In too many Messianic settings, when questions are asked about Biblical passages like Isaiah 11:12-16; Jeremiah 31:6-10; Ezekiel 37:15-28; and Zechariah 10:6-10, among others, polarized extremes are likely to be witnessed. One side makes these kinds of verses a central part of its spiritual identity—even more important than faith in the Messiah. Another side, when encountering past abuses, tends to totally dismiss legitimate questions and expectations which such passages pose. How can Bible readers have a mature approach to a larger restoration of Israel, prophesied in the Holy Writ, which is able to navigate through much of the immaturity detectable?

A significant question asked by the Apostles, before Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah ascended into Heaven, was, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6, NASU). Recognizing the restoration of Israel as a critical part of the Apostles' own expectations of the Last Days—might there be any aspects of the restoration of Israel, *beyond* the rebirth of the State of Israel and many Jewish people coming to faith in Messiah Yeshua, which any of us have missed? Is there possibly more to be anticipated in future salvation history, as it concerns the emergence of the Messianic movement, non-Jewish Believers embracing faith heritage in Israel's Scriptures in tangible ways, and many turning to the truths of God's Torah?

***Israel in Future Prophecy: Is There a Larger Restoration of the Kingdom to Israel?* addresses some of the controversies and problems which have been caused, by what is commonly known as the "Two-House teaching." This resource attempts to sort through much of the religious politics and abuse which one commonly encounters, when poignant questions are asked about what is happening in today's Messianic community. It intends to provide some preliminary resolution to the issues which are Biblically rooted, and are engaged with contemporary Jewish and Christian scholarship, providing some viable alternatives to the posturing more likely to be encountered. Above all, this publication directly takes on over-statements, exaggerations, and sound bytes offered by prominent advocates within the Two-House sub-movement, providing more Scriptural answers to welcoming in the many masses of people from the nations, as a part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13).**

ISRAEL IN FUTURE PROPHECY

Is There a Larger Restoration of the Kingdom to Israel?

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J.K. McKee

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.blog

Israel in Future Prophecy

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as *TWOT* for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)
CJSB: Complete Jewish Study Bible (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encylopaedia Judaica*
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: Greek New Testament
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: King James Version
Lattimore: The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)

LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: Septuagint
m. Mishnah
MARV: Messianic Apologetics Revised Version*
MT: Masoretic Text
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: New English Bible (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: New International Version (1984)
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)
NJPS: Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999)
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)
NT: New Testament
OT: Old Testament
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version (2014)
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition
v(s). verse(s)
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: Latin Vulgate
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)
WMB: World Messianic Bible (2020)

* This is a modified and adapted edition of the public domain World Messianic Bible (WMB).

Introduction

As a teacher, researcher, and apologist, it is my responsibility to address all manner of subjects and issues which are presented or inquired of me, from the Holy Scriptures, providing answers for the people of God. Many of these issues regard the essentials of faith, and how we, as a contemporary but yet still-emerging and developing Messianic movement, should approach them. My writings to date bear witness to the fact that I have had to address a whole host of topics, many of them relating to the challenges and controversies which our broad Messianic community is facing today. A variety of these issues are those upon which we all express a great deal of camaraderie and unity, as they concern the nature of Yeshua and His salvation. Some issues, however, are those which tend to get groups of people significantly divided and/or upset at one another, and which tend to make us rather uncomfortable. In far too many cases, issues which do get people divided or upset, are not often approached with a great deal of objectivity, reason, innovation, or patience. *And the love of the Messiah, which we are to demonstrate one to another, can often just be thrown out the proverbial window…*[ii]

There are three broad groups, which for better or worse, tend to make up the Messianic sphere of influence: Messianic Judaism, the One Law/One Torah sub-movement, and the Two-House sub-movement. **Messianic Judaism** as a modern movement, emerged in the late 1960s from the older Hebrew Christian movement, as a group of Jewish Believers wanting to acknowledge and worship Yeshua as the Messiah, in a widely Jewish cultural and religious context, and where Jewish Believers in Yeshua did not have to give up on their Jewish heritage. As Messianic Judaism grew in the 1980s and 1990s, congregations and fellowships were established all throughout places such as North America, Europe, Israel, and the West in general. While many Jewish people rejoicingly came to a saving knowledge of Yeshua as the Messiah of Israel, a major unforeseen side-effect also took place: scores of non-Jewish Believers, evangelical Christians, entered into Messianic Judaism, and sincerely desired to not only learn more about the Jewish Jesus, but also live more like Him, embracing their faith heritage in the Scriptures of Israel in tangible ways.

[ii] Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; cf. Matthew 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8.

As non-Jewish Believers have begun to utterly swell the Messianic community—indeed becoming the majority of it in many congregations and assemblies—many questions and answers to such questions have been proposed. For many of today's Messianic Jewish leaders, non-Jewish Believers entering into the Messianic movement is only the result of the Lord calling specific persons and families to assist in Jewish ministry and the redemption of their people, and for them to be in a unique, close communion with Jewish Believers. Others have viewed non-Jewish Believers entering into the Messianic Jewish movement, like the sojourner Ruth who attached herself to Naomi, her God, and her people (Ruth 1:16-17). Still, others have thought that non-Jewish Believers entering into the Messianic community, embracing a life of submission and outward obedience to God's Torah, is a result of prophecies like Micah 4:1-3 or Isaiah 2:2-4 or Zechariah 8:23 taking place, and a more decisive understanding of the New Covenant being realized (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Hebrews 8:8-12; 10:15-17).

Many have concluded that such non-Jewish Believers may be likened unto the *ger* or sojourner in the Torah who entered into the community of Ancient Israel, who was widely anticipated to follow the Torah, in many ways quite similar to the native Israelite. The **One Law/One Torah** sub-movement, is quite prone to emphasize, "You shall have one law for him who does *anything* unintentionally, for him who is native among the sons of Israel and for the alien who sojourns among them" (Numbers 15:29, NASU), and other passages. The One Law/One Torah sub-movement, though, is riddled with a great deal of legalism and judgmentalism, and should be kept at a distance.[iii]

Obviously in the realm of contemporary theological discussion, proposing that today's Messiah followers need to be consider the importance of the Torah or Law of Moses—perhaps including institutions such as the seventh-day Sabbath/*Shabbat*, the appointed times of Leviticus 23, or eating kosher—can be quite controversial. And, such convictions certainly require a great deal of analysis and reflection from various passages in the Apostolic Scriptures or New Testament, which may seem to say otherwise—including the general validity and relevance of the Torah for

[iii] Other passages of note include: Exodus 12:48-49; Leviticus 7:7; 24:22; Numbers 9:14; 15:15-16, 29-30.

For a further discussion, consult the author's article "Approaching One Law Controversies: Sorting Through the Legalism" (appearing in the *Messianic Torah Helper*).

Messiah followers.[iv] Yet in the scope of Messianic discussion, no proposals can be more provocative and divisive, at times, than those often made by people composing the **Two-House** sub-movement.

In the scope of the history of Ancient Israel, following the death of King Solomon, no one can deny the fact that Israel's realm split into the Northern Kingdom of Israel, also called Ephraim, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. In the course of Biblical history, as recorded within the Books of Kings and Chronicles, a mass from the Northern Kingdom of Israel was corporately taken into exile by the Assyrian Empire. Later in the course of Biblical history, the bulk of the Southern Kingdom of Judah was taken into exile by the Babylonian Empire, many of whom returned to the Holy Land following the conquering of the Babylonians by the much more tolerant and accepting Persian Empire. A huge mystery has ensued regarding the destiny of the descendants of the exiled Northern Kingdom of Israel—and their widescale non-return to the Holy Land—giving rise to all manner of interesting theories, speculations, and in far too many cases, outright myth and fantasy about the "Ten Lost Tribes."

A majority of people in today's Two-House sub-movement, while rightly raising the attention of Bible readers to the issue of the exiled Northern Kingdom in Scriptural history, have simply assumed that most of today's non-Jewish Believers are descendants of the exiled Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim. This is likely due to the inappropriate thought that those who are physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob somehow *must be* closer to God and His will than people of the nations generally. And not only this, but these non-Jewish individuals tend to call themselves "Ephraimites," although they lack any documentation or substantial proof for it, other than some sort of unobjective feeling or instinct (and they will frequently eschew the option of a DNA ancestry test available for a minimal cost). Suffice it to say, this is a huge debate—and one where reason, careful attention to detail, and a Thomas-level of skeptism (cf. John 20:25-27)—have not often been allowed to prevail. Yet, those who identify themselves as being "Two-House," do make up a noticeable sub-movement within the Messianic sphere of influence. If any of us intend to be fair as God's people, the main Biblical passages which they consider to be of importance must be analyzed, and in such a way which does appropriate justice to the text, removed from any of the bad behavior, problems, or semi-racism which may be endemic of various Two-House adherents.

[iv] Consult the author's books *The New Testament Validates Torah: Does the New Testament Really Do Away With the Law?*, *Torah In the Balance, Volumes I&II*, and the relevant volumes of the *Messianic Helper Series* by Messianic Apologetics.

Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics ***should not at all*** be considered a "Two-House" ministry, given the wide and diverse array of Biblical and theological topics we address, germane to the broad Messianic community. Our ministry interacts with people in Messianic Judaism, as well as with those who identify with labels, such as One Law/One Torah, Two-House, as well as Hebrew Roots—as we consider and analyze a wide series of issues and subjects which are thought to be of importance to people in all of those different sub-communities. If our ministry choice is to at all be honored by others in the Messianic world of ideas, we would consider ourselves **an egalitarian Messianic ministry.** We are a ministry which regards both Jewish and non-Jewish Believers in Messiah Yeshua to be a part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13, 19; 3:6), and which advocates a mutual submission ideology (Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3-4). We fully affirm that all Messianic Believers, Jewish and non-Jewish, male and female—are equals in the eyes of the Lord (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 2:11)—and should be encouraged to develop all of their gifts, talents, and skills as is proper in Him. We also believe that the Messianic movement's shared spiritual and theological heritage in the Jewish Synagogue and Christian Church, must be steadfastly honored.

As it concerns the specific issue of the Two-House teaching, Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics disavow the popular/populist variety of the Two-House teaching which has been promulgated since the 1990s, via a number of pseudo-denominations, sensationalistic groups, and dominant and/or presumed-prophetic personalities—which has not allowed itself to be often subject to constructive criticism and/or further theological refinement and engagement with conservative Biblical scholarship. Yet, in 2008, at least, one Messianic Jewish ministry actually allowed the following statement to be featured on its website:

> "The Two-House doctrine, in its most basic terms, simply maintains that the nation of Israel was divided following the reign of Solomon and will be reunited during the end times."[v]

This would be the basic or generic approach taken by our ministry to the issue of what happened to the exiled Northern Kingdom of Israel/Ephraim, in concert with the sentiments of pre-millennial eschaology.[vi] We would affirm a larger restoration of Israel, involving those

[v] (2008). *Two-House Doctrine Debate. The Messianic Center*. Retrieved 14 August, 2011 from <http://www.themessianiccenter.com>.

[vi] Cf. Walter C. Kaiser, *Preaching and Teaching the Last Things: Old Testament Eschatology for the Life of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), pp 37-38, 47-49.

from the exiled Northern Kingdom as a participant, yet to occur in Biblical prophecy.

We would acknowledge a greater, end-time restoration of Israel to come that is prophesied, going beyond the rebirth of the State of Israel in 1948, as important as this has surely been. Such a larger restoration of Israel definitely involves the Jewish people, as well as descendants from the exiled Northern Kingdom, but also many welcome and valued scores of companions from the nations themselves. There are pockets of people in remote corners of places like Southeast Asia, Southern Asia, the Middle East, the Eastern Mediterranean basin, and the environs of Central Africa, who claim to be descendants of the exiled Northern Kingdom via some kind of oral tradition, and/or what can appear to be Jewish-style customs—*and most probably are.* (Sometimes this has been enjoined with some credible DNA analysis, confirming distant Semitic descent.) These are the areas which generally fall within the sphere of influence of the old Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian Empires, and where the exiles of the Northern Kingdom could have been legitimately deported, scattered, and/or assimilated (cf. Jeremiah 31:10; Hosea 8:8-9; Amos 9:8-9).[vii]

We believe that the Lord will bring together, as one people in Him: the Jewish people, such aforementioned descendants of exiled Israel/Ephraim, and their many associated companions from all nations as one broad and inclusive community of people in Messiah Yeshua, before His return, in fulfillment of end-time prophecy (i.e., Isaiah 11:12-16; Jeremiah 31:6-10; Ezekiel 37:15-28; Zechariah 10:6-10). We **do not at all encourage** non-Jewish Believers (particularly those of Western European ancestry) who are a part of today's Messianic movement, and who recognize themselves as a part of the Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-13; 3:6) or the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16), grafted into Israel by faith in Israel's Messiah (Romans 11:17-18), to identify themselves as some sort of "Ephraimites." We especially do not encourage such non-Jewish people to make any kind of permanent pilgrimage or "*aliyah*" to the Holy Land, as there is no indication that all Messiah followers will, in total, ever live in the Land of Israel, even in the Messiah's Millennial Kingdom (cf. Isaiah 19:23-24; Zechariah 14:16-19).

An eschatology-based approach toward addressing this subject, with obviously various details needing to be left to an Eternal and Sovereign God,

[vii] I.e., as would be particularly seen in a work like Quest for the Lost Tribes A&E, 1998, DVD 2006, hosted by Simcha Jacobovici, and the concurrent comments witnessed in Jonathan Bernis (2005), *The Scattering of the Tribes of Israel*, March/April 2005. *Jewish Voice Today*. Available via <http://www.jewishvoice.org> and Sid Roth, *The Incomplete Church: Bridging the Gap Between God's Children* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2007), pp 17-18.