

The Remnant

"Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace."
Romans 11.5

July-August, 2014
Volume 27, No. 4

WHY EPHRAIM? PART II

by C. C. Morris

(Continued from the May-June issue)

By sovereign election God called (1) Abram/Abraham and gave him promises: eternal and unconditionally free, irrevocable and eternal, including (a) the promised Seed (the Lord Jesus Christ) in whom all nations would be blessed, and (b) the perpetual land-grant of the Promised Land.

God's promises to Abram/Abraham were confirmed in (passed on to) (2) Isaac.

God's promises to Abraham and Isaac were confirmed in Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel. The name Israel became the identifying name of the nation descended from this man. The term "children of Israel" has nothing to do with age (as "little children") but only means their descent from the man (3) Jacob/Israel.

The promises God made to these three men and their descendants are as valid today as they were four thousand years ago.

The Blessing of the Firstborn Son

The father as head of the family had three primary responsibilities to the Lord, to the nation, and to his wife, children, and entire household. The firstborn's honor was ordinarily bequeathed to the eldest or firstborn son. At the death of the family's father, his eldest son assumed his father's position as leader of the family and/or clan in the roles of (1) prophet, (2) priest, and (3) king. In addition, the firstborn son received (4) a double portion of the inheritance.

Since Jacob could not give the complete blessing of the firstborn to Joseph, he did what he could; he blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, including them as though they were full tribes equal with his own twelve sons. Further, he replaced his first two sons, Reuben and Simeon, with Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48.5). By adopting Joseph's two sons as his own, he made sure that Joseph and his sons would receive the double portion of his inheritance. By blessing these two boys as he did (elevating both Ephraim and Manasseh each to full tribal rank), the wily Jacob made sure that Joseph (and his sons) received the double portion of his inheritance.

The Remnant

published
6 times annually
by
Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church
of Dallas, Texas

The Remnant Publications

In the interest of
The Old Order of Baptists

Elder C. C. Morris
Editor and Publisher
P O Box 1004
Hawkins, Texas 75765
Phone 1-903-769-4822

The Remnant is sent free of any obligation
to all interested persons.

Address all correspondence to:

THE REMNANT PUBLICATIONS
P O BOX 1004
HAWKINS, TX 75765-1004
Phone 1-903-769-4822

E-mail: remnantlink@gmail.com

Web sites: www.the-remnant.com
and www.primitive-baptist.com

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Contents

Why Ephraim? Part II, By C.C. Morris.....	1
Why Ephraim? Part III.....	6
Books, Notices.....	16-19

(Continued from page 1)

Summary of Israel's Firstborn Blessings

1. Joseph, through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, received the double portion by Jacob-Israel's making each of these two grandsons a full tribe among his other sons. (Neither Joseph, nor Ephraim, nor Manasseh received the kingship or the priesthood for the nation of Israel.)

2. Judah became the kingly tribe (Genesis 49.10): Through Judah came David, then Solomon, and in the fullness of time came Jesus, the Lord and Messiah/Christ, the eternal King of kings and Lord of lords.

3. The Lord made Levi the priestly tribe, turning Jacob's curse on him (Genesis 49.5-7) into this blessing.

4. God in His sovereign wisdom placed the office of Prophet in whatever tribe suited His purpose.

How Jacob Blessed Joseph; Jacob's blessings on Ephraim and Manasseh: From Jacob's Viewpoint

As his appointed time to leave his earthly sojourn drew near, Jacob/Israel still wanted to name Joseph as his legal firstborn son, thereby passing on to Joseph the promises Jehovah made

to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; but, for reasons touched upon herein, this proved impossible for him to do.

The elderly man Israel eliminated the sons of his two concubines: Bilhah's sons Dan and Naphtali, and Zilpah's sons, Gad and Asher. The four sons of these two concubines were no problem to remove from consideration for being chosen as his firstborn, because they were the offspring of servant-girls who were not considered to be wives with all the attendant rights and privileges. (In later life Bilhah and Zilpah were elevated to the status of wives—Genesis 37:2—but they were never recognized as equals to Leah, or above all else, to Rachel.)

Next, Israel tried to eliminate the six sons of Leah (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun). He found reason enough to dispossess Reuben, Simeon (replacing them with Ephraim and Manasseh), and Levi. He got as far as Judah but could go no further. We will address why in a moment. But first we will consider his blessings on Joseph and Joseph's sons.

From Joseph's Viewpoint

"And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (Genesis 48:1)." When Joseph came, Jacob recounted the Lord's dealings with himself to his son (verses 3-4) and then passed the Lord's promised blessings on to Joseph's sons (verses 5-20).

"And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger,

and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn (Gen 48:13-14)."

"And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head (Gen 48:17)." But even the beloved Joseph could not prevail over the old man's intent.

Joseph, desiring his father Jacob's blessing on his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, brought the boys facing the old man with Manasseh—picture this carefully—Manasseh the older, on Joseph's left (and therefore on Jacob's right), and the younger Ephraim on Joseph's right, placing him on Jacob's left. This would mean Jacob, if he naturally reached his hands straight out, would place his right hand on Manasseh's head (signifying the stronger and primary blessing), and his left hand would have been on the younger Ephraim's head (signifying the weaker or secondary blessing).

Doubtless, Jacob remembered God's dealing with Esau (the older) and himself (Jacob the younger) and God's saying, "The elder shall serve the younger." Jacob used this same principle to bless Ephraim and Manasseh. He crossed his hands, placing his right hand (signifying the greater blessing) on the younger Ephraim's head. Thus Ephraim was blessed to rule over his older brother Manasseh and eventually over most of the other tribes.

"And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon [Jacob's two eldest sons], they shall be mine (Genesis 48:5)." With that declaration, he (1) placed Ephraim in Reuben's stead and Manasseh in Simeon's stead, and (2) made Joseph

(through Ephraim and Manasseh) his heir as firstborn—at least as far as the land grant territory was concerned.

Jacob blessed them that day, saying, “In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh (Gen 48:20).” With that, Joseph had to be content.

The Story of Judah;

The Scepter in Genesis 49

We now examine why Jacob gave up on trying to eliminate Judah, his fourth son by Leah, from the firstborn inheritance.

The explanation is long and complex, involving the entire account of Joseph in Egypt, his brethren’s coming to seek food during the famine, Joseph’s threatening to keep Benjamin as his slave, and Judah’s magnificent sacrificial substitution of himself so that Benjamin would be freed. The entire account occupies chapters 37-46 of Genesis.

Because of their envy and hatred of Joseph (they despised him because he was Israel’s favorite son), his older brothers had conspired to kill him; they ended up selling him into Egyptian slavery. They took Joseph’s robe, drenched it in an animal’s blood, and deceived their father into thinking some wild beast had killed Joseph.

Jacob, brokenhearted, mourned his loss from then on, for years. Now the only remaining tie he had to his beloved Rachel was his youngest son Benjamin. Rachel had died giving birth to him. Having lost Joseph (as he thought), Jacob would now protect Benjamin at all costs.

Jehovah in His perfect providence sent a famine into the Promised Land. In His all-pervading sovereignty He had exalted Joseph from Egypt’s prison-house to Pharaoh’s right hand, to be ruler over Egypt, second only to

Pharaoh. Jehovah as always worked at both ends to bring about His purpose. In His own good time He would bring the wicked brothers and Joseph together, bring about their reconciliation, and restore Joseph to his father. God would do it in such a way that would prove He had meant it all unto good, and in so doing would give perhaps as clear a statement of Romans 8.28 as can be found in the Old Testament (OT): “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive (Genesis 50.20).”

With God-given wisdom, Joseph forced his brethren to bring Benjamin to Egypt above Jacob’s protests. Jacob finally yielded when Judah promised him, “Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go...I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever (Genesis 43.8f).”

Joseph then “framed” Benjamin by having his special cup planted in the boy’s sack of grain, and then accusing him of stealing it. He told his brothers (who as yet still did not know Pharaoh’s right-hand man was their brother Joseph), “What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?”

And Judah said, “What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord’s servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.”

Joseph said, “God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.” (Talk about killing someone with kindness!)

Then Judah came near unto him, and said, "Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, 'Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.' And we said unto my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' And thou saidst unto thy servants, 'Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.' And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord."

Judah continued: "And our father said, 'Go again, and buy us a little food.' And we said, 'We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.' And thy servant my father said unto us, 'Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: and if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.'

"Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant," said Judah, referring to himself, "became surety for the lad unto my father,

saying, 'If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.' Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant" (Here Judah again spoke of himself) "abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father."

In that glorious story, Judah became a clear picture of his descendant (after the flesh), our Lord Jesus the Christ, who in the fullness of time would come as the substitute for His brethren here represented by Benjamin, bearing their guilt for them, thereby freeing them from their slavery in sin. Judah had vowed to his father, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever (Genesis 43.8f)," as Christ bore the blame of His people for all eternity. The heart of Judah's fulfillment of his vow to his father Israel is embodied in his later statement to Joseph in Genesis 44.16-34, of the entire story of why Benjamin was so important to their father. Judah's beautiful substitution of himself to save Benjamin is summed up in his closing statement in verses 32-34: "For thy servant [himself, i.e., Judah] became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant [himself, i.e., Judah] abide instead of the lad [Benjamin] a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me?"

What a beautiful picture this is of the Lord Jesus Christ's being the surety for His brethren, His people, before His Father, by bearing their blame in order to set them free

and return them to their Father, even God. The Lord Jesus is prefigured in Judah's "How shall I go up to my Father and the lad [God's Children, Christ's brethren] be not with me?"

..... bearing their blame, He now presents them blameless before their Father: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming [Greek apokalupsis, the Revelation] of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1.8)." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5.23f)." (The italicized I pray God is not in the original text, nor should it be! If you have an interlinear Greek New Testament, check it out for yourself. The saints' complete sanctification and preservation has nothing to do with Paul's—or any other man's—prayer, other than the Man Christ Jesus, who ever liveth to make intercession for the saints.) "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless [Greek amomos; without blame in Ephesians 1.4, unblameable in Colossians 1.22 and 1 Thessalonians 3.13] before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen (Jude 24f)."

Because of Judah's selfless sacrifice of himself to satisfy his father and set free his brother Benjamin, the old man Israel pronounced the blessing of kingship upon Judah and his descendants. That kingship resides today in Judah's (and David's) oldest living heir, the Firstborn among many brethren, Jesus of Nazareth, King of kings and Lord of lords,

who announced, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen (Revelation 1.18)." Being so, He is also King for evermore.

WHY EPHRAIM?

PART III

In the Years that Followed...

Prominent Ephraimites

Joshua was an Ephraimite. His inheritance was the city of Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim where he was later buried (Joshua 19.50, 24.30).

Centuries later, after Judah's tribe had been established as kings in David's dynasty (David, Solomon, Rehoboam, etc.), ten of the twelve tribes revolted against Solomon's son, Rehoboam, under the leadership of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, another Ephraimite.

Here continues the ascendancy of the tribe of Ephraim conferred upon them by Jacob himself in Genesis 48. After becoming the first king of the rebellious ten tribes, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, rebuilt the city of Shechem as his new capital in Mount Ephraim (1 Kings 12.25). The tribe of Ephraim became increasingly prominent, eventually becoming the dominant tribe of the northern ten.

At first the ten rebel tribes kept the name of Israel. Because Ephraim had grown into a mighty warrior tribe and had taken a lead in many battles against Israel's enemies, the northern ten tribes were often collectively called Ephraim. His name became associated with the rebel ten tribes as Jacob/Israel's name was associated with the entire nation.

Only the tribe of Benjamin stayed with Judah. Eventually Benjamin's tribe was more or less absorbed by Judah. Judah's name was eventually shortened to the nickname "Jew."

Isaiah and Hosea were contemporaries, prophesying during the reigns of kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (Isaiah 1.1, Hosea 1.1). During their time, around the eighth century B. C., Ephraim became the lead tribe of the rebels. After that, the ten northern tribes commonly were known as both Israel and Ephraim (These ten northern tribes also retained the name of Israel). Hosea refers to the ten tribes as Ephraim 37 times, more than any other book in the Bible. (compare Isaiah 7.2, 5, 9, 17; 9.9; 17.3, 28.3; Hosea 4.17; 5.3, 9.3-17, etc.)

In the all-pervading providence of God, it was fitting that these rebellious and idolatrous ten tribes would be known as Ephraim rather than Israel, Jacob's God-given spiritual name, which means Prince with God.

Hosea, His Life and Times

In his opening statement Hosea gives the entire historical setting of his time: "The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash [there were two Jeroboams. This was the second Jeroboam, not the first who was Jeroboam the son of Nebat], king of Israel."

Isaiah wrote "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah (Isaiah 1.1)." Isaiah prophesied to Judah, the southern two tribes, so he does not mention Jeroboam II; Hosea, prophesying to the northern ten tribes (known as both Israel and Ephraim), mentions their current king. The prophet Hosea was given a strange commission from the Lord God: "the LORD said to Hosea, Go, take unto

thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms: for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the LORD."

Hosea's Wife and Children; Their Significance

When Hosea's wife Gomer bore him a daughter, God assigned the little girl the symbolic name of Lo-Ruhamah—"No Mercy," or "Not Pitied." God explains: For Israel's idolatry, she will be no longer pitied; "...for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away." The particle "Lo-" is a Hebrew negative prefix meaning no, not, negative.

Next, Gomer bore a son whom God named Lo-ammi, explaining: "for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God."

What names to put on little children! There are many women named Mercy, but how many are named "No Mercy"? And the name for the poor little boy—Israel's present-day enemies (whether within the church or in world politics) love texts like these, using them to try to prove God will forever have nothing more to do with the Jews. These short-sighted enemies might benefit by reading the rest of Hosea, if God peradventure would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; otherwise they will not.

The Lord's saying, "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away," and "ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" are taken by those with an anti-Israel agenda to mean forever more God is through with the nation. The primary three rules for reading the Bible with understanding of its meaning are (1) context; (2) context; and (3) context. Read on, after the text. Before this chapter is complete, the Lord said, "Yet the number of

the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." (1.10-11. Note: Unless otherwise indicated, references in this article without book names will be in Hosea.) So the verses saying "I will no more have mercy" and "ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" prove temporary, applying to the coming captivity, after which God will bring them back to the land.

This text is quoted in the New Testament (NT) in Romans 9.25f and referred to in Hosea 2.23: "And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God."

What of Jezreel?

What of this "Jezreel" referred to in 1.11? He is first mentioned in 1.4, the oldest son of Hosea. "And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel (1.4)." His name is the same as the town Jezreel where King Ahab lived when his wife Jezebel framed Naboth, arranging his murder, so the king could take his vineyard. Jehu later killed Ahab and Jezebel and usurped the throne of Israel for a while. This in part, along with Naboth's, is "the blood of Jezreel" referred to in verse 4.

In Hebrew, Jezreel, meaning the seed of God, is a play on words, a pun. The Hebrew pronounces the letters I, J, and Y much alike, so Jezreel is pronounced almost exactly like Israel. The word itself, Jezreel, means both to scatter and to sow (as grain); to sow grain is to scatter it. In Hosea the word is used prophetically in both senses, and with a near and a far fulfillment. The near scattering was to be in the captivities of Israel and Judah, and the near sowing was their regathering and being sowed back into their land at the end of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. The far scattering refers to the scattering throughout all nations that began in A.D. 70 and lasts throughout the church age; and the far sowing of Israel is the regathering and sowing Israel in their land at the end of the church age. If we are not mistaken, we saw the beginnings of this regathering of Israel in the twentieth century.

Hosea makes these things clear enough in 2.23: "And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God."

Zechariah (in 13.9) makes it equally clear that Israel's nationally confessing Jesus as their Lord is yet future, that this restoration is not limited to Israel's Old Testament (OT) return, but its final fulfillment is yet future: And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

As proof this text (Zechariah 13.9) has a future fulfillment at the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, we offer the context. This text, having to do with Israel's recognizing Jesus as their Christ/Messiah—

—is preceded, in that day, when the fountain shall be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness (13.1); in that day the Lord will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also He will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land; And one shall say unto him, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" Then he shall answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." And,

—is followed by the coming of the day of the Lord, when the Lord will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: and His triumphant entry into Jerusalem (which was begun as the Lamb of God in Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12) will be completed as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Israel will then recognize Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Lord after asking Him, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" Then He shall answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends (Zechariah 13.6)." Finally, the Lord Jesus Christ will be manifest as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS and acknowledged to be so by all the earth; at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue

will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2.10f). "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one (Zechariah 14.9)."

The boy Jezreel and his name calls Israel's attention to the crimes of their king Ahab and queen Jezebel. Even though both had been killed in God's providential administration of His divine law of sowing and reaping, the people of Israel had widespread sins and crimes for which they must yet answer. "And I will visit upon her [Israel] the days of Baalim [idols], wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD (2.13)." "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. As they were increased, so they sinned against me: they change my glory into shame [marginal correction]. They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity. And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings (4.6-9)." "Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven, nor swear, The LORD liveth. For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place. Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone. Their drink is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: her rulers with shame do love, Give ye (4.15-18)."

Hosea shows Ephraim is synonymous with Israel, and Judah is linked as a sinful partner. Ephraim is the name God often

uses to identify Israel. "...there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled." "When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered...."

Even though they were a country divided by civil war, in four passages he names all three together in the span of only two or three verses:

1. (Hosea 5:3-5) I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled. And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them.

2. (Hosea 5:9-10) Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be. The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water.

3. (Hosea 6:10-7.1) I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel: there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee, when I returned the captivity of my people. (Hosea 7:1) When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without.

4. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints. (Hosea 12:2) The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him (11:12-12:2)

Gomer, a Picture of Israel

1. She is presented in chapter 2 as unfaithful to husband, a harlot (harlotry or whoredom

in the Bible is a picture of unfaithfulness to God, or idolatry).

2. Neither Gomer nor Israel knew the source of their blessing: "For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal (2.8)." "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them (11.3)."

3. God will allure, comfort, and restore Israel as Hosea wooed Gomer: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence...(2.14f)."

4. In the last day, God will give to Israel "...the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt (2.15)." At the valley of Achor, Israel stoned Achan to put away the sin that had brought God's judgment upon the nation. In the last day, Israel will be turned back to the Lord and by His grace will put away their sin once more, as they did in Joshua's day.

"And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day (Joshua 7:26)."

5. She will be bought back: "Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine. So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver, and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley: and I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee

(3.1-3)"; a beautiful picture of God's gracious love to His unfaithful wife Israel as He brings her back to Himself.

God's visitation/punishment on Israel in Hosea's day and her restoration after the church age: "And I will visit upon her the days of Baalim," the false gods of Canaan's idolaters, "wherein she burned incense to them, and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels, and she went after her lovers, and forgot me, saith the LORD (2.13)."

THE ENTIRE CHURCH AGE IS BETWEEN VERSES 13 and 14. After this,

"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness,* and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt (2.14f)."

But First, God will cause Israel "to cease"

"I [the Lord]...will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel (1.4)." "Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God (1.9)." Squint-eyed "interpreters" assume this means for ever and for ever more. Nothing could be further from the truth.

* Revelation 12.6: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three-score days [three and a half years]." The woman of Revelation 12.1, interpreted by God Himself through Jacob in Genesis 37, is Israel. Hosea and Revelation merge here, in the wilderness.

But not Judah? "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen. Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints (1.7)."

Yes, Judah also will fall: "And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them,...(The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water...Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness.)" (5.5, 10, 12).

"The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound [a reference to removing old landmarks in order to steal land—see Isaiah 5.8, and Proverbs 22.28 and 23.10]: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water. Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment [that of Jeroboam II; this does not refer to the commandment of God]. Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness (5.10ff).

Is this a contradiction about Judah? Of course not. He is saying Judah will not fall at this time. The difference between Ephraim (Israel) and Judah is this: Because of their excessive idolatry and grievous sins, Israel would go into Assyrian captivity in 721 BC. Judah was following Israel's sins, but more slowly. Like repentant Nineveh in Jonah's day, Judah would be spared for another century before God's judgment would arrive.

Judah would indeed go into Babylonian captivity in 606 BC over a century later.

Hence the Lord says in fine, "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God." For the time being (in Hosea's day), "Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints." In "the last day" (Armageddon), Judah and Israel will be saved with an everlasting salvation. "But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end (Isaiah 45.17)." Note, if you will, dear reader, world without end.

God's Controversy

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the [Promised] Land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood ["blood toucheth blood" might be translated as "one murder right after another."] Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away (4.1-3)."

"The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will He recompense him (12.2)."

"For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion (Isaiah 34.8)."

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the LORD (Jeremiah 25.31)." The final judgment is worldwide, not only on Israel.

Israel During and After the Church Age

For almost two millennia Israel has been an outcast in the world, yet supernaturally preserved as God's elect nation. At the end of this present age, when Christ returns, God will reactivate Israel's time-piece.

Perhaps the Crux of Hosea's prophecy as it relates to Christ's second advent and Israel is nowhere more plain than in the striking passage found in Hosea 5.14 through 6.3.

Chapter 5 ends with Christ's prophetic words to Israel: "For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him. I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early." The first three verses of Chapter 6 give Israel's response to Him: "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth (Hosea 5.14-6.3)." Let us consider this important passage verse by verse:

5:14 For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him. Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5.5). In this case, He as a Lion will be fighting against Judah for their rejection of Him. Specifically He fought against them in their destruction that followed the forty years of their testing, from His first presentation of Himself to Judah, the Jews, in

AD 30 ("And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age"—Luke 3.23), until He destroyed them as a nation in AD 70. The number 40 is the biblical number of testing. For forty years, from AD 30 to AD 70, Israel was tested, as to their Messiah-King; the book of Acts is the record. "...they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ (Acts 17.1ff)." "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first...(Romans 1.16a)."

15 I will go and return to my place... For the Lord "to return to His place" two things must be true: (1) He must have a place that is His place, and (2) He must have left it. Both are true. His rightful place is on the throne of the universe with His Father (Hebrews 1.1-3).

He left His throne to come to this earth and fulfill the predestinated purpose of God. Paul remarkably describes all this in Philippians 2: "...Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus He left His place.

He then returned to His place: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He will remain in His place ("...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high") until Israel acknowledges their offense:

till they acknowledge their offence... He will stay there, in His place, "till they acknowledge their offence," not "their offenses." We all have offenses, Jew and Gentile alike; but their offense was their national rejection of Him as their Messiah King.

and seek my face...: The only way Israel will ever seek the face of Jesus of Nazareth is by God's effectual bidding them to do so, for "there is none that seeketh after God (Romans 3.11)." But when God speaks, it is done (Psalm 33.9), for "Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest Thou? (Ecclesiastes 8.4)." God will but speak the word and the quickened elect among the Jews will hear. The collective heart of the national remnant of Israel will respond, "When Thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto Thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek (Psalm 27.8)."

in their affliction they will seek me early. Reduced to their wit's end (Psalm 107.27), they will desperately seek His face as they are faced with imminent destruction at the hand of their enemies, led by the Beast of Revelation 13. Christ's answer will be to come to their rescue, destroy their adversaries in the war of Armageddon, and bring His people Israel to Himself. Their response to Him at His appearing and His speaking to them is found in verses 1-3 of the sixth chapter:

6.1 "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." They will see clearly why they have suffered so grievously for most of their national existence. Finally,

they will be given repentance to the acknowledging of the truth (2 Timothy 2.25), because "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5.31)."

2 After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight... These two days are not Monday and Tuesday, or Friday and Saturday. Following the principle that one day is with the Lord AS a thousand years, and a thousand years AS one day (2 Peter 3.8), these two days are the two thousand years of exile the Jews have gone through since AD 70. The third day spoken of here is the thousand-year "millennium" of Revelation 20, which follows the two days (2,000 years) of the church age.

3 Then shall we know, if- we follow on to know the LORD: The supplied italicized if only confuses an otherwise clear text. Here the Jews are saying, "Then shall we know we follow on to know the LORD!"

His going forth is prepared as the morning; This is the dawning of a new day, the Day of the Lord!

...and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth: This is "the times of refreshing" spoken of by Peter: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive UNTIL the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3.19ff)."

Now, since this has been spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the

world began, why do we hear brethren say from time to time, "I never heard that before!"?

Is God "Through With National Israel"?

The Lord is no more through with the nation of Israel than He is through with Christ's bride, His church. If He were to break His unconditional eternal promises to Israel merely because of their sin and the passing of two or three thousand years, why could He not also break His unconditional eternal promises to the church, and then, why could He not cease to be the everlasting, unchangeable God presented to His people in the Scriptures?

Malachi 3.6, "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed," was spoken not to the church but to the sons of Jacob. (This text, we believe, has been rightly applied to the church, but its interpretation must be, first and foremost, to the sons of Jacob, or Israel. There may be many applications of a Scripture, but there is only one bona fide interpretation: it is exactly what the words say and mean—or else words, including those of God's word, have no meaning.)

These foes of national Israel within "religion" teach that the Jews/Israel must be "good people" before God will bless them, saying that in order for them to be saved, Israelites must produce the fruit of salvation before they are saved in order for God to save them! Everything anti-Israel amillennialists have ever said advocating free sovereign grace breaks down before their own view of national Israel. They unwittingly fall into the Arminian/Conditionalist trap of saying, "God will not bless national Israel until they obey Him." They thereby abandon the sovereign grace principle that no one

can obey God unless and until He blesses them to obey Him. Therefore Amillennialists cannot apply the doctrine of grace to the Jews even though God promised unmerited grace forever to that blessed nation. Israel's foes must revert to the Arminian works-system of Rome: "Be good and God will bless you for it." We can expect such from all Arminians, Conditionalists, and other religions of the world, but who would have thought those professing sovereign grace principles would have reverted, in their anti-Jewish posture, to a "works to earn God's favor" doctrine? Yet they have.

We read Isaiah 53. Who hath believed our report? Read Isaiah 54 along with it. The entire portion is addressed to Israel. Chapter 54 is a continuation of Isaiah 53. Read large portions of the Scriptures repeatedly to get their drift.

"3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband [like Hosea was to Gomer]; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused [like Gomer?], saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

"For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah

should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

"O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD (Isaiah 54.3-17)."

Read on.

Remember: This was written to Israel. It has its applications to the New Testament church, right enough; but it was written to Israel, about Israel in her latter days and on into eternity. He said somewhere, "world without end." —CCM

(To be continued, Lord willing,
in the next issue.)

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6. **PLEASE NOTE:** This sale applies **ONLY** to the Welsh Tract Publications books indicated above and in the chart on page 17. It does **NOT** apply to the other books (Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter by Shaun Willcock, still \$10.00 postpaid, and Absolute Predestination by Jerome Zanchius, still \$9.00 postpaid).

We are assured that postal rates and mailing costs will only increase. We must ask \$3.00 per book for mailing costs, no exceptions.

The chart on page 17 summarizes our sale prices.

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BOOKS FROM ELDER STANLEY PHILLIPS NOW AVAILABLE

We have now received word from Brother Hoyt Sparks on the availability of the books which Elder Phillips was preparing at the time of his passage from this life:

Monday, Apr 21, 2014, at 12:12 PM

Greetings Elder Morris:

Hope this finds you and yours doing well in the Lord.

I brought the remaining books published by Elder Phillips back with me. Today I finished separating the various books and counted them for inventory; and am ready to accept orders. Below is an announcement for you to please publish in The Remnant. I will also announce the books for sale via the Predestinarian email forum....

We have for sale the remainder of the books published by the late Elder Stanley C. Phillips. These books will be sold until the inventory is exhausted, and there will not be additional ones published. Each book will be sold for \$20.00, which includes shipping and handling FOR USA SHIPMENTS ONLY. [Those ordering from outside the USA should inquire from Brother Sparks about shipping costs before ordering.—CCM]

Particulars are as follows:

WRITINGS BY ELDER WILSON THOMPSON: For sale are Volumes II and III. Elder Phillips did not publish a Volume I because he considered the AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ELDER WILSON THOMPSON to be Volume I. There are nine (9) extra volumes of Volume III, and these may be ordered separate from Volume II. Otherwise, Volumes II and III will be sold only in sets.

WRITINGS BY ELDER WILLIAM SMOOT: For sale are Volumes I, II and III. There are two (2) extra volumes of Volume II, and one (1) extra volume of Volume III. Otherwise Volumes I, II and III will be sold only in sets.

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(Home phone: 336 372 6289)

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All proceeds, after shipping costs, will go to the widow of Elder Phillips, Sister Alma Phillips. Sister Phillips has been a semi-invalid for about 40 years. Her family and friends are making efforts to keep her in the family home for her remaining years, rather than her residing in a nursing home.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

God bless,

Hoyt D. F. Sparks, SL

Jeremiah 5:31

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

**ELECTRONIC BOOK BY
ELDER DAVID K. MATTINGLY**

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This book of 65 pages and seven chapters is only available as an e-mail attachment. Order it from d.kenneth2@att.net and say "REQUEST FOR BOOK" in the subject line.

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The following is an outline of principles the readers of The Remnant may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for The Remnant seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in

their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.