



# FEED MY SHEEP

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## The Tribe of Benjamin—Light Bearers

*The Story of Joseph, Part 49*

For many months, our study of the life of Joseph the patriarch has focused on the death bed prophecies pronounced by Joseph's father, Jacob-Israel. They foretold the destinies into the distant future of the progeny of each of his sons. We are now examining his prophecy for the tribe of Benjamin. In the last issue, we saw how the Bible notes specifically the left-handedness of many in the tribe of Benjamin. What significance does that have?

First, we saw that even the name, Benjamin ("son of my right hand") indirectly points to *left*-handedness because as little Benjy would stand next to his papa, he would grab Jacob's right hand with his left. There is, however, another way to look at this. Jacob considered his beloved Rachel as his "right hand" and so Benjamin was the son of his right hand, the son of Rachel. Fast forward now hundreds of years later, as the nation of Israel was split after the death of Solomon.

In 1 Kings, chapter 11, we read a passage which is very important prophetically because it pertains specifically to the tribe of Benjamin. As we know, when Solomon died, his son Rehoboam inherited the throne over all Israel.

The people had been complaining about the high taxes and so Rehoboam turned to his older counselors and asked them what they thought he should do. They advised him to ease up on the people and lower their taxes. Initiate a tax cut. It will be good for the country. Sounds like they were conservative Republicans, does it not? (*chuckle, chuckle*)

Then young Rehoboam turned to his classmates from Harvard—to put it in a modern context—and asked them what they thought he should do about the taxes. And what do you think these liberal Democrats advised? You're right! Raise taxes. Stick it to the people! Rehoboam followed the liberal Democrats' advice and we know what happened. The ten northern tribes seceded from the union, and unlike the 1860s, this time they got away with it.

Do you know why they got away with it? Very simply put: because this split was ordained of God. After the tax rebellion began by the ten northern tribes, Rehoboam gathered an army of 180,000 men from Judah and Benjamin and was determined to go teach those "Northern Confederate rebels" a lesson. But God then had this to say to King Rehoboam.

**2 Chronicles 11:4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.**

Although I was born and raised in the North, having studied and learned both sides of the great conflict of the 1860s, I have come to the conclusion that, Constitutionally, the South was correct. But you will never come to that conclusion simply from a typical public school education and especially through university-level history courses. You have to find the truth elsewhere.

But even though the South was right in the 1860s, they lost the war. Why? Well, we could discuss the role

of the Rothschilds in funding both sides and all the political chicanery, etc., but from the highest perspective, the reason the South *lost* is the same reason the ten-tribed, Northern rebels *succeeded* in ancient Israel: it was God's Plan!

After the ancient rebellion, it was the tribe of Benjamin which remained loyal to the southern tribe of Judah to form the Kingdom of Judah. In one sense, it is ironic because after King Saul and the death of King Ishbosheth, it was the tribe of Benjamin which lost the monarchy to the tribe of Judah; and yet they are the only tribe which remained loyal to Judah after Solomon.

Moreover, Benjamin was the only full brother of Joseph. Therefore, we would think that they would follow the lead of Ephraim in the rebellion against Judah. But such was not the case. Why would *they*, of all the tribes, cling to Judah? We could say that it was because the territory of Benjamin was on the northern border of Judah, and so there had to have been very close relations between the two, which is true. However, they also bordered Ephraim and Dan and Reuben and Gad's territories as well, so why did they stay loyal to Judah. Once again, the answer is divine providence.

**1 Kings 11:28** And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.

**29** And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field:

**30** And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it *in* twelve pieces:

**31** And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

I want us to pause right here and allow me to make a point—a question perhaps many of you have wondered about; namely: Why does nearly everyone affiliated with the British-Israel and Christian-Israel movement always use the phrases, “the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel” and “the two-tribed kingdom of

Judah?” Because, technically, it does not appear to be correct. Let's walk through it:

We know there were 12 tribes of Israel, but there were really 13 if you count Ephraim and Manasseh in the place of Joseph. But then there was Levi, who had no land inheritance. Instead, the Levites were scattered among all the other tribes. So we're back to 12 from that perspective.

But yet, the tribe of Simeon's territory was wholly enclosed by Judah. So wouldn't that make it the northern nine tribes and the southern three tribes? Well, we need to keep in mind that it was also prophesied that the Simeonites would—like the Levites—be scattered among Israel. But verse 31 here, specifically says that Jeroboam would get ten tribes.

So God's Word tells us that that the northern kingdom comprises ten tribes. And to refer the southern kingdom as two tribes is also biblically correct as shown in the next verse.

**32 (But he [and that means Rehoboam as representing the tribe of Judah] shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)**

**33** Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is right* in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father.

**34** Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his [referring back to Solomon here] hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

**35** But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes.

**36** And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

So the terminology “ten-tribed Israel” and “two-

tribed Judah” is biblically correct. But the main reason we have read this passage is to see that the tribe of Benjamin was to be a *light* to the tribe of Judah—a long-range prophecy indeed, which we shall now explore further.

This then is the origin of the saying that the tribe of Benjamin would be the light-bearers. I would quickly add that over the course of history, they would not be alone in that responsibility, but eventually all Israel would serve in that same capacity.

The Bible tells us that the Word of God is a light. Jesus became the Word made flesh, and Jesus, the Word, is the light of the world. So when Benjamin is a light-bearer to Judah, how was that fulfilled? First of all, it was fulfilled in that when the ten northern tribes were carried away into the Assyrian captivity, it was because they had forsaken the God of Israel. So when they never came back to the old promised land, they also lost track of the holy scriptures.

The tribes of Benjamin and Judah, however, even after they came back to the old promised land after the Babylonian captivity, they still had preserved the scriptures—the Word of God. In other words, they preserved the light.

And now let’s fast forward again up to the time of the Christ. In the first century A. D., the promised land was now divided into three parts. Judea was in the south as it had always been, except now it included the city of Jerusalem, which had always been in Benjamin’s territory up until the captivity.

One might wonder then, since remnants of the tribe of Benjamin came back after the Babylonian captivity along with remnants of the tribe of Judah, how did Jerusalem come to be in Judah’s territory? The answer is that the returning Benjamites chose to inhabit Galilee, way up in the north country. Remember also, that when the Assyrians captured and deported the masses of the ten northern tribes, they did not leave the land vacant.

They brought in people of mixed ancestry and they were still living there at the time of Christ. They were called Samaritans. They inhabited the central portion; the area north of Judea and south of Galilee. So there was a marked separation between the Judahites living in the south and the Benjamites living in the north—in Galilee.

When Jesus began His ministry, He chose his inner circle which consisted of 12 men whom we call the 12 apostles. Did you know that they were all from Galilee? —except one? One proof of that is found immediately after the ascension when the angel appeared to the 11 and said to them:

**Acts 1:11 Which also said, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.***

But let’s back up to the years before Jesus began his public ministry. There has always been much speculation about where Jesus was between his 12<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> years. Some stories say he went as far east as India. Others say he went as far west as the British isles.

I have one book that even makes the case that Jesus walked the Americas. The Incas, Aztecs and Mayans all had traditions about a wise white man from the East who walked among them and taught them and promised to return some day.

Personally speaking, I can see how all of those theories could be true. If you have read Steven Collins’ books, *Parthia*, which was the third, and *Israel’s Tribes Today*, the fourth and final one in the series, —then you know that some of the ancient Israelites migrated east as far as northern India and western China.

There is also a great deal of evidence to support the idea that Jesus had even lived in the British isles. This would have been in connection with his mother’s uncle, known in the Bible as Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph of Arimathea was a major defense contractor for the Roman Empire. Why do I say that? Because he held the contracts with the Empire to supply tin from his mines in Cornwall, England. It is beyond the scope of this lecture to pursue that idea any further, but it is indeed likely that Jesus had been with Joseph of Arimathea in ancient Britain. See Ray Capt’s book, *The Traditions of Glastonbury*.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, of course, which was in the land of Judah, then called Judea. His parents took Him and fled to Egypt for a couple years to avoid Jesus being slaughtered by Herod, and then when Joseph and Mary came back, where did they

live? Nazareth, which is located where? In Judea? No, it was in Galilee, that is to say, they lived among the Benjamites! As we read the gospels, notice how much time Jesus spent ministering in Galilee among the Benjamites. Oh, almost forgot...who do you suppose was the one original apostle who was not a Benjamite?

That's right, Judas. His surname was Iscariot, which means "man from Kerioth." Kerioth was a village which had become home to many of the Edomites as they had been forcibly converted to accept the religion of Judah over a hundred years before Christ. Judea had become a land with many true descendants of Judah mixed in among many descendants of Edom. Naturally, intermarriages occurred. King Herod himself was at least half-Edomite, some researches say he was Edomite on both sides. I cannot vouch for that.

After Judas betrayed the Savior, he killed himself and thus left a vacancy among the 12 apostles. Within weeks he was replaced by...? Another Galilean, which means that all twelve apostles were Benjamites. Now, recall that Benjamin is the only tribe where specific mention is made of their left-handedness. If you trace it in the Scriptures, you will find that the right side or the right hand always symbolizes mercy. The left side or left hand represents judgment. As we look at Luke 22, we notice in about verse 14 that this is the Last Supper. Jesus is there with his 12 apostles, Judas among them. Jesus says to them:

**Luke 22:29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;  
30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

You see, He is speaking to the Benjamites, the left-handed tribe. Not that every Benjamite is left-handed, of course, but that they were the tribe more associated with left-handedness, i.e., with judgment. And Jesus tells them: you will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. But wait a minute, you say, Judas is among them. What about that?

Well, that contingency is covered here in a preceding verse, and also over in Matthew 19:28 is another occasion—not the Last Supper—but when Jesus makes a similar statement.

**Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Judas fell away and was thus disqualified from the 12 and Matthias took his place. I must confess that I cannot prove from the Scripture that Matthias was from Galilee, but don't you think it is the likely case, given that all the others were from Galilee?

The Bible says that "he came unto his own and his own received him not." Meaning Jesus came from the tribe of Judah, but the Judahites rejected him—at first. It was only after the resurrection and after the ascension, and by the preaching of the Benjamite Galileans, that multitudes of Judahites were converted to faith in Jesus.

In the selection of Matthias, it says that the 11 "appointed" two men, Joseph and Matthias, and then they cast lots to see which one God would choose to fill Judas' spot. So doesn't it seem reasonable that Peter and his buddies from Galilee would appoint two Galileans as the finalists? I think so. The point remains: the left-handed tribe of Benjamites was prophesied by Jesus to be the judges over the 12 tribes when the kingdom comes. The Stone Kingdom, that is. Next month, we will return to and continue with the prophecy that the tribe of Benjamin would be the Light-bearers. (To be continued.)

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