were sons of the same mother, Leah; but this statement by Jacob implies more. It implies that they were closely allied in the wicked deeds they performed. What event is Jacob referring to when he describes them as having instruments of cruelty?

It refers to the rape of their sister, Dinah, by Shechem, the Canaanite; and Simeon and Levi's revenge upon Shechem and Hamor for the rape. The Bible tells how after the rape by Shechem, that the sons of Jacob told Shechem and his father, Hamor, that they would consent to become one people with those Amorite-Canaanites so long as Hamor, his son, Shechem, and all the rest of the men of their city would become circumcised.

And then in the days of their recovery from the circumcision, how Simeon and Levi went forth and slew all those men. Jasher indicates it was in the hundreds. They also took many of the women and children as servants, and Simeon himself—in what would appear to be an act of gross hypocrisy—took one of the Amorite women as his wife.

And after that, when news of the great slaughter spread among the other Amorites and Canaanites, a number of the kings of the Amorites confederated in an attempt to exterminate Jacob and his clan. Jasher gives all the gory details, and this is what Jacob was evidently referring when he said in...

Genesis 48:22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

You might want to read the whole story in Jasher some time. We won't take the space to do that here. (To be continued.)

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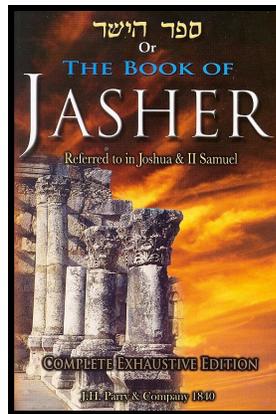
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